

WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

FRIEND

Jesus: Son of God, Lord of Creation, Saviour of mankind. Yet when he came to earth, he didn't behave like a king. Instead he chose to live among the community, hanging out with people hated and ignored by society's upper class.

Have you met JESUS: The Friend?

CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

- What is something you admire about someone else in the room?
- When you have a bad day, what cheers you up?
- If you had a week to live, what would you do with your time?
- What do you think is more important: imagination or knowledge?
- What has been the best day of your life so far? What day are you looking forward to most in your future?
- Would you rather be the best player on the losing team or the worst player on the winning team? Why?

INVOLVE

Have one or two people from your group share their testimony of how they came to believe and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. If possible you should ask them at least a few days before life group.

Encourage the group to ask any questions they may have about the selected person's testimony, interview style. To help it flow you may want to have a few questions prepared on slips of paper that group members can choose from. Some possible questions are:

- What has been the biggest change in your life since accepting Jesus?
- What did you think the first time you went to church? OR What did you think about church when you were growing up?
- Which person has had the biggest influence on your faith? Why/how?
- If you had to present an advertisement for Jesus what would be your top three selling points?

Note: In order to allow everyone time to share, we will use the same activity over the entire five-week series. After tonight's testimonies, nominate the person(s) who will be sharing next week. (For the mathematically challenged: Five people in your group = one person per group meeting. 10 people in your group = two people per meeting.)



WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

WEEK 1

life.

PAGE 1

FRIEND

DISCUSS

Have the members of your group read Mark 2:13-17 out loud.

NEW CHRISTIANS

- Jesus would have been pretty famous by the time this story took place. How do you think Levi would have felt having such a famous person at his house? How would you feel if someone famous came to visit you?
- Have you ever felt rejected or left out? What happened? How did you feel afterwards?
- Who are people in your own life that you sometimes try to avoid or ignore? Why do you try to avoid them? How do you think Jesus would treat those people?
- Tax collectors in Jesus' time were well known for being corrupt and ripping people off. How would you feel if you saw a famous Christian preacher having dinner with someone who had cheated you out of your money?

ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most in the story we've just read?
- Do you think there are certain types of people that are ignored or avoided by the church? Who, and why? How do you think Jesus would treat these people?
- In verse 17 Jesus said that he has 'not come to call the righteous but the sinners'. Do you think this means Jesus doesn't care about the righteous? What else do you think he could mean?
- In the story, Jesus was hanging out with people who were greedy and corrupt. If we spend time with people with bad attitudes or habits, how can we make sure that we are influencing them and not being influenced by them?
- What kind of things can stop us noticing lonely or forgotten people? What things can we do to start noticing them and including them?

WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

FRIEND

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Ask your group to think of someone they know who is often teased, ignored, or just has a reputation as being unpopular.

Have them write that person's name on the top of a piece of paper, and underneath write down three ways that they can encourage or make them feel special this week. In pairs, pray for each other to ask God to give a heart to care for others.

Have the group share their ideas and aim to hold each other accountable to follow through.

LEADER'S NOTES

- For this series we'll be stepping through the book of Mark. We've deliberately spaced out the stories to make it easy for your group to read along at home and cover the entire book during the series. Challenge your group members to read along, and we suggest asking an accountability question every week during the 'Connect' time to make sure your group sticks to the commitment. Group members will need to read three chapters between meetings in the first four weeks and four chapters in week five.
- Theological note:
 - * Regarding Question 4 for established Christians: Jesus does care for the righteous person - he encourages all of us to live righteous and holy lives (which is impossible in our own strength but achievable through submission to the Holy Spirit - check out Galatians 5:16-25). Jesus is actually trying to make it clear that Christians shouldn't only spend time with other believers but should always have a heart to connect with those who haven't yet come to know Christ.
- In the Discuss section, you might find that some questions for new Christians are also helpful for established Christians and vice versa. Read through both sets of questions before your group meeting and highlight the questions that you think will be most helpful for your group.
- Remember, don't challenge your group to do something you're not prepared to do yourself!

WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

PROPHET

He turned water into wine. He fed huge crowds with just a few pieces of bread and fish. He spoke to storms and waves and they obeyed his commands. Just like Moses, Elijah and many of the old testament heroes, Jesus was the man at the centre of countless miracles.

Have you met JESUS: The Prophet?

This week you'll need:

- Paper and pens for everyone

CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

- What is something you have learned about the person on your left through being in this life group?
- Is there something you were afraid of growing up? Does it still make you nervous?
- If Jesus stood before you prepared to answer any question you had, what would you ask?
- If you could do anything for God, with no worries about money, time or resources, what would you do?

INVOLVE

Have one or two people from your group share their testimony of how they came to believe and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Encourage the group to ask any questions they may have about the selected person's testimony, interview style. To help it flow you may want to have a few questions prepared on slips of paper that group members can choose from. Some possible questions are:

- What has been the biggest change in your life since accepting Jesus?
- What did you think the first time you went to church? OR What did you think about church when you were growing up?
- Which person has had the biggest influence on your faith? Why/how?
- If you had to present an advertisement for Jesus what would be your top three selling points?

Note: In order to allow everyone time to share, we will use the same activity over the entire five-week series. After tonight's testimonies, nominate the person(s) who will be sharing next week. (For the mathematically challenged: Five people in your group = one person per group meeting. 10 people in your group = two people per meeting.)



WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

WEEK 2

PROPHET

DISCUSS

Have the group read Mark 6:45-56 out loud.

NEW CHRISTIANS

- Have you ever seen a miracle? What was it?
- If you saw a miracle, do you think your first reaction would be fear or amazement? How would you feel if you actually saw someone able to control the wind and the waves?
- Why do you think Jesus was able to do such miraculous things?
- Jesus says in John 14:12 that anyone who believes in him “will do the same works as I have done, and even greater works”. Do you think a Christian can perform miracles? What kind of things do you think might have an impact on whether someone is able to perform miracles?
- The disciples struggled to understand how Jesus could walk on water even though they’d just seen him miraculously feed a huge crowd of people. What’s something that you’ve heard or read about God that you find hardest to believe? Why is it a struggle for you?

ESTABLISHED IN FAITH

- What stands out to you from the passage we just read? What does the passage reveal to you about Jesus?
- In v45 Jesus insisted the disciples get in the boat and head across the lake – pretty much saying ‘I’ll catch up’ even though he didn’t have another boat. What do you think was going through Jesus’ head as he sent his disciples off? How do you react to Jesus’ level of faith?
- Jesus says in Matthew 17:20 that nothing is impossible if we have faith as small as a mustard seed. Why then don’t we see miracles every time we pray for them? What do you think can have an impact on whether we are able to perform miracles?
- The disciples were doubting Jesus even though they’d just seen him miraculously feed 5,000 people. Do you find it easy to continually trust in God? Or do you find your faith can go up and down? Why do you think this is?
- Why do you think Jesus was going to pass by them? (v48) Do you think he had any intention of stopping?
- In v56 Jesus heals all that touch him. Do you believe that people need faith to be healed? Why or why not?

PROPHET

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

This week each person needs a pen and paper to write down prayer points for themselves. Have members of your group answer these questions on their paper.

- Something that could keep me from recognising Jesus in my life is...
- A doubt I want to conquer is...
- A miracle I want to see happen is...
- A part of my life that I'm struggling to let God control is...
- An area I want to grow in is...
- Another prayer request I have is...

After each person has done this, or at least answered all that they can, have them swap lists with the person beside them so that in pairs each person can pray for the other during the upcoming week (or longer).

LEADER'S NOTES

- If your group is reading the whole book of Mark together, don't forget to check up and see how everyone is going. During the Connect time try asking everyone to share the favourite thing they read during the week.
- *Don't feel like you have to know all the answers...* and check out the LIFE leadership handbook for other helpful discussion tips!
- Theological note:
 - * Speaking of not knowing all the answers... Why don't we see miracles every time we pray for them? This is a question Christians have been wrestling with for a long time. Jesus either had a phenomenal success rate or the gospel authors forgot to write about all the times that Jesus didn't see answers to his prayers. Who knows? Perhaps part of the answer is found in John 5:19 where Jesus says "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. *He does only what he sees the Father doing.*" Are we getting direction from God before praying for miracles? Just a thought...
- Anyone missing from your group tonight? Don't forget to ask for some volunteers to follow them up during the week.
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY - have supper, play a game or just chill!

WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

HEALER

He was God in human form, sent to earth for the salvation of mankind. But Jesus wasn't just focused on the big picture, he was also committed to meeting the needs of individual people.

Have you met JESUS: The Healer?

CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions.

- How has your week been? Give it a score from 1-10 and share why.
- What are you working on at the moment? What is one goal that you're trying to achieve?
- Which person in your life are you most thankful for right at this moment? Who has been your greatest encouragement lately?

INVOLVE

Have one or two people from your group share their testimony of how they came to believe and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Encourage the group to ask any questions they may have about the selected person's testimony, interview style. To help it flow you may want to have a few questions prepared on slips of paper that group members can choose from. Some possible questions are:

- What has been the biggest change in your life since accepting Jesus?
- What did you think the first time you went to church? OR What did you think about church when you were growing up?
- Which person has had the biggest influence on your faith? Why/how?
- If you had to present an advertisement for Jesus what would be your top three selling points?

Note: In order to allow everyone time to share, we will use the same activity over the entire five-week series. After tonight's testimonies, nominate the person(s) who will be sharing next week. (For the mathematically challenged: Five people in your group = one person per group meeting. 10 people in your group = two people per meeting.)



WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

WEEK 3

life.

PAGE 1

HEALER

DISCUSS

Have the members of your group read out loud Mark 7:31-37.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Notice in v33 how Jesus makes time away from the crowd to help the man with his problem. What's one thing that you'd really like God's help with? How do you think we should go about asking God for help?
- Do you think any problem is too big (or too small) for God to be interested in helping with? Why do you think that? Is there anything in your own life that you wonder whether God could (or would want to) help with?
- In this story, what can we learn from Jesus about how to treat other people?
- Lots of times Jesus just spoke and someone was healed. Why do you think in this case Jesus put his fingers in the man's ears and touched his tongue?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from the passage we've just read?
- In v33 Jesus is prepared to put aside his schedule to meet the needs of one man. How do you feel about interruptions in your own life? When people ask you for help, how do you respond? What's one thing you think you could do to improve the way you handle interruptions?
- The people were certain of Jesus' ability to bring healing. Do you have the same certainty when asking God for help? Do you find some things easier to ask for than others?
- Have you ever felt God ask you to do something really bizarre before? Maybe it was to say something to someone that didn't seem to make sense, or to do something that might have made you look silly. Did you do it? Was it easy? What happened?
- In v32, the people were begging Jesus to heal the man. Do you think they were interested in helping the man or do you think they were using him to try to see a miracle? What impact do you think our motives have on our prayers and requests to God?

HEALER

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Set the group a challenge this week - every time they notice someone who needs help, or everytime someone asks them for help, to stop what they're doing and respond to the situation.

Make sure your group members understand that they shouldn't do anything dangerous or dishonest just to help someone. And also explain they only have to help according to their ability to do so - if someone asks for help ending world hunger then allow yourself to be interrupted but don't feel like it's now your responsibility to solve the entire problem!

Next week during the Connect time you might want to give an opportunity for everyone to share how they went and what they learned.

LEADER'S NOTES

- If you choose to use the suggested Apply activity, send your group an SMS a few days afterwards to remind them of the challenge.
- When talking about the Apply activity, the implication shouldn't be that we need to be people who always respond to every interruption, as it's ok to have boundaries and it's important that we learn it's appropriate sometimes to say 'no'. The apply activity is only intended to be a week-long experiment to help get people thinking and to raise their awareness.
- Have you noticed the white space down the right side of every page? It's there to give you space to write comments, notes and ideas to help you plan your group meeting.
- Theological Notes:
 - * Is any problem too big or too small for God to worry about?
1 Peter 5:7 says 'Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.'

REBEL

Friendly, warm, caring, gentle - often our image of Jesus is wrapped up in words like those. But he wasn't a man who just preached love and forgiveness, he was a man prepared to take a stand against injustice and corruption, no matter the cost.

Have you met JESUS: The Rebel?

This week you'll need:

- A sheet of paper and a pen for each group member

CONNECT

Go around the circle and give everyone a chance to answer your choice of the following questions:

- Who have you prayed for this week?
- Who have you encouraged?
- What's one area you feel God is stretching or growing you in?
- What's been the highlight of this week for you?

INVOLVE

Have one or two people from your group share their testimony of how they came to believe and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Encourage the group to ask any questions they may have about the selected person's testimony, interview style. To help it flow you may want to have a few questions prepared on slips of paper that group members can choose from. Some possible questions are:

- What has been the biggest change in your life since accepting Jesus?
- What did you think the first time you went to church? OR What did you think about church when you were growing up?
- Which person has had the biggest influence on your faith? Why/how?
- If you had to present an advertisement for Jesus what would be your top three selling points?

Note: In order to allow everyone time to share, we will use the same activity over the entire five-week series. After tonight's testimonies, nominate the person(s) who will be sharing next week. (For the mathematically challenged: Five people in your group = one person per group meeting. 10 people in your group = two people per meeting.)



WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

WEEK 4

life.

PAGE 1

REBEL

DISCUSS

Have members of your group read Mark 11:15-18 out loud.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Why do you think Jesus got so angry at the people in the temple?
- One of the most likely reasons Jesus got angry was because the sellers and money changers were ripping people off. How would you feel if someone tried to make you pay money to come to church? How much would you pay before you stopped coming?
- We don't charge money for people to come to church, but sometimes we expect them to do certain things or behave in certain ways before they come. What are some of the things we can expect of people? What would God think about these attitudes?
- Imagine you're a fly on the wall at the temple, watching it all play out. How does this picture of an angry Jesus match up to what you've heard about Jesus in the past? Does it surprise you that Jesus acts like this? Why/why not? What are some other things that you think would make God angry?
- What sorts of things do you get angry about? When is it okay to be angry? When is it not okay?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you the most in the passage we've just read?
- How would you describe Jesus' actions in the temple? What does it remind you of? Why do you think Jesus acted this way?
- Under what circumstances is it okay to be angry? At what point does anger become sinful?
- Put yourselves in the shoes of the chief priests and teachers of the law. Would you have responded the same way they did? Why/why not?
- If Jesus walked into your church or youth group, is there anything you think he'd want to overturn or throw out? Is it right for us to get angry about those things? What other ways can we respond?
- We understand in the New Testament that we are God's temple - his dwelling place! (See the apply section for some Scripture verses that show this.) Who has the responsibility of clearing the unhelpful stuff out of our lives - us or God? How much responsibility do we need to take?

REBEL

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Give each person a piece of paper and a pen.

Remind the group that we are the dwelling place of God – his temple. Explain that God wants his temple to be a holy place. (You might want to have people read out the following verses: 1 Corinthians 6:19, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and Ephesians 2:21-22.)

Ask each person to write down one thing within them that they think Jesus would want to 'overturn' or 'clear out'. It might be to do with your attitude, the way you treat people, your thought life, your general behaviour or the way you prioritise.

Once everyone has written something down, have them break into pairs. Ask them to share what they have written down with their partner. Invite them to pray a prayer of confession ('I've messed up'), repentance ('I'm sorry and I want you to help me change') and encourage them to pray for their partner.

Encourage your group to keep praying about the thing they've written during the week, and challenge them to SMS their partner to ask how they're going.

LEADER'S NOTES

- How's the atmosphere in the room? Is it relaxed and inviting? Do people feel comfortable when they arrive?
- Are you developing leaders within your group? Check out the LIFE leadership handbook for some simple ideas on how to start.
- Anyone missing from your group? Why not take 30 seconds to call them during group time, put them on speakerphone, and let them know you're thinking about them.
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY. Why not break it up this week and try something different? See if you can find an old-school board game like Connect 4 or Guess Who.

SAVIOUR

'Christ died once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.' Hebrews 9:28

Have you met JESUS: The Saviour?

This week you'll need:

- A pen and sheet of paper for every group member

CONNECT

This week, invite your group to be honest with where they're at in life. Go around the circle and ask everyone to complete the following sentences:

- 'Two words I'd use to describe my life at the moment are _____ and _____ because...'
- 'One thing you guys could do that would really help or support me at the moment is...'

INVOLVE

Have one or two people from your group share their testimony of how they came to believe and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Encourage the group to ask any questions they may have about the selected person's testimony, interview style. To help it flow you may want to have a few questions prepared on slips of paper that group members can choose from. Some possible questions are:

- What has been the biggest change in your life since accepting Jesus?
- What did you think the first time you went to church? OR What did you think about church when you were growing up?
- Which person has had the biggest influence on your faith? Why/how?
- If you had to present an advertisement for Jesus what would be your top three selling points?

Note: This is the last week in the five-week series - make sure everyone who hasn't shared yet gets a chance this session. Make sure as the group leader share your testimony too - your story will be an encouragement to the members of your group.



WHICH JESUS HAVE YOU MET?

WEEK 5

SAVIOUR

DISCUSS

Read out loud Mark 15:22-16:8 (including the shorter ending of Mark).

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Which part of this story stands out to you the most? Why?
- Is there a cause or a person you would be prepared to die for? What/who is it? Why do you feel so passionate about it/them?
- Read 15:29-32. Have you ever tried to do the right thing and been teased or insulted because of it? (Or have you ever seen it happen to someone else?) How did it make you feel? Why do you think people do this?
- Read 15:38. The curtain was a big, heavy piece of fabric that hung across the entrance to the room where God's presence 'resided'. The curtain would have been over 4 metres wide and over 12 metres high, and it was ripped 'from top to bottom'! What do you think this means? What is it meant to represent?
- Read 16:1-8. Make a list of all the feelings that you think you'd go through as you stepped through that story. What would you be thinking as the various events unfold?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from the passage we read?
- Take a moment to reflect on the reality of the crucifixion story. Imagine standing in the crowd watching all these events take place, seeing Jesus being nailed to the cross, watching him take his last breath. What feelings does it stir up in you? What personal response or reaction does it stir up?
- Read 15:38. The tearing of the curtain signified God being accessible to all people at all times. How would you describe your relationship with God? Does it feel like a constant conversation? What are some ways we can increase the consistency of our time with God?
- Jesus knew for a long time that he would be killed in a slow and extremely painful way. How would you handle living with that knowledge for years? What does this teach you about Jesus' attitude, character and faith?

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing that they are going to do this week based on what they've learned or been challenged about.

AND/OR

Hand out pens and paper to everyone in your group.

Ask your group to think back and write down everything they remember being discussed about Jesus during the series, through both the

SAVIOUR

discussion times and also through people's testimonies. You might want to do this as a personal reflection activity or as a group discussion depending on your group.

Next, ask your group to individually write down and answer these questions:

- What's one thing I've learned about Jesus' life that I didn't already know?
- Who is one person (outside of this life group) that I will share what I've learned with?
- What is one thing about Jesus' life that I really admire and want to be better at?
- What is one thing I can do *right away* to start growing in that area?

Have everyone share their answers and then spend some time praying for each other. Try going around the circle and having everyone pray for the person on their left.

LEADER'S NOTES

- If everyone has already shared their testimony during 'Involve' in previous weeks, then perhaps you'd like to challenge your group to work on a 'one-minute testimony'. If they only had one minute to tell about the difference Jesus has made in their life, what would they say? Give everyone a few minutes to think, and then let everyone have a turn. Have a watch handy to make sure people stick to the time limit!
- Are school holidays coming up? Check out our LIFE FAQ page for some ideas if you want to keep meeting as a group during the school holidays. You can access the FAQ page from the LIFE main page on salvos.org.au/more.
- The crucifixion scene from the film *The Passion Of The Christ* could be a valuable tool during this session. The film is rated MA15+ so you'll need parental permission before you can show it to anyone under 15.
- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY – have supper, play a game, or just chill!