



TEACH IT TALK SESSION 5

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, allowing 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)

- **Movie/Video Clip:** Show three to four minutes of a movie scene, or play a music video along the lines of, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going” (a pep talk from a coach, a motivational combat talk from a military leader, etc.). You may be able to find a video montage of movie fight scenes called “Heroes in Training” at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=Hpun38yB00M>.
- **Leader List:** Before the talk, list on poster board the names of famous people from history, e.g., Gandhi, Isaac Newton, Mother Teresa, Napoleon Bonaparte, the Wright Brothers, George Washington, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Jesus. Do a Web search for a phrase such as “100 most influential people” for more ideas.
- **Quotations:** Collect leadership statements from famous people to share with the students.

EXERCISE HEADS-UP: The Session 6 Talk Session calls for a video option (Optional Openings: Pre-Session Video) that will require some advance preparation, including recruiting a few students. You may want to look at that option now if you're using that guide.

2. Optional Openings

MOVIE CLIP

Begin by showing the clip you chose to depict, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” Then talk briefly about the clip. Point out things such as how the leader tried to motivate the followers, the odds the underdogs were up against, or the obstacles the characters in the movie had to overcome.

VISUAL ILLUSTRATION

Show the poster board with the list of names, and ask students to yell out one-or two-word descriptions of each leader. Ask volunteers to tell you how any of these people fought against the political, social, religious, or popular thinking of the day. Share a few facts about each person. You may want to search the names on Wikipedia beforehand. Feel free to ask for students to yell out other names of influential leaders.

QUOTATIONS

Thirsty hearts are those whose longings have been awakened by the touch of God within them.
—A.W. Tozer (1897–1963, author and pastor)

Success is not measured by what a man accomplishes, but by the opposition he has encountered, and the courage with which he maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds.
—Charles A. Lindbergh (1902–1974, pioneering American pilot)

There are two kinds of people, those who finish what they start and so on.
—Robert Byrne (1928–present, American writer and novelist)

The time is always right to do what is right.

—Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968, minister and civil-rights leader)

And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.

—C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* (1898–1963, author, scholar, and Christian apologist)

3. Digging In

PERSONAL STORY

Share a story that illustrates a time when you made a decision to take a difficult road, even though you could have chosen an easy way out. For example:

- the time you helped a stranded motorist
- the time you offered to help a family member or elderly person over a long period of time
- the time you made a career or job change
- the time you participated in a mission experience or work camp
- the time you stood up to a friend (challenged a friend over a decision or pointed out a mistake)

Here's an example:

I'll never forget the day I told one of my best friends he was making a mistake. He had been dating a girl for a while—several months, maybe over a year—and he was about to pop the question. They had a decent relationship by most standards, but I saw her as someone who was on a husband hunt (her senior year of college—a marriage deadline for some people—was fast approaching), and I saw my friend as in a state of infatuation (she was very cute). Those factors didn't seem like good building blocks for a longstanding relationship, much less marriage.

I weighed the options and assessed the risks. Option one: I could let things slide and progress on a natural course. The main benefit of this option is that we'd all stay friends. And maybe things would work out just fine. But there was a huge downside: What if things didn't work out? And what if I was the only one who saw the truth of this relationship? Option two, then, would involve a confrontation, which would run the risk of ruining the friendship. It sure would have been easy to let things slide by. But I chose option two.

I got up the courage one evening and simply said to my friend, "I think you're making a big mistake." It caught him by surprise. But he didn't hit me. We had a very frank conversation about their relationship, and he assured me it was solid. He thanked me for the hard talk and proceeded to plan how he was going to propose to his girlfriend.

They got married. He's now a pastor, they have a great family, and we're all friends. So what do I know? Mainly, I'm not the person to ask for relationship advice. Even though things worked out well, I have to think that our conversation still played a part in the building of their relationship. I know it actually strengthened our friendship. I don't regret choosing the option to confront.

It was certainly not the easiest option, but, strangely, it was the most fulfilling. Funny how that works.

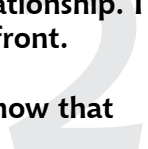
OPTIONAL MIX-INS

You may want to point out a few facts:

-In the Bible text for this talk, Jesus had just performed the miracle of feeding the multitudes with the five loaves of barley bread and two small fish.

-The people in the crowd were curious about this, but Jesus ducked out before the Q & A session. So they tracked him down.

-Jesus used this occasion to teach the crowd about one of many "I am's" that describe him in Scripture: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).



Tell your students—

In John 6:53-69, we see this:

Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.” He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.” From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION

Every day we all make choices between the easy and the difficult. We choose whom we’re going to love and whom we’re going to tolerate. In fact, think about this: Someone walks up behind you and smacks you on the shoulder. You turn around and it’s: 1) that annoying kid who’s always bugging you, or 2) your crush, that cute guy or girl you think about all of the time.

So how do you react? I’m guessing that depends on who it was who smacked you on the shoulder. If it’s the annoying kid, you probably frown, scowl, or yell and walk to your next class in a bad mood. If it’s the hottie, you’re probably still smiling because that person actually touched you. We choose to love some people and choose to not love others. The bottom line is that we go about our days making these choices.

It’s easy to choose the path of least resistance. It’s easy to smile at the crush and frown at the annoying kid. The measure of who we are comes when we’re confronted with a truth or an action that asks something of us. The crowd that was with Jesus had enjoyed an incredible miracle of food. They’d experienced something people would be talking about for years—actually, centuries. It’s easy to follow somebody who does cool things like that.

And then Jesus said something that wasn’t in the fun-and-easy category: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him” (John 6:56). That was new to the folks, and I’ll bet it sounded gross to some. It was a truth that asked something of them, and many walked away saying it was a hard teaching. They couldn’t get their minds off the easy path.

4. Taking It Inward

Continue with—

In the same way, you and I choose what we’re going to focus on. We can focus on what God is doing in our lives and all around us, or we can focus on the stuff we don’t have that we’d like to



have. We can focus on how much God must love us to die on the cross for us, or we can focus on how much that annoying kid bugs us. We can focus on the things God is calling us to do, or we can focus on things we like to do—not that there’s anything wrong with doing things we like to do, but remember, it’s easy to stay on the path of least resistance...and miss God completely! So what are the things you spend your time focusing on?

GOD’S PERSPECTIVE

God knows best. He just does. To see his children walk away from him—well, that’s rough. He’s not insecure. He’s not defensive. He’s literally *dying* to be in a relationship with us, so it’s rough when his children elect to focus on the stuff that ultimately just doesn’t matter that much. When we choose other things or other people over him, it’s rough.

OUR PERSPECTIVE

It’s hard to think long-term. It’s hard to see the big picture. It’s hard to make the right decision when many decisions aren’t so obvious. Sure, it’d be easier if I spent more time reading and knowing God’s Word. I understand that I’d grow in his likeness and start to catch a glimpse of his heart and how he feels about things if I spent more time talking with him, but it’s still hard. I’ll generally go with what’s easiest if you give me a choice between hard and easy. How about you?

5. Wrapping It Up

Finish with—

But Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

So we’re left with a decision: Do I try to squeeze through that narrow gate, or take a leisurely stroll through that wide-open gate everyone else is going through? One sure seems a lot easier—it’s just that the one who’s opening the skinny gate, well, he’s the one with the words of life. And that’s exactly what I want and exactly what I need.

What narrow-gate options are in front of you? Do you have a decision to make in which the right path will be the harder path? Have you stepped through the narrow gate Jesus was talking about—the gate that leads to him? You can take these steps right now.