

# Small Group Discussion Guide for Episode 1: When Church Doesn't Make Sense

## *Objective:*

*This guide will help your small group explore Episode 1 through the lens of two key **Essentials**: **Abide in Christ** and **Reach the Lost**. It integrates the **Head, Heart, and Hands** model while considering the **5 Spheres** (Abide, Church, Home, World, and Spiritual Realm) to guide personal application, inspire action, and incorporate meaningful Bible study through **Scripture Exploration Segments**.*

## **Opening Prayer:**

Start with a prayer, asking for God's guidance in deepening the group's relationship with Him and helping them reach others with the message of the gospel.

## **[Watch the Video:](#)**

Watch Episode 1 together, encouraging group members to take note of how Jim Putman's journey reflects the importance of abiding in Christ and reaching the lost.

## **Discussion Questions:**

### **Head (Understanding and Knowledge)**

#### **Abide in Christ ([John 15:4-6](#) | Abide Sphere):**

Jim's journey began with questioning and wrestling with his faith, leading to a deeper personal relationship with Christ.

- Jim initially resisted Christianity, thinking faith was irrational. How did his pursuit of truth and knowledge lead him to a deeper relationship with God? What role does understanding play in abiding in Christ?
- How can we integrate our pursuit of knowledge with a personal connection to God to deepen our daily abiding in Christ?

#### **Read: [Colossians 2:6-7](#)**

- What does it mean to be "rooted and built up in Him"?
- How does this passage encourage you to grow in your relationship with Christ, and how can being rooted in Him help you in everyday challenges?

#### **Reach the Lost ([Luke 19:10](#) | World Sphere):**

Jim was lost in skepticism and addiction before he encountered the truth of Christianity through his father's persistent outreach and intellectual challenges.

- How did Jim's father's approach to sharing his faith—through sending articles and engaging intellectually—affect Jim's journey?
- What does this teach us about adapting our methods of reaching those who are skeptical or resistant?

**Read: [1 Corinthians 9:19-23](#)**

- How does Paul's approach to reaching different people groups relate to Jim's father's strategy?
- How can you apply Paul's flexibility and passion for reaching the lost in your own life?

**Heart (Personal Transformation and Growth)**

**Abide in Christ ([Ephesians 3:16-17](#) | Spiritual Realm Sphere):**

Jim's life transformation involved leaving behind addiction and embracing a new identity rooted in Christ.

- Jim experienced a personal heart transformation when he surrendered to Christ. How did his new identity in Christ impact his heart and change the course of his life?
- Are there areas in your life where God is calling you to surrender more fully and abide more deeply in Him?

**Read: [Galatians 5:16-17](#)**

- What does it mean to "walk by the Spirit" and how does it help us abide in Christ?
- How can walking in the Spirit help you overcome struggles or temptations in your own life?

**Reach the Lost ([Romans 10:14-15](#) | Church Sphere):**

After Jim came to faith, he realized the importance of sharing the gospel with others, even those who were resistant, like he once was.

- How did Jim's transformation inspire him to help others? How can we prepare our hearts to be more compassionate and intentional in reaching the lost?
- How does the church community support our efforts to reach the lost, and what role can our small group play in that mission?

**Read: [Matthew 9:36-38](#)**

- What does Jesus' compassion for the crowds reveal about God's heart for the lost?
- How can this passage inspire us to reach out to the lost with compassion and urgency?

**Hands (Action and Application)**

**Abide in Christ ([Philippians 4:6-7](#) | Home Sphere):**

Jim's father and family helped create a space for him to explore faith, showing the power of loving persistence and truth.

- How did Jim's family contribute to his faith journey? In your own home, how can you create an environment where those around you can experience the love and truth of Christ?
- What are practical ways you can lead your family or close friends in abiding in Christ through shared prayer, Bible reading, or open conversations?

**Read: [Deuteronomy 6:6-7](#)**

- How does this passage emphasize the importance of leading your family or close ones in abiding in Christ?
- What are some simple ways you can incorporate faith into everyday conversations and actions at home?

**Reach the Lost ([Matthew 5:14-16](#) | World Sphere):**

Jim's testimony shows that even when someone seems resistant, persistent love and truth can eventually reach them.

- Who are the "lost" people in your life who need to hear the gospel? What steps can you take this week to reach out to them in love?
- Reflecting on the **World Sphere**, how can you be a light to those around you in your daily interactions?

**Read: [Acts 1:8](#)**

- How does the Holy Spirit empower us to be witnesses for Christ in the world?
- What practical steps can you take to be more intentional in sharing the gospel with those around you?

## Practical Application:

**Abide in Christ ([John 15:4-6](#)):**

Jim's story emphasizes the importance of daily surrender and abiding in Christ. This week, challenge group members to focus on one spiritual discipline that will help them abide more deeply in Christ.

- What is one new habit or spiritual practice you can commit to this week to deepen your relationship with God?

**Reach the Lost ([Luke 19:10](#)):**

Just as Jim's father persistently reached out to him, we are called to reach out to those who are far from God, even when it seems difficult.

- Identify one person in your life who is skeptical or disconnected from faith. What practical steps can you take this week to reach out to them in love and share your faith? How can our small group support you in this effort?

**Closing Prayer:**

End the discussion with a group prayer, asking God to help each member deepen their relationship with Him and give them boldness and wisdom in reaching the lost. Pray specifically for the individuals the group is seeking to reach with the gospel.