

## News Story Summary

*(Note: While most of the time the news stories in this feature are designed to be used in the introduction of the session, this one will work best in the conclusion to the session).*

The Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) debuted a new series in October, 2015 called *God for the Rest of Us*. The show is hosted by Vince Antonucci, pastor of Verve Church in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 2010, God called Vince and his wife Jennifer to Las Vegas to launch a church to specifically reach those working, living, and lost along the infamous Las Vegas Strip. Vince's passion for this ministry came out of his own experience: "My father was a professional poker player and degenerate gambler and con man in Las Vegas," recalled Vince. "He ruined his life here, he ruined my parents' marriage here, he ruined my childhood here. So the idea of bringing redemption to that story made sense."

Within just a short time attendance at Verve grew by forty percent. "And it wasn't people from other churches," Vince emphasized. "It was un-churched, non-Christians who were coming, drawn by this message that maybe God had a place for them. We see atheists, gang members, pimps, and prostitutes come to Christ and just really experience dramatic life change." He added that "one thing I've come to believe in all of this is that if you want to have someone who is radical about following Jesus, the best place to start is with somebody who is radically opposed to Jesus. Because it takes such a sacrifice to say no to your past and yes to Jesus, they're not going to do it unless they're really serious and all in. And we see that all the time here."

(For more on this story, search the Internet using phrases such as "God for the Rest of Us" on TBN")

## Focus Attention

Begin by asking group members to finish the famous marketing slogan for the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce: "What happens in Vegas..." ("...stays in Vegas.") Lead the group to discuss the ramifications of living by that slogan. Remind the group that Adam and Eve couldn't hide from God after their sin and that the wickedness of the world was not hidden from God when He destroyed the world in Noah's time or scattered the nations at the tower of Babel. Say, *In light of what we've learned about sin so far, do you think "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" is a truth or a lie?* Transition to the Bible study by noting the main point of the session: God does not allow disobedience and rebellion against Him to continue unrestrained. He rescues by grace alone.

## Challenge

Refer back to the second sentence of the Main Point: [God] rescues by grace alone. Lead the group to reflect on God's gracious rescue in this story. Ask: *Whom did He rescue?* (Lot, his wife, and daughters) *Who could have been rescued?* (Anybody else, especially his sons in law, according to verse 14) Emphasize that the offer for rescue was not accepted by most of the people in the story. Remind the group of the discussion about Las Vegas in the introduction, then share the story about the church plant on the Las Vegas strip. Explain that God can rescue anyone who genuinely repents, regardless of their background. Lead the group to think of someone they know by name who is far from God, and ask the Lord to use your group to reach out to those who need to be rescued.