



Fall 2004 *Go! Online* Bible Study

## I Will Go!

### Materials:

- *Go! Online* Download Video: *Go* by Mercy Me from 2002's *Spoken For* CD
- Computer, monitor, or video projector to display video
- One copy of *Go! Online* Group Activity for "I Will Go!"
- One Hershey's Kiss (or similar size candy) for each student, along with one Snickers (or similar size candy bar) for each student
- Copies of Fall 2004 *Go!* magazine for each student (unless they've already been distributed)
- Paper and pens for each student

### Group Activity:

Before this session, print out the page for the *Go! Online* Group Activity. Plan to hand it to one of your students as he or she enters the meeting area. Tell him or her to follow the instructions on the paper exactly. Pick a student who is not overly outgoing, but don't pick someone who is painfully shy.

As other students enter the meeting area, hand each a small piece of candy, such as a Hersey's Kiss. However, make it clear that nobody is to eat the candy for now. You'll tell them what to do with it later in the group time.

Delay the start of your study for a few minutes to give the student you picked time to spread the secret word—but don't allow too long for this to happen. Ideally, cut the time off after only half the students have been given the word.

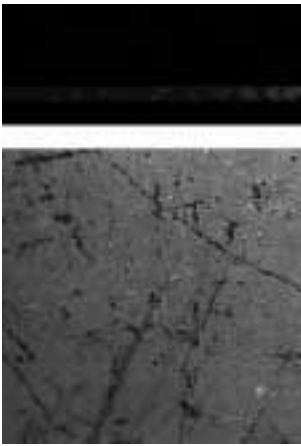
Now start your group and ask everyone to take a seat. Hand out sheets of paper and pens to every student and ask them to write their name and "the secret word" on their paper without letting anyone else see it. If some students ask you what you mean by "the secret word," ask everyone to keep it to themselves and do their best to guess at it if they don't know what you mean. Discourage them from helping each other figure it out.

Then ask your students to fold the paper in two, line up, and bring their papers to you, along with their candy. As each comes, open the paper and read it silently. If their word is "frog," take their small candy and hand them the larger candy bar. If they don't have the secret word, take their small piece of candy and ask them to return to their seat.

### Transition:

After everyone is back in their seats, ask a few of the people who knew the secret word how they found out what it was. Explain to the group how you "called" one





person to spread the secret word to as many people as possible, one at a time. Ask that person how they chose to spread the word and how well it turned out.

Which people in the group were most likely to get the message? Which ones were least likely to get it? Did anyone hear the message but not understand? Did anyone hear the word, but ignore it?

Finally, explain that this little game was just a simple, silly illustration of what we've been called to do as Christians. We're told to go and spread the word about Jesus. Ask someone to read Acts 1:8 out loud for the group:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (HCSB).

Say something like:

**Jesus spoke those words to His disciples right before He left earth for heaven. We, too, are witnesses for Jesus. It's part of our new nature to tell people about Him and show Him to others through our lives. Like it or not, we are missionaries. It's our job to "go," even if that just means walking across a room to begin a conversation about God.**

**Of course, the stakes are much higher than a candy bar and low blood sugar. Our message—what we have to offer people—can mean the difference between being forever in heaven with God and being forever apart from Him in hell. Our message matters.**

**Are you willing to go wherever God sends you to represent Him to people he loves? That might mean going to Seattle or Buffalo or China as a full-time missionary. But it definitely means going to your school or work or other places where you live your life right now. The questions we all have to ask ourselves are, Will I go? Will I take the risk to let others see my relationship with God through Jesus and tell them how to have one as well?**

**Today, we're going to look at what it took to get three different people in the Bible to say, "Yes, I'll go," when God asked them to. Which one do you identify with the most?**

### **1. Samuel: I'm Ready (1 Samuel 1-3)**

Not everyone responds to God's call to go in the same way. Some of us are ready right now; we're just listening to hear how God wants to use us. That attitude can have a lot to do with what kind of family we come from.

In ancient Israel, a generation before David became king, a woman named Hannah felt deep sorrow about not being able to have a son. She made a promise to God that if He gave her a son, she would give that son back to Him as a servant in the temple (1 Samuel 1:11).

That’s exactly what she did, dedicating Samuel to God’s service: “I now give the boy to the LORD. For as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD” (1 Samuel 1:28, HCSB).

In a free society, parents can’t force their children into service to God. However, they can commit themselves to do everything in their power to point their kids to a life of serving God by going where He sends them. Through prayer, discipline, good teaching and showing the hope, joy and peace of God in their own lives, many parents set their kids off on a life-time of serving God.

If your parents have done that—or if you’re already walking closely with God for another reason—you might be as ready to follow God’s lead as Samuel was. When he was just a boy, the Lord came and talked to him out loud with a voice he could hear. Samuel thought it was Eli, the priest. But when he understood God was speaking to him, the boy said this:

“Speak, for Your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10, HCSB).

The next day, he was afraid to deliver God’s message, because he knew it was unpopular. But he did it anyway, in obedience to God. And that began a long life of serving God by delivering God’s messages to people.

If you’re ready right now to hear God’s call to go and tell others about Him, you can stop waiting. He’s already called. You can get involved right now by serving others, living your faith in front of everyone in your life, and telling those God leads you to about His message of salvation.

## 2. Isaiah: I’m Not Worthy! (Isaiah 6)

Isaiah lived several generations after Samuel, and scholars think he was likely from a wealthy family with access to Israel’s royal courts.

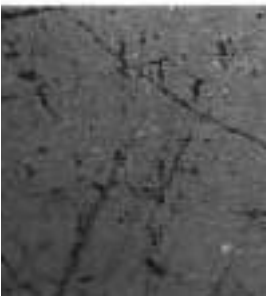
Like Samuel, Isaiah was willing to serve—and God appeared to him in a dream to ask him to go and tell His message. But Isaiah hesitated for a very specific reason. Let’s look at what happened in this vision described in Isaiah 6.



Read out loud to your group verses 1-4, then continue: What an awesome picture of Himself God showed to Isaiah! The Lord was big, wearing an unbelievably huge robe, and surrounded by angels whose praise-filled voices shook the temple. And what did the angels say?

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts; His glory fills the whole earth.” (Isaiah 6:3, HCSB).

That word holy means “set apart” or “totally pure and untainted.” God has no fleck of anything evil or sinful or unworthy in Him at all. When Isaiah saw this vision and realized how powerfully pure God is, he suddenly felt completely, utterly, hugely unworthy to carry God’s message to the people. His response:



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“‘Woe to me!’ I cried. ‘I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty’” (v. 5).

Seeing God’s holiness made Isaiah painfully aware of his own sinfulness. How could someone who had said and done the things he had be used to go and do God’s will?

Many Christians feel that way today. We think about the sin in our lives, the wrong choices we’ve made, the people we hurt, and we decide we’re not worthy to go and tell others about Jesus. “Telling others to follow Him when I keep messing up will make me a huge hypocrite!”

But that’s a lie. A great big whopper. Why? Because Christians have been cleansed from our sin. Even though we still struggle with it, we have been purified from all of our sin by Jesus’ death in our place on the cross. Listen to what John wrote in the New Testament:

“But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say, ‘We have no sin,’ we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:7-9, HCSB).

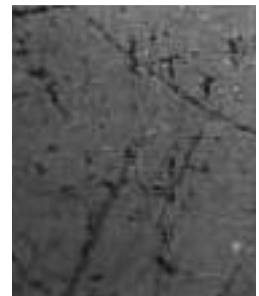
The reason our message is so great is because we can tell our friends that Jesus has made us pure in God’s eyes even though we still struggle to do the right thing sometimes. We’re not Christians because we don’t sin anymore; we’re Christians because we trusted the One who paid for our sins!

If the reason you don’t want to go and tell others about Jesus is because you’re ashamed of your sin, you need to understand that as a believer in Jesus you have been forgiven, washed in the blood and made pure.

The same thing happened with Isaiah’s “unclean lips.” [Read Isaiah 6:6-7.] Once he understood that his sin was covered, he was ready to say yes to God’s call:

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Who should I send? Who will go for Us? I said: Here I am. Send me. And He replied: Go!” (vv. 8-9, HCSB).

If you’re a Christian who has been waiting to get your spiritual act together before you answer God’s call to go and tell others about Jesus, you can stop waiting. You’ve been made pure by Jesus’ blood. Yes, you do need to let go of active sin in your life and move forward, but don’t wait until you’re perfect in this life to answer the call. God has equipped you to spread the good news right where you live.



### 3. Jonah: I'm Not Interested (Jonah 1-4)

Like Samuel and Isaiah, Jonah was a prophet of God commissioned to spread God's message. He probably lived and worked in the generation before Isaiah, and he had a reputation for doing his job. Then one day he didn't.

Almost everyone has heard the story of Jonah and the whale (or really big fish). Lots of us have even seen the funny VeggieTales movie. But do you remember why Jonah ran from God—why he went in the exact opposite direction from the one God sent him?

We don't really find out why until the last chapter of this short book. Here's the thumbnail version of Jonah: God said, "Jonah, go to Nineveh, and preach against their wicked ways." Jonah said to his travel agent, "Can I get a ticket on this boat away from Nineveh?"

Cue the big storm, followed by the big splash, followed by the big gulp—and now Jonah says, "I'm alive in this fish. Praise God. I'll do whatever you ask me to, Lord." Then the big heave and Jonah's on dry land again.

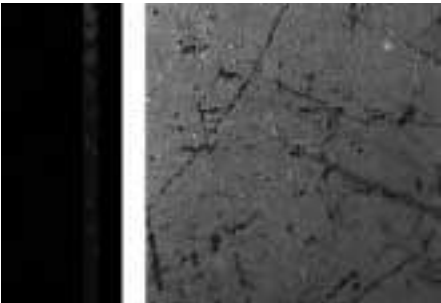
Take two: God says, "Go preach against Nineveh." Jonah goes and preaches against Nineveh. Then the twist: From the king on down, the people of this huge, wicked city repent from their sin and turn to God. No fireball from heaven. No plagues. Instead, these people find peace with God (for a while).

Turn to Jonah for the happy reaction shot, but—nope—he's mad. Really mad. So angry he wants to die. Now we find out why he ran from God in the first place:

"That's why I fled toward Tarshish in the first place. I knew that You are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to become angry, rich in faithful love, and One who relents from sending disaster" (Jonah 4:2, HCSB).

Jonah ran because he wanted the people of Nineveh to be wiped out. Why? Because some of the great wickedness they had done included doing really evil things to the people of Israel—Jonah's people. And Jonah guessed that God would do what He usually does—give them a chance to repent and make things right. Jonah just wanted them dead.

How are we like that today sometimes? Most of us don't physically run when God says to go and tell people about Jesus, but we get pretty good at ignoring the idea. The result is the same; we don't go.



And why don't we go and tell unbelievers about Jesus? Again, most of us don't hate non-Christians, but do we love them? Like Jonah said, God is "gracious and compassionate" and abounding in love for those who aren't saved. He doesn't want anyone to go to hell (2 Peter 3:9).



We might not hate as Jonah did, but where is our compassion for the lost? When God tells us to go and tell them because He loves them (John 3:16), do we feel any love for those who are dying without Jesus? Are we motivated to give hope to the hopeless?

If you're like Jonah and you've been running from God instead of saying yes, maybe you need to ask God to help you feel as He does for the people who need Jesus. Ask Him to give you His kind of compassion instead of Jonah's demand for justice. Tell Him you will go because He loved you enough to send someone to give you the message of hope.

### **Video Conclusion:**

Close your group time by playing the downloadable video clip that accompanies this study online at [go.studentz.com/leader](http://go.studentz.com/leader). It's a video for the song "Go" from MercyMe's 2002 *Spoken For* CD. In the song, the band commits themselves to go and tell others about Jesus.

In the Fall 2004 issue of *Go!* magazine, guitarist Mike Scheuchzer said this in response to an interview question about what doors the band's crossover success has opened to spread the good news about Jesus: "It totally opens the opportunity to share the gospel with these people who don't walk through the door of a church, who need missionaries to go talk to them across the street because they're not seeking it out. They need somebody to share the hope of Christ with them."

Consider reading this quote to your students from the magazine before playing the video. And make sure to distribute copies of the magazine to each student if you haven't done so already this quarter.

After the video, close in prayer. And, if you're feeling generous, hand out the rest of the candy to the students who ended up with none.

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