



TEACH IT COLLEGE AGE SESSION 10

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- the Session 10 Scripture sheet
- the student journal page for Session 10
- his or her own Bible, a pen, and a notebook

You'll also need—

- a whiteboard and markers
- a pack of colored pencils (at least two colors per student)
- optional: projection presentation featuring famous farewell quotations

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 10

As students experience this session, they will—

- discover why Jesus spent a lot of time toward the end of his life (spanning nearly five chapters in John's Gospel) in an intimate, intense conversation with his disciples.
- explore Jesus' exclusive claims about who he is.
- explore some lofty promises Jesus made.
- be challenged to meet the conditions required to enjoy these promises.

PRAYER

After the students have gathered, pray for their time together as a group. Use Colossians 3:16 as the basis for your prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help Christ's words dwell richly in your group members' hearts.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

OPEN

Famous Farewells

Below are a few famous farewell quotations or sign-offs. Some are fictional; others are real. Read the quotations, and have the students guess the source and/or occasion of each one.

Captain: Don't grieve, Admiral. It is logical. The needs of the many outweigh...

Admiral: ...the needs of the few.

Captain: ...or the one.

—Movie: *Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan*; Spock to Kirk as Spock dies after saving the ship

Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the bad break I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth.



—Speech: Lou Gehrig, bidding farewell in an emotional ceremony at Yankee Stadium, July 4, 1939, two weeks after being diagnosed with ALS, a condition known today as Lou Gehrig’s Disease

Accordingly, I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as president.

—Speech: Lyndon B. Johnson, announcing he would not seek re-election, March 31, 1968—an unprecedented move for an incumbent president

Therefore, I shall resign the presidency effective at noon tomorrow.

—Speech: Richard M. Nixon, resigning the presidency of the United States, August 8, 1974

Good night, and God bless.

—TV-show sign-off: Red Skelton, legendary comedian

Good day.

—Radio-show sign-off: Paul Harvey, news commentator

I’ll be right here.

—Movie: *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*; ET, after touching Elliot’s forehead with his finger, just before returning to his extra-terrestrial home

And please remember, help control the pet population; have your pet spayed or neutered. Good-bye, everybody.

—Game-show sign-off: Bob Barker, *The Price Is Right*

Monsieur, I beg your pardon.

—Marie Antoinette, spoken to her executioner, after she accidentally stepped on his foot

Transition into the study by noting that Jesus himself had a few good-bye quotations. In fact, he gave nearly five chapters’ worth in the book of John!

3. Digging In

Words to Live By

Remind the group of the giant block of red ink they saw in Session 9—John 13–17. These chapters recount a long talk between Jesus and the disciples, which took place during Jesus’ final hours with them. You might call it Jesus’ “farewell address” to his friends. Explain that several times during this conversation, Jesus told the disciples *why* he was telling them these things. By looking at these moments, we can get a “big picture” overview of Jesus’ farewell address.

Ask for volunteers to look up the following passages in their Bibles:

John 14:28-29

John 15:10-11

John 15:18-19

John 16:1-7, 33

John 17:11

As they locate the passages, tell the group to pay attention as the volunteers read the verses aloud, listening for anything Jesus said about the situation the disciples were about to face. They should also pick up on any reasons *why* Jesus was having this talk with his friends.

After the volunteers have read the passages aloud, ask the students to tell you what was about to happen and why Jesus felt the need for this talk. We've noted possible observations below for your reference.

| | What situation were the disciples facing? | Why did Jesus say these things? |
|---------------|--|--|
| John 14:28-29 | <i>Jesus was going away (v. 28).</i> | <i>He said this so that when it happened, the disciples would believe (v. 29).</i> |
| John 15:10-11 | | <i>He said this so that Jesus' joy might be in them and that their joy might be made complete (v. 11).</i> |
| John 15:18-19 | <i>-The world was going to hate them, just as it hated Jesus (v. 18). -They didn't belong to the world (v. 19). -Jesus had chosen them out of the world (v. 19).</i> | |
| John 16:1-7 | <i>Heavy persecution was coming, possibly even death (v. 2).</i> | <i>-He said this so that they wouldn't go astray (v. 1). -He said this to warn them beforehand of what was going to happen (v. 4). -He said this because he wouldn't be physically with them anymore (v. 4).</i> |
| John 16:33 | <i>They were going to have trouble in this world (v. 33).</i> | <i>He said this so that in him they would have peace (v. 33).</i> |
| John 17:11 | <i>Jesus was leaving the world, but the disciples were staying behind (v. 11).</i> | |

After the volunteers have read the passages aloud, ask—

How would you sum up Jesus' reason for this talk with the disciples?

Possible responses: Jesus seems to be giving them a heads-up to expect hard times, telling them these things so that they won't go astray, and so that they'll have peace, even though they'll experience trouble.

Now tell the group—

- 1. Read John 14:1-14 using your Scripture sheets.**
- 2. As you read, mark with a cross  every mention of Jesus.**
- 3. Don't forget to include pronouns such as *I* and *my*.**

When most have finished (it's okay if some haven't), ask them to tell you all of the big statements Jesus made about himself in these verses. Record their observations on the left side of the whiteboard. As they share, the board will begin to look something like this:

| Jesus on Himself |
|--|
| <i>-He was going to his Father's house, to prepare a place for them/us (v. 2). -He is the way, the truth, and the life (v. 6). -You have to go through Jesus to get to God (v. 6). -If we really know Jesus, we know God (v. 7). -The words Jesus spoke were not his own, but the Father's living in him (v. 10). -He will do whatever we ask in his name (v. 13).</i> |

Now ask the group what promises Jesus made in John 14:12-14. Write these on the right side of the whiteboard. The info will look something like this:

Jesus' Promises

- If they believed in Jesus, they would do even greater things than Jesus because he was going to the Father (v. 12).
- Whatever they asked in his name, Jesus would do so that the Father might get glory (v. 13).
- If they asked anything in Jesus' name, he would do it (v. 14).

Help them process this info by asking the following questions:

Think about Jesus' reason for this conversation with his disciples: to keep them from going astray in a world that would soon bring them trouble. Which of Jesus' promises or claims about himself do you think were going to be the most helpful to the disciples? Why?

What about you? Everything Jesus said to his disciples can be true for us as well. Of all the points on the whiteboard, what speaks most to your situation?

Encourage them to discuss a few points from both lists.

Is it possible to follow Jesus as the way, truth, and life and still respect or be tolerant of other faiths? Is it necessary to be tolerant of other faiths?

We'll leave this question open-ended for you to discuss with your students. There may be widespread opinion among your students, as well as widespread experiences regarding their contact with other faiths. Allow a few minutes of discussion, but you may want to set up another time for the group to explore this further. The goal of this session isn't to present a defense of Jesus' claims, but to help students encounter Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life.

4. Cross-Checking



Did He Say "Greater"?

The next two exercises (Cross-Checking and Digging Deeper) are designed for students to do in solitude. Explain that Jesus made some radical promises and claims in John 14, and the students are going to take a moment to experience both a promise and a claim. Before they take off, tell your students—

- 1. Find places where you can be alone with God—perhaps a corner of the room, a hallway, or an empty room nearby—where you can listen to him without distractions.**
- 2. You'll need your Bibles, journal pages, and pens.**
- 3. The Cross-Checking and Digging Deeper exercises on your journal pages will help you explore the promise that you can do even greater things than Jesus, and Jesus' claim that he is the way, the truth, and the life.**

Before the group disperses, have a moment of prayer. Give this time to the Lord, asking him to help students have open minds and soft hearts to encounter him.

We've noted Scripture references and possible observations from the exercises below for your reference.

JOHN 14:12

What is required of us before we can do greater works than Jesus did?

We must have faith in him.

What would make this possible? (Look for where Jesus was going.)

Jesus was going to the Father.

ACTS 1:1-8

What did Jesus say we'd need in order to do great things?

He said we'd need power from the Holy Spirit (v. 8).

ACTS 2:32-41

In this scene, Peter experienced the results of what Jesus promised in Acts 1. What results do you see?

About 3,000 people accepted the message and were baptized in one day (v. 41)!

Could this be an example of the disciples doing “greater things” than Jesus? In what way?

In one day, more people accepted the message of the gospel than perhaps in Jesus' entire ministry. Jesus had to die, be raised again, and ascend to the Father for the gospel of salvation to exist. The disciples got the awesome job (the “greater works,” according to Jesus) of sharing that message by the power of the Holy Spirit—and of seeing lives transformed from darkness into light. And now that awesome job is ours!

5. Digging Deeper



Bold Claims, Bold Actions

JOHN 8:28-32

What actions does Jesus ask of us?

-He asks that we lift him up (v. 28).

-He asks that we hold to his teachings (v. 31).

If we do these things, what will happen to us? (Look for the word *then*. You'll find it twice.)

-If we do them, then (not before!) we'll know he's the one he claims to be (v. 28).

-If we do them, then (not before!) we'll know the truth, and it will set us free (v. 32).

JOHN 10:7-15

-Jesus is the gate (v. 7).

-Jesus came that we might have full life (v. 10).

-Jesus laid down his life for the sheep (v. 11, 15).

COLOSSIANS 2:1-10

-All the fullness of the Deity—God—lives in Christ in bodily form (v. 9).

-We have been given fullness in Christ (v. 10).

-Christ is the head over every power and authority (v. 10).

6. Taking It Inward

Taking Jesus at His Word

When most of your group members have finished, call them back together. Ask any volunteers to share about their encounters with Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life.

Then discuss these questions, allowing students to note their responses on their journal pages before sharing.

Following Jesus as the way and the truth is how we experience him as the life. But following him as the way and the truth may mean going against the grain around you (friends, schoolmates, teammates). Is it worth it to you?

Yes No Maybe



Explore the idea of “lifting Jesus up” with your students by sharing something like this:

In the passages you read, Jesus was clear about what it takes to experience him as the truth: *Lift him up and hold to his teachings.* When you think about lifting Jesus up, the first ideas that might come to mind could be things such as wearing a fish-symbol necklace or displaying a Jesus bumper sticker. These are great things to do, but they’re more along the lines of “promoting” Jesus than lifting him up. So how is lifting him up more than wearing a Jesus T-shirt? What opportunities do we have every day to lift Jesus up? How can life experiences—disappointments, temptations, decisions—be opportunities to lift Jesus up?

You’ll see these questions on your journal pages:

To what degree are you doing what Jesus is asking?

What are some specific things you can do to lift Jesus up and hold to his teachings?

Write down your responses in the space provided.

7. Wrapping It Up

Bringing Hope and Assurance Close to Home

Close the discussion by reminding your group *why* Jesus was having this talk with his disciples. He was getting ready to leave them, and life was about to get tougher. Ask a few volunteers to share one tough thing they’re facing this week, and let the group encourage them with a promise or assurance from Jesus’ conversation with his disciples.

After some have shared, ask for students to volunteer to check in on those students who shared about a tough thing coming up this week.

Close your session by asking for volunteers—as many as would like—to pray for your group, that each student will see opportunities this week to boldly lift Jesus up.