

Lesson 6

One Thing

A 7-Week Study Guide

Are you someone who usually procrastinates or likes to prepare?

Hey Life Group Leaders! Welcome to Week 6 as we continue with our new Life Group Video Series, "One Thing!" We hope that this series continue to be uplifting, challenging, and help you find your next step in your journey with God!

This week, once again you have six questions coming up based on the video lesson this week! Remember that these leader notes are to serve as a guide for further and deepening conversation with your Life Group, not as the answers! Enjoy this week's discussion and always remember to ask an extra question such as "Why do you believe that?" to draw out some more conversation from your group members!

To start of this lesson, this is a very simple "get to know you" question with a great opportunity for your whole group to share. It may help if you, as the leader, are transparent and willing to share. This can be a fun way to share stories and learn more about the people in your group.

Read Acts 4:13. What astonished the leaders? Where did the power that astounded the leaders come from? How have you seen that same power at work in the lives of others?

Acts 4:13 reads, *"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

According to these passages, the leaders were astonished by the courage of the unschooled, ordinary men. They also seemed to acknowledge that this power came from Peter and John's close proximity and relationship to Jesus.

Many of us have known people with a deep and powerful relationship with Jesus. They seem to have a peace about them through many situations that are chaotic. They have courage and strength to do things for God's kingdom that others would not. They show love and care for people in ways that bring peace and courage to others. They seem to have a good focus on God's direction in their lives and know when God is guiding them towards paths that wouldn't make sense otherwise. There are many other examples of evidence that people have a close relationship with Jesus. Enjoy listening to your group share.

Read Romans 12:9 and 1 Peter 3:15. What do Paul and Peter write about sharing our faith? How might we lose influence if the sharing of our testimony is heavy handed or comes with an agenda other than Jesus?

Romans 12:9 reads, *"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."*

1 Peter 3:15 reads, *"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect"*

Love is the mark of the true Christian. We never run out of ways to love; we will never lack for occasions to love; we will never come up short of people to love. At the same time, keep our hearts and minds focused on Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. He is our true North as Christian sojourners. Gentleness and respect come from an abundance of love. All of this works together with the love of Jesus at the very center.

Our "loss of influence" may have something to do with how we go about getting our way or "making things right." Some of us have a mentality that will say, Jesus' teachings and way of life are a nice idea, but when you want to get things done, you have to do it in a way that ... you can fill in the blank there. We've all seen that scenario play out even if those exact words are not uttered. Jesus had gentleness and respect as he loved people through their difficulties. Those people clambered to get near him! Why would people who were so unlike Jesus, really want to be near him?

In the lesson, the point was made that if we're obedient to Jesus and consistent in our character then opportunities to share our faith will come. How have you seen this true in your life or in the lives of others?

This is another opportunity for everyone in the group to share their thoughts. Even if they have not thought about this situation very long, based on the sermon and video lesson, everyone will have something to share even if it is in disagreement. Encourage your group members to share the "why" behind their answers with biblical backing. Even if some in your group have not seen this play out, you may still discuss the concept of good and true character inviting conversations.

What does it look like to focus on the gospel as we share our testimony?

We first need to determine what is the gospel. Ephesians 2:1-10 is a pretty great condensed version of the gospel. It's fairly short, yet it packs a lot of meat into the passage. We were dead, but God "made us alive together with Christ." The same resurrection life that coursed through Jesus' body on the morning of the resurrection now, by a kind of spiritual capillary fashion, courses through our bodies also! This is all done by grace, God's free gift to us, that we accept through faith in the resurrection of Jesus. Then we go and do what God has created us to do.

The question then is, how are you living your life that reflects this gospel? How are you taking the grace that God gave you, and putting it to work in the kingdom of God. God planned beforehand and created you to do good works in his kingdom. How is your "new life" reflecting this process? That is sharing the gospel as seen in your life.

What does it look like to focus on the gospel as we share our testimony?

Our Christian testimony is comprised of 3 elements:

- Who we were before trusting Christ
- How we came to know and trust Him
- What changed in our life as a result

Practice sharing: have some people briefly share an answer to one of the 3 elements. This can be a very fun way to get to know people in your group. It may be a little bit scary at first. But the more that people share, the more comfortable others will be. It would be a really good idea to put a time limit (say three minutes) on each person sharing. There are a ton of details that can be summed up in a sentence or so. This does take practice, so show grace on people, but still move the discussion along. ;)

Once again, it may help if you, as the leader, are transparent and willing to share. This can be a fun way to share stories and learn more about the people in your group.

Have you ever written down your testimony? If not, keeping in mind what Pastor Dusty shared and what your group discussed, take some time this week to write down your testimony.

To close this lesson up for this week, this is a good opportunity for some home-work assignments. If you did the previous exercise in question 6, you have already made a good dent in this process. Now write some things down and expound a bit. Keep in mind, when sharing with someone, there are different time allotments you are going to have given certain scenarios and circumstances. It's good to have a 2-minute, 10-minute, 30-minute (you get the idea) version of your story. Having your story written out is a great way to know how to share in the future because you've had the chance to really think and pray through this process.

Take a few minutes to:

- Write down one personal takeaway from this lesson.
- Now, write about how this takeaway could be applied to your life.
- Finally, if you're comfortable doing so, share your takeaway and life application with the group.

If you have a chance to give the group time to do this exercise, it would be good ... but don't feel pressure to rush through the other questions (if you're having healthy discussion) to do this exercise. If you run out of time but still want to take part in this exercise one idea is for group members to do this on their own time during the week and share what they've written with other group members via email or text.