

loving Jesus and loving my friends...

THE ESSENTIALS

Holy Experiments

*What are Holy Experiments? Why are they important?
How do we live together this way?*

Holy Experiments

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 14:12-17 (NIV)

"Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me."

John 14:10 (NLT)

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'"

John 16:13-15 (NLT)

"If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought."

James 1:5-6 (MSG)

"...do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."

Matthew 10:19-20 (NIV)

So, what exactly is a Holy Experiment??

Well, experiments are great because they have no guaranteed outcome or required result. You are trying something JUST to see what happens! Shouldn't life with Jesus be the same way??

Abiding in Jesus means listening to the Holy Spirit and responding. This is an experiment! God puts something on your heart, you try it and then you just sit back and see what God does!

Too often we put so much effort and planning into ministry on our campus...we make so many plans! And sometimes we fail and get so discouraged...but God never asks us for a specific outcome! He just wants us to listen and then make an experiment of listening and loving people! Regardless of the outcome, God is glorified because we stepped out in faith! The only way to mess up an experiment is to NOT try it!

SO, how would your life and ministry change if you did all of it as a "Holy Experiment" with Jesus? What would this look like on your campus? Keep these questions in mind as you work through this section!

Holy Experiments

STORY TIME

Scenes From A Holy Experiment

Scene 1: Drama class. Fifth period. Brandi sat next to a girl in class that nobody liked. She was obnoxious and partied all the time. No one wanted her to be in their group for a class project. Brandi decided to reach out to her and ask her to be in her group (**Holy Experiment!**). The girl said yes. She and Brandi got to talking during the project and the girl asked her why she never saw her at parties. The questions continued and eventually Brandi asked the girl to go to youth group with her. She said yes!

Scene 2: 30,000 feet in the air, flying home from a choir trip to New York, Carrie notices a younger girl named Sarah who got into some trouble on the trip. She boldly goes and sits next to Sarah, engaging her in conversation (**Holy Experiment!**). Carrie did not question her behavior or point any fingers, she merely asked how she was doing and then listened. Sarah shared her heart and struggles, confiding in her new friend.

An incredibly strong friendship formed between the two girls. Because of the true friend Carrie had been to her, Sarah was excited to attend youth group, Bible study, and hangouts with Carrie's Christian friends. She soon made a decision to follow Jesus. She said, "Man, God was waiting for me with open arms for so long, he must have built up pretty huge arm muscles!"

Scene 3: A ministry team of students went to their local shopping mall to see how they could serve (**Holy Experiment!**). They ended up at Target, collecting the shopping carts in the parking lot and putting them back into the store. It seemed simple and not very impressive, but the Target employee in charge of the carts responded by saying, "Whoa! No way! You guys just made my day! Thank you!" Serving others can be extremely simple!

Scene 4: A campus ministry team had been praying for a group of students that went up into the mountains to practice witchcraft at night. The team felt like they were supposed to go up into the mountains, to the meeting spot, and pray for these students while they were practicing witchcraft. So, they took a parent along and they went (**Holy Experiment!**). Who knows what God did because of it...the important thing was that they listened and took action!

Scene 5: Josh was driving to work one day and saw a homeless man on the corner. He felt like God was asking him to buy the man some McDonald's, so he did (**Holy Experiment!**). He went back to where the man was and offered him the food, but the man refused it. Josh told the man that it was fine and he would just leave the food on the curb in case he wanted it later.

When Josh drove by later that day, the man was gone, but the food was still sitting there. Frustrated, Josh asked God why He wanted him to do it if the guy didn't even want the food?? God spoke to Josh's heart and said, "I told you to buy the food. I didn't tell you he would eat it. I wanted you to learn to listen to me and step out in faith!"

Holy Experiments are not about what WE can do! They are about listening, stepping out in faith and seeing what GOD wants to do through us!

Holy Experiments

*** This solo exercise is an opportunity for you to work alone through some questions about the role of Holy Experiments in your life!*

SOLO EXERCISE

Read and respond to the questions below:

- **Write down a story about a time when you listened to God and did something ordinary, but He turned it into something extraordinary!**
- **Remember the 3-5 people you listed in your solo exercise in the last section (“Relationships”)? Rewrite the names of those people below, then look back at that section and reread the answers for the questions we asked you about those friends.**
- **Based on the needs you see in their lives, what Holy Experiments can you try this week to pursue them, get to know them better, serve them, and show Jesus love to them? Make a detailed plan where necessary! Take some time to pray over these people and these Holy Experiments when you are done.** (Ask the Holy Spirit about this and listen...Ex. Send them a message on Facebook to say hi, eat with them, walk to class with them, invite them to hang out with your friends, give them a ride home, invite them to coffee, etc.)

CHALLENGE:

NOW...here’s the biggest challenge of all!! This week, we challenge you to COMPLETE ALL OF THE HOLY EXPERIMENTS you listed above! Don’t be afraid...God has gone before you in the lives of these people. Don’t worry about the outcome! God is asking you to take a chance for the sake of these people encountering His love! It’s a worthy cause if ever there was one! Take a risk! **GO LOVE SOMEONE! :)**

Holy Experiments

*** This team exercise is an opportunity for you and your community or campus team to work through some questions about Holy Experiments!*

TEAM EXERCISE

- **Read Acts 8:26-40 in your Bible, as a team, and then answer the questions below.**
 - **How is this passage an example of a Holy Experiment? Where do you see Philip listening to the Lord and obeying?**
 - **What ordinary thing did Philip do in this passage? How did God make it extraordinary?**
- **Write down a story about a time your team did something ordinary and God turned it into something extraordinary.** (Ex. Taking snacks to the freshman football team...or picking up trash on campus...etc.)
- **Look back at the groups you listed in the last section (“Relationships”) that God is calling your team to reach out and show love to. Rewrite them below, then look back and reread your answers for the questions we asked you about these groups.**

Based on the needs you see in these groups, what Holy Experiments can you try this week to pursue them, get to know them better, serve them, and show Jesus love to them? Make a detailed plan where necessary! (Ask the Holy Spirit about this and listen...Ex. Be a good friend, invite them to coffee, give them a ride home, make food for their club meeting, arrange an interclub party, etc.)

- **When you are finished, take some time to pray over these people and these Holy Experiments. Also, take some time to talk with each other about how you will regularly encourage each other to actively love and invest in the lives of these groups and the people God’s placed on each of your hearts in your Solo Exercise.**

CHALLENGE:

This is it! It’s GO TIME!! Take everything you’ve learned together as a team and put it into action! We challenge you to COMPLETE ALL OF THE HOLY EXPERIMENTS you listed above THIS WEEK! THIS is your mission as a team of students who love Jesus and want to impact your campus for Christ! GO LOVE SOME PEOPLE!!