

STUDENT LEADER GUIDE



THE CONVERSATION: OPPORTUNITY WEEK

OUTCASTS

WELCOME & OPEN PRAYER

[Host] Hey everyone, welcome to First Priority. Thanks for being here. Today [insert name] is going to share why it matters for us to speak first and to be the ones who reach out to people who feel like they don't quite fit in. Let's start by praying.

Sample prayer: God, thank You for bringing us here today. Help us to see how You can use us in our school to make a difference. Give us boldness and a heart for the people around us. Speak through [insert name] today and help us learn something new. In Jesus' name, amen.

THE CONVERSATION

[Speaker] Last week we talked about how Jesus noticed people that others usually ignored, and how we can do the same by inviting someone to First Priority. We even handed out Invite Cards and challenged each other to pray for and reach out to someone who might feel left out. So — who did you invite? How did they respond? (Take a moment to let a few people share and share your own response too.)

This week we're going to talk about why it matters to be the one who speaks first. Starting a conversation might seem like a small thing, but it can mean everything to someone who feels invisible or unsure if they belong.

Think about how many of us feel more comfortable when someone else talks to us first? (Let students respond and share your answer too.) When someone takes that first step to speak to us, it's easier to open up. That's exactly what we should be doing as followers of Jesus — being the first to speak, to show others they matter, and that we actually care.

Jesus did this all the time. One example is in John chapter 4 verses 7 through 9, "A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman

said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?' For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans."

Jesus started the conversation. And not just with anyone. He spoke first to someone people avoided. Back then, Jews didn't talk to Samaritans, and especially not to women in public. But Jesus didn't care about those social rules. He cared about her heart.

Even His disciples were shocked. But Jesus wasn't focused on her past or her reputation. He saw value in her. He cared more about her future than her mistakes. And the same is true for us. Jesus wants us to see people the way He does.

So what's stopping us from talking to people who seem different, or who are treated like outsiders? Is it fear? Is it judgment? Or are we just not noticing them? A lot of our conversations happen through text or social media, and that's fine, but there's something powerful about looking up, making eye contact, and saying something kind in person.

It doesn't have to be deep. Just say something like, "How's your day going?" or "I like your shoes, where did you get them?" That one moment can make someone feel seen. It can open the door to real connection, and maybe even to talking about Jesus, the One who values them more than anyone else ever could.

Jesus always made people feel welcome. With the woman at the well, He didn't avoid her or call her out to shame her. He had a real conversation with her and called her to a better life. He led with love. So, think about it, who's someone that might feel left out or overlooked? What if all they're waiting for is someone like us to notice them and speak first?

DISCUSSION TIME

[Speaker & Mentor] Let's take a few minutes to talk about this together. (Give students a chance to share their thoughts on the questions below and be sure to join the conversation.)

- Why do you think it's easier when someone speaks to you first?
- Can you think of a time someone reached out to you first? How did it make you feel?
- What are some reasons we don't speak first to people who seem left out?
- How could a simple conversation lead to a deeper friendship or even a chance to share about Jesus?

Thanks for sharing your thoughts! Hopefully we're beginning to see that starting a conversation doesn't have to be complicated, it just needs to be genuine. Now let's take what we've talked about and put it into action.

(Have the student host come back up and give the CHALLENGE and PRAY.)

CHALLENGE & PRAY

[Host] Find one person this week who might feel left out or invisible. Be the first to speak to them. It doesn't have to be a big deal, just something kind or thoughtful. Trust that God can use your words to do something powerful. Invite them to join you at church or First Priority. Let's pray.

Sample Prayer: God, thank You for seeing us, even when we feel overlooked. Help us to see others the way You do. Give us the courage to speak first, to be kind, and to show love to people who feel left out. Use our words to help others know they are valued by You. In Jesus' name, amen.

GAME TIME – Optional

[Host & Mentor] (See the Game Time tab for options.)