

News Story Summary

Ernie Johnson Jr., best known for hosting “Inside the NBA” with fellow commentators Charles Barkley, Shaquille O’Neal and Kenny Smith, recently participated in a book signing for his upcoming book “Unscripted.” Johnson said his life has been unscripted, in that he and his wife Cheryl adopted four children in the early ‘90s, several of them with special needs, which led to many more unscripted moments! Then again his life was instantly changed in 2003 when he was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma.

He credits his and Cheryl’s decision to put Christ first in their lives in 1997 for giving him and his family the hope and stability they needed through all the changes. While waiting for the test results for the cancer diagnosis, Johnson in conversation with his pastor said he made the decision that he would “trust God, period,” regardless of the results. He realized through his commitment to Christ that life was not about him, but about “living whatever God had planned for me and devoting my life to Jesus Christ.”

(For more on this, search the Internet using the phrase “Q&A: Ernie Johnson”.)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, share the news story and ask: *How can we best prepare ourselves beforehand for challenges to our faith? How can the challenges we face become a means for sharing our faith with others?*

Explain that the Great Commission came at a time when the disciples were filled with wonder because of Jesus’ resurrection, but were unsure of how His resurrection would change their futures. Challenge the group to consider how the resurrection impacts our lives today as they study this lesson.

Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind group members of the news summary and ask: *How do you respond when life goes “off script” sometimes? Share with the group ways to keep our focus on making disciples instead of the distractions.* Lead the group to understand that this commission to “make disciples” is for each of us. Close in prayer, asking that God will help us as we go to “trust God, period.”