



Ripple
Effect

MODULE 3 | **The Real Jesus**

Training Guide

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Course Overview

What is Ripple Effect?

Ripple Effect is a Christian discipleship course for evangelism. Ripple Effect is an accessible and comprehensive course that will help you:

- Better understand the good news about Jesus yourself
- Love family and friends who don't know Jesus by praying for them regularly
- Develop skills in talking about Jesus
- Learn how to live a life always 'on mission' and ready to serve God
- Hear what God is doing in and through others as you pray for them

Who is Ripple Effect for?

This course is for you if you want to 'dive' into evangelism or just want to dip your toe in the water. Expect God to create ripples that impact others in ways you never would have imagined.

Depending where you are on your Christian journey, you should begin with Module 1 and/or 2 to establish gospel themes and learn frameworks used in later modules.

Why does Ripple Effect work?

The course is built around small groups of people meeting weekly to engage with the brief session video and session guide. These weekly meetings are where discipleship happens and are crucial to the momentum of Ripple Effect. For each session, the group will:

SHARE

Share stories of evangelistic opportunities since the last session to encourage and seek wisdom from others in the group. God is always working.

PRAY

Praise God for his love, salvation, and the privilege of evangelism. Ask God to save our family and friends and use us to help them come to know and trust Jesus.

TRAIN

Improve confidence and competence in evangelism by learning, practicing, and reviewing skills that enable us to speak about Jesus in a natural and unforced manner.

What does Ripple Effect cover?

The Ripple Effect course is made up of 6 modules. You will find the modules cohesive as they build on gospel themes and frameworks. Each module contains 8 sessions.

MODULE 1 | Jesus & Me

Talking about Jesus and His impact on me

MODULE 2 | Jesus & Conversation

Talking about the gospel in everyday conversations

MODULE 3 | The Real Jesus (This Module)

Reading a Gospel with someone investigating Jesus

MODULE 4 | Apologetics

Answering the questions people have about Jesus and Christianity

MODULE 5 | Knowing Jesus

Discipling a new Christian

MODULE 6 | Jesus & Mission

Sharing the gospel with everyone

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Module Overview

MODULE 3 | The Real Jesus

This module is designed to help you read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus and Christianity.

1. Why read Luke's Gospel?
2. Reading Luke's Gospel with three questions
3. Inviting people to read Luke's Gospel
4. Loving your neighbour
5. Which passages in Luke's Gospel?
6. How we are forgiven
7. Inviting people to follow Jesus
8. The costs and benefits of following Jesus

Each session includes these components:

1. INTRO. Each session starts with a short training video.
2. SHARE. Talk through evangelistic opportunities in the past week.
3. PRAY. Praise God for Jesus and his forgiveness. Ask God to save our family and friends and speak through us to them.
4. TRAIN. Learn to read Luke's Gospel with people investigating Jesus and Christianity.
5. REVISE. Revisit session content at home to consolidate our learning.

Module Goals

- Learn to read Luke's Gospel with someone who is investigating Jesus.
- Pray regularly for our family and friends who don't know Jesus yet.
- Develop a heart for evangelism by reflecting on Jesus' forgiveness.

Session 1

Why read Luke's Gospel?

Key idea: Luke records eye-witness accounts of Jesus so that people might know Jesus and the forgiveness he brings, and choose to follow him.

Key encouragement: Trust God to speak about Jesus, through his word, as you invite people to read Luke's Gospel with you.

Practical challenge: Pray regularly for people to become Christian.

Session goals:

- Orientation to Ripple Effect 3.
- Consider who you could ask to read Luke with you and pray for them.
- Discuss reasons to read Luke with someone investigating Jesus.
- Know that God speaks through his word and Spirit about Jesus.

Session Introduction

Watch the Ripple Effect Module 3 introduction video.

In this Ripple Effect Module (RE3 – The Real Jesus) you will learn how to read Luke's Gospel with someone who is not yet a Christian. Why read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus? Because in the pages of Luke's biography of Jesus they will meet the 'real Jesus' and be able to make an informed decision about whether to trust and follow him.

Share

This is our first session so we'll spend time getting to know each other. Since we are learning to invite people to read Luke's Gospel with us, we'll share our favourite gospel story with each other.

- Introduce yourself to the group.
- Why are you participating in RE3?
- What is your favourite story about Jesus or told by Jesus? Why is it your favourite?

Setting group expectations.

- How can we make our group a safe and comfortable place to Share, Pray and Train together?

Many of these group expectations will also be important when reading Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus.

Pray.

Train

Watch the introduction video for Session 1.

In his introduction and conclusion, Luke tells us what to expect from his biography of Jesus.

1. Read Luke 1:1-4. Why did Luke write this book?
2. Read Luke 24:13-35.
 - a. 'What things' (v19) had Cleopas and his friend learnt or heard about Jesus?
 - b. How did Cleopas and his friend recognise that they were speaking to Jesus?
3. What encouragement do these passages give us to read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus?
4. What additional reasons to read Luke's Gospel can you think of that would encourage someone to read it? Be creative.
5. Who would you like to invite to read Luke with you?
 - a. Why them? (As you share, please remember to respect people's privacy.)
 - b. How do you feel about inviting this person? What are you excited or hesitant about?

Jesus is still a recognisable name today. Millions of people love and follow him. People die for him. Whether or not people believe in him, they feel the influence of his life and teaching in many cultural values and institutions. The themes Luke addresses—love, hope, joy, suffering, betrayal, evil, transformation, forgiveness (just to name a few!)—still resonate with us today. There are all sorts of reasons for someone to read Luke's Gospel.

We invite people to read Luke's Gospel so that they can see Jesus through the eyes of people who knew him. As they read Luke, we pray that God will open their eyes to see and stir their hearts to love Jesus, just as God has graciously done for us.

Pray

What thanksgiving and prayer points flow out of:

- | our Luke passages?
- | our time of sharing?

Some members of the group may feel more comfortable praying out loud than others. Please remember that a one-sentence prayer written down and read out is just as authentic as a five-minute prayer prayed spontaneously.

Revise

After each session there will be review activities to complete at home. They are designed to consolidate learning and to keep evangelism on our agenda throughout the week.

- Complete the Relationship Network Worksheet attached to this session.
- Start reading Luke's Gospel. Each week we'll read through a section of Luke's Gospel so that by the end of the module we have read the whole book.

This week, read Luke 1:1-4:13 in one sitting. In these passages Luke tells us about Jesus' birth and his life before he began his public ministry. After you have read it answer the following questions about:

- a. Jesus: what do we learn about Jesus?
 - b. People around Jesus: how did Jesus impact the lives of those around him?
 - c. Me: what particularly stood out for me in this story?
- Connect with other group members during the week. Share with each other your response to the Me question. When someone else shares spend a few minutes praying for them.

Relationship Network Worksheet

Unless we pause and reflect, we may not realise the opportunities that God has given us to proclaim the gospel to others.

Use the following diagram to:

- | identify the different relationship networks in your life.
- | list the names of people who aren't Christian that you know in your network.

As you look at your relationship network, ask yourself 'Is my list broad enough?'

Here are some ideas to broaden your list:

- | someone who catches the train at the same time you do.
- | an old school friend you saw at a wedding.
- | someone who walks the dog at the same park.
- | a 'blast from the past' whose name appeared in your Facebook feed.
- | a person at the gym.

As you look at your relationship network:

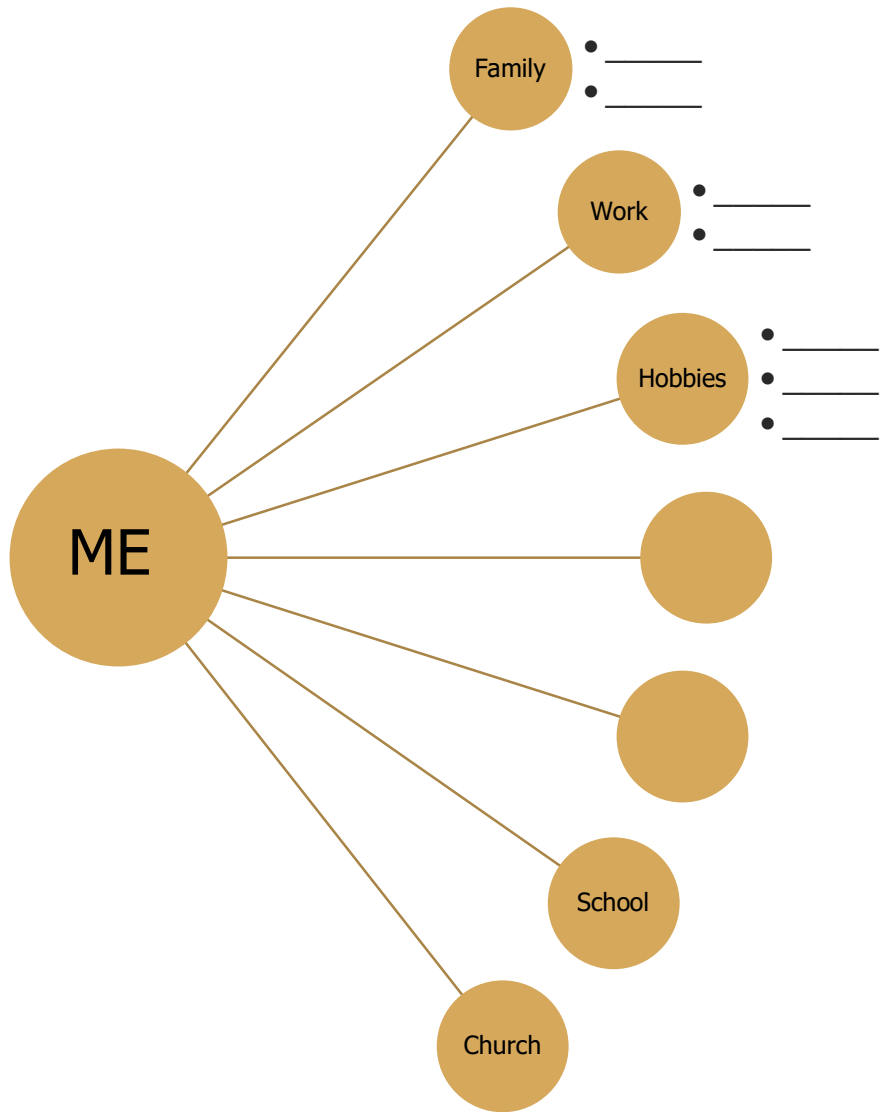
- | underline the names of people you see regularly, even if you don't know them very well yet.
- | circle the names of people you expect to see next week.

→ Choose 5 of the people you see or speak with regularly to pray for throughout RE3.

- | Include the person you shared about in Session 1.
- | These are the people we will be seeking to invite to read Luke's Gospel with us.

→ Reflect on and pray over these questions:

1. How might their lives be better if they knew Jesus?
2. Where and when do you see them?
3. What do you talk about?
4. How can you be more intentional in the way you share Jesus and your life with them?



Session 2

Reading Luke's Gospel with three questions

Key idea: *As we read Luke's Gospel, we will focus on Jesus and how people responded to him.*

Key encouragement: *You don't need to be an expert Bible teacher to read Luke's Gospel with others.*

Practical challenge: *Familiarise yourself with three questions that will help us read Luke's Gospel well.*

Session goals:

- *Learn to use three questions to read Luke's Gospel with someone investigating Jesus: Jesus. People. Me.*
- *Gain confidence that Jesus is willing and able to meet our needs, the most important of which is our need for forgiveness.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 2.

In each session we will read one passage in Luke's Gospel and discuss it using three questions. The stories we've chosen draw attention to Jesus' offer of forgiveness. By the end of the module, we'll have eight passages ready to read with a person investigating Jesus.

Share

From the Relationship Network Worksheet, share about two more of the five people you hope to invite to read Luke's Gospel with you.

- Share a little bit about your relationship with them and the conversations, if any, that you have had about Jesus and Christianity.

Pray

The first few chapters of Luke are filled with people singing with joy about the birth of Jesus. Zechariah sings of his son John's privileged role in pointing people to Jesus.

you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation

through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God

Luke 1:76-78 (NIV)

- | Thank God for Jesus and the mercy and forgiveness he offers to all who trust him.
- | Pray for your family and friends. Ask God to help them receive and rejoice in Jesus' offer of mercy and forgiveness.
- | Ask God to use us in this process, in any way he chooses, including by inviting them to read Luke's Gospel with us.

Train

Skill: Three questions

Our three questions are about Jesus, the people who encountered him, and how Jesus relates to us 2,000 years later. They can be used for discussing almost any passage in any Gospel. The questions, in their most general form, are:

Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?

People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?

Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?

These questions keep us focused on Jesus and how he affected the people around him. They start with the primary historical documents about Jesus, not secondary or personal opinions. They challenge us to consider the relevance of Jesus to us personally today.

Luke's Gospel

In Luke 4-9 we meet all sorts of people with all sorts of needs coming to Jesus for help. We will read one of their stories today.

1. Read Luke 5:17-31 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.

In each session we will review our discussion so that we notice how it evolved and what questions or comments moved it forward or deeper. We might also notice questions and comments which distracted us or took attention away from Jesus. Noticing these things will help us become better skilled at reading Luke's Gospel with others.

- a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
- b. What does this story teach us about forgiveness?
- c. What aspects of the story would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

Attached to today's session is a resource titled Expansion Questions. These questions can help keep discussion flowing and help people think more deeply about the passage. Which and how many of these we use depends on the passage, people's reading comprehension, their familiarity with Jesus and the Bible, whether they are an internal or external processor, how much time you have, etc. We're aiming for our discussion to feel more like a peer-to-peer conversation than a teacher-student conversation.

3. Pray. Thank God that Jesus is willing and able to forgive us. Ask God to help our family and friends see their need for forgiveness too.

RE3 is about ordinary Christians prayerfully trusting God to use us as we read Luke's Gospel with others. It is not about running the 'perfect' Bible study. If God has given us an opportunity to read Luke's Gospel with someone, then it's been a good day, even if it didn't go exactly the way we hoped it would.

Revise

Read Luke 4:14-7:35 in one sitting. In these chapters we hear Jesus' teaching and see some of his miracles. Both give us glimpses of what life is like in God's kingdom. After you have read these chapters answer the three questions.

→ Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?

- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Read the Expansion Questions attachment.

- For each of the three questions, choose one expansion question that you find interesting. Use it to add to your answers above.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other your response to the Me question. When someone else shares spend a few minutes praying for them.

Expansion Questions

RE3 uses three questions to structure discussion on Luke's Gospel. They focus on Jesus and how he affected the people around him. The last question encourages us to see how Jesus could affect us. For some people and groups these questions by themselves will be enough for fruitful discussion. Other people or groups might need more prompting. That's where expansion questions come in.

This resource contains examples of expansion questions that help keep discussion flowing and encourage us to think more deeply about the passage. Which and how many of these we use depends on the passage, people's reading comprehension, their familiarity with Jesus and the Bible, whether they are an internal or external processor, how much time you have, etc. We're aiming for discussion to feel more like a peer-to-peer conversation than a teacher-student conversation.

Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?

- | What does Jesus say and do? Why does he say and do these things?
- | Who does Jesus think he is? What evidence does he offer?
- | What do we learn about Jesus' character and motives?
- | What do we learn about Jesus' relationship with God? His relationship with people?
- | What does Jesus want people to understand about himself, themselves, God, and their world?

People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?

- | Who are the people in the story? (Don't forget the crowd who watch and assess Jesus but have not committed to following him.)
- | What do they say and do? Why?
- | What do they think and feel about Jesus? Why?
- | What are we told about them and why might this be important?
- | What do we learn about their circumstances, character, values and motives?
- | What is their relationship with God like? With Jesus? With other people?

Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?

- | What stood out for me in this story?
- | Who do I connect with in the story? Who am I most like or least like? Why?
- | What questions do I have about Jesus and this story?
- | How do I feel about this story?
- | What do I think about Jesus? Do I agree with Jesus? Why?
- | What does this tell me about trusting and following Jesus?

When preparing to read Luke's Gospel with someone it can be helpful to think through the Me question not only from your own perspective but also from their perspective. This helps you to love them well as you seek to view life from their perspective and better understand their joys, fears, hopes and griefs. God-willing, it will give you an opportunity to share with them how knowing Jesus could meet their deepest needs.

Session 3

Inviting people to read Luke's Gospel

Key idea: *Our response to Jesus depends on whether we think we need forgiveness.*

Key encouragement: *Nourish your own love for Jesus by reflecting on the magnitude of his forgiveness.*

Practical challenge: *Invite someone to read Luke's Gospel with you.*

Session goals:

- *Grow increasingly familiar with the three questions: Jesus. People. Me.*
- *Practice inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 3.

Jesus invited anyone and everyone to come to him and experience life-changing forgiveness. When you know you need it, Jesus' forgiveness inspires love for him and brings great joy, hope and peace. By inviting people to read Luke's Gospel with us, we are inviting them to meet Jesus and enjoy his forgiveness too.

Share

From the Relationship Network Worksheet, share about two more of the five people you hope to invite to read Luke's Gospel with you.

- Share a little bit about your relationship with them. Is there anything we have read or discussed so far that might connect with them?

Pray

In the synagogue at Nazareth, at the start of his public ministry, Jesus read from the Scriptures:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Luke 4:18-19 (NIV)

- | Thank God for Jesus and freedom he offers to all who trust him.
- | Pray for your family and friends. Ask God to help them come to Jesus for the true freedom that only Jesus can give.

Train

Luke's Gospel

In our story today Jesus is at a dinner party where he meets a woman who knows that she needs forgiveness and a man who thinks he doesn't.

1. Read Luke 7:36-50 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. What does this story teach us about forgiveness?
 - c. What aspects of the story would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?
3. What does enjoying Jesus' forgiveness mean for me?

Skill: Invitations

We are seeking to ask people to read Luke's Gospel with us so that they will meet the 'real Jesus' and be able to make an informed decision about whether he is worth trusting and following.

Picture one of the people you are praying for. Now imagine asking this person whether they would be interested in reading Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

1. What is the best thing that could happen?
2. What is the worst thing that could happen? How likely is this to happen?
3. Imagine a direct invitation to read Luke's Gospel with you. For example:
 - I'm doing a course at church where we are learning how to read Luke's biography of Jesus with people because ... Would you be up for it?
 - I read a story about Jesus yesterday and thought you might be interested in it because ...

Write down a sentence or two that reflects a direct approach in your own words and with your own reasons.

4. Imagine a more organic invitation to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.
 - Is there a topic that you talk about with them that relates to forgiveness? For example: guilt, regrets, cancel-culture, justice, painful relationships, etc.
 - Is there a topic that you talk about with them regularly?

Write down a sentence or two that could help you move from this topic to an invitation to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

5. Pray. Thank God for the way Jesus' forgiveness transforms us and our lives. Ask God to help us enjoy our forgiveness. Ask God for an opportunity to invite someone to read Luke's Gospel with us.

Revise

Read Luke 8-10 in one sitting. In these chapters the disciples grow in their understanding of who Jesus is and what being his disciple means. After you have read it, answer the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Consider the five people you are praying for. For each person:

- Which of the stories we have read would best connect with them?
- Which would be the most surprising?
- Ask God for an opportunity to share one of these stories with them.

Invite one of the people you are praying for to read Luke's biography of Jesus with you.

- Pray for an opportunity. Plan for an opportunity. Take a deep breath and invite them.
- If asking one of these people to read Luke's Gospel with you feels like a bridge too far at the moment, consider asking a Christian friend to read a story in Luke with you to help you practice.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Tell each other which Bible story you would like to share with your friend and why you chose that one, or, how God has been answering our prayers.

Session 4

Loving your neighbour

Key idea: *We all need forgiveness because we all fail to be the people Jesus challenges us to be.*

Key encouragement: *Having been loved and forgiven by Jesus, ask God to help you love like Jesus.*

Practical challenge: *Identify and respond to a need experienced by one of the people you are praying for.*

Session goals:

- *Grow increasingly familiar with the three questions: Jesus. People. Me.*
- *Accept Jesus' challenge to love our neighbours by deepening our relationships and conversations.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 4.

Jesus thinks we need forgiveness. Our response to Jesus depends on whether we think we need forgiveness. But what if your family and friends don't want or think they need forgiveness?

Share

- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go?
- Today we'll share stories about the evangelistic opportunities God gave us this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.

Pray

This is the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

'Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation.'"

Luke 11:2-4 (NIV)

- | Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train

Luke's Gospel

In our passage today Jesus tells a story that has become very famous – The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

1. Read Luke 10:25-37 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. How did discussing a parable change the way the three questions operated?
 - c. What information does this passage add to our discussion about forgiveness?
 - d. What aspects of the story would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?




Skill: Loving your neighbour




The following tables invite you to think through ways you can deliberately and intentionally love your neighbour. The top table is about spending time with people, and the bottom table is about conversations with people. In real life though, the two tables overlap.

1. Work through the tables with one of the people you have been praying for in mind. Try to come up with specific ideas for deepening your relationship and conversations with them,

including ways of inviting them into your Christian community. Then, share your ideas with the rest of the group.

While loving people can sometimes feel costly it is great privilege to share your life with someone else. Real love is costly but it is also beautiful. Ask Jesus, who loved us so much that he died for us, to help you.

SPENDING TIME WITH PEOPLE			
			
	Love: Acts of service.	Social: Casual and fun hangout.	Community: Connecting them.
	How can I show love to them in practical ways that they will appreciate?	How can I spend time with them in everyday ways?	How could I help them get to know by Christian friends?
Me individually			
My Christian Community			

CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE			
			
	Questions: Answering questions.	Jesus: Talking about Jesus.	Bible: Reading the Bible
	How can I answer the questions they have about Jesus?	How can I introduce them to life and teachings of Jesus?	How can I encourage them to read the Bible for themselves?
Me individually			
My Christian Community			

2. Pray. Thank Jesus for loving us enough to die for us so that we could be forgiven. Having been loved and forgiven by Jesus, ask God to help us love like Jesus.

Revise

Read Luke 11-14 in one sitting. In these chapters Jesus continues teaching his disciples as they head towards Jerusalem. Choose one short passage from within Luke 11-14 and answer the three questions. Include three or four relevant expansion questions for each of the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Work through the Loving your Neighbour tables for each of the five people you are praying for.

- Act on at least one of these ideas this week.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other one of your ideas for loving your neighbour, or, how God has been answering our prayers.

Session 5

Which passages in Luke's Gospel?

Key idea: *Jesus' teaching on forgiveness is rich and nuanced. He also teaches on justice, judgement and repentance. Forgiveness is only one possible theme we could trace through Luke's Gospel.*

Key encouragement: *Jesus has an encouragement or challenge for everyone. If one story doesn't easily connect with someone, there will be another story that does.*

Practical challenge: *Think through which particular passage(s) you would like to read with each of the five people you are praying for.*

Session goals:

- *Discuss different aspects of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness.*
- *Recognise that there are many different paths you could take through Luke's Gospel.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 5.

We are taking a forgiveness-themed journey through Luke's Gospel. Jesus' teaching on forgiveness is rich and nuanced. He also teaches on justice, judgement and repentance. While everyone needs to hear all that Jesus says about forgiveness, people might start their journey in different places because of their life experiences and worldviews.

Share

Choose one of the following to share about:

- Which passage from Luke 11-14 did you choose for an in-depth read? Why did you choose this one?
- Share stories of evangelistic opportunities God gave you this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.
- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go? Who will you see or speak with this week that you would also like to invite?

Pray

As you read Luke's Gospel you discover that Jesus meets people where they are at and relates to them individually. He doesn't take a 'one size fits all' approach.

- | Thank God that Jesus knows us by name.
- | Ask God to help us know and love the people he has placed in our life.
- | Pray these things for yourself, each other and your friends.

Train***Luke's Gospel***

From this session forward, different people will be facilitating our discussion on Luke's Gospel. This will give each of us practice at doing it.

1. Read Luke 18:1-14 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. Did discussing a passage with multiple stories change the way the three questions operated? If so, how?
 - c. What does this passage add to our discussion about forgiveness?
 - d. What aspects of the passage would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

Skill: Which passages?

Jesus' teaching on forgiveness and its related ideas is multifaceted, and the angle on forgiveness that he begins with when talking with a person seems to depend on a person's particular circumstances, values and/or griefs. While we all need all of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness, wisdom might lead us to begin conversation in one place rather than another.

1. Think of one of the five people you are praying for. Spend a few minutes considering which one of the following questions might be helpful for them to wrestle with as they investigate Jesus. Share with the group which question you chose and why.

Please note that these questions are often complex, nuanced and emotional. The answers below are brief and incomplete, and don't do anything more than suggest a possible trajectory for conversation. For further reading on the challenges of forgiveness read *Forgive: Why Should I and How Can I?* by Tim Keller.

- a. Do I really need forgiveness?

Yes. No one loves God and their neighbour with all their heart, soul, strength and mind. People enjoy God's gifts without honouring the God who gives them life. Luke 10:25-37, 12:13-21.

- b. Am I too bad to be forgiven?

No one is too bad for forgiveness. Jesus forgave anyone who was willing to receive it. Luke 7:36-50, 15:11-32.

- c. Does forgiveness mean that God doesn't care about justice?

The cross demonstrates God's justice and mercy. Sin is punished and forgiveness is offered. The risen Jesus will return and judge. He calls his followers to care for and protect vulnerable people while we wait for him to return. Luke 10:25-37, 18:15-17, 35-43.

- d. Is suffering evidence that God has not forgiven someone and is punishing them instead?

The relationship between sin, judgement and suffering is complex. Jesus recognises the existence of unjust suffering and warns his followers not to assume that if someone is suffering then it is their own fault. Luke 13:1-9, 18:1-8.

- e. Does receiving God's forgiveness really change anything?

When Jesus forgives people they are welcomed into God's family. This gives them the freedom of a genuinely new start. Luke 7:36-50, 19:1-10.

2. Forgiveness is not the only theme we could trace through Luke's Gospel and other themes might be a better entry point towards Jesus for someone. Think of another of the five people you are praying for. Answer some of the following questions as you are able.
- a. What do they hope or long for?
 - b. What do they value or fear?
 - c. What misunderstandings about God, people, themselves or the world do they have?
 - d. Given this, are there any passages in Luke's Gospel that you would like to ask God to give you an opportunity to share with them?
3. Pray. Thank God that Jesus recognises the complexity of our lives. Ask God to give us the sensitivity and wisdom we need to know which stories to share with our family and friends.

Revise

Read Luke 15:1-19:27 in one sitting. Here Luke records many of Jesus' parables and teachings. Choose one passage from Luke 15:1-19:27 that you think might be relevant to one of the five people you are praying for. For this passage answer the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Answer the Me question from both your perspective and your friend or family member's perspective.

Invite another person to read Luke's Gospel with you.

- Look back at the Session 3 Skill: Questions 3-4. Choose another one of the five people you are praying for that you will either see or speak with this week and work through these questions.
- Pray for an opportunity. Plan for an opportunity. Take a deep breath and invite them to read Luke's Gospel with you.
- If asking someone to read Luke's Gospel with you feels like a bridge too far at the moment, consider asking a Christian friend to read a passage in Luke's Gospel with you to help you practice.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other which passage you chose for an in-depth reading and why you chose it, or your plans to invite someone to read Luke with you, or how God has been answering our prayers.

Session 6

How we are forgiven

Key idea: *Jesus' death and resurrection is the event that secures our forgiveness. The innocent and powerful king dies in the place of, and at the hands of, guilty people so that we can be forgiven.*

Key encouragement: *There is a lot you already know about how to read Luke's Gospel well.*

Practical challenge: *Notice how many 'Christian' words you use and 'Christian' concepts you assume. Try to explain them in everyday language.*

Session goals:

- *Discuss how and why Jesus died.*
- *Consider how to explain Christian ideas in everyday language.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 6.

Jesus' death and resurrection is the event that secures our forgiveness. The innocent and powerful king dies in the place of, and at the hands of, guilty people so that we can be forgiven. Everything in Luke's Gospel, indeed, everything in the Old Testament, has been leading up to this.

Share

Choose one of the following to share about:

- Which passage from Luke 15:1-19:27 did you choose for an in-depth read? Why did you choose this one?
- Share stories of evangelistic opportunities God gave you this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.
- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go? Who will you see or speak with this week that you would also like to invite?

Pray

Jesus knew that the cross was ahead of him when he set out for Jerusalem. This was why he came into the world.

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.”

The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

Luke 18:31-34 (NIV)

- I Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train

Luke’s Gospel

Having been betrayed, tried and condemned to death despite his innocence, Jesus is executed.

1. Read Luke 23:32-49 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. What does this story teach us about forgiveness?
 - c. What aspects of the passage would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?
3. Explain, in simple English and without ‘Christian’ technical language, how the death of Jesus brings people forgiveness.

Skill: Giving context

When we talk about Jesus and read the Bible with people, it's helpful to be aware of how many 'Christian' words and concepts we use without noticing it. For example, first century words and practices that are no longer current, Old Testament references, or theological words and ideas. Even everyday Christian words like grace, gospel and sin can fall into this category. It's useful to notice Christian words so that we can explain them in everyday language to people who are unfamiliar with the Bible, Jesus and Christianity.

1. Look back at Luke 23:32-49.
 - a. Make a list of words or ideas that might be unfamiliar, confusing, or missed by someone who was reading Luke for the first time.
 - b. Try and explain, in everyday English, a couple of the words or ideas you identified in Question 1a.
 - c. How many of these words and ideas would it be helpful to explain when reading Luke's Gospel with someone?
2. How could you help someone gain an overview of Luke's Gospel so that they better understand the context for the stories you read together?
3. Pray. Thank God for the grace and humility of Christ, that led him to die on the cross so that we might be forgiven. Ask God to help us be amazed and moved by Jesus' love for us.

Revise

Read Luke 19:28-23:49 in one sitting. Here Jesus talks about his coming death so that when it happens we know what it means. Choose one short passage from within these chapters and answer the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Look back at the Loving your Neighbour tables in Session 4.

- Act on at least one of these ideas this week.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other your plans to love your neighbour, or, how God has been answering our prayers.

Session 7

Inviting people to follow Jesus

Key idea: *Jesus' resurrection is true news and good news that people need to respond to. The risen Jesus offers people forgiveness and new life, which they can accept or reject.*

Key encouragement: *People become Christian from all sorts of backgrounds and beliefs when they meet the risen Jesus in the pages of the Bible with the help of God's Spirit.*

Practical challenge: *Ask people what they think about Jesus and where they stand with Jesus. Give them time and space to make an informed decision, but encourage them to make one.*

Session goals:

- *Discuss why Jesus' resurrection is true news and good news.*
- *Learn how to invite people to respond to Jesus.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 7.

Jesus' resurrection is true news and good news that people need to respond to. The risen Jesus offers people forgiveness and new life, which they can accept or reject. Some people decide quickly. Other people need more time or information to make an informed decision, though long-term indecision is itself a choice with consequences.

Share

Choose one of the following to share about.

- Share stories of evangelistic opportunities God gave you this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.
- How did your plans to love your neighbour go?

Pray

Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. ...

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Luke 5:27-28, 31-32 (NIV)

- | Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train***Luke's Gospel***

Jesus, having risen from the dead, appears again to his disciples.

1. Read Luke 24:36-53 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. What does this story teach us about forgiveness?
 - c. What aspects of the passage would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?
3. Explain why you believe that Jesus rose from the dead and what difference this makes to your life.

Skill: The Ask – inviting people to follow Jesus

Giving people information about Jesus is important. It's also important to encourage people to respond to Jesus. To be saved, people need to repent, receive the forgiveness that Jesus offers, and follow him.

1. What types of things is it useful for someone to know about Jesus, and themselves, to become a Christian?

2. If someone says to you, 'I want to become a Christian:'
 - a. What questions could you ask to check that they knew what they were doing?

 - b. What could you tell them about how to become a Christian? (Hint: You could formulate an answer around the words: Repent. Believe. Follow. Pray.)

 - c. If they did repent and believe, what could you advise them to do next?

3. How could you respond to someone who says that they didn't want to become a Christian?

4. How could you help someone who 'needed more information' before making a decision?

5. As we practice inviting people to respond to Jesus, why is it important to remember that it is only through God's Spirit that people see their need for Jesus and respond to Jesus?

Asking people where they stand with Jesus can be uncomfortable, but it is important. People don't need to pass a doctrine exam or holiness test to become a Christian, but they do need to know 'enough' to trust and follow Jesus. Some people already know that they need help and will trust Jesus quickly. Other people wrestle with understanding things like the Trinity and Substitutionary

Atonement before becoming Christians. For others, admitting that they are sinners who need to change will be a real challenge.

People become Christian from all sorts of backgrounds and beliefs when they meet the risen Jesus in the words of Scripture with the help of the Spirit. So, pray for people and invite them to read Luke's Gospel with you. Ask them what they think about Jesus and why. Give them time and space to make an informed decision, but encourage them to make a decision. And let them know that whatever they decide, you will continue to care about them – as does Jesus!

6. Pray. Thank God for opening your eyes and enabling you to repent and believe in Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to be at work in your friends to help them turn to Jesus in repentance and faith.

Revise

Consider two of the five people you are praying for.

- What do you think stops them from following Jesus? If you don't know, how could you find out?
- How could you start to address these barriers?
- Are there any parts of Luke's Gospel that might help?

Invite another person to read Luke's Gospel with you.

- Look back at the Session 3 Skill: Questions 3-4. Choose another one of the five people you are praying for that you will either see or speak with this week and work through these questions.
- Pray for an opportunity. Plan for an opportunity. Take a deep breath and invite them to read Luke's Gospel with you.

Look back at the Loving your Neighbour tables in Session 4.

- Act on another of these ideas this week.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other your plans to love your neighbour, or invite someone to read Luke with you, or how God has been answering our prayers.

Session 8

The costs and benefits of following Jesus

Key idea: *Jesus is the servant king who offers new life to everyone who follows him. Following Jesus also involves costly discipleship while we wait for him to return as king, saviour and judge.*

Key encouragement: *Following Jesus involves suffering before glory, but it is worth it.*

Practical challenge: *When inviting people to follow Jesus, and talking with people about Jesus, be honest with them about both the costs and the benefits.*

Session goals:

- *Discuss the costs and benefits of following Jesus while we wait for him to return.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*
- *Review RE3.*

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 8.

Jesus is the servant king who offers true life to everyone who follows him. But following Jesus means costly discipleship while we wait for Jesus to return. We need to be open and honest with people about this. Following Jesus is wonderful, and the benefits far outweigh the costs, but the costs are real.

Share

Choose one of the following to share about.

- Share stories of evangelistic opportunities God gave you this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.
- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go? Who will you see or speak with this week that you would also like to invite?

Pray

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Luke 24:45-49 (NIV)

- I Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train***Luke's Gospel***

After Peter recognises that Jesus is God's promised king, Jesus teaches his disciples about what the future holds for Jesus and Jesus' followers.

1. Read Luke 9:18-27 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
 - c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
2. Review your discussion.
 - a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
 - b. What aspects of the passage would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

Skill: Recognising the costs of following Jesus

When inviting people to follow Jesus we need to be honest with them about both the costs and the benefits of being a Christian. The costs of following Jesus may not be the first thing we talk about, but they do need to be discussed.

1. Think of one of the people you are praying for.
 - a. What costs might they face if they become a Christian?
 - b. When and how could you talk with them about the costs of following Jesus?
2. What encourages you to keep following Jesus when it feels costly?
3. In Ripple Effect we focus on the joy and privilege of evangelism, but it can also be costly.
 - a. When does evangelism feel costly?
 - b. What encourages you to persevere with evangelism when you feel the costs?

Module Review

This is the final session of Ripple Effect **MODULE 3**: The Real Jesus.

Watch the final RE3 video.

1. What have you learnt about Jesus and yourself?
2. What aspect of reading Luke's biography of Jesus with unbelieving family and friends stood out for you?
3. What happens next is up to you. Here are some ideas. You could:
 - Move onto another module of Ripple Effect together. Check out the website for more information. <https://www.ripple-effect.net.au/>
 - Keep gathering each month to pray for your friends and family and to keep encouraging each other in evangelism.
 - Find a few other Christians and take them through RE3 so that there are more Christians equipped to read Luke's Gospel with their family and friends.
4. Pray. Thank God for the things you have been encouraged and challenged by throughout RE3: The Real Jesus. Ask God to bless you with the joy and privilege of reading a gospel with someone investigating Jesus.

Keep learning at
ripple-effect.net.au