

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

In order to make the most of this study and to ensure a richer group experience, it's recommended that all group participants read through the teaching and discussion content in full before each group meeting. As a leader, it is also a good idea for you to be familiar with this content and prepared to summarize it for your group members as you move through the material each week.

Each session of the Bible study is made up of three sections:

**1. THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE.**

An introduction to the theme of the session and its connection to everyday life, along with a brief overview of the primary Scripture text. This section also includes an icebreaker question or activity.

**2. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?**

This comprises the bulk of each session and includes the primary Scripture text along with explanations for key words and ideas within that text. This section also includes most of the content designed to produce and maintain discussion within the group.

**3. LIVE IT OUT.**

The final section focuses on application, using bulleted summary statements to answer the question, *So what?* As the leader, be prepared to challenge the group to apply what they learned during the discussion by transforming it into action throughout the week.

For group leaders, the *Like No Other* Leader Guide contains several features and tools designed to help you lead participants through the material provided.

**QUESTION 1—ICEBREAKER**

These opening questions and/or activities are designed to help participants transition into the study and begin engaging the primary themes to be discussed. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak, but maintain a low-pressure environment.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Each "What Does the Bible Say?" section features at least five questions designed to spark discussion and interaction within your group. These questions encourage critical thinking, so be sure to allow a period of silence for participants to process the question and form an answer.

The *Like No Other* Leader Guide also contains follow-up questions and optional activities that may be helpful to your group, if time permits.

**DVD CONTENT**

Each video features Dr. Tony Evans discussing the primary themes found in the session. We recommend that you show this video in one of three places: (1) At the beginning of group time, (2) After the icebreaker, or (3) After a quick review and/or summary of "What Does the Bible Say?" A video summary is included as well. You may choose to use this summary as background preparation to help you guide the group.

The Leader Guide contains additional questions to help unpack the video and transition into the discussion. For a digital Leader Guide with commentary, see the "Leader Tools" folder on the DVD-ROM in your Leader Kit.



For helps on how to use *Bible Studies for Life*, tips on how to better lead groups, or additional ideas for leading, visit: [www.ministrygrid.com/web/BibleStudiesforLife](http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/BibleStudiesforLife).

## SESSION 1: PROMISED LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus is the promised Messiah.

**The Passage:** Isaiah 53:2-12

**The Setting:** The prophet Isaiah ministered in the southern kingdom of Judah in the eighth century B.C. during the reigns of kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Isaiah 53 is the fourth and final of Isaiah's Servant songs or poems about the Suffering Servant, prophecies about the coming Messiah, Jesus. Unlike other messianic prophecies, because these reflect the sufferings of God's Servant, they were not initially understood to be about the Messiah.

**QUESTION 1:** How do you decide whether someone is believable?

**Optional activity:** Continue the theme of deception and truthfulness by leading the group in a few rounds of "Two Truths and a Lie." To play, ask for volunteers to offer three statements about themselves—two true and one false. After each volunteer shares his or her statements, encourage group members to guess which is the lie.

**Video Summary:** In his first video message, Dr. Evans explains a little bit about how the prophecies in the Old Testament predict—years in advance—who Jesus is and what He will do. The book of Isaiah contains prophecies about how God's people will be restored and redeemed and how God will intervene on their behalf. The message can be interpreted as God saying to us, through Isaiah, "I am a God who keeps my promise and here's how I'm going to do it." In Isaiah 53, specifically, we get a picture of the Suffering Servant who came to be the representative of heaven on earth.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 1, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- Besides God, in whose promises would you place your trust? Why?
- Has there ever been a time when you regretted believing a promise? Explain.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD

ISAIAH 53:2-12.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What do you like about the text?
- What questions do you have about these verses?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO ISAIAH 53:2-3.

**QUESTION 2:** What surprises you about this description of Christ?

Through answering this question, group members will have an opportunity to examine how their current image of Christ lines up with how this week's Scripture passage describes Him.

**Optional follow-up:** *What words or descriptions in this passage tend to be contrary to our expectations of a great man?*

**Optional activity:** *Complete the activity "I Promise!" on page 9. If time permits, encourage volunteers to share the different factors that help them evaluate the promises in God's Word.*

MOVE TO ISAIAH 53:4-9.

**QUESTION 3:** Which prophecies about Jesus in these verses do you find compelling?

This question requires group members to closely examine the biblical text before answering based on how the passage personally impacted them. As time allows, encourage them to explain their responses. Be prepared to offer up a model for the group by answering first.

**Optional follow-up:** *What ideas or images come to mind when you hear the word prophecy?*

**QUESTION 4:** How can you testify to Christ bearing your sickness and carrying your pain?

This question asks group members to recall a personal experience. The objective is for each member to understand, through story, ways in which Christ's sacrifices impact his or her life.

**Optional follow-up:** *In what ways have you been changed because of your encounters with Jesus?*

CONTINUE WITH ISAIAH 53:10-12.

**QUESTION 5:** When have you felt like only Jesus was enough?

This question gives group members another opportunity to share a personal story. The point of this discussion is to help members see that Jesus not only came for us but He has promised to remain with us. To drive home this point you may want to consider spending some time examining Proverbs 18:24 and Psalm 46:1.

**Optional follow-up: How can we increase our reliance on Jesus in all situations?**

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** What does this Scripture passage teach us about God's character?

This question is intended to lead group members to identify what they can know about who God is based on the words of this text.

### LIVE IT OUT

Encourage group members to consider taking the following steps to strengthen their faith:

- **Discover God's promises.** As you read the Bible, highlight any verses that contain a promise from God.
- **Trust His plan.** Make it a point to actively proclaim your trust in God each day. When you pray, acknowledge His plan for your life and declare your intention to trust Him.
- **Search His prophecies.** Use a Bible dictionary or concordance to look up Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. Consider how each prophecy underscores the truth of who Jesus is.

**Challenge:** Don't allow yourself to simply notice the promises contained in God's Word. Rather, when you come across God's promises this week, commit to believing them as truth. Consider writing them down as you encounter them and putting them in a place where you will see them and be reminded often.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by asking the Lord to help each of you remember that He not only came for us but also remains with us as our lifeline and assurance. Thank Him for keeping His promises.

### SESSION 2: A BIRTH LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus is fully human and fully God.

**The Passage:** Luke 1:26-35

**The Setting:** Luke wrote his two-volume work (Luke and Acts) for the purpose of demonstrating the spread of the gospel beyond the Jewish world and to the world as a whole. But before he could focus on the spread of the gospel (Acts), he had to demonstrate the reality of the good news of the gospel (Luke). He began that endeavor by addressing the birth of John the Baptist, who first spread the word about Jesus, and the birth of Jesus Himself.

**QUESTION 1:** How do you typically introduce yourself to someone new?

The goal of this question is for group members to share what types of information they reveal about themselves when they first meet someone new—to identify what information they view as most important when expressing who they are.

**Optional activity: Enhance your group members' engagement with "The Bible Meets Life" by passing around several pictures of newborn babies. You can find such pictures in your own family archives or by searching through magazines and other forms of media. Remember that images are a great way to help visual learners become more invested in a discussion experience.**

**Video Summary:** In this video session, Dr. Evans walks us through what it means that our Savior is 100 percent God and 100 percent man. As God He can address anything. As man He can identify with anything that needs to be addressed. As man He can feel our pain. As God He can soothe our pain. As man He can cry. As God He can wipe tears. God and man are brought together by the unique birth of the Perfect Man. The Man who can redeem mankind. The God-Man.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 2, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- In what ways do you think Jesus being fully human helps Him meet your needs?
- How does the fact that Jesus was both fully God and fully human impact your faith?

**WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?**

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD LUKE 1:26-35.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What questions do you have about these verses?
- What do you hope to gain from studying about what it means the Jesus was both fully God and fully human?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO LUKE 1:26-31.

**QUESTION 2:** Since Jesus existed before time, why is it significant that He came as a baby?

This question requires group members to go a step beyond interpreting the biblical text and to understanding the significance of the One who, even from the time and method of conception, was already both fully human and fully divine.

**Optional follow-up:** *How would you explain in your own words why Jesus was born of a virgin?*

MOVE TO LUKE 1:32-33.

**QUESTION 3:** What are the differences between living in a democracy and living under Jesus as the Sovereign Ruler?

This question provides an opportunity for group members to define for themselves what it means to do life in our culture while operating from a place of submission to a Sovereign Ruler who reigns now and for all eternity in the lives of those who follow Him. You may also want to look as a group at Galatians 3:28.

CONTINUE WITH LUKE 1:34-35.

**QUESTION 4:** Since Jesus lived as a man, why is it important to understand He is God?

As you discuss this question, consider drawing the group's attention back to The Point for this session. Guide group members to consider first why it is significant that Jesus lived for a time as a man. Then help them transition to the importance of understanding that He was and is also fully God and what that means in our lives today and for eternity.

**Optional follow-up:** *What does our culture teach about Jesus' nature and identity?*

**Optional activity:** *Encourage group members to complete the activity "Double Encouragement" on page 21. As time allows, invite volunteers to share their responses to what they find encouraging about Jesus' human nature and His divine nature.*

**QUESTION 5:** Jesus is fully God and fully man. How does that truth influence your choices this week?

This question is designed to help group members work through what it looks like practically to live out the significance of Jesus being fully God and fully man in their day-to-day lives. Encourage them to listen closely as others share. They can learn much from the responses of other members of the group.

**Optional follow-up:** *What responsibilities do you carry based on your knowledge of Jesus?*

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** How have you personally come to an understanding of who Jesus is?

The question gives members an opportunity to share with the group what they believe about who God is through their own personal experiences.

**Optional follow-up:** *How can you take your personal experience and help someone else understand who Jesus is? Be specific.*

## LIVE IT OUT

Invite group members to take one of the following steps in response to the truth that Jesus is fully human and fully God:

- **Dig deeper.** Ask your pastor to recommend a book, article, or podcast that can help you better understand Jesus' nature.
- **Get to know God's Word.** Meditate on Jesus' divinity and humanity by memorizing Hebrews 4:15-16 over the next few days. Concentrate on the truths those verses express.
- **Invite someone to know Jesus.** Pray for an opportunity to talk with someone who may not realize Jesus is both fully human and fully God. Be honest and encouraging as you share the truth of God's Word.

**Challenge:** Don't be afraid to stand for the truth of Jesus' identity and character. Look for opportunities this week to share examples from your own personal journey that illustrate Jesus as fully God and fully human. And when those opportunities present themselves, be ready and willing to do so.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by committing the members of your group to the Lord and asking Him to help each of you live fully out of the knowledge that He came to earth as the Son of God so that we could know God and experience Him more fully.

## SESSION 3: POWER LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus has power over all my fears.

**The Passage:** Mark 4:35-41

**The Setting:** This passage in Mark's Gospel is the first of a collection of four miracle accounts (4:35-5:43) that immediately follow a separate collection of parables (4:1-34). It is as if the Gospel is validating the teachings of Jesus in those parables by following them up with demonstrations of His authority over nature, demons, death, and disease. With such comprehensive authority, why should my fears prove any challenge to Him?

**QUESTION 1:** What forms of power really get your attention?

**Optional activity:** Bring a whiteboard or a large sheet of paper to the group meeting. As a lead-in to Question 1, ask group members to think of every possible definition or expression of the word power. Ask a volunteer to record each answer and group them according to categories, if possible. When finished, offer the final list as a springboard for possible answers to Question 1.

**Video Summary:** In this video session, Dr. Evans talks about the power available to us when we are connected to Jesus Christ. We can call forth His power and rest in it. He has overcome the world, and because of His power in us, we can overcome as well. Satan tries to use situations to drive us from the Lord. The Lord wants to use situations to drive us to Him. His power can override whatever this world lays at our feet.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 3, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- What is required to weather a storm well?
- Share with the group a specific time when His power changed you in the midst of a difficulty.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD MARK 4:35-41.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What questions do you have about these verses?
- What new application do you hope to get from this passage?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO MARK 4:35-38a.

**QUESTION 2:** In what ways do we typically respond to frightening situations?

This question is designed to help group members consider how people (themselves as well as others) tend to react to their fear. Answers will vary based on individual experiences.

**Optional follow-up: When have you felt like God was unconcerned with your problems?**

MOVE TO MARK 4:38b-39.

**QUESTION 3:** How have you learned that God really does care about His people?

This question will allow group members an opportunity to share personal stories as well as acknowledge and reflect on how their lives have been affected by God's care for them.

**Optional follow-up: In what ways can you use what you have learned to help someone who doubts that God really cares?**

**QUESTION 4:** How can we reconcile the truth of Jesus' power with the fact that He doesn't always calm the storm?

This question is designed to give group members permission to struggle with the tension that results from knowing that Jesus has the power to calm the storm but doesn't always choose to do so. Encourage them to be honest with their questions and answers, but make sure you draw the discussion back to the truth of who Jesus is and what He promises His followers.

**Optional activity: Direct group members to complete the activity "All My Fears" on page 31. If time permits, ask for volunteers to share which image they chose.**

CONTINUE WITH MARK 4:40-41.

**QUESTION 5:** In your everyday life, what does it mean to respond to Jesus' power?

This question differs from a broad perspective on what Jesus' power means for our lives and encourages group members to consider what His power looks like for them in the day-to-day. Encourage specific and practical responses.

**Optional follow-up: What obstacles prevent us from responding to His power?**

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** How do we bridge the gap between knowing about faith and demonstrating faith?

Encourage group members to do some self-examination before they respond. As time allows, also invite them to share actions steps for moving forward in demonstrating faith.

**LIVE IT OUT**

Encourage group members to consider the following ways they can let go of fear and trust in Jesus' power:

- **Write it down.** Make a list of the most pressing external problems that give rise to your internal fears. Pray over this list in connection with the trust found in John 16:33.
- **Watch your words.** Each day, assess whether your speech is more focused on your problems or on Jesus, who is the solution. Seek to speak more openly about Jesus.
- **Pray together.** Consider ways you can encourage others to trust Christ. Look for evidence of people struggling with turmoil and invite them to pray with you for peace.

**Challenge:** Many times we don't know how much faith we have until our faith gets tested. Be on alert this week for times when your faith is tested and take notice of how you react. Ask the Lord to make you aware of those times and what you need to learn through them.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by acknowledging that when we face uneasy times, we don't have to feel powerless or overwhelmed because we know the One who has what we need. Thank Him for His power and His willingness to use that power on our behalf.

**SESSION 4: TEACHINGS LIKE NO OTHER**

**The Point:** Jesus teaches us how to live and calls us to follow Him.

**The Passage:** Mark 1:21-22; 10:17-22

**The Setting:** Mark 1:21-22 occurs early in Jesus' ministry. He had completed 40 days in the wilderness, John the Baptist had been arrested, and Jesus had

called Peter, Andrew, and John to follow Him when they entered a synagogue in Capernaum and Jesus began to teach. Mark again records Jesus teaching in the latter part of Mark 9 (in Capernaum) and the early part of Mark 10 (in Judea). Against the backdrop of Jesus' teaching, a man approached the Teacher to ask a question.

**QUESTION 1:** What makes your favorite teacher your favorite teacher?

**Optional activity:** *To continue the theme of teaching, ask for volunteers to teach the group something interesting. Request that volunteers be brief, using no more than two minutes each if possible. Ideas for teaching could include offering tips for a smartphone, explaining how something works, recounting a piece of trivia they recently learned, sharing their professional expertise, and so on.*

**Note:** You will likely have time for two or three volunteers, depending on how long each person takes to teach. Also, it would be best to communicate this opportunity to group members prior to the gathering so they can prepare.

**Video Summary:** This week Dr. Evans talks about the greatest teacher of all time—Jesus Christ. This great Teacher always taught absolute truth. He taught where the people were, but He never compromised truth. His message came out of a heart of love and a desire to help. He is the final word and authority in the life of every believer. And He provided a way for us to experience His teaching today through the Bible—the voice of Jesus in print. We have full access to His truth, and what we choose to do with that truth will determine what our tomorrow looks like.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 4, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- Who has been most influential in teaching you the truth of Scripture? Explain.
- In what ways have you invested in others to share that same truth with them?

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD  
MARK 1:21-22; 10:17-22.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What do you like about the text?
- What new application do you hope to receive about what it truly means to live life to the fullest?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO  
MARK 1:21-22.

**QUESTION 2:** What's the difference between knowledge and authority?

This question is designed to give group members an opportunity to define for themselves two terms that will influence their understanding of this week's biblical text.

**Optional follow-up:** *How do we express and encounter authority in today's culture?*

**Optional activity:** *Direct group members to complete the activity "Assessment: Jesus' Teaching" on page 39. Encourage volunteers to share their reactions to the assessment.*

MOVE TO MARK 10:17-21a.

**QUESTION 3:** How does Jesus' approach help us love those we disagree with?

The question requires that group members interpret this Scripture passage for themselves as a way to move them toward life application.

**Optional follow-up:** *Share one situation in which you can put this teaching into practice this week.*

CONTINUE WITH MARK 10:21b-22.

**QUESTION 4:** Why is it loving for Jesus to call us to do something difficult or even painful?

This question is designed to help group members recognize that Jesus' teaching calls for a response. When a situation requires us to make a choice about our obedience, our decision demonstrates to ourselves and to Him what it is we truly believe.

**Optional follow-up:** *What obstacles are hindering you from more fully obeying Christ?*

**QUESTION 5:** How have Jesus' teachings changed the way you live?

This question provides group members an opportunity to share specific instances of positive change in their lives. As they share their responses, encourage members to also share examples of how they lived before His truth changed things.

**Optional follow-up:** *Which of Jesus' teachings would you like to focus on as you continue to grow spiritually?*

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** When have you been surprised by God's answer to your question?

This question invites member of the group to share their personal testimonies of how they have experienced God in their lives in unexpected ways.

### LIVE IT OUT

Invite group members to consider the following ways they can apply Jesus' teaching to their daily lives:

- **Read.** Read through one of the Gospels this week. As you come across Jesus' different teachings, reflect on how living by that teaching would benefit your life.
- **Commit.** As you read God's Word, make a conscious, deliberate decision to obey what it teaches. Pray through that commitment for the rest of the day.
- **Teach.** Consider leading a Bible study or teaching a class for kids, students, or adults. Let God use you to communicate the teachings of Jesus to others.

**Challenge:** Remember that it's never enough to read, understand, and believe Jesus' teachings. Obedience is a necessary requirement. Therefore, intentionally identify one of Jesus' teachings that you will put in practice each day this week.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by asking

the Lord to help each of you look to Him to learn how to live well—to learn what it means to live life to the fullest. Thank Him for the opportunity we have to sit as His feet and learn everyday.

### SESSION 5: A DEATH LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus' death is the heart of the gospel.

**The Passage:** Matthew 27:28-31,45-50,54

**The Setting:** Jesus had completed His earthly ministry save His justifying death and victorious resurrection. He had been arrested in Gethsemane, railroaded through a sham trial of the Sanhedrin, falsely accused before Pilate, and rejected by the crowd in favor of the notorious prisoner Barabbas. At that point, Pilate released Barabbas, had Jesus flogged, and turned Him over to the soldiers to be crucified.

**QUESTION 1:** Why do we care when famous people pass away?

**Optional activity:** *Use an object lesson to emphasize the reality of Jesus' physical death throughout your discussion. Bring a dead or dying plant to the gathering and display it in a place everyone can see. As you read the record of Jesus' death, use the plant as a way to reinforce the fact that His physical body perished. He literally died for us.*

**Note:** If you don't have any houseplants that are dead or dying, consider looking through the sale racks at your local garden shop or home-improvement store.

**Video Summary:** In this session, Dr. Evans spends time walking through some weighty theological terms—sin, grace, justification, redemption, propitiation, reconciliation—in explaining how God sent Jesus as our eternal substitute to pay the penalty for the sins of the whole world. "He made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). The Son of God paid the price to secure our eternal destiny. He took on hell for us on the cross—truly a death like no other.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 5, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- When has someone sacrificed for you? What impact has their sacrifice had on you?
- When have you sacrificed for another? What impact has your sacrifice had on you?

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD MATTHEW 27:28-31,45-50,54.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What questions do you have about these verses?
- What new application do you hope to get from this passage?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO MATTHEW 27:28-31.

**QUESTION 2:** What do these verses teach us about Jesus?

This question asks member to look beyond the words of this passage to discover what can be learned about Jesus.

**Optional follow-up: What are some ways we mistreat Jesus today?**

MOVE TO MATTHEW 27:45-50.

**QUESTION 3:** How do we explore the tension between the truth of God's love and the events in these verses? This question is meant to first acknowledge that there is a tension present between what we know about God's love and what is happening to Jesus in these verses. Be willing to manage this tension while you discuss how it can be navigated.

**Optional follow-up: Why is it important to understand that Jesus actually died?**

**QUESTION 4:** What emotions have you experienced while discussing Jesus' death?

Remind group members that there is no "correct" answer to this question. You're asking them to be open and honest about the feelings they have experienced as they have come face to face with the realization of the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for us.

**Optional follow-up: What are some ways you'd like to respond after this reminder of Jesus' death on your behalf?**

CONTINUE WITH MATTHEW 27:54.

**QUESTION 5:** When in your own life did you encounter the truth that Jesus is God's Son?

This question calls for a personal story, but some members in the room could be encountering this truth for the very first time. Hopefully they will consider your group a safe place to ask questions they may have been reluctant to ask in the past. Be prepared to start this discussion yourself if group members seem hesitant.

**Optional follow-up: The centurion concluded that Jesus is the Son of God. What other conclusions do people make?**

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** Why is Jesus' death the heart of the gospel?

This question calls for application based on the biblical text and is designed to make sure group members conclude this session with an understanding of the true importance of Jesus' death and the implication His sacrifice has for the lives of all believers.

### LIVE IT OUT

Encourage group members to consider the following options for responding to what Jesus' death means in their lives:

- **Confess.** Ask God to forgive you of your sins in light of Jesus' death on the cross.
- **Show gratitude.** Set aside time each day to intentionally express gratitude to Jesus for the sacrifice He made on your behalf. Let that gratitude influence your words and actions.
- **Invite others.** Invite someone to join you next week as your group discusses what happened after Jesus died on the cross. The focus on Christ's resurrection is a great time to introduce someone to the gospel.

**Challenge:** Christians can be passive when it comes to sharing the good news of the gospel. Choose to be proactive this week by initiating a spiritual conversation and proclaiming the message of salvation to someone who needs to hear it.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close by asking the Lord to help each of you ground your lives in what it means that Jesus died on the cross for us. Thank Him for the sacrifice He made.

## SESSION 6: RESURRECTED LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus is alive—and we can live forever.

**The Passage:** Matthew 28:1-10

**The Setting:** Jesus' torturous death on the cross had ended His physical suffering, but His followers' emotional suffering had only begun. For three terrifying, dreadful days, those followers grappled unsuccessfully trying to make sense out of His brutal death, seeking any insight to reconcile their expectations for Jesus to the new reality without Him. Then Mary Magdalene and Mary went to the tomb to anoint His body.

**QUESTION 1:** When were you excited to experience something firsthand?

**Optional activity:** *Bring several small rocks or pebbles to the group gathering. Distribute a rock to each group member and explain that the rocks represent the stone the angel rolled away from Jesus' tomb. Encourage members to carry the stones in their pockets or purses as a reminder that Jesus was physically resurrected from the dead—and that the evidence of His resurrection was seen by many witnesses.*

**Video Summary:** In this session, Dr. Evans talks about the good news of the resurrection and its importance for believers. The resurrection means that the price for our sins was paid, received, and accepted. This is the security and assurance for our eternal destiny. His resurrection affirms that death no longer has the last say for all who have placed faith in Him. His resurrection has eternal significance but we don't have to wait until heaven to reap the benefits—Jesus

Christ rose from the dead and has been transforming lives ever since. He forgives, changes weaknesses to strengths, reverses the course of lives, guides decision-making. He is what we need when we need it.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 6, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- What do you think it is about anticipating death that makes us fearful?
- How might a Christian's life reflect what he or she believes about Jesus' resurrection?

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD MATTHEW 28:1-10.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What questions do you have about the meaning of the resurrection?
- What new application do you hope to get from this passage?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO MATTHEW 28:1-7.

**QUESTION 2:** Why does it matter that Jesus physically rose from the dead?

We often settle for the "what" without drilling down to understand the "why." This question will provide that opportunity. Guide the discussion to help group members understand the significance of needing a risen Savior in whom to place our living faith.

**Optional follow-up:** *What evidence of Jesus' resurrection do you find most convincing? Why?*

**QUESTION 3:** In what ways has Jesus' resurrection impacted history?

This question gives group members an opportunity to look beyond how Jesus' resurrection has impacted their lives personally and consider the broader impact on history. Guide them to consider how the influence of His sacrifice on individual lives has impacted history through the church, society, etc.

**Optional follow-up:** *In what ways have you witnessed the power of Christ?*

CONTINUE WITH MATTHEW 28:8-10.

**QUESTION 4:** Why is worship still the appropriate response to the resurrection?

Answering this question will require group members to define for themselves what worship means and why they see it as important. Consider closing this discussion by reading together Psalm 95:1-6.

**Optional activity: Direct group members to complete the activity “Worship Him” on page 57.**

**QUESTION 5:** How will Jesus’ resurrection impact your life in the days to come?

This question requires group members to develop an intentional action plan for their lives based on the meaning of the resurrection. It promotes accountability and the need to act on biblical truth.

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** What can we learn from the repeated presence of fear in these verses?

This question asks group members to interpret the biblical text for their own lives. Encourage them to look beyond the words for godly principles.

**Optional follow-up: In what ways can you put those lessons to work in facing your own fears this week?**

### LIVE IT OUT

Encourage group members to consider the following suggestions of ways to respond to the hope of Jesus’ resurrection:

- **Seek peace.** Too many people allow the fear of the future to hold them back. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you embrace the peace that comes with eternal life through Christ.
- **Celebrate!** Jesus’ resurrection remains the best news anyone can hear. Therefore, make a concerted effort to celebrate that miracle this week. Give yourself permission to feel joy.
- **Pay it forward.** Someone told you about the gift of eternal life available in Christ. Do the same for someone else by explaining how they can have future hope in Christ.

**Challenge:** The message of the resurrection is that you and I can have the promise of eternal life. We can live forever and love forever. Such good news should affect what we do each day. Being mindful of this truth, make plans to take one action each day this week to live out the hope you have because of the resurrection.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by thanking the Lord for the miracle of love that was illustrated in the resurrection. Close your time by worshipping Him through the words of the psalmist in Psalm 95:1-6.

### SESSION 7: ASCENDED LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Jesus ascended to heaven but did not leave us alone.

**The Passage:** Acts 1:3-11

**The Setting:** Jewish officials did their best spin doctoring in their effort to control and shape the message about the empty tomb. But, they had no control over the resurrected Jesus. Over a 40-day period, Jesus appeared numerous times to various individuals and groups, presumably to encourage them and to teach them those things they had not been ready to learn before the crucifixion. At the end of 40 days, Jesus had one final appearance and word of instruction before returning to the Father in heaven.

**QUESTION 1:** Whose words always catch your attention?

**Optional activity: We can say that Jesus “did not leave us alone” because of the Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives. However, we aren’t always aware of the Spirit’s work and influence. As a way of illustrating the Spirit’s presence, bring a portable fan to the group meeting. Before moving into the main portion of this session, turn the fan to a low setting and position it so that group members experience a light breeze. Explain that the breeze should serve as a reminder of the Holy Spirit’s presence as you continue studying the life of Jesus.**

**Video Summary:** In this video message, Dr. Evans explains why Jesus ascended. Before He left, Jesus gathered His disciples to explain to them that in His absence He would be leaving someone to act in His place. While Jesus was on earth, He functioned where He was geographically. When He ascended, He sent His Holy Spirit to indwell and empower His followers who would then infiltrate the world with the good news of the gospel. Through the ascension of Jesus Christ, we are able to experience His unique spiritual presence and power.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 7, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- After watching the video message, in what way do you have a better understanding of Jesus' ascension?
- Which word do you think best describes Jesus' ascension—sad, hopeful, confusing, or amazing? Explain your answer.

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD ACTS 1:3-11.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What do you like about the text?
- What questions do you have about these verses?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO ACTS 1:3.

**QUESTION 2:** If you had a limited time with Jesus, what would you most want to learn?

Another way to phrase this question would be: "If you could have Jesus teach you one thing, what would it be?" As time allows, encourage group members to explain their answers.

**Optional follow-up: What have you learned or heard about the kingdom of God?**

MOVE TO ACTS 1:4-8.

**QUESTION 3:** In your own words, how would you describe the presence and work of the Holy Spirit?

This question provides group members with an opportunity to articulate the meaning of the presence

and work of the Holy Spirit. This activity will help them better define the concept for themselves as well as prepare them to share it with others.

**Optional activity: Direct group members to complete the activity "Plugged In?" on page 67. If time permits, ask volunteers to share what helps them connect with the Spirit's power each day.**

CONTINUE WITH ACTS 1:9-11.

**QUESTION 4:** Why is it important that Jesus' disciples witnessed His ascension?

This question allows group members an opportunity to process, through the filter of the biblical text, why Jesus felt it was important for His disciples to experience His ascension firsthand. Guide group members to consider the importance seeing the ascension played in the disciple's understanding of Jesus' heavenly position.

**QUESTION 5:** How does the promise of Jesus' return influence your daily decisions?

This question is designed to help group members apply the truth of the biblical text to their everyday lives and to make adjustments or put into place a more intentional plan if necessary.

**Optional follow-up: What emotions do you experience when you think about Jesus' return?**

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** What questions would you like to ask or discuss about the role of the Holy Spirit in our world? Hopefully group members will feel comfortable enough in your group to ask questions they may have. Be willing to start this discussion yourself to help others feel more comfortable. It's likely both believers and non-believers have or have had questions regarding the role of the Holy Spirit, but be sensitive to non-Christians who may be in the group.

**Optional follow-up: In what ways do you now feel better equipped to call on the power of the Holy Spirit in your life?**

## LIVE IT OUT

Invite members to consider the following options for responding to Jesus' ascension and eventual return:

- **Plug in.** Begin each day by asking the Holy Spirit to make Himself known in your life. Pray that He will offer clear directions as you weigh options and make decisions.
- **Research.** Look through articles, sermons, podcasts, or books in order to broaden your understanding of the Holy Spirit and His role in your life.
- **Let go.** Our future is in heaven with Jesus. Therefore, choose to let go of something—a possession, a grudge, a way of life—that keeps you tethered to this world.

**Challenge:** Consider using a physical object to remind yourself about the Holy Spirit's presence in your life this week. Wear a wristband, for example, or carry something in your pocket that symbolizes the Spirit's presence.

**Pray:** Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests. As the leader, close by asking the Lord to help each of you remember that even though Jesus ascended to heaven, He did not leave us alone. Thank Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

## SESSION 8: EXALTED LIKE NO OTHER

**The Point:** Honor Jesus as Lord.

**The Passage:** Ephesians 1:7-10,18-23

**The Setting:** As Paul wrote to the Ephesian believers, he doesn't seem to have been addressing any particular local theological or moral problems. He had already spent three years in the city on his third missionary journey, and the church there had already benefited from the ministries of Aquila and Priscilla as well as Apollos. Rather than intervening in problem areas, Paul wrote to emphasize the significance of the believers as the body of Christ, and began by stressing the blessings believers have in Christ.

**QUESTION 1:** What's your favorite way to honor others?

**Optional activity: Emphasize the theme of honoring others by using your group meeting as**

**a venue to honor someone known by most group members. For example, you could honor your pastor or another member of your church staff. Or you could honor a group member who has a birthday coming up, just got a promotion, has been in the group longest, and so on. Bring food, say something kind, and help group members get a taste of what it means to show honor to someone else—all as a way to help them think through what it means to honor Jesus as Lord.**

**Note:** Be sure to plan ahead for this celebration. Attempting something spontaneous could backfire in several ways.

**Video Summary:** In this closing session, Dr. Evans explains God's intention that all of life and history revolve around His Son, Jesus Christ. And, in turn, our lives are to revolve around Him as well. When God's philosophy about Jesus becomes our philosophy about Jesus, we will experience more of Him because we are being ruled by Him. When we exalt the Son of God by making Him Lord in our lives, we have access to the riches of the Father.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 8, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- In your opinion, what does the life of someone who exalts the Lord look like? Be specific.
- What is it about your life that makes others want to know Jesus?

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ ALOUD  
EPHESIANS 1:7-10,18-23.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What questions do you have about these verses?
- What do you hope to gain from learning what it means to honor the Lord?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO  
EPHESIANS 1:7-10.

**QUESTION 2:** What causes us to honor Jesus as Lord in some areas of life but not in others?

Identifying difficulties and barriers associated with honoring Jesus as Lord should move members along a continuum that culminates with discovering how they can better live lives that honor Him in everything.

**Optional follow-up: How have you experienced the blessings described in this passage?**

**Optional activity: Direct group members to complete the activity “Showing Honor” on page 77. If time permits, encourage volunteers to share how they honor people in different roles.**

MOVE TO EPHESIANS 1:18-21.

**QUESTION 3:** How do you respond to the truth that Jesus has authority over your everyday life?

The intent of this question is to prompt interaction with the biblical text and reveal attitudes and conclusions that may have prevented members from considering how Jesus’ authority impacts their lives in the day-to-day.

**Optional follow-up: How is the lordship of Jesus different from the role of a boss or a CEO?**

**QUESTION 4:** How does acknowledging Jesus’ authority over every area of your life benefit you?

This question is intended to help group members make the connection between doing what is asked of us as believers—to honor Jesus as Lord—and the benefits we receive from doing so. You may want to spend some time talking about such benefits as “the glorious riches of His inheritance” (v. 18) and “the immeasurable greatness of His power” (v. 19).

CONTINUE WITH EPHESIANS 1:22-23.

**QUESTION 5:** What steps can our group take to honor Jesus as head of the church?

Encourage group members to be specific in working together to answer this question. What *practical* steps can your group take to honor Jesus as head of the church?

**Optional follow-up: What steps can we take as individuals?**

**Note:** The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion

as time allows.

**QUESTION 6:** When are we often tempted to honor something or someone other than Jesus as Lord of our lives?

What we say we believe isn’t always the truest indicator of what we really believe. The truest indicator of what we believe is behavior. This question asks the group to consider instances when their behavior may reveal something other than what they think they believe about God. The follow-up question will help them develop a plan for change if necessary.

**Optional follow-up: What intentional actions can you take moving forward to make sure you aren’t tempted to misplace your honor?**

### LIVE IT OUT

Invite group members to consider the following ways they can honor Jesus with their thoughts, words, and actions:

- **Thoughts.** At the end of each day, ask yourself: *Did my thoughts honor the Lord? Or was I preoccupied with myself?*
- **Words.** Make it a habit of showing Jesus honor through your words by talking to others with the honor they deserve as people made in His image. Set a goal of avoiding sarcasm and negative speech for a full day.
- **Actions.** Keep a journal for one week of how you spend your time. After reviewing your journal, assess if you are honoring Jesus with the first place position in your life.

**Challenge:** The life and ministry of Jesus does not end. He is in His rightful and exalted place in heaven—and He is in you. Take some time this week to read and meditate on Ephesians 2:5-6 and allow His story to flow through the story of your life.

**Pray:** As the leader, close this final session of *Like No Other* in prayer. Ask the Lord to help each of you continue to live out the reality of who He is and the truths learned in this study. Conclude by committing to let His life and ministry flow through the story of your life.