

Brokenness: Leader's Guide

INTRO & CAST VISION (5 min)

Cast Vision. Remind them why we are doing this four-week series.

Introductions. Introduce yourselves and your ethnicity again. Be as specific as possible.

Clarify. Remind the group about Ground Rules of Engagement and pray for safety and honoring of the other in this conversation.

DEBRIEF THE WEEK (5 min)

Share in pairs: When were you most aware of your ethnicity this past week? When were you the least aware?

OVERVIEW

Each week we will be looking at our ethnic stories and how they tie to different aspects of God's greater story—the gospel. We will be looking at the beauty, brokenness, redemption, and restoration of our ethnic journeys.

Today we will have an honest discussion about some of the things in our world that are in clear need of God's healing and power.

VIDEO WITH DEBRIEF QUESTIONS (20 min)

Play the video and invite everyone to take notes on the handout. Afterwards, discuss in pairs or in small groups.

- Which story or quote resonated with you the most? Why?
- Which story or quote surprised you?

BIBLICAL REFLECTION: Luke 4:14–30 (15 min)

Context/background: Read the Teaching Notes below and pull out your favorite quote to introduce the context of Luke 4.

Ask someone to read the passage out loud.

Verses 14–22 contain the good news.

- What does Jesus say about his leadership priorities?
- How do the people initially receive it?
Jesus hints at the fact that he is the long-awaited Messiah who has come to make all things right.
- What do you like about Jesus opening speech and his top priorities in vv. 18–19?

In verses 23–30 the people have a seed of doubt, and Jesus exposes what is really in their hearts.

- Why do you think the people get so angry in v. 28?
Sidon and Syria were Israel's enemies in the Old Testament. The fact that God did miracles among them reveals his heart for everyone. I think they would have preferred if God had judged those wicked countries for their oppression, instead of blessing them with miracles.
- How is Jesus exposing their brokenness (both what has been done to them, and their heart attitude toward others)?
- Why would he do this?
- What does this tell you about Jesus?
Jesus' people want justice and shalom, on their terms, for their people only. They are scarred, and they define themselves by their scars. As a result, they can't hear Jesus and end up rejecting him. Many of us, our people, and our communities define ourselves by our scars—the things that have been done, said, and not done to and by us. What are the scars that we carry?

IDENTIFYING BROKENNESS (10 min)

Now we are going to fill out the Identifying Brokenness worksheet. Take 5 minutes, read it over, and see if you can fill in the blanks with your personal answers. Be prepared to share about the 2 discussion questions. Discuss the 2 questions in pairs or as a group.

POINT TO JESUS! (2 min)

Looking at our brokenness often requires courage. It can be painful, leaving us feeling a bit lost. That's why it's so important to bring our brokenness to Jesus—it's through Jesus that our brokenness can be transformed and redeemed. It's through Jesus that we have HOPE! Be sure to join us next week. Today's session will not make any sense if you don't come back for the good news.

ACTIVE RESPONSE

>>Pass It On.

Grab a friend and tell them about your experience of Luke 4 and the reflection on our brokenness. What are you learning about yourself and your people?

Stretch Goal – Reach Out.

Reflect on your chapter's engagement with different ethnic communities on campus. Who has not been welcomed to come to InterVarsity and experience the love of God? Identify a community that you can take a risk in reaching out to in the next week. A first step could be visiting a cultural center, attending the meeting of a cultural organization, or meeting with a leader of a cultural club or fraternity/sorority to hear what their experience has been like on campus.

Teaching Notes

BEFORE THE STUDY

Ask Jesus to step ahead of you and prepare the way as you get ready to talk about brokenness in our ethnic experiences. You don't need to be the expert. Just model humility and transparency, as well as the willingness to listen to others.

- Acknowledge we all have pain but don't need to compare each other's suffering.
- Make space to listen well and to not discredit what you feel as well.
- Be sensitive to what people express and ask the Holy Spirit to be speaking to others, as well as to you, as people share.
- Be quick to honor vulnerability. Gently push people toward Jesus in their pain.
- Timing. This session might go long because everyone has a story, and it can take time to share. If you have a big group, decide if you will pair up to share or if you want to take the extra time.

**You may want to take 2 weeks or 2 hours on this topic.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND for Luke 4:14-30

When Jesus entered the scene in Israel, he was stepping into a culturally diverse and racially tense historical setting. 700 years prior to his birth, both Israel and Judah fell as the Assyrian and Babylonian empires invaded and decimated the land. Many died, pregnant women and babies were slaughtered, and the remaining educated citizens were deported to Assyria and Babylon, leaving only the poor. They continued to endure successive takeovers by Persia, Greece, and Rome. All these ruling nations were cruel. The Greek ruler Antiochus emptied the Jerusalem temple treasury for his own gain, slaughtered a pig on the altar, and sold the high priesthood to the highest bidder in Israel. Thousands were killed as they tried to defy Greek rule. Forced Hellenization caused deep resentment in the Jews. Rome repeated the same. Many were killed in the foiled uprisings, and according to Josephus, a thousand Jewish men were crucified on a public road (and forced to watch their wives and children killed in front of their dying eyes).

This is the cauldron of anger and bitterness that marked Jewish consciousness in a Roman world. The Romans brought *Pax Romana* by decimating their enemies, enslaving the remaining population, and setting up puppet kings. It's to these people that Jesus reads the equivalent of his people's "I have a dream" speech, a writing by a prophet that predicts the coming of a Messiah, a savior-figure.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS on Luke 4:14-30

Jesus' people have some deep scars in their ethnic story. Their people and culture have been mocked, degraded, destroyed, and oppressed. Deep hope would have welled up inside as they heard him speak. As they long for the Messiah, they are longing for shalom, for the freedom to be fully Jewish, for freedom, for justice, for the end of such suffering and oppression.

This is the first of Jesus' sermons that Luke records; and we see his priorities:

- Good news to the poor
- Freedom for the prisoners and the oppressed
- Recovery of sight for the blind

But when the people wonder if a poor carpenter's son could really be the Messiah, he reminds them that in the history of Israel's unfaithfulness, God showed up and did miracles among ethnic strangers and Gentiles. When he tells this people who have been oppressed for 600+ years that the story of salvation and good news will include their ethnic enemies, they become livid and reject his message. Good news is incompatible with including their ethnic enemies, in their mind.

VIDEO 2: Cheat Sheet

NAME (in order of appearance)	NOTES
CHARLENE (Ghanaian)	"In first grade, while I was walking home from school with my twin brother, one of our friends proceeded to call him the N-word."
LEAH (Puerto Rican, Italian, Polish)	"When I would share about my culture... It was me being Puerto Rican that was the problem for [the other kids]."
CAROLINE (Malayali)	"Another painful reality is that the caste system still exists in India... and it's hard to distinguish what prejudice is."
SEAN (African American)	"It was the first time that I had seen a cross-cultural conflict up close like that and I remember thinking something is not right."
KAITLIN (Chinese American)	"My worst fear had come to pass as a 6 year old: someone had noticed that I was different and it was not good."
CHARLENE (Ghanaian)	"When I would go to the bathroom, I would spend 5 maybe 10 minutes washing my hands, trying to get the black off of my skin."
NOEMI (Mexican American)	"I distanced myself from [my Afro-Latina friend] because I didn't want to go through that pain either... I wasn't any better than the people that were making fun of her."
COURTLAND (Native American Lakota Tribe)	"They yelled, 'Hey Indian, white power'... I knew that they were bigoted... but it still scared me. I was hated."
NOEMI (Mexican American)	"'But you're too pretty to be Mexican'... Essentially she was saying that my people are not beautiful, that my people are not worthy, that my people are ugly."
CAROLINE (Malayali)	"A friend was driving around with his windows down when a truck of white men pulled up next to him... and said 'F**ing ISIS, go back to where you came from.'"
TODD (German American)	"I didn't want to be white anymore, and I tried to distance myself from my ethnicity."
BRENT (African American)	"'You're not really black.' When I asked why, she said, 'Because you're smart, because you're kind, because you're respectful'... 'Why would you want to be black?'"
SEAN (African American)	"My first two weeks staying in that apartment complex I got stopped by the police 15 times."
KAITLIN (Chinese American)	"My first-generation Chinese friends labeled me Twinkie—yellow on the outside, white on the inside—because I couldn't speak the language and because of my white-washed self."
CHARLENE (Ghanaian)	"The teacher stopped, and she looked at me and she said 'Charlene, well you're black. Do all of your people steal?'"
ANDREW (German, Scottish, Irish, English, Armenian)	"I started to become overwhelmed with shame for the color of my skin and for the actions of my people, and I started to live in the lie that being white is wrong."
KAITLIN (Chinese American)	"Mom, I'm 100% Chinese right?... Wait, I'm also 100% American because I was born here, right?... So I'm 200%?"
ELEANOR (Asian American, Filipino)	"Filipinos have always been the conquered, the foreign, the servants, as a result of this, there is this notion... that says we will never be good enough."