

Legacy

Leader Guide

Hope for the Dying

<http://www.last.fm/music/Hope+For+The+Dying>

Album Title: *Legacy*

Facedown Records

Song: Legacy

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Theme

Testimony / God's Provision

Objective

The objective of this Bible Study is to lead your students to a greater understanding of what it means to live a life of purpose and think about what they are leaving behind for the next generation. It is important for us to get a fresh glimpse of what it means to be a follower of Christ. In today's society, we have lost our sense of identity. The early church knew who they were, what they believed, and why they believed it. This Bible Study will open the door for your students to embrace a Legacy of Faith left to us by Jesus and be motivated to leave a lasting Spiritual mark on their home, their school, their community, and their world.

Warm Up

As students arrive, have them break into 2 groups. You will be playing a game called *Legacy Charades* with your students. Hand them cards that you have prepared ahead of time.

Prep: The cards should have the following:

Animal Name: (Example: Bats)

List one Belief people have about this animal – True or False (Example: You will turn into a Vampire if bitten by a bat)

How do people Behave when they encounter this animal (Example: Run Screaming)

What is the name for the grouping (Belonging) of that animal: (Example: Colony)

Each group will have a chance to play a couple rounds depending on the time you have left. Hand one card to the member of the team who will be acting out. Let them read the card. Each team will have 2 minutes to guess which animal is being acted out based on the clues on their card. They cannot speak. They can only act out those attributes of Believing, Behaving and Belonging.

Transition

The church in China is expected to reach 247 million within the next decade. The church in India is still growing at a rapid pace. We sit and scratch our heads and wonder how this is possible. How can this be? We think we know all the answers. We claim to have God figured out. We think we can predict what comes next. "We claim to know the secrets, the answers have been found, but how can one fool make another wise?" We cannot predict God's movement any more than we can predict the weather. We need to get back to the basics. We need to unite around the "God of Mission" and find out where he is working and join him there.

The western church has portrayed Jesus a type of spiritual "Superman" that came to rescue us from our sins. I believe this is a distorted view of what Christ came to do. The history of the incarnation and the struggle that the early Church Fathers had over this issue seemed to divide them on how to describe the incarnation. Some

believed that Jesus' divinity and humanity were separate and never affected the other. Others believed that they kind of worked together as if Jesus was like Superman. His humanity was like Clark Kent and His Divinity was that of a super hero. The way we view the incarnation will have a great influence on how we approach youth ministry.

A proper view of the incarnation will allow us to share that Jesus did not come to give us a "gift", but to be there "for us". The incarnation will allow us to share with students the true hope that Jesus offers. By God choosing to come "in the flesh", we have a Savior who understands us. He will be there when we need Him. If we act as if God is this great benefactor that does great things for us, we will have a skewed perspective of what God is trying to do in our lives. God is not just "doing things" for us. God is "for" us and he wants us to leave a Legacy of Faith for future generations.

What is a Legacy?

What are some of your family's Legacies?

What Legacy did Jesus leave for us?

The Video

Hope for the Dying *Legacy*

Transition

You may need to build another bridge between the song and the Bible study section. This will likely involve asking some open-ended questions about what the group just saw, or going back over the lyrics and generating some feedback.

Bible Study

In Harper's, *The Way to Heaven*, we see the emergence of a new type of Christ follower. Harper paints the picture of this new believer as following a movement of God. This move of God is a new wine like that which was poured out in the power of God's Spirit on the disciples of Jesus. But it also requires a new wineskin. The early church's way of thinking about the church's mission and what constitutes success is vastly different from what we see in the majority of church ministries today. The younger evangelicals are rejecting how modern churches tend to measure success. They now want to examine the viewpoint of achieving an early church missional focus.

The lack of direction and misguided measurements for success of many churches boils down to a failure to focus on the mission of the church as defined by its early members. Most church leaders think their mission is to build up the church out of the life of the community. In reality, Jesus calls us to a transformational mission that builds up the community out of the life of the church. The younger evangelical sees the church as the agent of change within the community much like that of the early church.

Read Acts 2:42-47

The first, second, and third century Christians were about this kind of transformational mission. They preached and practiced a Christ-like life in the communities where they lived. Being a follower of Jesus wasn't a separate church function of their lives in which they participated once a week; it was their life in community with one another. This is what defined them. When new believers were added to the church, scripture states, "They devoted themselves to the apostle's teachings and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42, NIV). These early Christians had a mindset vastly different from our western twenty-first century world. They saw prayer, walking in the Spirit, working at their jobs, caring for their families, ministering to those in need, and the rest of their lives not in compartmentalized facets, but as a whole—integrated and continuous. This is true of the younger evangelicals today. They really want to get back to a holistic approach of the Christian life.

So the emerging church in the first century tended to see prayer and faith and worship and loving others as Christ loved as an integrated whole. Church wasn't a weekly event, separate from their daily living. They *were* the church. That is what defined them. The Younger Evangelicals do not want to just think and talk about Christ one day of the week in a building somewhere. They don't think in terms of participating in a church program or just attending a series of events. They want to experience the totality of what Jesus was all about and model it daily before their children and within their community. They understand the mission Jesus gave them as a journey, a relational pilgrimage of becoming more and more like their Lord, a mission that is to be lived out in every aspect of their lives *within* their community locally. It is an experiential relationship with Jesus that transforms their attitudes and actions. Their corporate prayer and worship in a fellowship is borne out in the attending to the physical and emotional needs of people by caring for the sick, feeding the hungry, and befriending the outcasts and rejects of society. Their mission is to raise up transformed followers of Jesus by seeing people in their community redeemed spiritually as well as restored physically, relationally, economically, etc. Those early Christ-Followers left us a legacy to follow.

What Legacy did the Early Church leave us?

What will your Legacy look like?

What Legacy will you leave behind???

Read Act 1:6-8

As I listened to *Legacy*, I could not help but think of my own Christian walk and how it has evolved over the years. When I first came to Christ, I was a real legalist. Things had to be done a certain way or you were going to hell. I did not give anybody any slack. I not really interested in help serve people. I just want to tell the truth of the Gospel and not really move to much farther beyond that. That was until I had a unique experience happen to me in college. When I was in college, I accepted Christ and got involved in the local Baptist Student Union (BSU). After I was there for a few months, I volunteered to lead a Bible Study on Campus. One day I was running late, so I grabbed my materials and ran up the hill to the building where the Bible Study was being held. As I approached the top of the hill, a homeless man started toward me. When I saw him, I moved to the other side of the street. So he moved to the other side of the street. I switched sides a few time, but he always followed me. In my mind I said, "I do not have time for this. I am late. Maybe I can give him a few bucks and he will leave me alone. So as I approached him, I pulled a few dollars out and handed it to him. As he took the money, he grabbed my hand. He would not let it go. He said' "Before you go, I have a quick question to ask you". I thought, "Ok here comes this guy's sob story." He asked me "Do you know Christ?" My heart sank. He said' "I see college kids go by all the time and I wonder if they know Jesus." At that moment I felt 2 inches tall. Here I was going to teach a Bible Study about Christ and missed an opportunity to minister to someone else. As we talked, he told me that it was hard to share with people because he did not have a bible. I had some with me so I gave him one. I walked away changed that day.

Whose Legacy are you following?

What Legacy are you leaving (modeling) for your family?, friends?, church?, community?

How can you as a generation leave a Legacy within your community, your state, the US, and the World?

Wrap Up

I believe God is raising up a new breed of Christ followers who want nothing more than a mighty move of his Spirit. God is calling each of us to return to the purity of the early church. I believe that people around us need to experience a face-to-face encounter with God, be united as a body in continual prayer, and engage their communities with a culturally relevant message and lifestyle. We must heed the call of the apostle who said, "I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is that too much to ask? Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world [not even the behavior of the religious world], but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do..." (Romans 12:1-2, NLT).

Read Romans 12:1-2

I have realized that instead of leading people to say the prayer of accepting Christ, it is more about coming out of our upper rooms of prayer empowered by God's Spirit to lead them to a face-to-face encounter with God and a spiritual formation process played out in the cycle of **believing, behaving, and belonging**. This establishes a grid by which we measure our lives in relationship with Jesus. Rather than focusing on church attendance, donations, and the number of programs and events I attend, I see that my journey must focus on getting to know Jesus intimately for who he really is and becoming shaped and formed by the power of God's Spirit in very specific areas of my lives. In doing so, I will be better equipped to fulfill the "zip-code" ministry that God has called me to.

Ask students to consider the following questions:

Do my beliefs have an impact on my Legacy?

Does my behavior have an impact on my Legacy?

Do the groups I belong to have an impact on my Legacy?

As you close remind students that the Legacy that they leave behind is up to them and by Believing, Behaving, and Belonging to the body and mission of Christ will leave a Legacy for many generations to come.