

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

GOAL

The goal of this lesson is twofold:

1. *To help students understand and follow* the actions of Jesus in their own lives through Bible study, hard questions, activities, and specific life application.
2. *To make it easy for you* to facilitate and teach students. That is why the Facilitator Guide is packed with easy-to-use instructions, timeframes, and questions that promote thinking and draw out real responses.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of the Facilitator Guide for you and any other facilitators
- A copy of the Student Guide for each participant
- Be sure to check out the Live It Out section ahead of time to prepare. You'll need:
 - *an open area large enough in which to play tag*

BACKGROUND

This lesson is found in the WHO NEEDS JESUS? set of *The Black Letters of Jesus*

1. That's Not Good Enough (Matthew 3:1-17)
2. Mind the Gap (John 1:1-18)
3. Intervention (Isaiah 61:1-9)
4. Who's Thirsty? (John 4:1-26)

ROOT SUGGESTION

This lesson correlates well with other lessons in the *Rescue Root of Deep Discipleship*. Here's an overview of the Rescue Root, which helps students understand their need for a savior:

We are slaves, held captive by terrible enemies: sin and death. In this fallen, corrupt, and shattered world, we need a rescuer—Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer. In fact, he's the only one who can free us. And once we've been freed, we have the opportunity to join in the rescue mission for others.

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HOW TO USE: Small Group or Large Group

The Facilitator Guide contains everything in the Student Guide, plus some additional material. This table outlines the elements of each lesson and provides an approximate timeframe, which you can adapt to meet the needs of your group.

- For a **SMALL GROUP** setting, use the white boxes below.
- For a **LARGE GROUP** talk, refer to the grey boxes on the right

		FOR A SMALL GROUP SETTING		FOR A LARGE GROUP TALK
		FACILITATOR'S GUIDE	IN STUDENT GUIDE	<i>*include personal illustrations to make this a powerful talk</i>
LESSON ELEMENTS	OVERVIEW	Read before facilitating	X	Read before facilitating
	OPENING QUESTIONS	Get students thinking and begin conversation (2-3 minutes)	✓	Use these questions as an ice breaker
	WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT	A Bible Study with discussion questions (15-20 minutes)	✓	Main Scripture and teaching
	A SECOND LOOK	Another take on this study with discussion questions (10-15 minutes)	✓	Use as an illustration to bring the topic to life
	LIVE IT OUT	An experiential activity to help students reinforce and internalize the lesson (10-15 minutes)	X	Consider using this as an object lesson
	APPLY IT	A practical application for students to do this week (2-3 minutes)	✓	Use this as a springboard to present students with practical next steps
	THINK ABOUT IT	Challenging quote to consider	✓	Challenging quote to consider
	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	Additional illustrations/object lessons	X	Additional illustrations/object lessons
	MEMORY VERSE	Verse to meditate on <i>*text or post the graphic included in your download</i>	✓	Verse to meditate on <i>*text or post the graphic included in your download</i>

INTERVENTION

WHO NEEDS JESUS?

The Black Letters of Jesus: Jesus intervenes when we're stuck in sin.

OVERVIEW

Interventions become necessary when someone cannot escape a situation on his or her own. That may be an addiction, but it can also be imprisonment, a life-threatening experience, or sin. Jesus intervened and addressed every level of our need. Isaiah prophesied about this more than 700 years prior to Jesus' birth. Even in our darkest days, God has/had an intervention planned.

Students will recognize the hopelessness of their lives of sin and better appreciate Jesus' intervention in their lives. They'll learn more about the passage Jesus reads in the synagogue that amazed listeners and see how it applies to them today. They'll also learn about the life of Louis Zamperini.

OPENING QUESTIONS

- When was a time you remember feeling helpless?
- What do you think about when you hear the word "intervention"?

WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT

There are situations in life where you'll be stuck until somebody steps in to help you. Whether it's toddlers in kitchen cabinets, someone who can't swim floundering in the deep end, stranded motorists, prisoners of war, someone who falls and breaks a hip, when you're in the backseat and the child-safety door lock is on, or even an addiction, each of these situations requires an intervention. They require the care or compassion of another person in order for them to be saved or rescued.

We are just as helpless, if not more so, to deal with the sin in our lives. There are sins that we will confess and repent of and swear to never commit again, only to find ourselves in their grips a day or two later. There are sins we don't even know we're committing. Without Jesus' intervention, we would be hopeless in our sin.

The book of Isaiah was written by the prophet Isaiah more than 700 years before Jesus was born. The Israelites were given these words after they had already been through a war with Assyria (which they lost). Now their future was looking pretty bleak, as they were about to become prisoners of war in Babylon. There was no end to their suffering in sight.

That's the setting of the passage you'll read. Keep in mind that prophecies are usually warnings, promises, or both, and they often reference something that hasn't happened yet. God is not limited by time, so it's no big deal for him to know the future. He's already there.

In fact, Jesus read out loud some of the verses you're about to read when he was in the synagogue once. He told the people there that he was the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Read Isaiah 61:1-9

WHO NEEDS JESUS?

Discuss:

- What does this passage say about who we are?
- What does Jesus provide when he intervenes?
- Why does he bother to intervene?
- Where do you most need his intervention?

A SECOND LOOK¹

Louis Zamperini needed someone to intervene so that he would quit getting into trouble as a teenager. So his brother introduced him to running. He qualified for the Olympics before heading off to war, where his plane was shot down over the ocean.

Louis spent weeks floating on a life raft before rescue came. He was dehydrated, sunburnt, and hungry. As his rescuers drew closer, though, he realized something horrible. It wasn't his countrymen who were coming to save him; it was the enemy coming to capture him. Louis left the desolation of a life raft on the ocean for the stench, torture, and hopelessness of a prison camp, where he remained until the end of World War II.

When he returned home after the war, he dealt with the flashbacks, nightmares, anger, and obsession for revenge by drinking too much, quickly becoming an alcoholic. His wife begged him to quit, but he refused, staying drunk for the better part of four years.

Then Jesus intervened. Louis became a Christian while listening to Billy Graham preach. He quit drinking, got rid of his stash of porn, and stopped having the flashbacks that led to his rage-filled thoughts of revenge. He was a new man.

More than most people, Louis understood the message in Isaiah spoken to the captives and prisoners. He understood mourning and devastation, shame and dishonor. And thanks to the intervention of Jesus, he also understood the good news, the justice, and the everlasting joy.

Of all the interventions he needed in life, Louis was most thankful for the intervention of Jesus.

Discuss:

- Louis faced multiple situations that seemed hopeless and lived to tell about them, thanks to some helpful interventions. Has there ever been a time when you lost hope? How did it end up?
- Which of the situations Louis faced best represents your spiritual life right now? Explain.
- What effects did Jesus' intervention have on Louis' life?
- What effects does (or could) Jesus' intervention have on your life?

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: When Jesus intervenes in our lives, he doesn't necessarily change our temporary circumstances. But his intervention always changes us (forever). We get a new identity, we're connected to God, and we receive hope and the promise that in the very end, God wins.

¹ The story of Louis Zamperini's life is found in *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand (New York: Random House, 2014). NOTE: There's also a movie, but the movie doesn't talk about his salvation.

WHO NEEDS JESUS?

LIVE IT OUT: FREEZE TAG WITH A TWIST

What you'll need: An open area large enough in which to play tag.

Before beginning the explanation, divide the group into teams of two or three students and give each team a set of supplies. At the end of the designated time, test the bridges one at a time to see which is the longest and which holds the most weight without collapsing.

Say Something Like:

We're going to play freeze tag, but it's a slightly different version of freeze tag than you've probably ever played. Here are the rules of the game:

- *One person will be It.*
- *If that person tags you, you must stand frozen in that spot until another player (not It) comes by and tags you.*
- *Once they "unfreeze" you, you must hop on their back, piggyback style, and stay there until they're tagged by It and become frozen themselves.*
- *Once they're frozen, players must jump off their backs and avoid being tagged by It.*
- *The game ends when It manages to freeze all players at once or when everybody is tired, whichever comes first.*

Feel free to play multiple rounds with different people in the role of It, as time allows.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: There may be some big kids in your group. That's perfect. It will help to illustrate a point during the debriefing questions later.

Discuss:

- Was there ever a point when you were reluctant to "unfreeze" someone? Why?
- Were you more willing to "unfreeze" someone else after you'd been frozen yourself? Why or why not?
- How are the effects of sin in your life similar to being frozen in this game?
- When did you need a freeze tag intervention?

APPLY IT

Jesus has intervened on our behalf, but sometimes we lose sight of it. What's one thing you can do this week to keep his promises and his hope in full sight?

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

WHO NEEDS JESUS?

THINK ABOUT IT

“When he thought of his history, what resonated with him now was not all that he had suffered but the divine love that he believed had intervened to save him.” – Laura Hillenbrand, *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*. New York City: Random House Publishing Group, 2010

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- This is a great opportunity to connect the dots across your church and have someone that the students don't normally interact with share his or her story of God's intervention (a.k.a. their testimony). Students often hear God's intervention stories from people involved in the youth ministry, but allowing them insight into the stories of people in different areas of the church could not only be powerful but also give them a larger perspective on God's work and the body of Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)



Disciples of Christ desire God's intervention.

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