



BURDEN FOR THE LOST:

Why share about Jesus?

Facilitator's Guide

OUTREACH

🎯 OVERVIEW:

Let's face it: there are a lot of lost people in the world. What are we supposed to do about this? How are we supposed to feel about this? Oswald Chambers wrote, "So long as there is a human being who does not know Jesus Christ, I am his debtor to serve him until he does."¹ That's challenging. This lesson reminds students that, to Jesus, finding the one lost sheep is worth a whole lot of effort. We shouldn't share the good news of Jesus to prove that we're right and other people are wrong. We should do it because we genuinely want to help people. We should yearn to see them reap the blessings of passionately pursuing Jesus.

? OPENING QUESTIONS:

- Do you think all followers of Christ should share their faith with others? Why or why not?
- When you think of people who don't have a relationship with Jesus, what's your gut reaction toward them?

💬 WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT:

Some people believe that if you're not handing out tracts on a street corner, you don't have a deep burden for the lost. But is that true? D.T. Niles says in his book *As Seeing the Invisible: A Study of the Book of Revelation*, "True witnessing is one beggar showing another beggar where to get bread."² Why do you think you should share the good news of Jesus? Because you feel guilty? To check it off a list of "things Jesus-followers should do?" As a competition ("I gave tracts to more people than you")? Or is it because you feel a deep burden for the lost? Do you have a deep desire to share an amazing truth with someone else who needs what you have? Many people seem uninterested in Jesus because they don't realize how good life with him is. George MacDonald put it this way: "Instead of automatically blaming the person who does not believe in a God, we should ask first if his notion of God is a god that ought to be believed in."³

Many people have the wrong idea about God, and we should feel compelled to show them what they're missing. We should love them so much that we couldn't possibly keep such good news out of their reach. In the book of Romans, Paul writes about how he feels when he thinks about people who are lost, people who haven't had a deep, fulfilling encounter with Christ: "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart," (Rom. 9:2). Jesus cares passionately about the lost. He told two stories back to back about the way God sees the lost. They're found in the book of Luke. As you read these two stories, think about whether or not you have that kind of burden. Do you desire to share the joy of Christ with those who have never experienced it?

Read: Luke 15:1–10

Discuss:

- What do the shepherd and lady have in common? What do the sheep and coin represent?
- What should we have in common with the shepherd and the lady?
- What does a heart for the lost look like? How does it manifest itself?
- Where does that type of heart come from? If we don't feel a burden for the lost, how can we get one?





* A SECOND LOOK:

Pandita Ramabai was born in a time and place where it wasn't normal for females to get any education, but Ramabai was lucky. Her father was a teacher and rice farmer with a passion for the education of women. Even though they were kicked out of their community and forced to live in the forests, Ramabai's father continued to educate Ramabai and her mother. Sadly, Ramabai's parents died in a severe famine. But deciding to carry on her father's legacy, Ramabai continued traveling the country, advocating for female education. This led to public recognition at a university in Calcutta and eventually to an opportunity to study in England. From England she traveled to the United States, and there she had a life-changing experience: she encountered Jesus and became a follower of Christ. This experience gave her a particularly strong burden for the lost back in her homeland of India. Ramabai was raised Hindu, as many were in India, so she understood the importance of bringing the message of Jesus to her homeland. Over the next few decades, Ramabai worked to share the good news of Jesus through meeting desperate needs of the people of India. She did everything from building orphanages and schools to speaking out against the oppression of women forced into prostitution at temples. When she died in 1922, she left behind a legacy of radical contribution to modern India. Her life and work reflect the joy she found in sharing the good news of Jesus while making women's lives better.

She says this about the first time she decided to follow Jesus: "I realized after reading the fourth chapter of St. John's Gospel, that Christ was truly the Divine Saviour he claimed to be, and no one but he could transform and uplift the downtrodden women of India... Thus my heart was drawn to the religion of Christ."⁴

Discuss:

- Ramabai put a lot of effort into seeking out the lost and sharing the good news of Jesus because she felt joy by sharing the dignity and freedom a life following Jesus provides. Do you feel that same joy at the idea of sharing about Jesus? Why or why not?
- What is it about Jesus that gets you excited to share his good news with others? For Pandita Ramabai, it was the way Jesus brings dignity to the oppressed. What is it for you?
- Ramabai combined her burden for the lost with a burden to make people's lives better. Do you think you can have one without the other? Is one more important than the other?

LEADER'S NOTE: There is a great opportunity to discuss with students how important it is to use their words and their actions to reach out to the lost. The words of the gospel message are vital (Romans 10:14) and our actions speak as well (John 13:35). The Spread the Word lesson of this Outreach root goes deeper into this concept.



✓ **LIVE IT OUT: *Worth Sharing***

Pandita Ramabai was excited to share about Jesus because she knew that Jesus offered hope to the oppressed women of India. She knew that the women of India who didn't know Jesus were missing out on something great. What is it about Jesus that you think is worth sharing with others? What are people who don't know Jesus missing out on?

On your own, brainstorm five ideas, then share them with the whole group. Based on everyone's answers, put together a Top Ten List of things someone who doesn't know Jesus is missing out on.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

>>> TOP TEN LIST <<<

↓ **APPLY IT:**

How connected are you to God's burden for the lost? This week, how can you connect to God's heart for the lost and actively seek out people who don't know Jesus?

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

LEADER'S NOTE: Whenever students make applications, challenge them to be specific. It's one thing to say, "I'm going to trust God more." The truth is, our students won't really know if they did this, or if they grew in trust over the week. It's another thing to say, "Every morning this week before I eat breakfast, I'm going to tell God that today is his and that I trust him, and I'm going to ask him to give me the strength to replace worries with trust." Challenge your students to answer the questions under the "Be Specific" section. You can even have them pair up, share their applications, and ask for accountability from their partner.



THINK ABOUT IT:

"[Pray] also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel," (Eph. 6:19).

"Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that."

– Charles Spurgeon⁵

"If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies! And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves! If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for!" – Charles Spurgeon⁶

***Any reference within this piece to Internet addresses of websites not under the administration of LeaderTreks is not to be taken as an endorsement of these websites by LeaderTreks; neither does LeaderTreks vouch for their content.

¹ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: Classic Edition* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 2011), Kindle edition.

² D.T. Niles, *As Seeing the Invisible: A Study of the Book of Revelation* (London: SCM Press, 1962).

³ George MacDonald, *Discovering the Character of God*, ed. Michael R. Phillips (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1989), 19.

⁴ Pandita Ramabai, *Pandita Ramabai's America: Conditions of Life in the United States*, ed. Robert Eric Frykenberg (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), Kindle edition.

⁵ Charles H. Spurgeon, "She Was Not Hid (Sermon No. 2019)," *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 34, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1888), 222.

⁶ Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Wailing of Risca (Sermon No. 349)," *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 7, (London, Passmore & Alabaster, 1861), 307.