

ADULT MISSIONS STUDY

Tell Louisiana, “We’re Here for You”

Items to bring:

Bibles

Large map of the world.

Tacks or Pins

Computer or tv to play the

Here for You Video Clip

Cards, each with the name of a different Louisiana town or city printed on each.

1. Ice Breaker: Mark the Spot!

As people arrive, invite the group participants to place a tack on the world map in the places outside of Louisiana that they have been. Encourage the group to think of the most unusual and most distant trips they have taken.

Ask: What are some of the major differences you observed? How did the places differ from our town/city? What caused you the most confusion?

Say: Sometimes we forget what it’s like to be an out-of-towner. They say the worst person to ask for directions is the person that has lived their whole life in that town. They forget what it’s like to be lost in that town, so the directions they give have too many assumptions about what the lost person really knows. There’s a spiritual parallel to this truth.

2. Share the following statement by the American Immigration Counsel:

Louisiana is home to a small but growing number of immigrants who make up 4 percent of the state’s total population. While their share is small, immigrants are an essential part of the Louisiana labor force, accounting for 13 percent of residents working in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations. Most immigrants speak English well and are naturalized citizens or eligible for naturalization. ¹

Ask: What opportunities are found in the growing number of immigrants coming to Louisiana?

What should we as followers of Christ be considering when we think of all the people who are coming to Louisiana?

3. Look in the Word

Say to the group: Let’s look at the story of a foreign traveler from God’s word.

Ask a group member to read Scripture Reading: Acts 8:26-40 (NIV)

4. Summarize the scripture story.

The story of Philip and the Ethiopian is an account of how God orchestrates divine encounters to bring people to the knowledge of the truth. This story shows how God uses ordinary people to accomplish His purposes and how important it is for us to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. In this Bible study, we will examine the story of Philip and the Ethiopian and learn some valuable lessons from it.

Philip was one of the seven deacons chosen by the apostles to help with the distribution of food to the widows in Jerusalem. However, after the persecution of the church in Jerusalem, Philip went to Samaria and preached the gospel there. ***Takeaway:*** God can use difficult circumstances to bring about His purposes.

God sent Philip to the Ethiopian because He knew the Ethiopian was searching for the truth. The Ethiopian was reading the book of Isaiah, and he was looking for someone to explain it to him. God used Philip to bring the message of salvation to the Ethiopian and to help him understand the prophecy in Isaiah.

The Ethiopian was reading the book of Isaiah and was struggling

to understand it. When Philip approached him, he asked if he understood what he was reading. The Ethiopian responded by saying that he needed someone to explain it to him. **Takeaway:** People are searching for the truth and are open to hearing the gospel message.

The Ethiopian believed in Jesus and was baptized by Philip. He then went on his way rejoicing. **Takeaway:** When we share the gospel message with others, we can have a profound impact on their lives.

Summary: Evangelism is not about us, but about the person with whom we are sharing the message. We need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and be willing to share the message with those who are open to hearing it.

5. Discuss the story

Why do you think God sent Philip to the Ethiopian?

What was the Ethiopian doing, and how did Philip approach him?

What was the Ethiopian's response to Philip's message?

What can we learn from this story about evangelism and sharing our faith with others?

How can we be more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

6. Applying the text to Louisiana

When we think about Louisiana, we must understand that this is a diverse state with all types of people and cultures, and yet Jesus urges us to cross cultural boundaries and traditions to offer people an opportunity to know and follow Him. It's a big task that takes all of us. We can complete the task by actively participating in ministries that impact those people around us. We can also support such efforts through financial gifts. That's what the Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering is all about. We know that Louisiana is a mission field. We know there are challenges, but like the Ethiopian, there are people all over our state who are looking for answers. We get an opportunity to lead them to an

understanding of God's ultimate plan for their lives. The question is, will we sacrifice our time, our treasures, and our talents to let people know that Jesus is the answer?

7. Watch Here for You!

Say to the group: One tool we can utilize to share the gospel message is Here For You. This multiplatform, multimedia campaign provides a creative application of a Biblical truth that strives to point the viewer to a Gospel presentation and a local church. Through the Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering we are supporting this effort to deliver God's good news into the hearts and homes of the estimated 3.2 million people in Louisiana who do not have a relationship with Jesus. This strategy allows us to present an open door of communication creatively and consistently so that the gospel can be multiplied. Here for You also airs on Spanish radio stations across south Louisiana in an effort to reach the growing Hispanic population.

Play the GBO highlight video for Here for You found at www.georgiabarnette.org/promo-materials/

8. Prayer

Hand each member of the group one card with the name of a town or city in Louisiana. After the cards have been distributed, read the list of names of towns to the whole group. Challenge the group members to pray throughout the week for the town printed on the card.

¹ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-louisiana>

