

SESSION

6

COMMUNITY FOR THE WIN

▶ THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Businesses love viral marketing. They may initiate an ad, but through social networking individuals grab on to it and pass it along. When you like something, you share it with your circle of friends, and those friends pass it along. Followers of Christ have something far greater than a marketing message; they have a message of victory and hope in Christ. The message of Christ—the gospel—is life-changing and worth passing along.

▶ THE POINT

I'm called to share the life and victory in Christ.

▶ THE PASSAGE

Luke 24:44-49

THE SETTING

Jesus is risen! A group of women discovered the empty tomb. Angels shared the good news with them (Luke 24:1-8). Peter and John ran to the tomb to investigate (v. 12; John 20:3-4). Jesus appeared to two disciples on their walk to the village of Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). On Easter evening, Jesus appeared among His disciples (vv. 36-43). Then, Jesus told His disciples the words of our focal passage (vv. 44-49).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

LUKE 24:44-49

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,

⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."



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PREPARE

LEADER LIVE IT OUT

Community for the Win | Luke 24:44-49

You obviously have a genuine desire to see others impacted by God's truth. This is great! After all, Jesus taught that His followers are to make disciples of all nations. Discipleship involves helping those in the church grow in maturity, as well as reaching the lost and seeing them made members of the church. As you prepare to help your students understand this call and translate that into real life, evaluate your obedience to God's call to reach others. Pray that God would help you recognize opportunities to share with others and commit to following through. Remember, discipleship is not nearly as instructional as it is practical.

1 Prepare: While you prepare for this session, it is critical to allow the truth of Scripture to challenge your heart. God works in our hearts as we teach others His Word.

ONE CONVERSATION™

Scripture: Luke 24:44-49 **Topic:** Community for the Win

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE: Businesses love viral marketing. They may initiate an ad, but through social networking individuals grab on to it and pass it along. When you like something, you share it with your circle of friends, and those friends pass it along. Followers of Christ have something far greater than a marketing message; they have a message of victory and hope in Christ. The message of Christ—the gospel—is life-changing and worth passing along.

THE POINT: I'm called to share the life and victory in Christ.

- What viral video stands out most clearly in your mind?
- What practical tools help you engage with and understand Scripture?
- What are the basics of the gospel that every Christian can share?
- What practical steps can you take to become a better witness for Christ?

Discuss the following quote: "Spreading the Gospel isn't solely the church's job; it's the job of every Christian."¹—Paul Chappell

1. "23 Quotes About Witnessing," *Christian Quotes [online]*, [accessed 13 September 2016]. Available from the Internet: <http://www.christianquotes.info/quotes-by-topic/quotes-about-witnessing/>.

LIVE IT OUT: Your student has been encouraged to take practical steps to take his or her faith and Live It Out in the Personal Study Guide.

Here are some ways you can encourage your students to live out their faith with Christ personally, in community, and in their culture:

- ▶ **Christ:** Pray with your student this week that he or she will find joy in sharing the gospel.
- ▶ **Community:** Work alongside your student to share the gospel with others.
- ▶ **Culture:** Your student will be practicing his or her own testimony to share it with others. Take the time to tell your personal testimony to your student, and share how you have changed since accepting Jesus into your life.

2 Follow Up: Don't forget to text a picture of the **One Conversation** section to parents or post it on Facebook and tag them after the session. This will equip them for further family discussion.



ENGAGE (15 MINUTES)

THE POINT I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

1 Engage: Begin the session with one or more of the **Engage Options** on the next page (optional).

2 Discuss: Ask students, "What viral video stands out most clearly in your mind?"

3 Guide: Call attention to **The Point**. Keep coming back to it throughout the session.

4 Read: Summarize the **Bible Meets Life** for your group.

5 Pray: Transition into the session by praying for students to understand things about God and His purposes they may have previously missed.



THE POINT

I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

APPROXIMATELY 205 BILLION EMAILS ARE SENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD EACH DAY. THAT'S 29 EMAILS FOR EVERY PERSON ON THE PLANET, OR 2.4 MILLION EMAILS PER SECOND, 74 TRILLION PER YEAR.¹

Marketing is the pursuit of making a product or idea widely known and can be traced back to the 1450s when the printing press was invented. Advertisements are a common sight today and include TV commercials, billboards, telemarketing, magazines, and celebrity endorsements. Central to every marketing strategy is this: the greatest success comes when people are moved to spread the word from person to person.

A recent phenomenon associated with the Internet age and social media is the idea of "going viral." A viral video is one that explodes and, within a few days, is seen by thousands and even millions of people.

➤ **What's your newest favorite viral video?**

➤ **What did you like so much about it?**

Whether it's a new pizza place or an online video, when we discover something we enjoy, it's natural to want to share it with others. Jesus, before He left the earth, reminded His disciples that they had witnessed some incredible things during their time with Him. It was now their job to share what they had seen with others.

ENGAGE OPTIONS

LEAD WITH ACTION

Divide your group into boys and girls for a relay race. Ask students to pass an orange to everyone on the team without using their hands or letting the orange hit the floor. Offer a prize to the winning team. Say, **“Everybody loves oranges. Right? When we have something good, it’s worth sharing, even if it’s not always easy.”**

LEAD WITH ATMOSPHERE

Place baskets of snacks on a table near the door where students will enter. Make a small sign that says, “Take One! But don’t eat it. You must share with others.” When every student has a snack, say, **“It may have been easy to share, or you may have had to search a little bit. Either way, we can accomplish amazing things when we’re more concerned with sharing than keeping things for ourselves.”**

LEAD WITH MEDIA

Search the Internet for “That Awkward Moment When You Try to Share Your Faith.” Play the video as you begin the session. Say, **“It can sometimes feel awkward to talk about faith, but if we truly love God and people, we’ll want to share it.”**

NOTE: Always make sure you preview any video clip you show students and ensure that it is appropriate for your church and ministry.

SECOND OPTION

Divide students into teams for a relay race. Have students line up and place a bucket at each end of the line. One bucket is full of water and the other is empty. The object of the race is to pass a wet sponge to everyone on the team and squeeze it into the empty bucket until it’s full. Reward the winning team. Say, “It’s worth sharing something when we know it will bring about good things, even if it’s not always easy.”

FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

Have students sit in groups of three or four and share words of encouragement with the people around them. Say, “We often don’t make it a priority to share with others. Even kind words can make a big difference when we’re willing to share with the people around us.”

LEADER PACK ELEMENTS

If you have the optional Leader Pack, consider one of the following:

DVD: Play the *Unit 1 Session 6 DVD* opener to draw everyone to the main point of the session.

Item 5: Consider using the *Fellowship Quote* poster to get students thinking about the session.



IMPART (10 MINUTES)

THE POINT I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

1 Read: Invite a student to read the passage aloud.

▶ **LUKE 24:44-45**

Being a teacher is a tough gig. If you don't believe it, try volunteering at your local elementary after-school program and help 30 kindergartners learn to read.

We all learn in different ways and at different paces, but one thing is certain, learning a new skill, depending on the complexity, takes time. List a couple things that were challenging, even frustrating, for you to learn:

>
>

2 Discuss: Explain these introductory thoughts, then ask students to share.

WHAT PRACTICAL TOOLS HELP YOU ENGAGE WITH AND UNDERSTAND SCRIPTURE?



3 Ask: Read the question and encourage students to respond.

4 Engage: Ask students to share with their friends via social media this week.

When we spend time with Jesus in His Word, He'll open our minds and hearts. #JesusFTW



5 Connect: Explain to students the process whereby the disciples grew in maturity. Help them see how we are often much like the disciples.

▶ **How did you feel when you didn't catch on as quickly as you would have liked?**

Jesus spent a lot of time with His disciples and explained that His purpose was to suffer as a servant, not conquer as a King—at least not yet. However, they simply couldn't understand. Even though they clearly knew the Old Testament teachings, they had trouble understanding how Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures.

Before we criticize the disciples as being especially dense, let's be honest. We all miss things, and probably more often than we'd like to admit. Jesus, the good Teacher, rather than reprimanding, patiently explained one more time how He would fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures. When we spend time with Jesus in His Word, He'll open our minds and hearts too.

COMMENTARY

LUKE 24:44-45

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, LUKE 24:44-45


Verse 44. The whole of Scripture points to the truth of Jesus. Jesus reminded His disciples of the words He had spoken to them while He was with them prior to His crucifixion, death, and resurrection. Thus this was not a new teaching but a continuation of His previous instruction.

“While I was still with you” indicated that Jesus’ appearance to them now was exceptional and unusual. The definitive events of redemption had now taken place and His dwelling would no longer be among them on earth as before (John 1:14; 14:2). His presence with them from this point on would be of a different nature (Matt. 28:20).

Jesus called attention to the three divisions of the Old Testament: the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. The Law of Moses refers to the Pentateuch (Genesis–Deuteronomy). The Prophets means the books of the prophets and includes both the “former prophets” (the “historical books”) and the “latter prophets” (the “major and minor prophets”). The words show that Jesus viewed the Old Testament as a unitary whole. Bible students debate whether the Psalms refers to just the Old Testament book by that name or if it was meant to stand for the third major division of the Old Testament Scriptures that began with the Book of Psalms.

Jesus words emphasize that Jesus is the focus of both the content of the Scriptures and the fulfillment of the Scriptures. While Jesus did not here cite specific passages, this is the second time in this chapter that Luke stressed these truths. Luke recorded Jesus’ words to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus in verse 27 where Jesus apparently did cite specific passages. No proof-texting was necessary, however, for the whole of the Scriptures points to Him. The emphasis here is on the totality of the Old Testament witness to Jesus the Messiah and His ministry.

*When we spend
time with Jesus
in His Word, He’ll
open our minds and
hearts. #JesusFTW*



Interestingly, Luke began his Gospel record of Jesus’ ministry with Jesus reading from the Book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, where He stated, “Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled” (Luke 4:21). Now, at the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus stated that everything written about Him in the Scriptures “must be fulfilled.” The two narratives stand like bookends to Jesus’ earthly ministry and stress that the fulfillment of the Scriptures is found in Jesus from beginning to end.

Verse 45. Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (contrast 9:45; 18:34). The Scriptures refers back and clarifies the character of the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms in verse 44. Now the disciples had a real and clear understanding not only of what the Scriptures prophesied but of what they had witnessed during their time with Jesus. These words remind us that the Scriptures need to be understood. It takes the illumination of the Holy Spirit to understand God’s Word (1 Cor. 2:14). The risen Lord is not only the content and fulfillment of Scripture; He, the Living Word, is the interpreter of the written Word.



IMPART (10 MINUTES)

THE POINT I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

1 Do: Ask students to complete the activity and discuss it together.

2 Read: Invite a student to read the passage for the group.

3 Highlight: Summarize this section, then highlight the differences between the Jews' expectations and Scriptural prophecy.

4 Discuss: Share your thoughts on this section, then discuss your answers to the questions.

5 Ask: Read the question, then discuss with students.

6 Connect: Help students understand what God expects them to do with this great news.

*"Let others report the bad news; we'll share the good news."*² —Woodrow Kroll

News in the world is characterized as a long and unbroken string of terrible events. The news of the gospel, however, stands in stark contrast. How will you testify to the goodness of Jesus this week in your:

➤ Words?

➤ Actions?

➤ Attitudes?

▶ LUKE 24:46-47

The Jews knew of the coming Messiah. There were many Scriptures that guaranteed God would send the Promised One to save His people; however, somewhere along the way the Jewish people got off track. They were looking for a great political leader, a military conqueror. But that's not what the Scriptures described. What do these Scriptures say about the Messiah?

➤ Isaiah 53:7-8

➤ Psalm 22

The Old Testament not only tells of a coming Messiah, but describes the things He would do and the purposes He would fulfill. He wouldn't initially come as a victorious warrior, but as a humble servant, and through His sacrifice, all people would have the opportunity to know God.

Sometimes we tend to think of this as exclusively a New Testament reality, but this gospel truth was clearly proclaimed in the Old Covenant.

➤ What promises did God make in the Old Testament?

➤ How does Jesus fulfill these promises?

This is a life-altering truth, and one that is too big to be kept to ourselves. If we've been changed by the gospel of Jesus, then it's our responsibility and privilege to share it with others. As we share, people are blessed and God is glorified.

WHAT ARE THE BASICS OF THE GOSPEL THAT EVERY CHRISTIAN CAN SHARE?



COMMENTARY

LUKE 24:46-47

and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

LUKE 24:46-47

Verses 46-47. The cross and empty tomb are central to the gospel of Jesus. In helping the disciples understand the Scriptures, Jesus referred to what is written. Luke used three infinitives to summarize what had been written in the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Messiah. The first two (suffer and rise) were now past; they were accomplished. The third item, the proclaiming, was about to begin. The first two—the cross and the resurrection—are the central elements in the proclamation.

Suffer refers to Christ's crucifixion, His "Passion." For the third time in this chapter, the work of the Messiah was summarized in terms of His crucifixion and resurrection (see vv. 7,26). Jesus explained to His gathered disciples how the Scriptures foretold His death and resurrection (v. 46). On several occasions during His ministry Jesus either shied away from the title Messiah (the Christ) or seemed to have wished to conceal the fact He was the Messiah (see Mark 1:43-45; 8:29-30). Here, however, Jesus clearly identified all those predictions concerning the Son of Man with the Messiah ("the Christ"). Now that His messianic role had been clarified by His death and resurrection, the title became a common reference to Him in the early church's proclamation.

That Jesus did not in any of these places refer to His birth, teachings, healing ministry, or other aspects of His life on earth reminds us that, while these were important, it was His redemptive work on the cross that is the saving act (Rom. 5:15-19).

It is on the basis of Jesus' atoning death and glorious resurrection that repentance for the forgiveness of sins can be proclaimed in his name to all the nations. Verse 47 adds for the first time the element of proclamation to the work of the Messiah (proclaimed is the third infinitive following "suffer" and "rise"). The words point to the following mission of the church, starting in the Book of Acts and continuing to today.

What is to be proclaimed? Repentance for forgiveness of sins. The act of repentance involves turning, a turning away from sin and turning to God. It involves a total reorientation of one's life. Indeed, repentance is a key feature of the preaching in the Book of Acts. Forgiveness is also a key emphasis in Acts. What is the basis for this forgiveness? It is "in his name." The name represents the person of Jesus and all He stands for (see Luke 9:48).

The recipients of the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ are "all the nations." The message of Jesus is a universal message. It is for everyone (though many choose to reject it). Jesus' words anticipate the commission in Acts 1:8 and the proclamation that began on the day of Pentecost beginning in Jerusalem (Acts 2) but that was also intended to reach to the ends of the earth (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). Where Jesus' earthly mission ended, in Jerusalem, the mission of the church began. That Jesus' disciples would proclaim the good news beginning in Jerusalem fulfilled Old Testament prophecy as well (Ezek. 5:5; Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2).



IMPART (10 MINUTES)

THE POINT I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

1 Do: Allow students time to finish the optional **Action Point** (p. 60) in the PSG.

2 Ask: Read the question and invite students to respond.

3 Read: Ask a student to read the passage.

4 Summarize: Share your thoughts on these paragraphs, highlighting the power in personal testimony.

5 Connect: Emphasize that sharing is a calling from God.

6 Do: Direct students to complete the **Action Point**. Encourage them to pray for their friends.

WHAT PRACTICAL STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO BECOME A BETTER WITNESS FOR CHRIST?



▶ LUKE 24:48-49

On the night that Jesus was arrested, He made a promise to His followers. The Father would send the Holy Spirit to come alongside the disciples to teach, comfort, and empower them (John 14:16-17). This helper would equip them to carry out one of their primary responsibilities as Jesus' followers: serving as a witness to what they'd seen and heard.

In a court of law, witnesses can only talk about what they've experienced first hand. To talk of anything else is hearsay.

➤ **Describe a time when sharing hearsay got you into trouble.**

The power in a witness' testimony is in the experience. If we speak of something we didn't experience, it's likely we won't have all the facts straight. But for events we saw and smelled, tasted and touched, we know exactly what happened. The disciples were charged with spreading the message of Jesus' life and death, and His offer of forgiveness, all over the world. This may have seemed like a daunting task, but God promised the Holy Spirit would help them fulfill this mission.

➤ **Christians today are called to the same mission. What have you experienced that God is calling you to share?**

ACTION POINT

Social media is a more prevalent in our lives today than it has ever been before. We share moments of our lives on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, and more. People who follow us are able to keep up with the things we do and even the things we care about.



We should be even more willing to share the message of Jesus, even if it doesn't mean plastering it on our social media accounts.

➤ **List three people you will share your faith with this week. How will you communicate the gospel so that it resonates with each person? Jot a few notes, pray for them each day, and share the good news.**

COMMENTARY

LUKE 24:48-49

You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high. **LUKE 24:48-49**

Verse 48. We are to share the message about Jesus. Jesus told His disciples that they were witnesses to the events concerning Himself. While up to this point the disciples had been mostly observers as they accompanied Jesus, now they were to actively champion the message of repentance and forgiveness of sins as His witnesses. The disciples were witnesses to the fulfillment of the Scriptures, and they could testify to what had occurred because they had seen those events happen (1 John 1:1-3). “These things” refers to the content of verse 46. This theme is repeated in Acts 1:8 and then throughout the Book of Acts.

Verse 49. The disciples could be effective witnesses because Jesus was sending them what my Father promised and because they would be empowered from on high. What the Father promised Jesus did not specify here, but it clearly was the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17,26; Acts 1:4-5,8). The Holy Spirit would make them effective and bold witnesses. This was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4,32-33). That the disciples would be empowered from on high at the end of Luke’s Gospel recalls the beginning of Luke’s Gospel when Mary was told, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1:35).

From on high keeps before us where the real power for evangelism and witnessing comes from. The words may be another way of referring to God or merely a reference to heaven (compare 1:78). In either case, these words remind us that Jesus’ disciples do not witness in their own power. Until Jesus sent them this gift, the disciples were to “stay in the city,” that is, in Jerusalem (v. 52; Acts 1:4). Their staying and waiting was intended to be done together, not in isolation. (See Acts 1:12-14 for how they obeyed this command.)

The reference to Jerusalem (Luke 24:47) and “the city” (v. 49) is the first time it is indicated that the place where Jesus’ ministry and atoning work ended was to be the same place where the church’s mission would begin. From there, the good news would go forth to “the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

In Luke’s second volume, the apostles remained in Jerusalem through chapter 7 of Acts. Then Peter and John, upon hearing the people of Samaria had received the word of God through the preaching of Philip, went to Samaria and witnessed to the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17). Peter next went to Caesarea after he experienced a heavenly vision and witnessed to the Roman centurion Cornelius (10:1–11:18). Paul took the gospel to the Gentiles but often returned to Jerusalem (11:29-30; 15:2; 19:21; 20:16,22; 21:13). In Romans 15:18-19, Paul summarized his ministry up to that point: “I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum” (Rom. 15:19). The gospel was well on its way to all nations (Matt. 28:19) and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Tip: Guide students to see that their walk with God will factor into the way they talk and how they talk about others. It is a process, but as a Christian they should see progress as they grow in Him.



IMPACT (10 MINUTES)

THE POINT I'M CALLED TO SHARE THE LIFE AND VICTORY IN CHRIST.

1 Discuss: Read and discuss the quote with students.

2 Guide: The **Christ** portion of the **Live It Out** section encourages students to dig deeply into God's Word and examine their motives for serving others. Remember the **Bible Reading Plan** provides students with a custom reading plan to stay in God's Word and follows along with each session.

3 Guide: As you guide your students through the **Community** section, remember to emphasize the importance of community with believers outside of group.



LIVE IT OUT

"SPREADING THE GOSPEL ISN'T SOLELY THE CHURCH'S JOB; IT'S THE JOB OF EVERY CHRISTIAN."³ — PAUL CHAPPELL

BIBLE READING PLAN



DAY 1
ACTS 1:1-11

DAY 2
ACTS 1:12-26

DAY 3
ACTS 2:1-13

DAY 4
ACTS 2:14-36

DAY 5
ACTS 2:37-47

DAY 6
ACTS 3:1-10

DAY 7
ACTS 3:11-26

▶ CHRIST

Jesus calls His followers to engage in practices that aren't necessarily pleasant or comfortable—at least not at first. However, as we simply obey Jesus' call on our lives, we often find those things that we once dreaded become sources of great joy. Honestly confess to Jesus and make a note on how you feel about sharing your faith. Pray every day this week that you'll find joy in being used to win others.

▶ COMMUNITY

Evangelism can be done one-on-one, but it can also be done with others. Brainstorm with your group, and list ways you could work together to reach people for Christ.



IMPACT

► CULTURE

One of the most powerful tools for impacting others with the gospel is your testimony. Jesus called His disciples witnesses because He intended for them to share their personal experiences. So that you can serve as an effective witness for Jesus, outline your testimony as follows:

MY TESTIMONY

My life before knowing Jesus:

How I came to understand my need for God:

The difference in my life since trusting Jesus:

4 Guide: The **Culture** section equips students to apply this session to their lives every week. Help students see themselves and others through the lens of God's Word to develop a lifestyle of investing in others for the gospel.

5 Pray: Close in prayer asking that God would help students not only know Him more deeply, but that He would move them to share with others.

6 Follow Up: This week connect with your students via email, text, or a phone call. Share with them how you used your story this week to share the gospel with those around you.