



TWINNE

The World Is Not Enough

**FGA MELBOURNE  
LEADERS NOTES**

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# OVERVIEW – Leaders Copy

## THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

### Series Summary

**Series passage:** *“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:30-31 ESV)*

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

The passage for the whole of 2014 (Gifted by FAITH) is Eph 2:8-10, which begins with *“For by grace you have been saved through faith...”* Perhaps the very best gift we have been given is that of salvation. Ephesians says *“it is not your own doing; it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”*.

This series take a very close look at what Salvation means. It’s called “The World Is Not Enough” or TWINE because the primary alternative to God right now is the “World” (and the things of the World). Please be very careful because this series addresses two types of people: Those who are religious as well as those who are far from religion. Both need Jesus. It’s been a very long time since we have done a church-wide series on Salvation (Theologians call this “Justification”). So much of what we have been talking about has been around the “Sanctification” side, i.e. After you have been saved, what do you do?

Without a very clear understanding of what Salvation is, we are at risk of two things:

- Making Christianity just about works and becoming a “better person” or
- Being just believers and not true disciples of Christ (we are calling this the “believing non-practising Christian”)

John addresses this clearly by tackling what it means to “believe” that Jesus is the Christ (or Messiah or Saviour).

## WRITE UP ABOUT THE SERIES

The Gospel of John has been written so that you will have life as it was originally intended. John explores what it means to be truly saved. This series aims to remove confusion in a world where many are calling Jesus LORD without being connected to Him. Discover the Word, the Light, the Good Shepherd, the Living Water, the Bread of Life and the True Vine. Discover why the world is not enough.

## DESIGN

We’ve tried to have some fun with this series (since it is quite a serious topic). The home group videos have been “dressed up” a bit and we’ve got a bit fancy because we wanted to show that while the world has some really good things to offer ... it is simply not enough.

## LEADING THE SERIES

This is a really tricky series for all of us to run. It means that you are trying to get right to the core of what a person believes about Salvation. Was it a moment when they acknowledged that they wanted to be Christian? Is it something they have because they agree with the teachings of Jesus and the things in the Bible? Are they having doubts about being saved? Is Jesus the Lord and Saviour of their life?

Please take this series as a good opportunity for you to have some very honest discussions about the state of the Faith of your Home Group.

For all practical purposes the series lands on TWO major points that are fleshed out over 4 sessions:

1. Believing in Jesus means "Putting your whole trust or faith in Jesus" or in our words being "Dependent on Jesus"; and
2. True sheep "Hear and Obey". Which means that we will be talking about two questions:
  - HEAR: "What is God saying to you?" and
  - OBEY: "What are you doing about it?"

The concept that we will be introducing through this series (regarding salvation) is "Lordship Salvation". Put simply, this means that Jesus cannot be your saviour unless he is first your Lord. Lord and Saviour come together, if He is your Lord, then he is your Saviour, if He is your Saviour, it is because he is your Lord.

I would encourage you to read the whole book of John to get a good perspective on what we are talking about. However, at the very least, if you read John 1, you'll get a glimpse of the epic imagery that John introduces through out the book.

### **This Home Group series is divided into four sessions**

1. Begin Again: A look at Nicodemus and Samaritan woman (John 3 & 4)
2. Dependence: What does it mean to "Believe"? (John 15)
3. Hear and Obey: How does this work out in our lives? (John 10)
4. Victory: Jesus has overcome the the world (John 19-20)

### **The TWINE Home Group series will be augmented by:**

- A renewed focus on Prayer at FGA with 9am Pre-service Prayer at Kingswood and the re-instatement of the Wednesday Corporate Prayer at Lexton. While attending prayer meetings doesn't make you closer to God, prayer is an essential part of maintaining a close connection with God.
- Re-ordering of our service (during the TWINE Series) to allow time for everyone to process the messages and to encounter God in the service. The Message will move forward, and Worship will take place after the sermon is preached.
- There will possibly be some extra sessions on what real salvation is, if there's a growing need for a more in-depth discussion

# THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH – Leaders Copy

## Session 1: Begin Again

**Key passage:** *“The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”* (John 1:9-13 ESV)

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

This session is designed to open up the whole discussion about salvation and what it is and what it is not. It's specifically made so that it will open up more questions than it answers. Over the course of the series, we will address each of the major elements of Salvation, but right now, in the first session, it is so important to shake up some of the existing paradigms of what it means to be saved.

Take time to discover what each of your home group members really think salvation involves. Slowly unpack what it means to “Accept Jesus into your heart” or “be Born Again” or “to have a personal relationship with Jesus” and how each of these phrases don't fully convey what salvation entails.

There's a misconception that there are two types of Christians: Believers Only and True Disciples. There are only True Disciples, and believers only aren't saved (even the demons believe, it's just that they don't have Jesus as their Lord).

The video sessions are a bit longer, because we really are trying to get a good grasp of the issues that John brings up, so please allow time for the video to play.

### FORMAT FOR SESSION ONE

This is a suggested format for the session

Standard Home Group	Casual Home Group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Worship (DVD)/Prayer</li><li>2. Welcome</li><li>3. Give general introduction to the Series</li><li>4. Play Series Introduction video (5:45 min)</li><li>5. Play Session Video (12 mins)</li><li>6. Read Scripture</li><li>7. Summarise Main Point</li><li>8. Open for discussion</li><li>9. Application and Prayer</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome</li><li>2. Play Series Introduction video (5:45 min)</li><li>3. Play Session Video (12 mins)</li><li>4. Summarise Main Point</li><li>5. Discuss Question 2 &amp; answer Question 3</li><li>6. Food/Fellowship</li></ol>

#### A. Session One Video (12 minutes)

This first video session introduces the book of John and the series. We open the conversation by saying that we can't really tell who is saved. It asks us to take a good look at our own Salvation, perhaps it is something that we have taken for granted, or maybe it is something that we have completely missed. The major points are:

1. Introduction to the Book of John from John 1
2. Nicodemus in John 3
3. Samaritan Woman in John 4
4. How can we tell who is really saved?

## B. Scripture Reading (John 1:1-18)

Background to the passage: This is a great summary of the whole book of John and it covers all of the major themes by introducing epic imagery.

By using the same kind of language as the beginning of the Bible (in Genesis), John is trying to communicate that this is about a new beginning. Not a completely different one though, because it's actually a parallel. Jesus was there already at the Genesis beginning and He is there in the beginning of the book of John. Jesus is described as the Word, the Light and John describes that Jesus is God, who made the world and yet the world did not know Him or receive Him.

## C. Main point

**Two kinds of people who need Jesus: Nicodemus (being good) and the Samaritan Woman (God's grace is good).**

In today's session we meet Nicodemus (John 3) who thinks he's already saved, but gets asked to begin again. We also meet the Samaritan woman (John 4) who hasn't "done" the right things, but Jesus shows her extraordinary love. Salvation is for all, but what does it require?

Nicodemus struggles with having to undo all of the things he has done (i.e. He has to crawl back into his mother's womb and begin again), and the Samaritan woman has to completely change her world. Today, however, there's a growing number of "Believing, Non-practising Christians". Statistics state that 64% of Australians say they are Christians (believe Christianity), yet only 9% are actively practising and regularly attending at a place of worship (and that's only attending church!). There's the kind of faith that says "Lord, Lord I did these things in your name" (See Matthew 7:21-27) but doesn't save. And there's the kind of faith that SAVES.

We look at the tension today between being good and God's grace is good. Where do you stand?

## D. Discussion Questions

**1. Is it possible to be at church, have a good understanding of Christianity and the Bible, live a moral life and not be saved? There are all kinds of people in churches today. How do we know who is truly saved?**

*Answer guide: Wow. This question has the potential to either draw out all kinds of controversial debates OR generate a range of "Sunday School" answers that fall away when probed. It's designed to help you understand where everyone is at regarding their beliefs on salvation. Some people may have heard our Sunday sermon preached on the topic, or may have already jumped to the answer of "Dependence on Jesus", if that's the case, don't just close this question off and move to the next one. Really sit down and ask ... what does that mean.*

*Feel free to look at John 3 (Nicodemus) as an example. Why did Jesus talk to him about being Born Again?*

*Objective of this question is to help your home group understand that they could very well NOT be saved.*

*Instead of answering all of the questions that may come up, it would be good if you can collect answers to this question and email them to me at [chris.ong@fgam.org.au](mailto:chris.ong@fgam.org.au). Also, if this raises a whole bunch of questions that you cannot answer, it's a good opportunity for you to stir up genuine interest in the topic. You can then email questions to me and we can dialogue through the answer.*

## **2. Who can be saved? Does believing in Jesus mean that your whole life has to change? Can a person be saved and still sin and be living in sin?**

*Answer guide: Hopefully you'll get an answer that "anyone" can be saved. We can never be good enough for God, and so we are all sinners. I'm hoping that you will take the discussion deeper than that though. Maybe throw in some examples (depending on how much controversy you're keen to stir up in your home group!):*

- *What about a couple that is living (and sleeping) together before marriage*
- *What about a person who has a sinful addiction (drugs, alcohol, anger etc.)*
- *What about a person with bitterness and unforgiveness*
- *If you're game ... ask, "What about a homosexual person?"*

*Again, we will land on "Dependence on Jesus" and Lordship Salvation. But I would hope that you do not go to "standard answers" too quick. Justification (which is us being saved not by our works, but by Jesus) is not dependent on how good we are. However, it does rely on our "dependence on Jesus". That means that if we're talking about TRUE salvation, there's got to be repentance (of our own lordship) and the acknowledgement (in our heart and mouth) that Jesus is the LORD.*

*Working out his Lordship in our lives is called the Sanctification process, where we are changed to be more and more like Him. We will never be blameless or spotless in our own right, but as sin is never good for us, we should always be on a journey to grow and be open to the Holy Spirit in our lives.*

*A good analogy to use is that of Marriage. When we get married we start that journey of a relationship together. Does that mean that we don't do anything to hurt the other person? And suddenly become perfect? No. But it does mean a commitment towards working out our love and changing.*

*Once a Christian has stopped repenting of sin, or stopped grappling with their own selfish pride or stopped listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit ... you've got to ask the question ... Are they daily dependent on Jesus Christ. And dependence on Jesus is what our entire salvation hinges on.*

*This will be more fully explored in our next session. It's perfectly fine to have a whole range of unanswered questions from this first session. Instead of answering all of the questions that may come up, it would be good if you can collect answers to this question and email them to me at [chris.ong@fgam.org.au](mailto:chris.ong@fgam.org.au). Also if this raises a whole bunch of questions that you cannot answer, it's a good opportunity for you to stir up genuine interest in the topic. You can then email questions to me and we can dialogue through the answer.*

## **3. Take some time to work out what you would say to someone if you were going to explain Salvation to them. Maybe it's to your family, or your friends or colleague.**

**[there's no perfect answer, but our attempt to work out what we will say is so crucial for our own faith understanding and for us as we live out the great commission. Over the course of this series, hopefully the answer will become clearer]**

*Hopefully this is a fun question. Asking the question "What would you say" is a good way for us to look at how we view salvation and Christianity. If your home group members don't know what to say or haven't thought about it ... it is highly likely that they are not living out the "Great Commission" of making disciples. Ask then, why is it not important to be able to articulate our faith?*

*There's no perfect answer, so encourage your home group to give it a really good shot. Avoid "cop out" answers like: "I would just invite them to church" or "I don't know, maybe I'll just get them to do Alpha" or "I'll call a pastor".*

**New Visitor/Non-Christian Take Home:**

Unfortunately, so many people engage with Christians who call themselves Christians but aren't really much different from anyone else. Christianity is not a set of rules and morals (something Nicodemus was really good at), nor is it a simple belief without any lasting life change. It tackles our very understanding of life itself and the world that we are in. Jesus doesn't want to persuade you to believe in Him and to make Him Lord. His point is that He IS already Lord, and that the world in all its splendour cannot save itself. It is because of His love for us that he wants us to put our trust in Him. That's why John 3:16 is perhaps the most famous verse in the whole Bible:

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:16-17 ESV)*

**E. Application**

Write down one question you have about salvation or Christianity. See if you can get this answered through the series or perhaps go and find out about it in the weeks to come.

Question:

**F. Potential Prayer Points**

Take time to pray for needs in your home group. Don't just pray only for physical needs (while that's important). Throughout the whole series we are going to be asking the question: "What is God working on in your life?" Take time to pray with your home group members as they struggle through the kinds of life changes the Holy Spirit is prompting them to make.

**G. Looking Forward**

In Session 2 we will be looking at the word "Believe" and answer a range of questions that have been brought up in the first Session.

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## Session 2: Dependence

### Key passage:

*“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:30-31 ESV)*

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

This session begins to provide some answers to the issues raised in the first session. It’s important not to jump too quickly to the “answer” as each person in your home group really needs to grapple with their own issues with Salvation. We are taking time as a whole church to look at this in detail, so that we do not take our Salvation or our walk with Jesus for granted. Please emphasise repeatedly that it is impossible for us to “judge” who is saved and who isn’t. A person may be a church leader and outwardly living a very moral life but is not “dependent on Jesus” ... and therefore isn’t saved. Also, another person may be apparently “sinful”, but is so desperately reliant on Jesus ... and therefore is saved. It’s just that God is in the process of transforming that person through the Sanctification process.

John uses the analogy of the branches and vine. We need to be connected to Jesus who is the vine. In the other words “Dependent” on Him. Once we are disconnected, we are actually already dead. While we may have leaves and things might still look alive, the branch is already beginning the dying process as it no longer has life.

This session looks at “Dependence on Jesus” as the basis for our salvation. It is not us, our works or the world that can save, only Jesus. If we don’t depend on Him, then we depend on something else. That something else ... is not enough.

### FORMAT FOR SESSION TWO

This is a suggested format for the session

Standard Home Group	Casual Home Group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Worship (DVD)/Prayer</li><li>2. Welcome</li><li>3. Play Session Video (10 mins)</li><li>4. Read Scripture</li><li>5. Summarise Main Point</li><li>6. Open for discussion</li><li>7. Application and Prayer</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome</li><li>2. Play Session Video (10 mins)</li><li>3. Summarise Main Point</li><li>4. Answer question 1 and discuss question 2</li><li>5. Food/Fellowship</li></ol>

### A. Session Two Video (10 minutes)

This second video session looks at John 15 and explains what the Bible means by the word “Believe”. It is “Dependence on Jesus”. The major points are:

1. 'Justification' and 'Sanctification'
2. Believe in Jesus = Dependence on Jesus
3. John 15 (The True Vine)
4. Believing, Non-Practising Christian
5. What does it mean to be really dependent on Jesus?

## B. Scripture Reading (John 15:1-12)

Explanation of the passage: John is explaining the relationship that we have with God. Just as he is connected to God the Father, Jesus wants us to be connected to Him. In fact, in the passage just before this, he says in John 14:31 *“but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father...”*

The analogy of the branches and the vine is a good metaphor for our “Dependence on Jesus”, which ultimately what our whole salvation and faith rests on. The branch on its own cannot bear fruit, unless it abides in the vine. John 15:6 says, *“If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned”*.

## C. Main point

### We depend on Jesus for Salvation

We ask the question today: “What does it mean to be really dependent on Jesus”. We know that our own works are never good enough to save us. If we were able to save ourselves, Jesus would never need to come into the world. However, some people view salvation just as a point in time, or a particular action that they take (like going up for an altar call, or saying the sinner’s prayer). Something that gets them through the gates of heaven and saved. For them, dependence on Jesus can be something long forgotten, or something that doesn’t really enter into their daily lives. It’s possible that they aren’t dependent on Jesus anymore, but rather, dependent on the “religious activity” that they did to be saved (e.g. Saying the Sinners Prayer). It’s our vibrant, authentic, real, daily dependence on Jesus that saves us. Not our works, but Jesus’ works. Please take time to work this out in your home group as we explore salvation.

## D. Discussion Questions

### 1. Why is it worthwhile to explain the word “Believe”? What are some of the ways it is misused today?

*Answer guide: Use this question as an opportunity to talk about the growing category of Christians that are Believing, Non-Practising. 64% of people living in Australia say they are Christians (ABS, 2012), yet only 9% say that they are actively practicing and regularly attending a place of worship. I suspect the genuine figure of people really depending on Jesus is much lower than 9%, because not everyone who regularly comes to church lives a life dependent on Christ.*

*We are now seeing an influx of people who call themselves Christians, but their lives look identical to their non-Christian neighbours. Divorce rates are similar (please note: it’s recently been discovered that there’s a big difference in divorce rates between Christians and non-Christians when you factor in church attendance), moral choices are similar etc.*

*Believe can be misunderstood to mean “mental acknowledgement”. James 2:19 says “... Even the demons believe—and shudder!”, yet they are not saved, because they don’t have Jesus as their Lord. There’s a misconception that there are two types of Christians: Believers Only and True Disciples. There are only True Disciples, and believers only aren’t saved.*

*The passages with Believe in Jesus (typically the verses we use to explain salvation) in them have “believe that Jesus is the Christ” or “Jesus is Lord”. It’s not a belief of the existence of Jesus, but of His Lordship.*

*It’s not just a mental acknowledgement of his Lordship, it is total dependence on Him, like a branch depends on the vine.*

*Also, please note that Jesus is LORD whether or not we confess or believe that He is Lord. That means, that at some point, AS the LORD he will judge all the living and the dead. Salvation and our dependence on Him actually makes a big difference. Jesus invites us to see the world as it truly is: Made by Him,*

where He is LORD. It's like Light shining, for us to see how things are. Yet we are in darkness, not really knowing the true state of things.

## **2. What does it mean to be dependent on Jesus?**

*Answer guide: Hopefully, this question will be a follow on from the discussion that took place last week. If the last session opened up a whole bunch of questions and controversies, hopefully, in answering this question, a lot of them will be cleared up.*

*If you'd had a chance to email through some of your questions, hopefully, we would have supplied some good answers under the context of "dependence on Jesus".*

*Dependence on Jesus:*

- *Doesn't mean that our whole life is perfect. But it does mean that we are looking to Him for what to do about our sin*
- *Does require some immediate or present connection. We can't say we depended on Jesus 35 years ago when we said the sinners prayer and then have nothing really to do with Him after that*
- *Is not works based in the Sanctification sense, because then we would be dependent on ourselves. However, it does require action on our part ... a connectedness with Jesus (either through prayer, His word, His people, His Holy Spirit etc.)*
- *Is possible because of what Jesus has already done. It's a great privilege/gift that we have because of His Grace. Something we have access to, that we shouldn't take for granted*

*Next week we look at the words Hear and Obey as a practical outworking of "Dependence on Jesus". You won't need to fully cover it in today's session. Just generate discussion and curiosity about it. Every Christian needs to work out what it means to be dependent on Jesus for themselves. Might be good for your home group members to leave asking ... are they truly dependent on Jesus? Their entire salvation rests on it.*

## **3. How do you know if you are truly saved?**

*Answer guide: Here's a good question for every believer to ask.*

*There are some that will doubt their salvation because Satan is condemning them by saying "Your sin and your works are not good enough for God". For them, the answer is, "I depend on Jesus, he is my salvation, and it is not my own works that save me". They repent of sin, they are open to God's leading and He is actively at work in their lives (even though their lives are far from "perfect" ... which by the way is just like every other believer).*

*There are some that have never doubted their salvation because they've relied on a religious activity that they have undertaken. Like a man who says to his wife, "why do you ask if I love you? I married you 30 years ago didn't I?". In reality, they aren't dependent on Jesus. He is not their Lord and Master, nor does He direct their path and lead them to green pastures.*

*Each home group member should take a shot at trying to answer this question.*

**New Visitor/Non-Christian Take Home:**

Everyone puts their trust in something. This world offers so many alternatives for you to depend on. You can depend on your skills, your money, your relationships to get the most out of life. Christianity answers the most fundamental of all questions: What is life all about?

If you're exploring Christianity through this series, it might be a good time for you to figure out what it is that you depend on and check to see if dependence on it is truly going to pay off. Is the world (and what it has to offer) enough for you?

*John 20:30-31 says "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."*

**E. Application: Make space for Jesus**

Work out what you can do in the next two weeks to increase your dependence on Jesus. Write it down as a commitment.

**F. Potential Prayer Points**

Take time to pray for needs in your home group. Don't just pray only for physical needs (while that's important). Throughout the whole series we are going to be asking the question: "What is God working on in your life?" Take time to pray with your home group members as they struggle through the kinds of life changes the Holy Spirit is prompting them to make.

**G. Looking Forward**

In our next session, we look at how we can practically live out our dependence on Jesus. If today's session seems somewhat theoretical, at our next session we land on something practical that every Christian should look at doing regularly (if not on a daily basis even).

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## Session 3: Hear and Obey

**Key passage:** “.... The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” (John 10:3-5 ESV)

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

So far the series may have raised a few more questions that it has actually answered. Please remember that this whole process is actually very important for your Home Group members. Each person needs to grapple with his or her faith and salvation through this series. We have a lot of people who may have grown up at church or have just come to church not really understanding salvation or dependence on Jesus.

This session aims to land the discussion practically. We want to settle on Jesus’ instructions to “hear and obey”. Christianity isn’t simply about being a “fan” of Jesus, or “liking him”, or attending services and putting stickers on your car. It is a call to discipleship. It is a call to follow Jesus.

Jesus can only be your Saviour if he is also the Lord of your life. There’s no other alternative. Dependence on Jesus is like how sheep follow their shepherd. They hear his voice, and they follow after him (Hear and Obey).

### FORMAT FOR SESSION THREE

Standard Home Group	Casual Home Group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Worship (DVD)/Prayer</li><li>2. Welcome</li><li>3. Play session video (9 mins)</li><li>4. Read Scripture</li><li>5. Summarise main point</li><li>6. Open for discussion</li><li>7. Application and Prayer</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome</li><li>2. Play session video (9 mins)</li><li>3. Summarise main point</li><li>4. Discuss Question 3</li><li>5. Food/Fellowship</li></ol>

#### A. Session Three Video (9 minutes) [Note: Audio quality is a bit compromised]

This video session talks about living out your dependence on Jesus at a practical level. The major points are:

1. Your life tagline
2. John 10: Sheep and Shepherd
3. Hear and Obey

#### B. Scripture Reading (John 10:1-18)

Sheep don’t do that well when they are making decisions on their own. They don’t have wisdom to know where danger is, or where the green pastures are. Jesus uses them as an analogy because his audience at the time would have completely understood this. Christians were being described as sheep. Not the kind of sheep that just attends meetings and acknowledges the things that the Shepherd is saying. Christians are being likened to sheep that both Hear and Obey the voice of their Shepherd. That means the shepherd directs their lives.

The analogy of the sheep is very fitting because, as it turns out, if we aren't following the voice of our Shepherd, we're actually very likely listening to another voice. John calls this the "thief" or the "wolf". This is the context for our discussion on living out our dependence on Jesus.

## C. Main point

### Jesus' sheep follow Him for they know His voice

So far, we have raised a lot of questions about what it means to be truly saved. Today, we are going to land on how that works out in our everyday lives. We don't want our faith to be something that we just mentally acknowledge without it being something that translates into an authentic reality in our lives. Even if we re-define the word "Believe" to mean "Dependence", what does it then mean to be "Dependent on Jesus"?

We land on two questions that would be helpful for all Christians to ask themselves regularly:

1. What is Jesus saying to me? and
2. What am I doing about it?

## D. Discussion Questions

**1. After all that has been discussed; do you think it is possible to be saved without hearing and obeying Jesus? How would you now answer some of the questions posed earlier e.g. Can a person be saved and still living in sin? Can a person go to church, agree with all the teachings, be a good person and not be saved?**

*Answer guide: This is a revision question. It's important for you to really test out what your members believe regarding the whole justification process. How does a sinner grapple with his or her sin while being saved as a Christian? Etc.*

*It's helpful to revisit and land on "dependence on Jesus" by really taking time to explain what it means in each context that is presented:*

- *The Sinner: needs to be actively engaging with God regarding his or her sin. That might mean continual repentance or if that is happening too often, looking at why simply saying "sorry" isn't enough. It doesn't mean, being comfortable with our sin and saying, oh well, good thing we aren't saved by works. God's grace will cover me (Rom 6:1)*
- *The Religious Person: needs to be actively engaging with God, not just via works and deeds in Spirit and in Truth. What is God currently saying to that person? Surely they aren't perfect yet! There must still be continual repentance and growing in the Lord. Very often that means getting out of their comfort zone.*

### 2. How can I tell what Jesus is saying to me?

*Answer guide: This is a good opportunity to cover a variety of ways that God speaks to us (through the Holy Spirit). However, it is important to make an INITIAL point:*

*Do we have space for God to speak into our lives?*

- *This doesn't just mean, do we set aside time for God to speak (which may include devotions, going to church, home group, prayer etc.)*
- *It also means, do we set aside areas of our lives for God to speak into (e.g. If he asks us to reach out to a new person, are our schedules already too full?)*

*Once you've covered the arena of space, then you can talk about how. Which is pretty much: prayer, His word, His people, His Holy Spirit etc.*

*You can also take the time to talk about our church making more time for prayer, both in our 9am prayer meeting or our Wednesday Corporate Prayer. These are avenues (not the only ones) for hearing God and communicating with Him.*

### 3. What are some of the obstacles to Obeying Him, and what can we do about getting rid of them?

*Answer guide: It's so easy to land on excuses. We've got one for every selfish thing we do. Once you've answered the question about really wanting to hear God and wanting to depend on Him, all serious Christ followers have to grapple with "how to obey".*

*This works out really differently depending on your level of Christian maturity, and so there really isn't any one particular formula. It is the link between the Justification that Jesus does and the Sanctification that He works in us. As a Christian, we must inherently and authentically desire to obey Him.*

*Find out how your Home Group is doing this. Also, suggest some practical ways to remove obstacles. Sometimes there's a genuine desire, but a person can get stuck trying to figure out a way out of their current sin. E.g. Maybe there needs to be accountability, maybe time needs to be reorganised, maybe they need to take a step of faith etc.*

*After all we've been through, please be careful NOT TO MAKE works (or the sanctification process) the thing that saves. It isn't the thing that saves. Our dependence on Jesus is the thing that saves. However, everytime someone is truly dependent on Jesus, they follow him and real life action and works take place. John calls that Fruit (John 15), and James calls it works.*

*"What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!" (James 2:14-19 ESV)*

#### **New Visitor/Non-Christian Take Home:**

A call to Christianity involves the whole of your life. It is the call to a different Master. Not one that has evil intentions or one that wants to rob you out of the joy of life. But rather one who can give you full life.

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10 ESV)*

A little further on, Jesus says, in John 15:11-13: *"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full... This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."*

Jesus loves you, and his greatest command is that we show that love to others.

## **E. Application: Hear and Obey**

Each day this week, set aside time to ask yourself:

1. What is Jesus saying to me? and
2. What am I doing about it?

Maybe you'll be reading a passage of scripture during your quiet time and you'll ask these questions.

Maybe you'll have heard a sermon on a podcast, and you'll ask these questions.

Maybe you'll have interacted with someone during the day, and you'll ask these questions

Maybe you'll be still and hear the Holy Spirit, and you'll ask these questions

Maybe you'll put on some Praise and Worship, or spend time in prayer, and you'll ask these questions

Make space to Hear and Obey.

## **F. Potential Prayer Points**

Take time to pray for needs in your home group. Don't just pray only for physical needs (while that's important). Throughout the whole series we are going to be asking the question: "What is God working on in your life?" Take time to pray with your home group members as they struggle through the kinds of life changes the Holy Spirit is prompting them to make.

## **G. Looking Forward**

Next session we wrap up the series by looking at Jesus on the cross and his ultimate victory. If it's between your way and His way, you need to know that His way is greater.

# THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH – Leaders Copy

## Session 4: Victory

**Key passage:** *“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33 ESV)

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

We are now wrapping up the whole series. The life of a true follower of Christ is one of risk. If you’re dependent on Jesus then who knows where He will lead you, or what He will ask of you. Sometimes (or often), we doubt that God has the very best for us, and so we hold back, preferring to settle with the things of the World. We rest on what others say is the best way, and we bank on things that are temporary.

This session looks at Jesus’ work on the Cross and highlights how He has overcome the world. We take a look at Judas, who despite being close to Jesus, merely used Jesus as a means towards his own goals. He wanted NOT what Jesus could offer, but what the “World” could offer. Judas was very quickly unhappy with how things were going with Jesus, as Jesus was not behaving in a way that Judas wanted.

### FORMAT FOR SESSION FOUR

This is a suggested format for the session

Standard Home Group	Casual Home Group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Worship (DVD)/Prayer (this may need to be shorter than usual as it is a long session)</li><li>2. Welcome</li><li>3. Play Session Video (9 mins)</li><li>4. Read Scripture</li><li>5. Summarise Main Point</li><li>6. Application</li><li>7. Prayer</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome</li><li>2. Play Session Video (9 mins)</li><li>3. Summarise Main Point</li><li>4. Application</li><li>5. Food/Fellowship</li></ol>

## A. Session Four Video (9 minutes) [Note: Audio quality is a bit compromised]

This video session about how Jesus overcomes the World. The major points are:

1. Recap on series so far
2. John 16:33
3. Why is it victorious to put our trust in Jesus
4. The Cross
5. Jesus as Lord and Saviour
6. Is the World enough for you?

## B. Scripture Reading (John 19 & 20)

The Gospel of John finishes with Jesus heading to the cross. What seems to be His greatest defeat becomes his greatest victory. All through the account it would seem (to ordinary eyes) that Jesus is losing and that the world is winning. Quite often our lives can look like that. It might appear that by following Jesus we may not be able to do the things that others are doing, or that the world may be more attractive with what it has to offer. However, Jesus rises from the dead, and ultimately vindicates everyone who believed in Him ... just as He will do when He comes again.

The passage ends with John 20:30-31, where John states the real purpose behind him writing the Gospel of John. It is so that all of us might “believe” that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by “believing” we may have life in his name.

Jesus is so big, so strong, and so mighty. The things that He did, the things that He is doing and will do through His church are so expansive that “*were everyone of them to be written*”, “*the world itself could not contain the books that would be written*” (John 21:25 ... the last sentence in the Book of John). The world has never been enough, for us or for Jesus ... because it is not all there is. Jesus is all there is. And so we end with the beginning of the Book of John.

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”* (John 1:1-5 ESV)

## C. Main point

### **Taking a risk with Jesus is worthwhile because ultimately He has the victory**

We are now wrapping up the whole series. You may have heard it said before, FAITH is often spelt r.i.s.k., because the life of a true follower of Christ is one of risk. If you’re dependent on Jesus then who knows where He will lead you, or what He will ask of you. Sometimes, we doubt that God has the very best for us, and so we hold back, preferring to settle with the things of the World. We rest on what others say is the best way, and we bank on things that in reality are temporary.

## D. Discussion Questions

**1. Read through today's verse again: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 ESV). How does Jesus give us peace? Does salvation promise us a peaceful, easy life?**

*Answer guide: This is a question about Salvation. Take some time to talk about what are the promises of Salvation. Sometimes, Christians are disappointed because they believe that being a Christian means that God is going to bless them with everything good in life and nothing bad. Jesus can become a bit like a good luck charm to ensure that evil does not befall you.*

*If there's confusion, you might want to highlight the personal stories of Jesus' own disciples (as well as that of his own). All of them died following Christ, most were persecuted and tortured.*

*What is the big promise contained in salvation?*

- Heaven, eternity (true)
- Justification for the judgement day before Jesus Christ (Heb 9:27, 2 Cor 5:10, Rev 20:11-12)

*All are correct, however, one that I'd like to highlight is PEACE or Shalom. It is a holistic peace. It is being reunited with God! The big promise of salvation is that peace is once again restored back with God, we are reunited in relationship again with our creator for all eternity. Ultimately, Jesus wins and we will be with Him. Each of Jesus disciples have that to look forward to.*

**2. What is the problem with using the following phrases too quickly:**

**(1) "Accept Christ"**

**(2) "Ask Jesus into my heart"**

**(3) "Having a personal relationship with Jesus"**

**(4) "Making Jesus your personal Lord and Saviour"**

*Answer guide: Please know that there is some truth in each of the statements above, and that we will continue to use them. However, without understanding some of the limitations of these statements, we can just roll into an easy Christianity that doesn't get to the core of genuine Salvation.*

1. *Accept Christ: The great miracle of redemption is not that we accept Christ, but that He accepts us. We would never love Him on our own (1 John 4:19). We need His revelation and his acceptance. It's not just a sinner's decision for Christ, it is the sovereign work of God.*
2. *Ask Jesus into my heart: Jesus isn't someone we ADD to our lives. Jesus invites us into HIS world ... His Kingdom. Sure, Jesus has to come and dwell in our hearts. But that imagery tends to make us the centre, and we try to fit Jesus into the many things in our heart. The reality is that we are asked to be born again into His kingdom. We are to surrender our lives to Him*
3. *Having a personal relationship with Jesus. This is a true statement. However, it can nowadays mean, just having Jesus as your mate. A good friend who makes suggestions about your life, understands you and is willing to hang out with you whenever it suits you. The reality is, if you had a "personal relationship" with the most powerful person in the universe, the creator of everything, there would be awe, reverence and respect. That personal relationship would be characterised as "Lord"*
4. *Making Jesus your personal Lord and Saviour: Jesus is already Lord and sovereign, whether we believe in Him or not. He doesn't need us to "make" Him anything. It's more acknowledging. Believing. Depending.*

*Please remember that these statements are true, and we are just looking at them closely because so much of modern Christianity is now built around how we fit Jesus into our lives. But Salvation, at its very core, is that Jesus wants to bring us to His Kingdom.*

### 3. How should Salvation affect our lives? What next?

*Answer guide: Salvation should transform every part of our lives. We should be living daily depending on Jesus. This works itself out differently in each person. For some this may be a tiny step, for others a bigger step.*

*Does this mean that we cannot have doubt? No. It means that we are processing through our doubt. Does this mean that we live perfect lives? No, it means that we are allowing Jesus to work on our sin, and we are continually repentant*

*It doesn't mean a stagnant relationship though. It doesn't mean reliance on something that was done many years ago. It does contain elements of Hear and Obey. There's risk.*

*Our next theme is called "Deeper Faith" and it is an exploration of this next step. The journey of every true believer in "Discipleship". Salvation begins us on this journey to follow after Christ as his disciples. Not to earn our salvation, but because we have now been free ... and unshackled from sin that weighs us down.*

#### **New Visitor/Non-Christian Take Home:**

This series has primarily been designed for believers or church-goers as they explore the reality of their faith. If you would like to better understand Christianity and what Jesus did on the cross, FGA Melbourne runs an Alpha program designed to take you through the fundamentals of our faith.

Ultimately, we hope that you will realise that the world can only offer so much. There is more to life. More than just having fun, being a good person, making money. Here's a video about it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThVwkvbSmc0>

### **E. Application: Rededicate your life to Christ**

At the end of this series, if you would like to, consider rededicating your life to Christ. Sometimes couples go through a marriage rededication, to remind themselves that they need to keep their relationship real, vibrant and alive. You could take some time this week, to reaffirm your dependence on Christ.

What would that mean for you?

### **F. Potential Prayer Points**

Take time to pray for needs in your home group. Don't just pray only for physical needs (while that's important). Throughout the whole series we are going to be asking the question: "What is God working on in your life?" Take time to pray with your home group members as they struggle through the kinds of life changes the Holy Spirit is prompting them to make.

### **G. Looking Forward**

We trust that you have benefited significantly from the "TWINE" studies. The next Home Group series, "Deeper Faith", will be one where we explore what it is to go deeper with God in our walk with Christ.