

# PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The following training, beneficial for students and club coaches alike, can be completed prior to your first official club meeting, or you can take your first month of your club to familiarize yourself with First Priority and the EPIC Cycle, and plan your year out together!

When planning your schedule for this year's EPIC guide, there are a few things we want to remind you about. First Priority Clubs are all about reaching students with the hope of Christ, and if you are familiar with the EPIC cycle, you know that INVITE Week (the third week of every month) is the week we encourage students to invite as many friends as they can to club! You'll learn all about this in the training.

INVITE Weeks are so important to spreading the Gospel which is why we encourage you to schedule your 9-month EPIC cycle to have as many INVITE Weeks as possible! We know it can be tricky with school breaks/holidays/etc, so you may want to sit down with your Club Coach to talk about how to best plan your year! While you're at it, dedicate some time to examine the game provided for each week and ensure it can be played in your classroom. This way, you'll have ample time to seek out an alternative if needed.

Don't forget, INVITE Weeks are also a good time to plan different parties or special events that may be happening!

**Now, let's dive in and learn about First Priority together!**

# WHAT IS FIRST PRIORITY?

## WHY FIRST PRIORITY?

At First Priority, we know that you want to be an influencer of culture. In order to do that, you need a way into the public schools. The problem is that adults cannot share Jesus at school which makes you feel frustrated. We believe the church should influence the school culture rather than the world. First Priority is a tool to equip students to form clubs in the local schools where we have seen thousands of students reach their peers for Christ across the country!

### Mission and Vision

- The Mission of First Priority is to take the Hope of Christ to every student.
- The Vision of First Priority is to unite the local church to equip students to share the gospel with a friend. (*Students Reach Students.*)

## OUR CORE VALUES

- Gospel-Focused
- Student-Led
- Strategy-Based
- Local Church-Engaged

## IS THIS LEGAL?

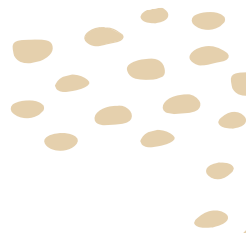


***The 1984 Equal Access Act gives students the right to initiate and lead a Christian club on campus.***

To ensure an 'EPIC' First Priority club, stick to the four-week plan, promote activities through approved means like school announcements and personal invitations, encourage students to share 'The Four' individually, avoid mass distribution of flyers without school approval, show kindness to all, and steer clear of conversations involving controversial, non-EPIC guide content. When we unite around the mission and love people, we follow Christ's model.

# CORE VALUES

## GOSPEL-FOCUSED



### OUR CORE VALUES

First Priority clubs are not just another Bible study or Christian club. We are a club that trains students to be better, more confident influencers on their school campuses.

Jesus is the only way to get to God. The way people hear about Jesus is through His people sharing about Him to their friends. Therefore, we need to share our stories and the Gospel with friends at school, so they can experience eternal life.

**SALVATION IS FOUND IN NO ONE ELSE, FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN TO MANKIND BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED. ACTS 4:12**

### We are called to be influencers. What is an Influencer?

It is easy to think that being an influencer means you have to have a certain amount of followers or likes on social media. Maybe you think you have to "go viral" before becoming an influencer. While these things may be results of being an influencer, at the core, being an influencer means you have the power and ability to affect someone else's behavior or decisions. Even if it's just one person! We are called, as Christ's followers, to be influencers to those around us, our "social network".

Maybe your social network is just one person, maybe it's your family, or maybe your social network is a sports team or club. The reality is, that we all have some sort of social network and influence. God is calling us to be light to those feeling the darkness of this world. We call it influencers for the Gospel! First Priority needs students and leaders who are called, because called people can influence but influencers are not always called. Take a look at your network, and those around you. Who can you think of that has influence? As believers, we should be using our platform (whatever that may be) to spread the Gospel and grow the Kingdom of God.

# CORE VALUES: GOSPEL FOCUSED

## The FOUR Gospel Framework & The Thick Gospel

These pages demonstrate the FOUR Framework, a simple Gospel tool that acts as a guide for you to enter into conversations about the Gospel with your peers.



1. God Loves Us



2. Sin Separates Us



3. Jesus Rescues Us



4. Will you Trust in Jesus?



### Tips for Remembering the FOUR!

1. Write the FOUR steps on your hand. 🖐️
2. Write the FOUR steps + Bible verses in a favorite notebook for easy reference. 📖



**The Thick Gospel** is the good news for the world that the one true God has fulfilled His past promises to seek and save the lost. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus, the Savior, brings forgiveness of our sins, transformation in the present, and hope for the future.

## God Loves Us

(Genesis 1:27; John 3:16; Romans 8:38-39)



**Romans 8:38-39** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Definition:** God made us, loves us, and wants us to personally experience His love and purpose for our lives.

### Thick Gospel Truths:

1. God's love is unconditional and unfailing.
2. God sacrificed His one and only son, so we could have eternal life.
3. This good news of Jesus is for the whole world!



Reflection/ Notes:

## Sin Separates Us

(Romans 3:23 & Isaiah 59:2)



**Romans 3:22-23** There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

**Definition:** When people don't trust God and lean on their own desires, sin produces destruction in their lives.

### Thick Gospel Truths:

1. God loved the world so much he sent Jesus to die for our sins.
2. The Gospel is the fulfillment of promises God made in the past.
3. Through the death of Jesus, we have received hope for an eternal future.

## Jesus Rescues Us

(1 Peter 3:8; John 3:16 & Romans 5:8)



**Romans 5:8** God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Definition:** Through turning away from your sin and toward God, and putting your faith in Him, you are given eternal life and your sins are forgiven.

### Thick Gospel Truths:

1. The Gospel is the fulfillment of promises God made in the past.
2. The Gospel is about Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.
3. Jesus' death brought forgiveness of our sins and transformation in the present day.
4. Jesus' resurrection gives us hope for the future.

## Will you trust in Jesus?

(John 1:12 & Revelation 3:20)



**2 Corinthians 5:17** Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

**Definition:** Faith in Jesus Christ offers you fulfillment and eternal life.

### Thick Gospel Truths:

1. The good news of the Gospel for everyone. It's for the world!
2. God has fulfilled His past promises to seek and save the lost.
3. Putting our faith in Jesus as our Savior provides forgiveness for our sins.
4. The Gospel of Jesus brings transformation in the present day.
5. The Gospel of Jesus ground for hope for the future.

 **Reflection/ Notes:**

# CORE VALUES: GOSPEL FOCUSED

## The FOUR Gospel & The Bridge

The Four and The Bridge are two gospel tools we can use to illustrate the Gospel story. These two illustrations have the same message and purpose. But as influencers, we can choose which illustration is most effective in our personal network. It might even be a combination of both! Take a look below at how these two illustrations can help us tell the Gospel story.



God loves us so much that God created us to be close and connected to Him. We are meant to be in a relationship with Him. God is not some distant being or long-distance friend that we talk to when it's convenient. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16**



Sadly, because of sin, we are separated from God. **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23** Sin divides us and creates this chasm between us and Him. It keeps us from being connected to who He is. **For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23** When we allow sin to control or take over our lives, we find it harder to be close to God and the goodness He has for us.



But God did not want this to be the end. He knew sin was keeping us from Him so He gave us His son Jesus as a sacrifice to bridge the gap between us. **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8** Christ died on the cross to give us the way, the only way, into Heaven.

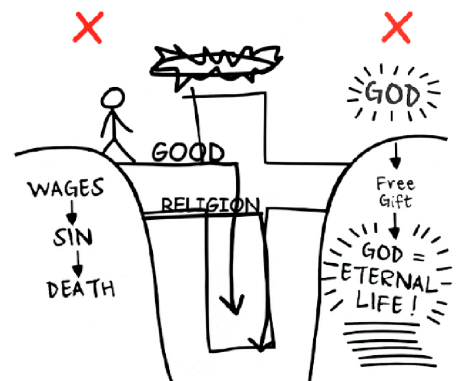
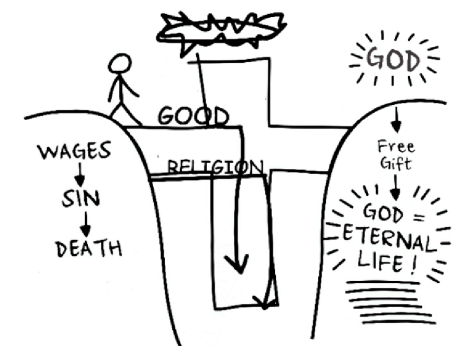
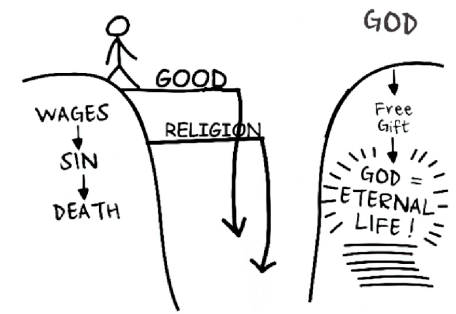
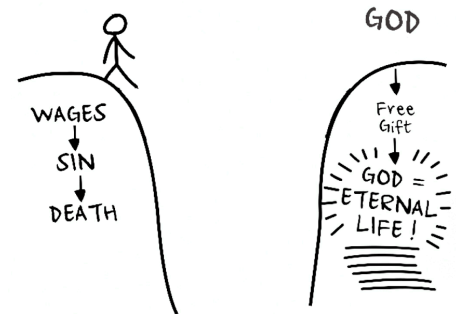
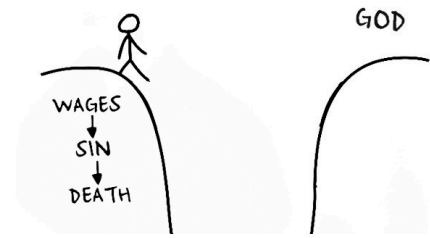


The gift of Jesus Christ and his ultimate sacrifice for us is free. The way to God, through Jesus, is not something we have to earn or pay for! To receive the gift of salvation, you must declare Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead. **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name John 1:12**



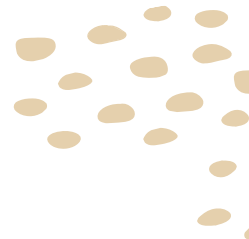
**WATCH AN EXAMPLE OF THIS GOSPEL ILLUSTRATION HERE.**

**SEE APPENDIX A FOR MORE GOSPEL TRAINING.**



# CORE VALUES

## STUDENT-LED



### FIRST PRIORITY ROLES

- Club Coaches
- Faculty Sponsors
- Student Leaders

#### **Club Coaches:**

- Invest time at the beginning of the year to diagnose student leadership skills and spiritual maturity levels.
- Always engage the sign-in process. Sign in at the front office every time they visit the club and always wear the school issued Visitor's I.D.
- Avoid walking the hallways without a student from the club or a Faculty Sponsor.
- Dress in an appropriate manner that is comparable to what the faculty and staff are required to wear. Our goal is to achieve excellence in all things.
- Connect with the principal and express appreciation for allowing the First Priority Club the status it is due because of Equal Access.
- Submit weekly club reports found in the First Priority App.
- Pursue consistent communication with the club's Faculty Sponsor.
- Get to know the administration, front office and security personnel.
- Communicate with leaders via communication platforms (e.g GroupMe) 48 hours prior to club.
- Ensure the club maintains the integrity of our mission, vision, and strategy.
- Keep students accountable to the follow-up process.

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

**1 Peter 5:2-3**

#### **Faculty Sponsors:**

- File club paperwork with the administrator, along with a copy of First Priority's club Constitution/By-Laws.
- Are present for every meeting and 'on-campus' planning sessions.
  - Be careful not to hold a club meeting without a representative from the school being present. If the Faculty Sponsor is unwilling to participate at this level, you'll need to ask God to provide another sponsor.
- Make themselves accessible to the Club Coach for ongoing and consistent communication.
- Register as the Faculty Sponsor in the First Priority App.



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## STUDENT LEADERS ROLES

### PROMO

- Promote and communicate club meetings.
- Act as the Point Person for school announcements, posters, school news, yearbook.
- Lead content creation for your club's social media.

*Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

**1 Timothy 4:12**

### WELCOME

- Set a welcoming environment by greeting students at the door and connecting with students who are new.
- Coordinate the use of music and food with Faculty Sponsor and Club Mentor.
- Ensure that EVERY student is seen & heard.
- Remind students that you're here on purpose for a purpose.

### HOST

- Keep the club meeting on schedule.
- Open every club with the Mission and Vision of First Priority, prayer, and a game.
- Introduce the speaker for the day.

### SPEAKER

- Teach EPIC Cycle content.
- Preparation is crucial to leading an excellent club. Speak confidently and loud enough for all to hear you. Make eye contact with students in the room.
- When appropriate, group students into small groups for further discussion of EPIC resource material.

### FOLLOW-UP

- Reach out to students who made a decision in club to follow Christ.
- Prioritize active listening, briefly revisiting the gospel outline, and offering to explore church options together, setting up follow-up meetings over coffee with a student pastor to provide ongoing guidance and support in their journey with Jesus. See more details on page 11.

**"DILIGENT FOLLOW UP AND FOLLOW THROUGH WILL SET YOU APART FROM THE CROWD AND COMMUNICATE EXCELLENCE."**

**-JOHN MAXWELL**



# CORE VALUES STRATEGY BASED




## E.P.I.C. MODEL EXPLAINED

The E.P.I.C. model was adopted to equip Student Leaders with the tools to deepen their understanding of the Gospel and how its truths can be lived out daily. The E.P.I.C. acronym stands for EQUIP / PREPARE / INVITE / CONNECT. Each week of our monthly curriculum will follow one of the four letters to help us learn about the Gospel and how we can share it with others.

### WEEK 1: EQUIP

EQUIP Week prepares students with a deeper biblical foundation of the gospel as it is connected to all of Scripture. From this foundation, you will be equipped with tools to share the Gospel with others. Distribute the prayer cards during this week so students can pray for friends they would like to invite to their First Priority club to hear the gospel.


 Additional Resource Needed: **Prayer Cards**

### WEEK 2: PREPARE

PREPARE Week engages the truths of Scripture with practical tools on how to share the gospel.

- **Passion:** Students encounter God's Word and why it is their mission to reach unsaved friends with the hope of Jesus Christ.
- **Pray:** Students pray for one another and for friends who need Jesus.
- **Plan:** Students confirm plans of Invite Week leadership team responsibilities and may even role play the meeting.

- **Promote:** Students distribute Invite cards during this week so students can invite their friends to next week's club meeting where a full gospel message will be taught.


 Additional Resource Needed: **Invite Cards**  
**Writing My Faith Story Sheet (Testimony Guide)**

### WEEK 3: INVITE

INVITE Week is a special week at First Priority, where students are encouraged to invite their friends to the club meeting. The goal for this week is to share the gospel message so that each student has the chance to put their faith in Jesus. As a Student Leader, you have two options of how you would like to structure this week's message.

**Option 1:** A Student Leader shares the gospel message using the script provided.

**Option 2:** A Student Leader shares their testimony.

 Additional Resources Needed:  
**Student Response Cards**

## WEEK 4: CONNECT

CONNECT Week will take what students have learned in the previous weeks and help them to connect these truths to their daily lives. The goal for this week is to explore how to live out the gospel message in community with each other. This would be a great opportunity for your club to follow up with new members and help them to get connected to a local church community.

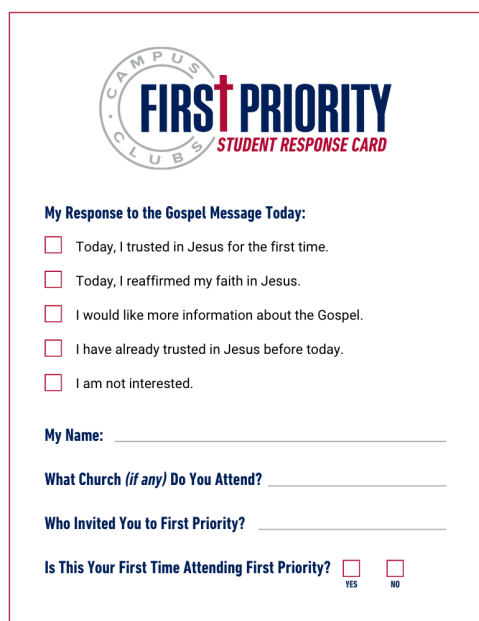
 Additional Resources Needed:

### **Student Response Cards**


*(for follow up from the week before)*

### **A list of local churches**

*(for interested students to connect with)*



The image shows a 'First Priority Student Response Card' with a circular logo at the top that says 'CAMPUS CLUBS' around the perimeter and 'FIRST PRIORITY STUDENT RESPONSE CARD' in the center. Below the logo, the text reads 'My Response to the Gospel Message Today:' followed by five checkboxes with corresponding text: 'Today, I trusted in Jesus for the first time.', 'Today, I reaffirmed my faith in Jesus.', 'I would like more information about the Gospel.', 'I have already trusted in Jesus before today.', and 'I am not interested.'. Below this are three lines for 'My Name:', 'What Church (if any) Do You Attend?', and 'Who Invited You to First Priority?'. At the bottom, there is a question 'Is This Your First Time Attending First Priority?' with 'YES' and 'NO' checkboxes.

 The **Student Response Cards** are an important resource we can use when following up with new friends who attend our club meetings. The information on these cards provide us with guidance towards the best way to follow up with these new friends who attend. It is important to keep some Student Response Cards at each meeting, in case new people attend.

## FOLLOWING UP

Following up with new attendees can be challenging when we don't know what to say to them. But we have to remember that God will guide us to the words we should say. Below you will find a few tips on the best practices for following up with people who attend.

### **Student Trusts In Jesus for the First Time**

If a fellow student prayed to trust Christ in your meeting, you will want to meet with them, pray for them and provide them with a First Priority Bible.

Then you will want someone from your team to follow up with them to talk through any questions they have or next steps they can take in their journey with Christ. Before you follow up, pray and ask God how you should approach this conversation.

- **Beginning the Conversation:** Begin the conversation by introducing yourself and thanking the student for attending the previous club meeting. Let them know you received their Student Response Card and would like to pray with them about the faith decision they just made.
- **During the Conversation:** Listen to their story and how they came to make their faith decision. Assure them that they are not alone on this journey and you are here to support them in taking the next steps of faith. Ask them if they have any faith questions. Do your best to answer their questions, but if you are unsure of an answer, connect them to a local Youth Pastor or another First Priority leader for guidance.
- **Ending the Conversation:** Invite them to be a part of our community and continue attending your club meetings each week so they can learn more about Jesus and make new friends who can support them in their faith journey.

Connect them with a local church community. One of the biggest things you can do is help new students become connected to a local church community. It is through this community that they will grow deeper in their faith and meet people who can answer their questions and guide them in the right direction.

✓ **Student Would Like More Information About the Gospel**

If a fellow student indicated on their Student Response Card that they would like more information about the Gospel, follow up with them after your club meeting.

When you meet with them, practice listening to their story and how they came to faith.

Ask them if they have any questions. Do your best to answer their questions but if you are unsure of an answer, connect them to a local Youth Pastor or another First Priority leader to help.

✓ **Student Has Already Trusted in Jesus Before Today**

If a student trusted in Jesus already, but is not involved with a First Priority club, this may be the perfect time to extend hospitality to them and invite them to join your First Priority community.

Ask them if they have any questions about the club and offer to meet them at the next club meeting. This will help lessen any anxiety they may have about attending and give them a familiar face to connect with when they attend.

✓ **Student is Not Interested**

If a student indicates on their Student Response Card that they aren't interested you may be tempted to not follow up with them. But in order to effectively show the love of Christ to every student, we should extend hospitality even to those who may not respond.

Reach out to this student following the club meeting and simply thank them for attending the First Priority meeting that week.

If they have any questions, do your best to answer them. If you are unsure of an answer, connect them to a local Youth Pastor or another First Priority leader to help.

Let them know that you are praying for them and they are welcome to attend a First Priority club at any time.

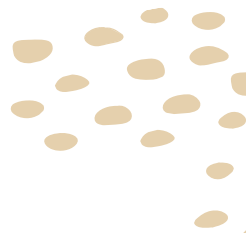


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# CORE VALUES

## LOCAL CHURCH-ENGAGED



### WHY THE LOCAL CHURCH MATTERS.

The local church is of immense importance to the spiritual health and well-being of the believer.

*And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **Matthew 16:18***

Christ did not build the home or para-church organization on the rock. He built the Church. This speaks to immense importance of the local church.

#### The Local Church:

- reinforces and strengthens the believer's identity in Christ. - *Rom. 12:5; Gal. 3:28*
- is the context by which the believer is trained to make disciples. - *2 Cor. 5:18-20*
- provides structure and accountability in the life of the believer. - *1 Thes. 2:11; 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17*

"The local church is not an option in the buffet line of Christianity. It is not a Christian elective." -Pastor Kenny Morgan

