

DIXIE JACKSON ARKANSAS MISSIONS OFFERING

ADULT LESSON PLAN

PRAYER

- Ask God to give you insight as you read His Word and prepare your lesson.
- Pray for a clear understanding of how the Holy Spirit leads you to respond personally to the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.
- Pray for each person in your group to be attentive and responsive during your meeting, and obedient in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads them to engage with the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.
- Pray for your group to have a fresh understanding of how the Lord is working through Arkansas Baptists to spread the Gospel and how we can all join in His work.

PREP

- Explore the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer resources available at absc.org/dixiejackson. Read the theme introduction and review the planning guide. Learn about the ministries spotlighted; decide how you'd like to share the ministry videos during group time, and plan accordingly.
- Read John 1:35–42, along with the lesson plan.
- Reach out to the folks in your group a week or two before you meet. Send a group text if you have phone numbers, or an email if you have addresses. If your church has a Facebook page, you could write a brief post. Let everyone know you look forward to seeing them during your time together; you might mention something about the text that is exciting or encouraging to you.
- If you'd like to ask volunteers to read Scripture or open and close your group time in prayer, recruit them a few days before your meeting.

- On the day/evening of your meeting, arrive early enough to be sure the room is set up the way you want it and to greet everyone personally as they arrive.

PLAN

God often uses the prayers, obedience, and energy of just one person to build something powerful and new. We can find great examples of this truth at work in a variety of ways through the ministries supported by the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer. And they can inspire us to jump in with confidence whenever God calls us to serve.

Your goals for group time are to encourage folks (1) to think and talk about opportunities the Lord has given them to plug in where He is at work, and (2) to respond with enthusiasm and obedience to those opportunities, beginning with how they engage with the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.

Use this lesson plan word for word or simply as a guide—however it offers you the best support as you lead. For example, when you lead your group discussion after you share the ministry videos, don't feel pressured to cover every question. It's not necessary to use each one; they're meant to give you a springboard for group conversation. If you're watching the clock, you could choose one of the four to focus on, or choose one or two questions within each of the four. Also, if your group is too large for everyone to talk comfortably and be heard, divide into two or three smaller groups.

A large, stylized, light blue graphic of the word "Lesson" in a script font, with the "Dixie Jackson" logo overlaid on it. The logo consists of the words "Dixie Jackson" in a black script font, with "ARKANSAS" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font below it.

When everyone's seated and ready to begin group time, open with a prayer.

Introduce the theme for the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer:

IT STARTS WITH ONE.

You could say: The Bible is full of grand gestures, huge personalities, dramatic displays of obedience and epic results; they show up in thrilling accounts that we love, share, and know by heart. For good reason!

But when we think about these amazing stories, we don't always notice something really important: Even the biggest circumstances and events that God used to grow His Kingdom started with one—one person who loved Him, who leaned in, stepped up, shared their faith, trusted Him with the results.

One person like Andrew, a fisherman from Galilee who would become the first disciple Jesus recruited. He also became the very first missionary when he introduced his brother to the Messiah.

When we meet Andrew in the Gospels, he's been a disciple of John the Baptist for awhile. He's been baptized by John and has heard him preach many times about the coming Messiah. Evidently, he's been paying close attention. Because when he finally comes face-to-face with Jesus, he's ready to follow Him.

Read John 1:35–42 to the group:

"The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, 'Look, the Lamb of God!'

When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, 'What do you want?'

They said, 'Rabbi' (which means 'Teacher'), 'where are you staying?'

'Come,' he replied, 'and you will see.'

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas (which, when translated, is Peter).'" —*New International Version*

Introduce the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering ministry videos.

You could say: Witnessing one-to-one, friend-to-friend, brother-to-brother, starts with Andrew. His life changes when he meets Jesus, and he's excited! Naturally, he tells his brother, whom he loves, because he wants his brother's life to be changed, too.

And that's what it boils down to for us, as followers of Jesus. When we accept Him as our Savior, walking daily with Him changes us. Through the gift of His grace, we have freedom, hope, peace, redemption, healing, joy. Naturally, we want to share with others.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, He taught by example. One thing He revealed over and over again was His heart for people; Jesus understood that relationships grounded in love for the Father have a unique capacity to reach the world with the Gospel.

We can see that power at work among Southern Baptist churches in our state when we engage together with the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer, sharing our resources toward a common goal of impacting Arkansas for Christ.

We can also see it in the ministries that the Offering supports—ministries through which lives are changed every day because one person reaches out to another in the one-on-one relationship-building that Jesus demonstrated.

Share the 2019 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering ministry videos.

After you watch the videos, use these questions to lead a group discussion about discipleship and obedience, based on the time you have and the format that best suits your meeting.

You could say: If you know Jesus, you're called to share Him with others. Whatever that looks like—reaching out to a friend, stepping out on faith or stepping up to help a brother or sister in Christ, being on-purpose about making the most of our time to plant the seeds of the Gospel, sharing the redemptive power of Jesus to make all things new—we can trust God to make the most of what we give Him. We see that in the way He's spreading the Gospel through the obedience of people we meet in the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering ministry videos.

So what can we learn from their stories? How can they motivate us to let Kingdom work start with us?

1. **Emily Duncan knew a lot about Jesus, but she didn't really know Jesus.** Her life changed when a friend at school invited her to get involved with the campus Baptist Collegiate Ministry, where she learned what it means to have a relationship with Christ. Just like with Andrew and his brother Simon, one person can have a huge impact on the story of another. But even when we know the Holy Spirit is prompting us, it's not always easy to follow through. Is there one person in your life who introduced you to Jesus? Invited you to a youth group event or a Bible study? Brought you to church for the first time? How did that person shape your walk with Christ? Do you ever struggle with hesitation when the Lord is nudging you to reach out to someone in Jesus' name? If so, would you be willing to share what that's like? If not, what have you learned or experienced that might encourage others?
2. **When Jesus calls His disciples "friends" in John 15:15, He shows us that relationships are at the heart of His ministry.** Dustin Clegg was burdened about the need in his community for Jesus to heal relationships broken along racial, economic and social divides; he knew God was calling him to plant a church that actively pursues diversity among its members. But he had no idea where to start. When he stepped out on faith, the Lord provided ministry partners to help. Has God ever asked you to do something that seemed overwhelming to you? Something you didn't know how to do? Was it easy or hard to ask for help? How did God provide? On the other hand, have you ever been called to come alongside someone who needed a hand pursuing a ministry opportunity? How did you respond? In either scenario, what did you learn about God's faithfulness that you might not have known otherwise?
3. **After Andrew spends time with Jesus, the first thing he does is to tell his brother and then bring him to meet the Messiah.** Andrew knew how to seize a moment; so do James Fannin and his son, James Jr. As Disaster Relief team volunteers in Iowa, they found that filling buckets of disinfectant and cleaning solution for flooding victims gave them a few moments of one-on-one time with each person in line. So they used those minutes to share Jesus. Are there any built-in moments in your routine that you could use to plant Gospel seeds?

Any places where you often see the same people, like the checkout line at the grocery store, or the drive-through of McDonald's or your bank? Are there folks who regularly make deliveries or repairs to your home or office? What are some easy ways to share Christ during these encounters?

4. **Jesus gives Simon a new name: Peter, from the Greek word for "rock."** But Simon isn't always much of a rock. In fact, sometimes he's a hot mess. Jesus loves and accepts Simon as he is, and gives him a name based on who he'll become because of God's grace at work in his heart. Today in the Arkansas prison system, Joshua Mayfield sees inmates' lives changed by that very same love, acceptance and grace alive in them. 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that in Christ, we're made totally new. What does that tell you about Jesus? And what does it mean to you, personally? How does it shape your desire to serve Jesus? Because of your relationship with Him, how are you different than you were a year ago? Five years ago? There are people around you every day who need to know about the hope you have in Christ. What are some of the ways the Holy Spirit is prompting you to reach out to them? How will you respond?

Wrap up your group time with some closing thoughts and prayer.

You could say: All of us can be the hands and feet of Jesus, whether one-on-one or serving with other believers. Right now, Arkansas Baptists have an amazing opportunity to impact our state for Christ together by giving to the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering. And the ministries supported by the offering provide countless ways we can invest our time and energy throughout the year.

The power of Christ alive in every believer makes us world-changers. If you have a relationship with Him, you have something powerful and priceless to share. The Holy Spirit is continually at work all around us redeeming lives, restoring relationships, growing His Kingdom and inviting us to join in. Let it start with you!

Before we dismiss, we're going to pray silently for a minute. Thank the Lord for His love, goodness and provision. Ask Him to make it clear to you where He's working in our area and throughout Arkansas; pray for discernment to know how He wants you to participate, including your response to the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering. Then I'll say a closing prayer.