

FOLLOWER

LIVING AN AUTHENTIC FAITH



Our event is finally here! We're so excited that you've encouraged and allowed your child to participate. It's going to be an amazing time of fun, community, and meaningful spiritual growth.

As promised, here is the document that will help you know exactly what your child will be learning over the course of the event. As I mentioned, the theme of the event is "Follower: Living An Authentic Faith." As I mentioned in the previous letter I sent you, there is a craving in our world for realness. (The buzzword "authentic" is a buzzword for a reason.) The great thing is that *Follower* will teach your teenager what an authentic relationship with Christ looks like, and will empower them to live out this faith in their daily lives. They will see in powerful ways that the call to live out a faith that's true and real in today's world starts with the call to be a follower. *A Christ-follower.*

Your teenager will learn these truths most intently in his or her small group time. For each small group session your child will participate in, I've included both an overview of the content, and some suggested takeaways you could utilize to help your child apply these truths in his or her life.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Again, thank you for your support and for the amazing job you do of steering your child's spiritual growth.

Follower Small Group Session 1

The first small group session was entitled "The Call To Follow." The purpose of this session was to introduce the concept of "following" as the true foundation for the teenagers' faith-relationship with Christ, and to get them thinking about whether or not they follow Christ's example or someone else's.

Your teenager looked at the following passages with his or her small group:

- **Main Scripture:** Matthew 4:17-22, Matthew 9:9, John 1:43
- **Supplemental Scripture:** Matthew 16:21-26

Next Steps . . .

As you go through the week, find a few occasions to circle back around with your child, picking back up on some of the themes of the event.

- Ask your teenager to define in his or her own words what it means to be a follower of Christ. Ask why following is seen as the foundation of living an authentic faith.
- Talk about how Christians are perceived by others. Discuss with your teenager whether or not that would be any different if all or even most Christians truly followed Christ.
- Ask your teenager if he or she can come up with a new focus or initiative, based on some of the principles of their time studying *Follower*, for your family to help you grow closer to Christ.

Follower Small Group Session 2

The second small group session was entitled “What Does It Mean To Follow?” The point of the lesson was to help students define what it means to follow Jesus, and to challenge them to compare their own faith with this definition, looking for ways they’re both on and off track.

Your teenager looked at the following passages with his or her small group:

- Matthew 16:24, John 12:25-26, Matthew 3:1-10, Matthew 10:37-39

Next Steps . . .

As you go through the week, see if you can find some time to engage your child in a recap of what he or she remembers about the exchange of self for Christ.

- Discuss with your teenager the idea of “denying” his or her self as it relates to following Jesus. Ask if he or she remembers discussing this and why it’s so important in learning to truly follow after God.
- Share with your child some of the areas in your own life that are hard to surrender to God. Ask him or her to share with you. Ask how you can help your teenager with giving up these areas to God’s leadership.
- Brainstorm with your teenager some ways your family can follow Jesus more actively together. Then, commit to following through and actually doing the things you planned.

Follower Small Group Session 3

The third small group session was entitled, “The Cost Of Following.” The point of the lesson was to remind students that following Jesus is not without its cost, but to encourage them that following Christ is still the only way to real life.

Your child looked at the following passages with his or her small group:

- Luke 9:57-62, John 15:18-21, John 16:33

Next Steps . . .

Finding opportunities to talk about our attitudes toward others is pretty easy! Look for a chance to be intentional about talking with your child about this idea of exchanging hate for love.

- Engage in a discussion about what challenges your teenager faces as he or she chooses to follow Christ in their day-to-day lives.
- Ask your child to share with you the tension he or she feels between wanting to be accepted and wanting to stand for his or her convictions.
- Help your teenager understand that you make similar choices as an adult. Consider sharing with him or her a time where you faced some difficulty because of your faith.

Follower Small Group Session 4

The fourth small group session was entitled, "A Boost For The Journey." The point of the lesson was to encourage students as they commit to pursuing an authentic faith with Christ, empowering them to make real change in their lives.

Your child looked at the following passages with his or her Small Group:

- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 2 Corinthians 4:7-9, John 14:25-27, Hebrews 12:1-3

Next Steps . . .

- Talk with your family over dinner or a car ride about what it means to be called by God to make an impact on this world.
 - Ask your teenager to help you understand some ways you might be an encouragement to him or her as he or she strives to live the life of a Christ-follower.
 - Ask your teenager how he or she might lead your family in encouraging one another. Come up with some fun and creative ways and then help him or her follow through in implementing them.
 - Ask if your child would share a time that his or her faith in Christ helped pull him or her through a tough spot. Consider sharing a similar story with your teenager.