

LAUNCH

General leader's notes

Dear Launch Leader,

Thank you for your willingness to lead new believers at the start of their walk with Christ. What an exciting time in their lives! As you journey with them, may God bless your time and efforts, and may he be glorified as these new Christians draw closer to him.

The following pages contain leader's notes that are applicable to all 10 Launch sessions. Note that you will also need to review the separate leader's notes for each session that you lead, including preparing your own answers to Bible Encounter questions and other exercises.

If you have questions about leading a Launch group or how to use the website in general, please contact the InterVarsity Evangelism Department at evangelism@intervarsity.org.

Blessings,
The Launch Team

CHECKLIST

Personal Prep:

- Review the entire session online
- Read the leader's notes for that session and make notes in the spaces provided
- Pray for each member of your group and your time together

Materials Prep:

- Snacks and drinks (or potluck)
- Extra Bibles
- Box of tissues
- Copies of the session's Scripture passage and other handouts for each participant
- Extra pens or pencils

Equipment Prep:

- Laptop, smartphone, or other WiFi-enabled device
- Fully charged battery and/or available power source
- Internet access

▶ WELCOME

Handouts and Snacks Pass out the session's scripture passage and any other handouts to each person as they arrive and get settled. Offer snacks and drinks if you have made them available. If participants take turns bringing snacks, make sure to thank the person who brought them.

What To Say Give a sincere and warm welcome to each person, letting them know you are glad they chose to come to the session. Then, share the vision for the group every time you meet:

I'm so glad each of you is participating in Launch. The Launch website and the studies we'll do together are going to build a solid foundation for your relationship with Jesus. During our small group time together, we'll be exploring answers to the top questions new Christians on college campuses have about their relationship with God.

If the group has met a few times, most people should feel comfortable with each other, but don't take that for granted. Continue to be a great host. Now is the time for you as a leader to be bold in calling them followers of Jesus, and conveying the expectation that they will fully follow through on their commitment.

Ground Rules At your group's first Launch session, share the ground rules for participating:

This group will be as good as we make it. It will be built on our discussion, not on my knowledge or teaching ability. So how we share together will make or break how our group goes. To make our group as valuable to each of us as possible, here are some guidelines for our times together:

- 1. Have fun.*
- 2. Ask questions. Any question that is sincerely asked is a great question.*
- 3. Answer questions. Contribute to the conversation, being careful not to dominate the discussion.*
- 4. Respect and affirm each other. Listen attentively and be open to each other. If you feel genuine appreciation for a person's idea or insight, tell them.*
- 5. Stay on task. Try to find answers from the session's Scripture passage. If our group regularly goes off on tangents, we may never get anywhere.*
- 6. Be open to spiritual growth.*

▶ SESSION TABS

Each session has 6 segments navigated by tabs:

Starter ▶ **Story Part 1** ▶ **Bible Encounter** ▶ **Story Part 2** ▶ **Experience** ▶ **On Your Own**

It is recommended that your group go through all tabs from start to finish. However, as the leader, you may opt to shorten the session by skipping certain questions or exercises as you deem appropriate. This will require reviewing the session ahead of time to plan which portions to focus on and which to omit.

Starter The purpose of the first video clip is to ease into the topic. Keep in mind that, depending on your Internet connection, videos throughout the entire session may load slower than desired. Rather than enduring awkward silences, do your best to continue the discussion while the video loads.

The question after the video is simply to get people talking, so encourage each person to share for a minute or less. It may help if you share first. Your goal is to help people feel comfortable to ask hard questions and share vulnerably from their life experience. Take initiative in setting the pace for the kind of openness you want to see among participants; this is why it is helpful to review each session's leader's notes and prepare your personal examples in advance.

Story Part 1 Feel free to watch the video in full-screen mode. An alternate story is provided in written form should you either prefer the alternate story or not have access to the video. After the story has been watched or read, ask the discussion question and spend a few minutes sharing.

Bible Encounter Read the context for the Scripture and how it relates to the theme of the session. Then, have participants take turns reading verses from the passage aloud.

Each session's leader's notes provide bullet points for each of the questions to help you prepare and facilitate the discussion. You do not need to get across all the points in the notes; make sure to highlight a few that you definitely want to cover in the time you have. After going through the questions, use your own words to recap or read the summary provided.

Story Part 2 Feel free to watch the video in full-screen mode. If you chose to use the alternate story in Story Part 1, read the second half.

Experience Exercises are provided to reinforce what was learned in the Bible Encounter and get participants to think about next steps related to the theme.

On Your Own This tab provides Bible studies, videos, audio, books, articles, and other websites for participants to explore at their convenience between sessions. At the end of each session, tell the group they can explore more about the topic you've just studied before your next meeting by going to the Launch website and selecting the On Your Own tab for the session you've just completed.

► CLOSING

Choose Next Session List the remaining sessions your group hasn't yet completed, and have the group choose which one they would like to do next.

How do I know God loves me?
How do I make a difference in a messed-up world?
How do I hear from God?
How do I learn something from the Bible?
Why do I need Christian community?
How do I talk about what God's doing in my life?
How do I make lifestyle changes and keep my friends?
Does God have a "calling" for me?
Am I too broken for God to fix?
What if I doubt God sometimes?

Housekeeping Decide when and where you will meet for the next session, and who will provide a light snack for the group, if desired.

Prayer You may opt to close the session with prayer, or simply adjourn. Let participants know how much you want to see them again, and how excited you are to be getting this kind of encouragement in your own relationship with God.

► FOLLOW UP

Check-In #1 Send a group or individual e-mail, Facebook message, or text 1-2 days after the group meets. Remind them of the On Your Own tab by providing the link within the body of your message. If the completed Launch session had specific action items, gently hold participants accountable to completing them. Remind everyone of the next meeting time and location, and tell the person whose turn it is to remember snacks for the next session. Affirm where everyone is in their journey. Tell them you are growing through this process as well, and that their feedback and insights are important to the whole group.

You may want to specifically encourage 1-2 people with something you appreciated about what they contributed last time. Offer to meet with anyone who may have more questions or wants to talk more about a particular issue raised in the session. If you feel someone would benefit from one-on-one discipleship before the next meeting, you may want to give them a separate call to set up a time to meet in person.

Check-In #2 Text each person the day before your next meeting. Give the time and location, and let them know you're excited to see them again.