

Interactive Student Book

# OUTCAST

finding our place in God's kingdom.

**This book  
belongs to:**



Outcast: finding our place in God's kingdom  
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ISBN-10: 1-939031-33-8

ISBN-13: 978-1-939031-33-4

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Published by LeaderTreks  
25W560 Geneva Road, Suite 30  
Carol Stream, IL 60188

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# WELCOME TO OUTCAST

We see outcasts everyday—people who fit under a different stereotype, don't look like us, like what we like, or believe the same things. It's easy to walk away from outcasts, leaving them forever in that category, but Jesus never did. Instead, he walked into the difficulty of their lives to bring them the ultimate insider experience—belonging in his family.

At a quick stop at a well on a hot day, Jesus shows us how it's done. And now we are called to go to the outcasts and bring them in. After all, we've all been outcasts at some point.

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## Here are some things you need to know as you go through this study:

1. God wants to connect with you. In fact, he's looking forward to it. But how ready are you to connect with him? As you go in and out of the sessions and devotional times, make sure you are willing to listen to him and learn from him. He promises that he will come near to you if you come near to him (James 4:8). Try it!
2. What you put into this study is what you'll get out of it. There are people all around you who have spent a lot of time praying for you and getting ready to invest in you. You'll probably meet some new people, hear some new speakers, and get a chance to spend some quality time with God and with friends. Take advantage of it! Ask hard questions. Commit to being authentic and honest. God wants to use this time and these people in your life.

# SESSION ONE INTRO

## ON THE OUTSIDE

From the time we are little kids, we learn how to put things in boxes. From toys that separate shapes and colors, to finding people to hang out with who share the same likes and dislikes. We label the world around us (Star Wars fans, soccer players, musicians, etc.) and choose to spend time with people who fit into the same boxes we do. We gravitate toward the boxes that we're comfortable with.

But what about the people who don't fit into our boxes? We don't share a lot in common with them, we don't run into them at the same places, and it doesn't always feel comfortable to talk with them. It's easiest to avoid interacting with these people—making them feel like outsiders. The only problem is that God's family isn't just for people who fit into our boxes, it's for everyone. Outsiders Welcome.

# SESSION ONE LARGE GROUP ON THE OUTSIDE

*These two pages are designed so you can take note of anything that stands out to you and that you think is worth remembering during the large group talk. This talk will set the stage for the rest of the session.*

*Consider writing down main points, quotes, Bible verses, and any questions that pop into your head.*

If you made a diagram of all the levels of the people in your school, with the most important people at the top level and the least important people at the bottom, what group of people would be in the top spot? The bottom spot? Why?

What are some of the reasons one person will reject another person?

# A Second Look

As Kaylee got home from youth group, her thoughts returned to the party last Friday night. All week she'd been stressed—first about breaking up with her boyfriend, then about two tests she had on the same day. When Friday night finally came, her friends from school decided she needed to let loose, forget her stresses, and make a few bad decisions. Kaylee responded that she didn't need any more regrets in an already bad week, but her friends were persistent: "We're just looking out for you." She finally gave in, if only to shut them up. A few bad decisions later, she was feeling much better about her stressful week—until she made eye contact with Bethany, a girl from youth group. Bethany's eyes opened wide as she realized what Kaylee had been doing. What is she doing here? Kaylee thought. Her youth group friends never came to the same parties as her school friends! But it was too late; she'd been discovered.

By the time Wednesday night youth group rolled around, Kaylee felt terrible. She didn't want to go, but in the end, she decided that if anyone could be forgiving, it was her friends from youth group. She couldn't have been more wrong. Word of her actions at the party had spread quickly. She felt like everyone was staring daggers of judgment into her. She caught a glimpse of someone's phone screen and realized the other students had been texting about her during the youth pastor's talk. But it didn't stop there. Her school friends, who had been so concerned with her well-being at the party, laughed at the fact that she felt so guilty about what she'd done. She'd never felt so ashamed, so universally hated. There was no way she could ever recover from this. As she sat in her room longing for just one sympathetic person, her cell phone rang—someone from youth group was calling. After staring at it for a few moments, she decided to pick up.



**If you were the one  
calling Kaylee, what would you say?**

**What did Kaylee's school friends and youth group friends  
have in common?**

**Have you ever made a mistake that you thought your  
friends or God could never forgive? If so, how did that make  
you feel?**

# A Little Deeper

Take a look at each of these Bible passages and get ready to talk through the following questions with your group.

*Genesis 1:27: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

If your value comes from the fact that you were created in God's image (God's autograph on you), does it change the way you see yourself? Why or why not?

How would it change your relationships if, instead of seeing people's faults or differences, you looked for God's image in them?

*Galatians 3:26-28: For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

What does this verse tell us about the family of God (the church)? In light of this verse, how should we view those who are lower than us on the social ladder?

Do you think this should affect who we hang out with?

*Romans 5:6-8: For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Why do you think Christ died for us while we were still ungodly and sinful?

How should that change the way we act toward other people who seem ungodly and sinful?

## Apply It

What is one thing you can do to show value to someone who needs it? Think about what you can do this week, or even today.

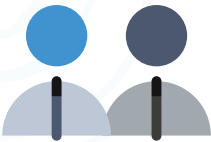


**Be specific:**

**What are you going to do?**



**When are you going to do it?**



**Is there someone who can keep you accountable?**

# Notes:

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