

## 2026-04-22 Small Group Guide

### Small Group Guide: A Testimony of Redemption

Based on Jason's Testimony

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Begin by thanking God for His redemptive power and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and open hearts to what He wants to reveal.

Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

Question: Share about a time when someone invested in your spiritual life or when you felt God working through another person to reach you.

### Key Takeaways from the Testimony

No one is beyond God's reach - Even the "worst of sinners" can be redeemed through Christ

The importance of mat carriers - We all need intentional relationships with believers who hold us accountable

Breaking all Ten Commandments doesn't disqualify us from grace - Jesus died for all our sins

The power of intentional prayer - Moving from "get me out of this" prayers to "use me for Your will" prayers

Spiritual warfare is real - We face demonic influences, but Christ has victory

Baptism and salvation are distinct - Growing up in church doesn't automatically mean being saved

Generational impact matters - The spiritual leadership (or lack thereof) in our homes affects generations

### Discussion Questions

Section 1: Recognizing Our Need (15-20 minutes)

Jason shared how he broke all Ten Commandments. Read through Exodus 20:1-17. Why is it important to recognize the full extent of our sinfulness before God?

Jason thought he was saved as a child but wasn't. What's the difference

between cultural Christianity and genuine salvation? How can we know we're truly saved?

Personal Reflection: Have you ever had a moment where you realized you were spiritually lost, even though you thought you were fine? What brought about that realization?

## Section 2: The Turning Point (15-20 minutes)

Jason's life changed when he met John and started attending the men's group. What role did community play in his transformation?

Read Mark 2:1-5 (the paralyzed man lowered through the roof). What does it mean to be a "mat carrier"? Who has carried your mat to Jesus?

Jason mentioned changing the way he prayed - from asking God to get him out of situations to praising God's will and asking to be used. How might this shift in prayer change our daily walk with God?

## Section 3: Spiritual Warfare and Influences (15-20 minutes)

Jason shared experiences with spiritual warfare from childhood. Read Ephesians 6:12. How aware are we of spiritual battles in our daily lives?

Jason surrounded himself with people who reinforced his destructive lifestyle. Who are you surrounding yourself with? How do your closest relationships either draw you toward or away from Christ?

Difficult Question: Jason mentioned his father didn't lead the home as a godly man. For those who are parents or plan to be: What does godly leadership in the home look like practically?

## Section 4: The Power of Redemption (15-20 minutes)

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17 (the passage Jason closed with). Paul calls himself the "worst of sinners." Why does God often use people with the darkest

pasts for His glory?

Jason planned to end his life at 50 but instead was celebrating his 50th birthday with his wife. What does this reveal about God's timing and plans for our lives?

Jason is now baptized, married to his dream girl, raising children who love Jesus, and sharing his testimony. What "impossible" transformation might God want to do in your life or someone you know?

### Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2):

#### Option 1: Find Your Mat Carrier

If you don't have an intentional, daily accountability relationship with another believer, pray about who God might be calling you to connect with. Reach out to that person this week and ask if they'd be willing to meet regularly.

#### Option 2: Evaluate Your Influences

Make a list of the 5 people you spend the most time with. Honestly assess: Are these relationships drawing you closer to Christ or away from Him?

Consider what changes might need to be made.

#### Option 3: Transform Your Prayer Life

For one week, commit to praying differently: Focus on God's will, praising Him, and asking to be used rather than asking Him to fix your circumstances.

Journal about how this changes your perspective.

#### Option 4: Share Your Story

Write out your testimony (even if it's not as dramatic as Jason's)  
Share it with at least one person this week who needs to hear about God's redemptive power

#### Option 5: Godly Leadership Assessment (For Parents/Future Parents)

Identify one specific way you can lead your home more intentionally toward Christ

Implement it this week (family devotions, prayer before meals, church attendance, etc.)

Group Prayer Time (10-15 minutes)

Prayer Focus Areas:

Thanksgiving - For God's redemptive power and that no one is beyond His reach

Confession - Space for members to silently confess areas where they've broken God's commandments and receive His forgiveness

Intercession - Pray for:

Those in the group who are struggling with repetitive sin

Family members who don't know Christ

The courage to be mat carriers for others

Protection from spiritual warfare

Commitment - Pray for strength to implement this week's practical applications

Closing Thought

Jason said: "There's this guy named Jason that's a disgusting, ugly sinner that deserves hell, and he's dead and buried. I throw a shovel full of dirt on that guy every morning just to make sure he's dead and buried and gone."

Read Romans 6:4 - "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

The old you is dead. The new you is alive in Christ. Live like it.

#### Additional Resources

Men's Ministry - Mondays at 7:00 PM (as mentioned in the sermon)

Recommended Movie: "Nefarious" (for mature audiences - deals with spiritual warfare)

Recommended Reading: Consider studying the Ten Commandments more deeply as a group

#### Leader Notes

Sensitivity Alert: This testimony deals with heavy topics including suicide, addiction, abortion, and spiritual warfare. Be prepared to offer additional support or pastoral care if needed.

Create Safety: Remind the group that what's shared stays in the group (confidentiality).

Don't Rush: It's okay if you don't get through all questions. Go deep rather than wide.

Follow Up: Check in with group members during the week, especially those who seemed particularly moved or troubled by the discussion.