



TEACH IT TALK SESSION 4

This talk guide is just that: a guide. It's not intended to be a manuscript to read aloud. It's here to give you ideas, structure, and stories to blend with your personal study (Prep It) as you prepare your talk.

The content complements the other Teach It guides and allows you to give a talk on the same topic students are studying in other settings, such as small groups, without too much overlap.

1. Materials (Optional)

- *Let's Make a Deal* supplies: trivia questions on cards from your favorite trivia game or ones you've created based on local or pop culture, a few nice prizes, such as gift cards or candy bars, a few not-so-nice prizes, such as cans of vegetables
- Before your session make arrangements to be able to facilitate any challenges you give your students as part of the Wrapping It Up activity, in which students individually talk or pray about their salvation or about a friend who needs Jesus.

2. Optional Openings

VISUAL ILLUSTRATION

Play a couple rounds of *Let's Make a Deal*. Ask a trivia question (from your favorite trivia game or questions you've made up), and reward the winner with a gift card or candy bar. When the winner comes forward for the prize, offer the choice of taking the prize or trading it for what's in the envelope (or behind the curtain). You can create a little tension by implying the value of the prize could go either direction. It could be a bigger gift certificate, a supersize candy bar, or a can of lima beans.

QUOTATIONS

Share a few of these quotations to help students define and assess the value of good news and perhaps contrast it with bad news. One way to incorporate these quotations is to ask for a show of hands as to whether students either agree or disagree with the statement or think the statement is true or false.

Nothing travels faster than light, with the possible exception of bad news, which follows its own rules.

—Douglas Adams (1952-2001, British comic writer)

Never awake me when you have good news to announce, because with good news nothing presses; but when you have bad news, arouse me immediately, for then there is not an instant to be lost.

—Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821, French general, politician and emperor)

For most folks, no news is good news; for the press, good news is not news.

—Gloria Borger (1952-present, American journalist, political analyst and commentator)

Bad news travels fast.

—American proverb

The news media are, for the most part, the bringers of bad news...and it's not entirely the media's fault; bad news gets higher ratings and sells more papers than good news.
—Peter McWilliams (1949-2000, American writer and activist)

PERSONAL STORY

Share a personal story of hearing unexpected or great news. Here's an example:

I remember waking up on snowy mornings and sprinting downstairs to watch the news. I'd switch from channel to channel. I'd listen to the radio while I was watching TV. I was desperate for Wilson Hill Elementary School to pop up in the canceled school list. When the Ws would scroll by, I'd sit up a little higher. I'd scoot a little closer to the TV. Those Ws seemed to last forever. When they announced that Wilson Hill Elementary was canceled for the day due to snow, life just peaked. There was no better news to be had. I could sleep in. The irony was that I was so pumped by the news I couldn't go back to sleep. No school? This wasn't good news. This was great news.

3. Digging In

Continue with—

Some probably wonder why the gospel is called good news. In fact I'd include myself in the "some." I associate good news with a good test grade or a cure for cancer. But there *is* a reason—actually many reasons—why you'd call the gospel good news. As I read these verses from 2 Timothy, listen to what happens to death, and listen for the word *gospel*.

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Timothy 1:9-10)

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel. (2 Timothy 2:8)

Did you catch it? Death is done. Wiped out. Finished. Destroyed. Conquered. I'm thinking that's good news.

4. Digging Deeper

Continue—

Imagine what it'd be like to spend your life handing out money. Think what it would be like to be the person who pulls up in the Prize Patrol van and hands people those huge checks. Everywhere you'd go, people would stop what they're doing and hope you'd stop in front of their house. You would change lives with one visit. People would talk for years about the time you showed up and gave them the news, "You're now a millionaire." That'd be a great job, wouldn't it? What could be better?

Really...what could be better? More money? I suppose that'd be a little better, but the difference between getting a giant check for one million dollars and five million dollars isn't all that different. Either way, you'd be changing people's entire economic condition—giving them the

OPTIONAL MIX-INS

You may want to point out a few expositional points about 2 Timothy:

-In New Testament times there was only one way to get your news, whether good or bad—via personal messenger. If the news was good, such as the outcome of a victorious battle or the birth of a child, the message was called euangelion (yoo-an-GHEL-ee-on), which literally means "good news."

-According to the Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, the Greek word euangelion combines angello, meaning "to proclaim news," with eu, meaning "well, good." This is the word translated in the Bible as "gospel"—and there's a reason why the Bible writers called the gospel "good news."

-This word euangelion appears more than 76 times in the New Testament. Sixty of these mentions are found in Paul's letters alone.

possibilities of getting a new home or car, quitting their job, maybe getting a load of cool new stuff.

Again, that'd be a pretty cool job, but what could be better? If changing someone's life is great, wouldn't changing his or her eternity be better? You wouldn't be changing his next 50 or so years; you'd be changing his next few *million* years.

So what could we possibly give someone that would impact his next million years? We can't really give them anything better than the best news they could ever hear. There's no greater honor, no better gift.

To have the words of eternal life is to have something better than the cure for cancer. As followers of Jesus we have the greatest job possible. Our gig is infinitely better than the guy driving the prize patrol. We don't have to drive around in a fancy van and carry balloons to the front door. We can have casual conversations with friends or relatives, telling them about a God who loves them more than they could ever ask or imagine. You could tell them about the gap that God bridged in order for them to know true life. You could tell them about the peace that Christ brings when he settles the turmoil going on inside. You could tell them about Jesus who was actually raised from the dead to make all this possible. It's the greatest opportunity we could ever hope for.

Paul writes in Romans 1:16-17 —

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'

5. Taking It Inward

Ask students to share a few different phrases that describe salvation. Here are some examples:

- getting saved*
- accepting Christ as your personal Savior*
- receiving the gospel*
- praying the sinner's prayer*
- becoming a believer*
- following Christ*

Continue—

Through the years each generation has come up with its own phrase to describe the process of embracing the good news. Sometimes these phrases sound a little tired or old-fashioned. Maybe it's time for a new phrase. Because here's the deal: The fact that the God of the universe, who is holy and pure, would want to have a relationship with us—people who are dirty and rebellious—is great news.

6. Wrapping It Up

Before your session make arrangements to be able to facilitate the following challenge. Options include having adults available to pray with your students; making yourself available at a determined location after your talk; or allowing for a response time after your talk.

Finish with—

You could take this one of two ways. First, has God's prize patrol come rolling by your house? Have you said yes to knowing Christ on an intimate basis? Have you said yes to having the rest of your life—and the next few million years in eternity—set? If not, maybe you'd like to do that before we wrap up our time here.

Second, do you have a friend who's ready for this prize? Maybe he or she is simply waiting for someone to tell him the good news—that Jesus has done something far better for them than giving them millions of dollars. Take a minute to think of one friend who might be ready for this prize.

Give students a minute of silence to think of a friend. Continue—

Picture that friend asking you about your Christian faith. Now think for a minute about how you would explain the gospel to your friend. Try to be creative in how you would explain it, avoiding clichés and phrases that could cause your friend to say, "I've already heard it all."

Allow students to think of their explanations. You may want to close your talk with a time for students specifically to pray for their friends.