

THANKFUL

Prepare Week Leader Guide

Prepare Week: A time for students to learn how to share their story of what their life was like without Christ in contrast to their new life with Christ.



CLUB TIME PREP:

- Select one student to lead this month's Prepare Week.
- Post to social media and text friends inviting them to First Priority Club
- Print Appendix A – Your Faith Story (1 per student) if you want to have every student attending club working on their testimony at the same time (recommended at least once a semester). Faculty sponsors can usually print these for you if given enough notice.

INTRODUCTION: 3 minutes

Welcome Students, Prayer and Introduction

- **Assigned Leader Opens:** Welcome to First Priority! This club is a place to seek and grow in God. This week is Prepare week, which is where we practice sharing our personal story about how we came to know Jesus.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Explain Sharing and Testimony Time:** Assigned Leader Suggestion: "Today, we are going to practice how to share our God Story or testimony of how God has changed our life. Testimony simply means testifying or sharing the truth about something. In this case, we will practice sharing the truth about what our lives were like before we encountered Jesus and after we encountered Him. If you have never done something like this and are nervous, or are not a Christian, don't sweat it. We are glad you are here and if you are not comfortable sharing, just listen while others share and encourage them."

GROUP TIME: Thankful to Tell Others (20 minutes)

Break Out Group Time

Assigned Student Leader: We are going to break into groups of 3 to 4 students to allow everyone to practice their testimonies (God Stories) for ten minutes.

We have passed out a copy of "Your Faith Story" to help everyone get started on how to share your God Story/Testimony. Basically, you want to focus on these three things connecting the monthly theme of "Thankful":

1. What your life was like before you found the HOPE of Jesus Christ? (Ex: did you feel alone, were you greedy about material things, were friends your only focus, etc.)
2. How did you encounter Jesus and submit your life to Him? (Ex. When did you first hear about Jesus and what made you respond to Him in your life?)
3. In what ways are you now Thankful for God in your life?

Group Wrap Up

- **Leader Host:** "As you are finishing up, take the next couple of minutes to give positive feedback to those who shared about how they did and feel free to ask them questions about their story.

ACTION CHALLENGES:

- **Group Challenge:** Write "Reasons we're thankful for Jesus" on a whiteboard and have the club write down their reasons below it (such as salvation, forgiveness, mercy, etc.) Take a picture and post on social media with the hashtags: #firstpriority and #FPthankful
- **Invite Challenge:** Personally invite at least 5 students to Engage week next week. They can be friends or people you barely know, but how will they hear the gospel if no one ever invites anyone to hear more about Him.
- **Prayer Challenge:** Pray daily for the students in your school who need to hear the HOPE of Jesus Christ, and for Christ following students to be encouraged to be bold in talking with others about Jesus. Write the following verse on a sticky note and place it on your bathroom mirror and inside your locker as a reminder. *"And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone." Mark 16:16 (NLT)*

WRAP UP: 2 minutes

- Share any FP Club announcements including that next week's meeting is Engage Week. Remind everyone to bring a guest because it will be a fun atmosphere with food and a game, as well as a student giving a gospel presentation.

Appendix A

YOUR FAITH STORY

Your story is one of the most important tools you have been given by God to share the gospel with the world around you! Finding the power in your story will depend on how you learn to tell it. The first step to being able to tell a powerful story is to **WRITE IT DOWN**. This will give you the ability to edit the specifics and memorize. The second is to **PRACTICE OUT LOUD** with a close friend or parent so that they can give you useful feedback. The third is to **SPEND TIME IN PRAYER AND IN THE SCRIPTURE** to ask God to speak through you before you share your story publically, because God can do more in others through you than you can do by yourself!

1. START WITH A KEYWORD

The first step in writing down your faith story is choosing what keywords describe your life before Christ. Below is a list of emotions. Circle two or three that adequately describe how you felt as a result of a problem you faced without Christ in your life. You are not limited to this list, so feel free to chose a keyword of your own! This part helps keep your story compelling and on track.

KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| alienated | bitter | fearful | hurt | rejected |
| alone | confused | frustrated | insecure | uncertain |
| angry | depressed | guilty | lonely | unforgiving |
| apathetic | distrusting | heartbroken | lost | unloved |
| ashamed | doubtful | hopeless | prideful | worthless |



2. SET UP THE BACKGROUND

Now describe the situation in which you came to face this problem and why your keyword describes the way you felt. It is more important to be honest than dramatic. This helps people to relate with your story personally and understand why we need God in our lives. If you need more space, continue on the back.

EXAMPLE: *"My parents divorced when I was younger... I blamed myself and began to feel unworthy of relationships... so I become isolated and alone because I was afraid of being rejected for being unworthy..."*

Appendix A YOUR FAITH STORY (continued)

3. SHARE HOW JESUS ENTERED YOUR STORY

Now describe how you came to know Jesus. Be sure to describe that moment (or that process) if you can with adjectives that show how meaningful and impactful it was for you. Try to describe how Jesus touched your heart, and how you responded (such as asking Him to be your Lord and Savior). This part challenges people's idea of what God is like.

EXAMPLE: *"One summer I attended church camp with my youth group and we talked about new identity in Christ and being loved as God's children. God began to speak to my heart and to my issues of unworthiness and fear of rejection. One evening I experienced the love of God and realized that Christ died for my sin, so that I could have a loving relationship with God. So I asked Him to save me and forgive me of my sin. The impact of that moment changed everything."*

4. STATE THE IMPACT OF CHRIST ON YOUR LIFE



Now describe how Christ impacted your problem and your life. Use the emotion opposite of your keyword and share how Christ either reversed your problem or is continually giving you the power to overcome. This is the part that inspires your hearers to place their hope in Christ!

EXAMPLE: *"What changed after that was my view of myself. I began to trust that God really did love me and want me to be in relationship with Him. I had once been unworthy, but now I was given worth. I was once alone, but now I see myself as wanted, loved, and together with God and His family. I was once afraid of rejection, but now I know that I am fully accepted by Him, and He is giving me the faith and the strength to overcome the attitudes of the past."*