THE HOPE OF CHRIST IN EVERY STUDENT HOPE WEEKLY GUIDE THANKFUL MONTH 4, VOLUME 3 FIRST PRIORITY

#### FIRST PRIORITY

is a campus evangelism strategy implemented by the local church.

MISSION: To Unite The Local Body of Christ With
A Plan of Action To Influence The Schools With the Gospel

#### FIRST PRIORITY BUILDS NETWORKS OF SUPPORT





**Students "The Players In the Game"** Taking The Love & Message of Jesus Christ As Missionaries To Their School.



Parents "The Fans In The Stands" Praying For, Supporting & Discipling Their Children.



Churches "The Coaches On The Sidelines" Equipping, Encouraging and Empowering Students.



**Educators "The Referees Of The Game"** Providing
Guidance and Direction.



Business / Community Leaders "The Owners Of The Team" Investing Leadership, Mentoring and Resources In Their Community.



"First Priority is the most innovative way to reach a city for Christ. It unites our local churches together as one to make a difference."

- Dr. Jay Strack, President of Student Leadership University

# **PLANNING GUIDE**

Help Week:	
Host:	
Leadership speaker:	
Behind the scenes organizer:	
Overcome week:	
Host:	
Leadership speaker:	
Behind the scenes organizer:	
Prepare week:	
Host:	
Faith story 1:	
Faith story 2: (optional)	
Faith story 3: (optional)	
Behind the scenes organizer:	
Engage week:	
Host:	
Activity Leader:	
Gospel speaker:	
Behind the scenes organizer:	

**Host**: Welcomes, opens in prayer, introduces the week, introduces the speaker, makes announcements, talks through response cards, thanks everyone, and dismisses. **Behind the scenes organizer:** Makes necessary arrangements for (but doesn't do it all him/herself) greeters (who also hand out response cards), food, decor, printing, music.



"And I. when I am from the earth, I will draw all people to myself." - John 12:32

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theLIFTtour.com

SPECIAL FALL PRICE by November 17: \$45

#### **ARTISTS & SPEAKERS**

\*Artists and speakers vary by location



**Brent Crowe** 



Jeff Wallace



**David Nasser** 



**Ed Newton** 





**Liberty Worship Collective** 



Trip Lee



Andy Mineo



**Drew Worsham** 

\*Check theLIFTtour.com for Kansas City and Augusta pricing.

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November 10-11, 2017

KANSAS CITY, KS\*\* November 10-11, 2017

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January 12-13

PANAMA CITY, FL January 26-27

PHOENIX. AZ January 26-27

COLUMBIA, SC February 2-3

HOUSTON, TX February 9-10

DOTHAN, AL February 9-10

TULSA. OK February 16-17

ORLANDO, FL February 16-17

**NW Arkansas** February 16-17

DALLAS, TX February 22

MEMPHIS. TN February 23-24

NASHVILLE, TN

February 23-24

ROME, GA February 23-24

JACKSON, MS March 2-3

**GREENVILLE, SC** March 9-10

ATLANTA. GA March 16-17

CHATTANOOGA, TN March 23-24

JACKSONVILLE. FL March 23-24

STUDENTS

THE LIFT TOUR

IS AN

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LEADERSHIP

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WITH LIFEWAY

# **THANKFUL**

#### Help Week Leader Guide

**Help Week:** A time for student leaders to equip their peers to become missionaries to their school, as they plan and pray for the month of campus ministry ahead.

#### **CLUB TIME PREP:**

- · Select one student to lead this month's Help Week
- Remind students to post on social media and text friends reminding them about First Priority club time
- Remember to meet with your leadership team to discuss the plan for the month and ENGAGE week plans including food

#### **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 Help Week, which is where we help each other become missionaries to our school. Last month we talked about what it means to be redeemed from our brokenness and how that impacts how we share the gospel of Jesus Christ. This month our theme is "THANKFUL." We are going to learn how gratitude



enables us to have a stronger and more spiritual influence with others. This month's verse is: "Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT)

- · Opening Prayer
- Introduce Student Leading Discussion: Today, my friend, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,
  is going to share how being thankful helps us to share the message of HOPE on
  our campus.

#### **GROUP TIME: THANKFUL for the Body of Christ (20 Minutes)**

**Assigned Speaker Suggestion:** What impression do you think you make on people? Are you a positive person? Do you think that you spend more time of your day complaining and criticizing or being thankful and encouraging? If someone followed you around all day, would they even say that you are a happy person?



Imagine that the worst possible thing you could imagine happened to you right now, and you lost everything but your life. Your family, your friends, your possessions have been lost, and now maybe even your body or mind has been harmed in some way. What would you need to be happy again? Now, everyone grieves when they experience

extreme loss, but after that grief is over, what would it take to find some joy in life again? Think carefully about your answer. Is happiness found in "having enough"? If "not having enough" is preventing you from happiness, you will never find the kind of happiness that lasts. Happiness that lasts is called "joy". True Joy is found only in Jesus, and if you follow Jesus, no circumstance can take him away from you. The truth is that we already have in Jesus all we need to be full of joy, happiness, and gratitude. Your outlook and attitude in life will automatically reflect your awareness of this truth.

**Something to think about:** How can we share with others that we have the hope of Jesus Christ if we are too busy focusing on our problems or complaining about everything? Paul says in Ephesians,

"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." Ephesians 4:29 (NLT)

People who are full of hope are thankful for that hope. Even when we have plenty of reason to be bitter or resentful, having a thankful heart makes the world take notice. When others notice your joy, what they are really seeing is Jesus.

True Joy is found only in Jesus, and if you follow Jesus, no circumstance can take him away from you.

#### **THANKFUL Help Week Leader Guide (continued)**

#### **APPLY IT:**

**Discussion Option 1:** How did Paul show his gratitude for people and what kind of effect do you think this had on the people he led?

"Let me say first that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith in Him is being talked about all over the world. God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to God, whom I serve with all my heart by spreading the Good News about his Son." (Romans 1:8-9 NLT)

**Discussion Option 2:** What are some other ways that thankfulness can impact your school for the gospel and what are some ways to put gratitude into practice?

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:17 NLT)



#### **THANKFUL Help Week Leader Guide (continued)**

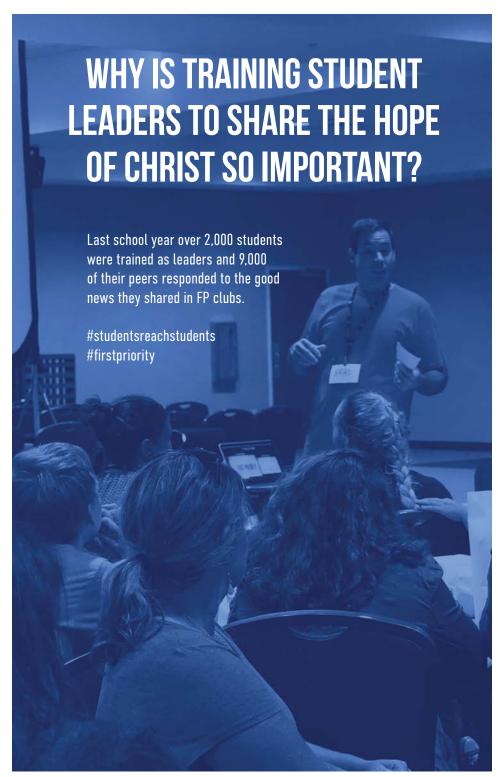
#### **ACTION CHALLENGES:**

- **1. Group Challenge:** Take a group picture holding up a sign that says "WE ARE THANKFUL FOR A GOD THAT LOVES" and post on your social media using hashtags #FirstPriority and #FPThankful
- **2. Share Challenge:** This is a great month to consider collecting food for a local food pantry. Consider sharing with your entire school the need, and then work with your faculty sponsor to set up a food drive.
- **3. Prayer Challenge:** Have someone close club time in prayer asking that everyone would operate in self-control this week with our speech and to be thankful.

#### **WRAP UP: 2 minutes**

 Share any FP Club announcements including that next week's meeting is Overcome Week.





# **THANKFUL**

#### Overcome Week Leader Guide

**Overcome:** A time for student leaders to encourage their peers to overcome their fears of sharing the Gospel.



#### **CLUB TIME PREP:**

- Select one student to lead this month's Overcome Week
- Post to social media and text friends inviting them to First Priority club

#### **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 Overcome week, which is where we encourage each other in how to overcome obstacles of sharing the Gospel. This month our theme is "THANKFUL." We are talking about how gratitude enables us to have a stronger and more spiritual influence with others. This month's verse is: "Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT)
- Opening Prayer
- Introduce Student Leading Discussion: Today, my friend, \_\_\_\_\_\_, is going to share about how gratitude helps us be intentional about sharing the good news of the gospel.

#### **GROUP TIME: Little Thanks, Big Thanks (20 minutes)**

Assigned Speaker Suggestion: Don't answer this question aloud, but on a scale of one to ten, how thankful would you say that you are that Jesus has saved you? Luke chapter 7 tells us about the time Jesus was invited to have a nice dinner with some "important" people (pharisees), only to have the formal occasion awkwardly interrupted by a woman who was probably the subject of 99% of the town's gossip. It was obvious to everyone that her emotions were out of control as she wept and approached the guest of honor (Jesus) with very expensive perfume. The embarrassment of the hosts probably multiplied when she began crying on, kissing and drowning his feet in perfume. She and Jesus were clearly breaking several unspoken social rules. Immediately, the guests at the table began to gossip, this time not only about her, but also about how Jesus would even allow his feet to be touched by any woman, let alone THIS one.

Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you."

"Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied.

Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?"

Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt." "That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume.

"I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven."

The men at the table said among themselves, "Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?"

And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." (Luke 7:36-50 NLT)

#### THANKFUL Overcome Week Leader Guide (continued)

It is very important that we consider the size of what Jesus has done on our behalf. If we think that he has saved us from only a little sin in comparison to others, our life will reflect this attitude by our choice to often put other things before God. If we begin to see ourselves as people who owed a huge debt we couldn't possibly pay, we will realize that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and victory over death is the most important act of love anyone has ever done for us. We should be overflowing with thankfulness and eager to love and serve others at any chance we get. Sometimes, even our hesitation to share the gospel with others is evidence that we think we have more "important" things to do. You see, we are this pharisee in this story if our hearts do not have enough thankfulness to serve Jesus at every opportunity.

#### **APPLY IT:**

**Discussion Option 1:** What are some times that you feel like you have allowed selfishness to rob you of opportunities to show or share the love of Jesus with others at school?

**Discussion Option 2:** Is there anything more important for a Christian than living your life for God's glory? Why do you think so many Christians make excuses or have bigger priorities than Jesus?

#### **ACTION CHALLENGES:**

- **Group Challenge:** Take a group photo with the Colossians 3:17 on the white board or on a poster board and post on social media using the hashtags #firstpriority and #FPthankful
- Invite Challenge: Text someone to let them know how thankful you are for them in your life and share with a student this week why you are thankful for God in your life.
- Prayer Challenge: Lastly, get into groups of three or four and spread out. Take 2 minutes and take turns praying for each other to walk in thankfulness.
   Then, we are going to huddle up and someone can close out our club time in prayer.

#### WRAP UP: 2 minutes

• Share any FP Club announcements including that next week's meeting is Prepare Week



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## **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.



#### CI IIR 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."

#### **THANKFUL Prepare Week Leader Guide (continued)**

#### **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.

# FIRST PRIORITY IS INFLUENCING STUDENT LEADERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO SHARE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IN THEIR SCHOOL.



Do you know a community that needs a First Priority movement started? Throughout the year we train FP Coordinators to lead this movement into their community. Go here to get started; firstpriority.club/roles/first-priority-coordinator

## **THANKFUL**

#### **Engage Week Leader Guide**

Engage Week: A time for students to engage their school with the gospel.

#### **CLUB TIME PREP:**

- Confirm your student or guest speaker and remind them to be prepared to share the gospel and an invitation to accept Christ. Gospel presentation options can be found at firstpriority.club
- Confirm that student follow up cards have been printed and will be ready to hand out to students as they enter your meeting space. Faculty sponsors can print for you if requested in advance.
- Confirm that arrangements for food for the club have been completed and that is it ready to serve just before club opening.

#### **INTRODUCTION: 3 minutes**

• Allow students to fellowship as student leaders prepare the group activity.

#### **Welcome Students, Prayer and Introduction**

• Assigned Student Leader Host: Welcome to First Priority! Today we are going to start with a game to get to know one another. There is food for everyone here, so please feel free to grab a bite to eat while we get started.



#### **THANKFUL Engage Week Leader Guide (continued)**

#### **GROUP ACTIVITY TIME: 5 minutes**

- Game: Form a Group
- Preparation: No preparation necessary
- Play: Easy game that can be used to divide into teams if need be. Simply yell, "Form a group according to . . . (Music genre, hair color, number of siblings, shirt color, etc.)"

#### **GROUP TIME - THANKFUL FOR SALVATION: 15 minutes**

**Introduce Speaker Sharing the Gospel** 

• **Student Leader Host:** Today, my friend, \_\_\_\_\_\_, is going to share about something that is very important to them. Please listen respectfully as it takes a lot of courage to speak in front of others. You all were given a student response card that looks like this (hold up a sample card) when you came in. Just hold on to it and we will explain them to you shortly.

#### Gospel, Invitation, and Response Cards

• **Gospel Presenter:** Share the gospel and give a personal invitation using "Appendix B Sample Gospel Presentation" or another gospel presentation at FirstPriority.club.



#### **INVITATION & STUDENT RESPONSE CARDS: 5 minutes**

#### Opportunity to connect to Jesus

• If everyone would just take a minute and think about what I shared today. If you would like to have a relationship with Jesus today, then simply take a minute where you are and let Him know that. Then, on your response card, simply let us know that you made that decision today. We want to connect with you and answer any questions you may have and celebrate your new life in Jesus.

STUDENT

- If you are not interested in having a relationship with Jesus at this time, it's ok to be honest and mark that on your student response card. The great thing about Jesus is that He died on the cross for us out of love, knowing that some would not love Him back. That is not to make you feel bad, but to let you know that Jesus still loves you and died for you and cares for you no matter what you write on that card. No one here will judge you.
- If you have questions and don't know what you want or feel, mark that on your student card so we can connect with you and just listen to what you have to say. We would love to help you find answers to your questions.

#### Opportunity to connect to a local youth group

• We also want to make sure to give everyone an opportunity to connect with a local youth group if you are not involved in one right now. Could each of you please mark your level of interest in connecting with a local youth group? Also, if you are already connecting with a local youth group, we want to know so we can help you invite other students to join you.

#### WRAP UP WITH RESPONSE CARD DIRECTIONS & PRAYER: 2 minutes

<ul> <li>As we wrap up, I want to clos</li> </ul>	e in prayer, but first I wanted you to kr	now that
is available to	o connect with you if you have question	ons today.
Also, the response cards can	be given to	and will
only be used for follow up red	quests. Thank you for coming today ar	nd please
join me as I close us out in pr	ayer thanking God for His love for all c	of us today
• Student Leader Host: Thank	you so much for coming today! Pleas	e turn in
your card to	_ before you leave. We meet here ever	y week at
this time, so you are all invite	d to come back next week.	

#### **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 <u>unworthy</u> of relationships... so I become <u>isolated</u> and <u>alone</u> because I was <u>afraid</u> of being <u>rejected</u> 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."

#### **Appendix B**

#### SAMPLE GOSPEL PRESENTATION

# G.I.F.T.

God Inviting (us to be) Forgiven (and to) Trust (Him)

#### GOD

God is perfectly good, and He created the whole world to reflect His goodness. The first people lived in perfect relationship with God by obeying Him, and He loved them very much with a perfect love.

"And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31 ESV)

#### **INVITING**

The first people disobeyed God, breaking their relationship with Him, which became known as sin. Sin drove a wedge into man's relationship with God and messed up how we were supposed to experience life. Sin results in death. Even today, people try to fix their relationship with God by doing good, but no amount of good deeds can remove our personal sin. So, God reaches out toward us and invites us into a new relationship with Him.

"For if because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17 ESV)

#### **FORGIVEN**

God sent His son, Jesus as a gift to the whole world. Jesus lived His life without disobeying God at all, and then let Himself be nailed to a cross to die for sin in our place. He traded His innocence for our guilt. That means that He paid the price we owed so that you and I could be forgiven. This is the free gift that God offers us, the gift of salvation. To receive it, we cannot earn it, or it would no longer be a gift.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8 ESV)

#### Appendix B SAMPLE GOSPEL PRESENTATION (continued)

#### **TRUST**

In order for us to begin a relationship with God and be saved from our sin, we must receive God's gift of salvation. To receive this gift, you must believe God and turn to Him by trusting Jesus, putting Him in charge of your life. Then, the Bible says that you will be saved.

"because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9 ESV)

#### **HOW TO RECEIVE CHRIST AS SAVIOR**

- 1. Confess your need (I am broken and in sin)
- Change your direction in life, knowing that God's way of living is better than our way of living
- 3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and was raised to life to save you and restore your relationship to God
- 4. Receive through prayer the free gift of salvation and begin your journey as part of the family of God.

#### WHAT TO PRAY

Father God,

I know that I am broken, and I need your forgiveness. Jesus, I believe you died and were raised so I could be saved. I want to turn away from my old life and toward a completely new life with You in Your family. Right now, I put my trust in You and invite You to come into my life and change it. In Jesus' name, Amen.





# We believe in the impossible: THE HOPE OF CHRIST IN EVERY STUDENT

at your school.

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