



# BE A LIGHT

## TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- **CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: “What is said in small group, stays in small group.” *Nothing, nobody, never..Share nothing, to nobody, never*” outside of the group.

## PART 2: "INVITE BOLDLY"

### ICEBREAKER |

What is the fanciest place you’ve ever been invited to or an event that made you feel special and valued?

### INTRODUCTION |

Maybe you feel out of place or right at home at a fancy gala event. A lot of that depends on the kind of invitation you get. If it comes hand-delivered, gold-embossed, and requiring an RSVP, you know you’re in for a formal occasion. If it’s a quick text from a good friend, it’s definitely “come as you are.” What makes an invitation special is the welcome it sends. When you invite your unsaved friends to come to Jesus, remember that you are welcoming them no matter where they are coming from. Today, let’s take a look at what makes an invitation to Jesus so special.

## READ I

In Jesus' day the invitation to join God's Kingdom was seen as very exclusive. Only the richest, most successful and popular, and the most religious were allowed in. But Jesus had a different idea.

One day, to illustrate His point, He told a story. A man prepared a fantastic party and sent out invitations. But when it came time to show up, they all made excuses. So instead, he invited others. But what kind of people got invited?

*Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.*  
*Luke 14:21 (NLT)*

People who are poor, crippled, blind, and lame need other people. They understand they can't do it on their own. They are also the most overlooked in society. But Jesus said those are the ones who are invited.

The church is an "everyone" kind of place. Our doors are open to anyone who knows they need help. We will never close the door to anyone who is seeking God.

**Have you ever misunderstood or thought the worst about someone before getting to know them? Instead of accepting them as they were, maybe you judged them too harshly. How did that turn out? What do you wish you had done differently?**

## READ I

Jesus is not afraid of messy people. He doesn't run from them, He runs to them. In fact, in the story we just read above, did you notice the first two words?

*Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town...*  
*Luke 14:21 (NLT)*

**There is an urgency behind what Jesus is asking us to do.** That's because it's ok to not be ok, but it's not ok to stay that way. We don't need to get dressed up or fixed up to meet Jesus. But we can't stay messed up either.

**Have you ever met someone whose life was “messy?” Do you usually avoid those types of situations or run to them? What is something you can do to be more accepting to “messy” people?**

## **READ |**

Invitations are not the end of the journey, they are just the beginning. Many times we are afraid to invite others to come to church or to get to know Jesus because we're afraid of failure. We might think that if they don't accept Jesus into their hearts on the spot, somehow we've let them down.

But think about it this way. Imagine a line with -5 on one side and +5 on the other. In the middle is the moment a person comes to know Jesus as their savior. If you know someone who is say a -4 and you invite them to church, they may not go all the way to the plus side, but they could get closer.

The point is not winning every person you know to Jesus. It's to move them closer to the Lord. You can do that every time you invite someone.

**Think about your own spiritual journey and when you came to know Jesus. What was your life like before that moment? How did you know it was time to accept Jesus? What has He done in your life that has made the difference since?**

## **READ |**

That simple story you just told – My life before Jesus, How I came to know Him, and What He's meant to me since – is your personal testimony. If you can tell that story, then you can be a witness.

But not every single conversation has to end with you giving your personal testimony. It may take a while. Instead, think about first **INVESTING** in people's lives. Ask them questions about themselves. Get to know them. Find out what you share in common. After all, no one will care what you know until they know that you care.

The next step is **INVITING**. When it's time, you can invite them to church, invite them to lunch afterward, or even invite them to accept Jesus. Again, the point is not to win a soul to the Kingdom, it's to help them move closer to Jesus.

Jesus did the same exact thing. His invitation to a woman at a well was contagious. Once she met Jesus, she wanted to tell others about it!

*The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could He possibly be the Messiah?"*  
John 4:29 (CEV)

**What is the one roadblock that keeps you from inviting boldly? How are you investing in others' lives right now?** (Example, meeting with a friend for coffee, getting to meet other moms at a playground while we watch our kids play, having lunch with a co-worker, volunteering at a senior care home, etc.)

## **WHAT WILL YOU DO?**

As we continue praying for our 5 specifically, let's ask that we have an opportunity to:

- INVEST – by getting to know them better and getting involved in their lives, and
- INVITE – to church, to know more about Jesus, and to accept Him into their lives.
- If you have begun reaching out to your 5-people, share with your group how that went.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS (Optional):**

- Invite someone from your 5 who you are reaching out to, to your small group

## **CLOSE IN PRAYER**

Father God, thank You for giving us an invitation to know You. It's all because of You that our lives are changed. And we want that for our friends, our coworkers, our family members, and all of our neighbors. Help us to see past the mess and to the heart of each person we come in contact with. Give us the same kind of heart You have for the lost. And give us boldness to invite them to know You better. In Jesus' name, amen.

## SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

### **Day 1:**

*Your eyes are the lamp for your body. When your eyes are good, you have all the light you need. But when your eyes are bad, everything is dark. So be sure your light isn't darkness.*  
*Luke 11:34-35 (CEV)*

### **Day 2:**

*You are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light.* 1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)

### **Day 3:**

*Then Jesus said, "Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."*  
*Matthew 11:28 (NLT)*

### **Day 4:**

*How wonderful it is to see a messenger coming across the mountains, bringing good news, the news of peace! He announces victory and says to Zion, "Your God is king!"*  
*Isaiah 52:7 (GNT)*

### **Day 5:**

*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with Me.*  
*Revelation 3:20 (NIV)*