

## **Answering the Call**

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# Preface

The Institute for Prison Ministries at the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College created *Answering the Call* to equip incarcerated Christians to live focused lives of witness and discipleship within their spheres of influence. We believe the Christians “behind the walls” are the best ones to reach the corrections community. God may use volunteers and chaplains from the “free world” to come inside the correctional facility to share the gospel and disciple. A healthy church behind the walls, however, will see many more in the community become committed followers of Christ.

This training equips participants to develop relationships and communicate the gospel naturally, with gentleness and respect, and to disciple Christ followers toward maturity in Christ.

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Describe the call to make disciples
- Define what it means to be spiritually lost, a disciple, a witness, and an evangelist
- Describe the model of prayer, care, share, and stay there
- Be motivated and confident about sharing the gospel and their personal transformation story
- Assist other Christ-followers to grow in their faith

## Certificate

To earn a certificate, participants must a) attend the training, and b) complete the Bible studies.

We are grateful to the corrections staff and chaplains who have granted us permission to offer this training and to the volunteers who serve with us.

We pray that every follower of Christ will be *Answering the Call* to join the work of the Holy Spirit in reaching the mission field that God has set before them to make disciples.

Karen Swanson, Ed.D. Director  
Institute for Prison Ministries

# Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr. Lon Allison, evangelist, pastor and author, who taught me to live a focused life of witness through introducing me to the model used in this training. A special thanks to the incarcerated who submitted stories (indicated by their first name) and illustrations for this workbook.

## **Institute for Prison Ministries (IPM)**

IPM exists to bring expertise to correctional ministry through training, convening, and support for Christians evangelizing and discipling those impacted by crime. Visit us at: [www.prisoninstitute.com](http://www.prisoninstitute.com)

# Endorsements

*Answering the Call not only opened my eyes, but **helped me to understand that God has called me** to preach, teach, and show his love and undeserved mercy to those who are lost.*

—Texas participant

....

***I am one of three hundred men in God's army here in this facility.***

*This seminar reminded me that holding onto parts of my old life will prohibit me from moving forward in my new life.*

—South Dakota participant

....

*I learned that **my relationship with God doesn't end with me** and my journey.*

*I have been able to make the valuable connections that part of the joy in loving God is sharing him with others and loving them so much that I want them to feel his love, too.*

—Arizona participant

....

*I recently visited two facilities where Answering the Call (ATC) was offered. The men greeted me with, "**When are you going to have another ATC seminar?**"*

*Many were amazed when they began to map their "faith journey" and document their sphere of influence to bring others to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.*

*Many shared their Spiritual journey and the wonderful work Jesus Christ had done in their lives. **The seminar provided these men the tools they needed** to witness to others—from family to fellow prisoner. I highly recommend this seminar to engage the Christ-centered leaders behind the walls.*

—Mary Engle, Prison Fellowship

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# Lesson 1

## Called to Make Disciples

### Key Concept

Christians are called to make **disciples**—not converts.



### The Great Commission

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he gave this final command, referred to as the Great Commission:

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:18-20)*

All disciples of Christ are called to “go and make disciples.” But followers of Christ often feel guilty, fearful, or inadequate when it comes to how and when to share Christ and disciple others. Some Christians believe they must be a famous evangelist or a trained religious professional to effectively share their faith. Some think their job is finished once someone places their faith in Christ.

The *Answering the Call* training is designed to help Christians understand how God uses them just as he created them—within their personality, gifts, strengths, and relationships—to share the gospel naturally, and to assist other Christians grow deeper in their faith.

## What is a Disciple of Christ?

Disciples are those with a personal \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus Christ as evidenced through a \_\_\_\_\_ life.

A disciple may also be called a follower of Christ or a Christian.

### Relationship

There is a difference between knowing about someone and knowing someone. Knowing someone implies there is a relationship—you know them and they know you. God created us and knows us. Having a personal relationship with God begins the moment we realize our need for Him, admit we are sinners, and in faith receive Jesus Christ as Savior.

*Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. (John 17:3)*

The Apostle Paul recognized the value of knowing Christ and being known by Him.

*What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. (Philippians 3:8-9)*

*Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers.’” (Matthew 7:21-23)*

### Transformation

It is the Holy Spirit who transforms disciples into being more like Christ. The disciple’s role is to give permission and put themselves in a place where the Holy Spirit can change them.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the **new creation** has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

## • A transformed heart

A transformed heart leads to changes in behavior, which are more like Christ.

1. From self-absorption to concern for God's kingdom (Matthew 6:33)
2. From defiance to submission (1 Samuel 15:19-22)
3. From self-reliance to God-reliance (Jeremiah 17:5-8)
4. From wasting resources to stewarding them (Matthew 25:14-30)
5. From expecting and taking for granted to accepting and gratitude (Luke 17:11-19)
6. From spiritual indifference to spiritual growth and vitality (2 Peter 1:3-8)
7. From concern with how you look to others to concern for character (1 Samuel 16:7)
8. From conformity with the culture to conformity to God (Romans 12:1-2)
9. From concern for self to concern for others (Philippians 2:3-4)
10. From lording it over others to serving others (Mark 10:42-45)
11. From quarreling to cooperation (James 3:13-17)
12. From independence to community (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
13. From envy, competition, and self-protection to love (1 Corinthians 13:4-13)
14. From harboring hurt and resentment to extending forgiveness and seeking reconciliation (Ephesians 4:32-5:2)<sup>1</sup>



From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

## • A transformed mind

A transformed mind includes what you think, believe and your worldview. A Christian worldview is seeing all of life through the lens of Scripture.

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)*

List two examples of beliefs or ways of thinking which have changed in your life as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit living in you. For example: I used to believe it was okay to blame others when I got in trouble. Now I take responsibility for my actions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

What does the Bible say about...

Money? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Work? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sex? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Marks of a Disciple of Christ

### Assured of Salvation by God's Grace Alone

*But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)*

What does grace mean? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is being assured of your salvation by grace alone important?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Daily Surrender

*Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it." (Mark 8:34-35)*

What does it mean to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus?

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## A Life of Obedience to God

*In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17)*

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desire; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22-24)*

*Biblical belief is more than something we confess with our mouths; it's something we confess with our lives. —Kyle Idleman, *Not a Fan**

### Review

- ✓ All Christians are called to make \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ Disciples are those with a personal \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus Christ as evidenced through a \_\_\_\_\_ life.
- ✓ A transformed life includes changes in our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to be like Christ.
- ✓ Marks of a disciple are to be assured of salvation by \_\_\_\_\_, daily surrender, and a life of obedience to God.

# Bible Study 1

## Spiritual Transformation

### Objectives

By the end of this study you will be able to:

- Contrast your position in Adam to your position in Christ
- Describe living out your position in Christ
- Define spiritual transformation

### Our Position

Becoming a disciple of Christ changes our relationship and position with God. Disciples are reconciled with God and given a "perfect" position in Him. We are seen as righteous because of Christ. We have changed from our position in "Adam" to being in "Christ."

#### In Adam

According to the following scriptures, what was true of us in our position in Adam, before we knew Christ?

Ephesians 2:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

John 3:36 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 5:12-19 \_\_\_\_\_

#### In Christ

Read Ephesians 2:4-7

What is true about our new position in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

What motivated God to take action on our behalf? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God do for us at salvation?

Romans 5:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 10:11-18 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 5:21 \_\_\_\_\_

## Living out Our Position

If you are a disciple, you are born again and have the Holy Spirit living in you (I Corinthians 6:19). The same God that created the universe and holds it together, lives in you. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, can be grieved, quenched, fill you (control you), give you spiritual gifts, and produce the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants to live His life in and through you. This is the Christian life. You are saved from the power and effects of sin because of the work of Christ. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit, using the inexhaustible resources of the risen Christ for effective victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. *"But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh"* (Galatians 5:16).

God wants us (disciples) to focus on seeing ourselves "in Christ" and not on our condition as sinners. Satan wants us to focus on our thoughts and behaviors trying to earn acceptance by God. When we do this, we fall into the trap of thinking we have to clean up our life or get our act together before coming to God. We are tempted to try to earn God's approval and acceptance which cannot be earned because we already have it "in Christ."

What are some ways that you try to earn being seen as righteous before God? \_\_\_\_\_

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When you sin, instead of claiming God's forgiveness and acceptance by faith based on His grace, what are some things you do to try to work your way back into believing that God loves and accepts you?

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In what ways have you begun to see God change your heart, thinking and behavior toward what you already are positionally "in Christ"?

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If you fail to understand what God has already accomplished for you through Christ, you are doomed to attempt to live life on your own. You will try to have an obedient life and make life work. You will rely on your own will power and strength. You will be filled with anxiety and fear wondering if you are "saved." The truth is you have the power to live an obedient life and persevere in your faith, through Christ.

## Spiritual Formation and the Power of the Holy Spirit

Spiritual transformation is:

- **NOT** information overload but ongoing renewal of the heart
- **NOT** behavior modification but Christlike behavior follows belief
- **NOT** optional but required as followers of Christ

*Spiritual formation is the process by which Christ is formed in us...for the glory of God, for the abundance of our own lives, and for the sake of others. (Ruth Haley Barton)*

Spiritual transformation:

- **DOES** impact our relationship with God and others
- **DOES** make us more like Christ
- **DOES** bring God glory

**Transformation happens through the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit.**

*Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)*

What does John 14:16-20 say about the Holy Spirit?

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Read Galatians 5:13-26. What does it mean to walk or live in the Spirit?

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### Action Steps

1. When I begin to doubt my standing before God, I remind myself of the truth that I am now seen as righteous in Christ. Memorize and meditate on: Romans 8:1, *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*
2. The power to make changes in my life is not by my will but through the power of the Holy Spirit. My responsibility is to live in the Spirit by abiding in Christ and being obedient to Him.

## Lesson 2

# Our Model, Approach, Terms and Definitions

### Key Concept

Making disciples can be accomplished through the model of praying and caring for those spiritually lost, sharing the gospel, and staying there to disciple. Our approach is one of a spiritual travel guide for others on their faith journey.

## Our Model

Our model for relational witnessing and discipleship is:



## Our Approach

### Spiritual Travel Guide

Our approach of relational witnessing and discipling is being a spiritual travel guide for others on their faith journey. The spiritual travel guide helps those who are spiritually lost to take steps toward a committed relationship with Christ and helps other Christians take steps toward maturity in Christ.

### Without Proselytizing

Every correctional facility has a “no proselytizing policy.” The following is an example:

*Chaplains, contract chaplains, religious program volunteers, other staff, members of the community, and offenders may not initiate unsolicited, unwanted, or forceful attempts to persuade another individual to convert from one religious belief to another religious belief or criticize the religious beliefs of others within the grounds of any department facility. Nothing in this provision will prohibit the sharing of information regarding an individual's religious belief. (WA Dept. of Corrections)*

- No coercion – pressure, force, intimidation, bullying
- No criticism of other religious beliefs
- Can share your faith

## With Gentleness and Respect

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Peter 3:15-16)*

### Ways to share with gentleness and respect:

- Ask for \_\_\_\_\_.
- Go at their \_\_\_\_\_. Respond to where they are in their journey.
- Don't back unbelievers into a \_\_\_\_\_. Allow them time to \_\_\_\_\_ what they have heard.
- Don't treat the lost like your \_\_\_\_\_. Be their friend, even if they reject the gospel.
- Don't \_\_\_\_\_ conversations, but don't run from open doors.
- Don't have a \_\_\_\_\_ agenda but be ready to share.
- Make sharing a \_\_\_\_\_, not a monologue.

## Terms and Definitions

**The Spiritually Lost (Non-Christians, Unbelievers)** are those \_\_\_\_\_  
from God, without a \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ and destined for eternal \_\_\_\_\_.

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. (John 3:36)*

### Marks of the spiritually lost

- **Alienated from God, an enemy of God and characterized by evil behavior**

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. (Colossians 1:21)*

All those who have NOT put their faith in Christ, to save them from their sins, are dead in their sins and will spend eternity separated from God in hell. Their only hope of salvation is through Christ.

**Witness** is one who claims to follow Christ and is \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to the work of God as he or she reaches out to a lost world. All disciples are called to be witnesses for Christ.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)*

### Marks of a Witness

- **Reflects the heart of God**

*This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:3-4)*

- **Is salt and light to the community**

*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)*

What are specific ways you are salt and light in your community? \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Is fully committed to the work of God**

*Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)*

**Evangelist** is one \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by the Holy Spirit for a lifelong focus on the ministry of evangelism in the life of the Church.

*It was he (the Holy Spirit) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers. (Ephesians 4:11)*

### Marks of an evangelist

- **A consuming passion for spiritually lost people to know Christ**
- **A strong ability to convince and invite**
- **An anointing from God to call people to a decision**

- **Effective in multiple forms of evangelism**
- **A passion to train others in evangelism**

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline.  
(2 Timothy 1:6-7)*

## Review

- ✓ Our model for making disciples is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ Our approach is as a \_\_\_\_\_, without proselytizing, and sharing with gentleness and respect.
- ✓ The spiritually lost are those \_\_\_\_\_ from God, without a \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ and destined for eternal \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ A witness is one who claims to follow Christ and is \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to the work of God as he or she reaches out to a lost world.
- ✓ An evangelist is one \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by the Holy Spirit for a lifelong focus on the ministry of evangelism in the life of the Church.

## Recommended Readings

- *The Masterplan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman
- *Out of the Salt Shaker and into the World* by Rebecca Pippert
- *Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message* by Ravi Zacharias

## Bible Study 2

# Developing a Passion for those Spiritually Lost



### Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- Describe God's desire for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others
- Evaluate your level of passion for spiritually lost people

♥ **GOD'S HEART:** What is God's heart for people who do not know him?

Read John 3:16-18. Why did God send his one and only Son into the world?

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Read Romans 5:8-10. What words are used in this passage to describe the people God reached out to?

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What was God's motivation for sending his Son to die so people can be saved? (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)

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Read 2 Peter 3:9. How does God feel about lost people? \_\_\_\_\_

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Summarize God's heart for spiritually lost people \_\_\_\_\_

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♥ **PAUL'S HEART:** How did Paul view his calling from God?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-27. What was Paul's calling and how did he accomplish it?

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Summarize Paul's heart for spiritually lost people \_\_\_\_\_

**♥ MY HEART:** How do I view my calling from God?

Read Matthew 28:18-20. What is God's calling for me as a disciple of Christ?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1. What is our purpose in life?

What principles should we follow in how we relate to those around us?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. What is the ministry that God has given his followers?

"Reconcile" means to reestablish friendship between; to settle a dispute. In light of this definition, what do you think the ministry of reconciliation means?

Rate yourself on the scale below. How concerned are you for lost people?

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

No concern

Extremely concerned

If you find yourself closer to the 0, don't give up. It is important to be honest and to pray for God to give you a greater passion for the lost.

Summarize your heart for spiritually lost people \_\_\_\_\_

### **Action Steps**

1. Evaluate your life. Do you see God's calling upon your life to be his ambassador (representative)? If not, ask God to confirm that calling and to show you how to live it out.
2. Pray that God would increase your passion for spiritually lost people.
3. Ask God for more faith-sharing opportunities and discernment to see where the Holy Spirit is working.
4. Find a disciple who can encourage you and pray with you for witnessing opportunities.

## Lesson 3

# Witnessing: An Expanded Definition and Our Barriers

### Key Concept

Christians are called to journey with the spiritually lost, helping them take the next step toward a relationship with Christ. Our barriers to sharing the good news of Jesus with others must be removed for effective witness.

## An Expanded Definition

**Witnessing** is to \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to bring one or more \_\_\_\_\_ one \_\_\_\_\_ closer to Christ.

### To Cooperate with the Holy Spirit

We humbly play a part, along with the Holy Spirit, in bringing someone to faith in Christ.

- **God seeks lost people**

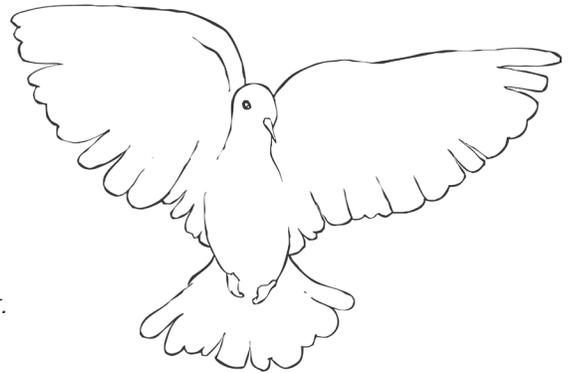
*For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.*  
(Luke 19:10)

- **God (not us) saves people**

*No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.* (John 6:44)

- **We are God's fellow workers, but God is responsible for the results**

*What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.* (1 Corinthians 3:5-6)



## To Cooperate with Others

In addition to the Holy Spirit, a person's journey toward a relationship with Christ often involves a number of individual contributors whom they knew.

*Thus the saying, "One sows and another reaps" is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor. (John 4:37-38)*

### ACTIVITY:

On the path below, write the names of those who have contributed to your understanding of Christ and your personal relationship with Him.



What are common characteristics of those listed on your path?

- People we \_\_\_\_\_.
- People who did not have professional religious \_\_\_\_\_.
- People who \_\_\_\_\_ about us and \_\_\_\_\_ Christ with us

## To Bring One or More Persons

Every encounter with another person is an opportunity to witness as you represent Christ.

*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)*

*For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. (2 Corinthians 2:15)*

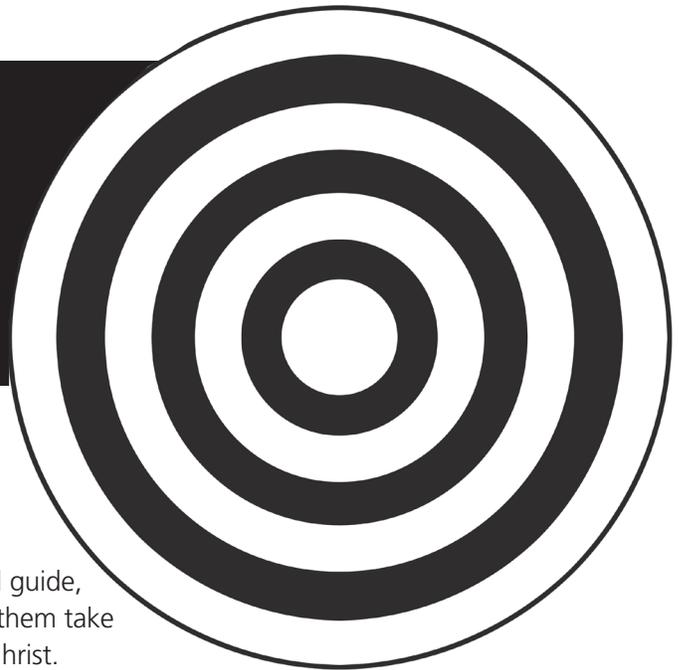
- **Targeting spiritually lost people**

You may have heard the saying, "If you aim at nothing, you are sure to hit it."

We need to be intentional about targeting non-Christians. Think about all those in your sphere of influence who do not have a relationship with Christ.

**Activity:**

Place the groups on the target, starting with the center, naming the group you have the closest relationships with (family/friends) and then add other groups in the remaining circles.



## **One Step Closer to Christ**

There are many steps along the spiritual journey which lead to placing one's faith in Christ. As a spiritual travel guide, meet others where they are on their journey and help them take their next step toward making the decision to follow Christ.

*To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. (1 Corinthians 9:22)*

Accepting Christ as Lord and Savior is the beginning of a new journey of a life with Christ. This decision to follow Christ is often referred to as "conversion." Conversion means to change or to switch. When individuals convert to Christianity, they are no longer following their own way or a false religion, but following Christ and trusting in him for salvation from their sins. What does conversion look like?

### **Conversion is not:**

- **Agreeing with a group of ideas**

*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that and shudder. (James 2:19)*

- **Obeing a set of rules**

*For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

- **Fire insurance, paid upon death**

*A man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him... Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. (1 John 2:4, 6)*

## Conversion is:

- **A heart decision to trust in Jesus**

*If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)*

- **Evidenced by a transformed life of obedience**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

*We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. (1 John 2:3)*



## Our Barriers to Witnessing

- **Fears** \_\_\_\_\_
- **The** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Poor evangelism** \_\_\_\_\_
- **An** \_\_\_\_\_ **spiritual life**
- **Witnessing is not a** \_\_\_\_\_
- **How Christians** \_\_\_\_\_ **one another**
- **Lack of** \_\_\_\_\_ **and confidence**

## Review

- ✓ Witnessing is to \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to bring one or more \_\_\_\_\_ one \_\_\_\_\_ closer to Christ.
- ✓ Our barriers to witnessing include \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, poor evangelism \_\_\_\_\_, how Christians \_\_\_\_\_ one another, and lack of \_\_\_\_\_ and confidence.

# Bible Study 3

## Spiritual Gifts and Witnessing

### Objectives

By the end of this study you will be able to:

- Identify your spiritual gifts
- Describe ways to use your spiritual gifts for witnessing

### Spiritual Gifts

- Given only to believers by the Holy Spirit
- A gift—they cannot be earned
- An expression of God’s grace to you
- Determined by God
- No single gift is given to everyone
- No individual receives all gifts

### Spiritual Gifts List

List the spiritual gifts identified in each of the scripture passages.

Romans 12:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:7-16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Read each statement and evaluate on a scale of 0 to 3 to what extent it is true of your life. This is not a complete list of spiritual gifts. Verify your results with others who know you well.

3 = Strongly    2 = Moderately    1 = Little    0 = Not at all

Enter the numerical value of each of your responses next to the number of the corresponding statement. Then add up the five numbers that you have recorded in each row and place the sum in the "Total" column.

Value Statements					Total	Row
1	8	15	22	29		<b>1</b>
2	9	16	23	30		<b>2</b>
3	10	17	24	31		<b>3</b>
4	11	18	25	32		<b>4</b>
5	12	19	26	33		<b>5</b>
6	13	20	27	34		<b>6</b>
7	14	21	28	35		<b>7</b>

1. I have the ability to organize ideas, people, and projects to reach a specific goal.
2. I have led others to a decision for salvation through faith in Christ.
3. I tend to notice and approach those who are sitting or standing alone.
4. People have told me I have helped them learn biblical truth in a meaningful way.
5. I am conscious of ministering to others as I pray.
6. I enjoy caring for others when they have had material or physical needs.
7. I enjoy giving to those in need.
8. When a group I am in is lacking leadership, I usually step in and assume the role.
9. I enjoy spending time with seekers. It is my desire to tell them about Jesus.
10. I enjoy encouraging and giving counsel to those who are discouraged.
11. I have applied spiritual truth effectively to situations in my own life.
12. When I hear a prayer request, I pray for that need for several days.
13. I feel compassion for people who are hurting and lonely, and like to spend considerable time with them to cheer them up.
14. Giving money or possessions to the work of the Lord brings me deep pleasure, and I do it cheerfully.
15. I easily delegate significant responsibilities to others.
16. I get frustrated when others don't seem to share their faith with unbelievers as much as I do.
17. I enjoy meeting new people and introducing them to others in the group.
18. I enjoy helping young Christians grow in their faith.

19. Intercessory prayer is one of my favorite ways of spending time.
20. I enjoy serving others, no matter how simple or insignificant the task.
21. I don't mind living at a lower standard than my friends because it allows me to give more to God's work.
22. I can guide and manage a group of people toward achieving a specific goal.
23. I like to tell others how to become a Christian and invite them to receive Jesus as personal Lord.
24. I have a desire to effectively counsel the confused, the guilty, or the addicted.
25. I have helped Christians who have wandered away from the Lord find their way back to a growing relationship with him.
26. I see specific results in direct response to my prayers.
27. I am sensitive to the emotional needs of others; I seem to know when they are hurting.
28. I am so confident that God will meet my needs that I give to him sacrificially and consistently.
29. People respect my opinion and follow my direction.
30. I have a desire to train others to share their faith.
31. People tell me things they won't tell anyone else, and they say I am easy to talk to.
32. I can devote considerable time to learning new biblical truths in order to communicate them to others.
33. I am often asked to lead in prayer in a group.
34. I am very dependable for getting things done on time, and don't need much praise or thanks.
35. When I give money or possessions to someone, I don't expect anything in return, and often give anonymously.

Enter the totals for each row in the following chart which corresponds with the spiritual gifts. Your spiritual gifts are your tops scores. Verify your results with your own reflections and with those who know you well.

Row	Total Score	Gift(s)
1		Administration/leading
2		Evangelism
3		Hospitality/exhortation
4		Pastoring/teaching
5		Prayer
6		Service/mercy
7		Giving

God uses areas of gifting to reach our world for Christ individually and as we collaborate with other Christians for group witness. The following questions will help you identify ways to use your spiritual gifts and to collaborate with other Christians for living focused lives of witness and discipleship.

1. **Administration and leading.** How can I help the Christian community witness through my gifts of administration and leadership? (1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:8)

2. **Evangelism.** How am I using my gift in evangelism to get others excited about witnessing? (Ephesians 4:11-14)
3. **Hospitality and exhortation.** How am I reaching out to people outside the church through hospitality and encouragement? (Romans 12:8-13)
4. **Pastoring and teaching.** How am I using my relational and teaching gifts in the lives of seekers and skeptics? (Ephesians 4:11-14)
5. **Prayer.** How are my prayer gifts being used in ministry to seekers and skeptics? (Romans 8:26-27)
6. **Service and mercy.** How are my gifts of service and mercy helping to build trust for the gospel with those who don't know Jesus? (Romans 12:6-8)
7. **Giving.** How is my giving helping to meet the needs of unbelievers? (Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7)

List your top two spiritual gifts and answer the corresponding questions.

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## Partner and Team Witnessing

Bringing spiritual gifts together as a group or with a partner can be a powerful witness to the community. It is often less intimidating to witness with others than alone.

Read Acts 2:42-47. What spiritual gifts were used in this community of believers?

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What are your spiritual gifts? How can they be used to witness to those groups you identified in the target on page 23?

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## Personality

Are you an introvert (like to be alone, being with people drains you) or extrovert (love being with people, it energizes you)? What does witnessing look like in your life as an introvert or extrovert?

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## Interests

What activities do you enjoy doing which you can do with non-Christians?

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What areas in life interest you that you can talk about with non-Christians? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Conclusion

God uses many people and different ways to reach non-Christians. Each person has a unique combination of personality, and interests. Witness in a way that is natural for you.

### Action Steps

1. Ask God to show you your spiritual gifts.
2. Partner with a friend or group of friends and identify ways that together you can witness to your community.

# Lesson 4

## Prayer

### Key Concept

God wants us to pray for non-Christians. Prayer helps us live a focused life of witness and changes our hearts and their hearts.

*I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)*

*Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for (them) is that they may be saved. (Romans 10:1)*

### Prayer List

Using the people groups you identified in the target on page 23, list 5-6 unbelievers by name who you can pray for faithfully.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### Pray For

- **A deeper understanding of God's \_\_\_\_\_ for humanity and to have that same \_\_\_\_\_.**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

*But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. (Matthew 5:44)*

- **The work of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the hearts and minds of those around us**

*No man can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. (John 6:44)*

- **Unbelievers to seek to \_\_\_\_\_ God**

*God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from us. (Acts 17:27)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **in our relationships so we will have opportunities to make Christ known**

*Pray for us, too, that God will open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ. (Colossians 4:3)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **to share and for the words to say**

*Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (Ephesians 6:19-20)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **in what is spoken and what is heard**

*And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. (Colossians 4:3-4)*

- **The \_\_\_\_\_ battle**

*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4)*

*The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. (Mark 4:14-15)*

## Review

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ helps us \_\_\_\_\_ on sharing Christ with others.
- ✓ Prayer changes our \_\_\_\_\_ to be more loving toward those who don't know Christ.
- ✓ Prayer changes the non-Christian's heart to be open to the gospel.

# Bible Study 4

## Prayer

### Objectives

By the end of this study you will be able to:

- Describe the spiritual battle for sharing the gospel
- Pray for those you listed who need a personal relationship with Christ

### Parable of the Soils (Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15)<sup>2</sup>

Read the Parable of the Soils and the descriptions below on how this parable influences witnessing and discipleship.

#### First Soil Erosion

When the seed is sown in the first soil, it is quickly snatched away by Satan. The quickness of this attack is alarming. The listener seems to have little time to respond. The problem is that the listener doesn't understand the gospel (Matthew 13:19).

In all three passages, the evil one comes and snatches away the word: "The thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy" (John 10:10). We should not expect the enemy to sit passively by as we attempt to pull people from hell to heaven. In fact, he "has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see" or understand (2 Corinthians 4:4). When we are sharing the gospel with a person who seems genuinely interested but unable to understand, be aware that the evil one is active.

The first soil people have some degree of acceptance or at least interest in the gospel, but it is short lived. The Luke passage suggests that the word finds some residence in the heart, for "the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts" (Luke 8:12).

How do we fight against the devil's attacks on people who are seeking Christ?

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#### Second Soil Erosion

Many readers know stories of people who respond to the gospel by walking forward or raising their hands acknowledging their desire to accept Christ as Savior and Lord. They pray the "sinners" prayer. It seems genuine, with at least some enthusiasm or wonder at what happened. But nothing happens after that. They don't show up at church or come back to Bible study. They don't read the materials or scriptures given to them. They don't respond to the invitations of Christians who wish to walk with them in the early stages of Christian life. There is no life; the blindness remains.

Second soil people show all the early signs of a new birth in Christ. But all too quickly they close up. In the sower parable, Jesus states that tribulation and persecution are the causes of the collapse (Matt. 13:21; Mark 4:17). Luke 8:13 calls it temptation or a time of testing. But the problems are because of “the word.” Something about the Christian message impacts the lives of the responders, and they choose to turn away. If one’s new faith results in loss of relationships with family, in loss of career or in threats on one’s life, then we can understand the struggle. Jesus said he came to bring a sword and not peace; family systems will at times be torn apart (see Matthew 10:34-37). Rugged persecution causes many to fall away.

The word is sharper than a double-edged sword, cutting deeply into souls (see Hebrews 4:13). The word judges us, and we must respond rightly. Many new responders to the message of Christ desire the consolations of faith, but not the requirements. Because they do not immediately grow in the knowledge of faith, thereby understanding that even the requirements of the faith are actually beneficial for life and made possible by the indwelling Spirit, they are in danger of falling away.

It is interesting that Jesus places blame for second soil people directly on them. Satan receives no credit for the collapse, nor is the community of faith the culprit. The seeking people come up against the good requirements of the faith and, tragically, turn away. For example a person may come to Christ for the benefits of peace, eternal life, and hope for winning their case, early parole, favor in an appeal, but when they don’t get what they want regarding their case, their faith is gone.

### **Third Soil Erosion**

Third soil people hear the word, too. But, like second soil people, they do not mature. In fact, something happens that makes the word seem unfruitful. In reality, the problem is not the word, but other competing habits and loves that choke out the good news of the reign of Christ. All three Gospel texts state that worry is a major culprit. For a time, when the freshness of spiritual faith is intoxicating, some people may be drawn to the Christian life. But if such people do not learn how to “rest in the Lord” concerning the cares of life, they will fall away.

Worry, anger, or playing the victim in a hard world replaces Christian hope. Christians are not exempt from the struggles of life, but they learn to give their worries to the Lord of the universe and rest in him, knowing he is in charge and will save them. Unfortunately, people raised to be independent and self-made do not easily come to the point of absolute surrender. Until they do, worry dominates their souls. Soon, God is rejected as powerless.

The texts also state that delighting in riches and pleasure will choke out the word. It is those who are addicted to pleasure and wealth. For such people, an initial attraction to Christ is primarily because he is a delight and pleasure. There is a wonder that comes with believing in Christ. But the danger here is that this delight simply feeds an addiction. Such responders to the message desire Christ as another pleasure, another add-on to already pleasure-saturated lives.

Soon, however, the demands of the Word confront the addiction and call responders to lives of sacrifices. Christ is never an add-on, never just another pleasure. He must become the center of one’s life. Once again, Jesus places the problem of preservation squarely on the shoulders of the individuals who make the faith decisions. He does this because the resources of God, including the Holy Spirit, the angels, the word, and the church with its many graces are more than sufficient to “keep you from falling” (Jude 24).

This is an example of what is termed “prison religion.” Third soil people claim to have made a commitment to Christ while incarcerated but once released, their commitment to Christ disappears as they are pulled away by the cares of life. The pull of the street is strong and Christians must be prepared for the spiritual battle.

Write an example of a third soil person:

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### **Fourth Soil Production**

Thankfully, the story does not end without hope. There is a fourth soil. Those fitting this image “hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop” (Luke 8:15). Matthew (13:23) and Mark (4:20) add that these fourth soil persons become reproducers who bring in crops thirty, sixty, or a hundred-fold. Every Christian longs to see fourth soil Christians. The Parable of the Soils makes it clear that both Satan and especially the seeker (or responder) play significant roles in spiritual erosion.

Of the four soils in the story, only one produces a crop. It appears that only fourth soil people are true disciples. We cannot press this story too far by declaring that only one in four who make a faith decision will become a fully-committed Christ follower. Nevertheless, Jesus told this emphasizing that more fall away than follow. Other passages support this sad reality. Jesus said, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

In the parallel passage in Luke 13, a listener asks Jesus if only a few will be saved. The context is interesting. At least this listener senses this is Jesus’ meaning. As Jesus responds, he uses the image of doors and gates. The door or gate is narrow leading to life. Few find it. This is a sobering truth. If it were the only time he speaks in this vein, it would be easy to dismiss. But there is more.

Only two verses later he speaks of the same idea: “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:17-20).

For more on this, see several of the kingdom parables in Matthew 13:30-50. Look also at Matthew 7:21-27. These words and others suggest that belief in Christ—true saving faith—requires more than a quick prayer or immersion in a pool. We are not advocating works righteousness. We are disallowing “easy belief” as saving faith.

Contrasting these demands of faith is the equal reality of the overwhelming grace of God and his abiding love for the whole world. So great is this grace that many devoted believers cannot imagine a loving God rejecting anyone. But it almost seems such theology rewrites Matthew 7 and Luke 13 to say, “The door and gate is wide, and many choose it.” We wish the text and the comprehensive testimony of Jesus said this. If one accepts that the way is narrower than we’ve imagined, we must never use this teaching as an excuse to become lazy or lax in helping inquirers come to saving faith that results in maturity. Jesus also said the

poor would always be with us, but that doesn't mean we are to disregard them. Rather, let us labor with all the more urgent diligence to feed the poor and fully assure the salvation of the seeking.

Kevin accepted Christ while incarcerated. After returning to society Kevin chose to get involved in a church, read his Bible, pray, and surround himself with other believers. He is a committed follower of Christ, and serving in the church and the community. No one can unmistakably verify saving faith, because it is the invisible work of God within the person, yet scripture suggests many marks of belief. It is important to note that none of these marks are necessarily identifiable at the moment of decision. They will occur if conversion occurred, but the timing of their appearance differs. It is, therefore, even more important for the new believer to be linked with God's people as soon as possible after the faith decision. Care-driven follow up is one way to assure that a faith decision is, or becomes, saving faith.

What stands out to you from Matthew 7?

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How does this passage apply to your witness and discipleship? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Action Steps

Find a prayer partner who you can pray with weekly for those you listed as needing to know Christ.

Prayer Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer time (Day and time): \_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 5

## Care

### Key Concept

Relationships are built through loving and caring for others. To care for someone means to be their friend, know them, and guide them on their spiritual journey. It includes working to break down their barriers that keep them from taking the next step toward a relationship with Christ.

*The gospel is passed on most effectively through established relationships.—Lon Allison, Evangelist*

*Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you. (Mark 5:19)*

### Build Genuine Friendships

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater than these. (Mark 12:30-31)*

*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.... So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. (2 Corinthians 5:14, 16)*

What are characteristics of a genuine friend? \_\_\_\_\_

### Love Others

- Being \_\_\_\_\_ /accepted
- Words of \_\_\_\_\_
- Quality \_\_\_\_\_
- Receiving \_\_\_\_\_
- Acts of \_\_\_\_\_
- Physical \_\_\_\_\_

## Be Good Listeners

What are characteristics of a good listener? \_\_\_\_\_

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*I show care through the simple and kind act of listening to a problem, then encouraging the person to pray and have faith. I share scripture that relates to his or her problem and give my own personal testimony of how God picked ME out of a house full of people (a den of iniquities) to save me and to give me a second chance. I have been clean for three years with no desire to use crack cocaine anymore. – Charlotte*

## Ask Good Questions

There is a comfort in being with people who know you and accept you. One of the ways of showing love and care is to get to know them. Ask them questions to learn their story. Listen without judgment. Accept them for who they are.

What are sample questions you can ask others to help you learn about them?

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What are sample questions you can ask to learn where they are in their spiritual journey?

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## Walls Unbelievers Have Toward Christians and the Christian Faith

**Wall 1: Broken** \_\_\_\_\_

- Breaking it down: Build \_\_\_\_\_

**Wall 2: Pain and** \_\_\_\_\_

- Breaking it down: Empathetic \_\_\_\_\_ and compassion

**Wall 3: Perceptions about \_\_\_\_\_ and the Christian life**

- Breaking it down: Be \_\_\_\_\_, loving, real, examine your life, teach and \_\_\_\_\_ the truth

**Wall 4: Perceptions of \_\_\_\_\_**

- Breaking it down: Teach \_\_\_\_\_ truth and share \_\_\_\_\_ experiences

## Caring Cautions

- 1. Be wise. Avoid people like you.** People who struggle with the same temptations you do should not be the people you should hang out with. God will bring someone else in their life to witness to them.
- 2. Be with them, but don't sin.** Don't compromise your character or integrity.

### Review

- ✓ Caring means to build genuine \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ others, be a good \_\_\_\_\_ and ask good questions.
- ✓ Walls non-Christians may have toward the gospel are: broken \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and perceptions about \_\_\_\_\_, the Christian life and \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ Breaking down the walls includes building \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ listening, compassion, Christlike living, teaching biblical truth, and sharing personal experiences.

# Bible Study 5

## Developing Caring Relationships

### Objectives

**By the end of this study you will be able to:**

- Identify ways to care for and love non-Christians.
- Identify strategies for breaking down barriers non-Christians have toward a relationship with Christ.

While we need to be intentional about developing relationships with spiritually lost people, the goal is to love them, not convert them. For them to be our friend, not our project. Sharing Christ with others should be natural—not forced. We develop relationships by demonstrating care and loving others.

### Caring and Loving Others

Read 1 Corinthians 13. List the characteristics of love from this chapter.

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List two spiritually lost people in your life and specific ways you can demonstrate care and love for them.

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### Breaking Down the Barriers

#### • Build trust

How do you respond when people don't trust you?

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List specific ways you can build trust with non-Christians.

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- **Develop humility**

Read Philippians 2:3-11 and reflect on the humility of Jesus. How can you be humble like Jesus?

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*Pride is your greatest enemy and humility your greatest friend. —John Stott*

*True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. —C.S. Lewis*

Read Isaiah 6 and reflect on the holiness of God. How does this truth humble you?

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- **Know God**

Read each scripture and write what it says about God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 23:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 34:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 62:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

From your own life, how have you experienced God?

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- **Answering tough questions**

**If God loves us, why do we suffer?** Explain where evil/pain come from.

1 Peter 5:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_

John 8:44 \_\_\_\_\_

Genesis 3:1-24 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 5:12 \_\_\_\_\_

**Why does a loving God send people to hell?**

Matthew 23:37b \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 3:8-10 \_\_\_\_\_

## Ways to Help Non-Christians Take the Next Step in their Spiritual Journey

Live counterculturally. What are three behaviors expected or accepted by those in your community which are NOT biblical and write the countercultural biblical behavior. Support your answer with scripture. For example, It is acceptable to steal from the kitchen—*You shall not steal* (Deuteronomy 5:19).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Action Steps

1. Identify one person in your sphere of influence who does not know Christ. Pray for them and identify ways you can care for them.
2. Identify an area where you want to be more like Christ. Ask God to help you make this change. Memorize a scripture verse to help in this area.

## Lesson 6

# Share: Your Transforming Story

### Key Concept

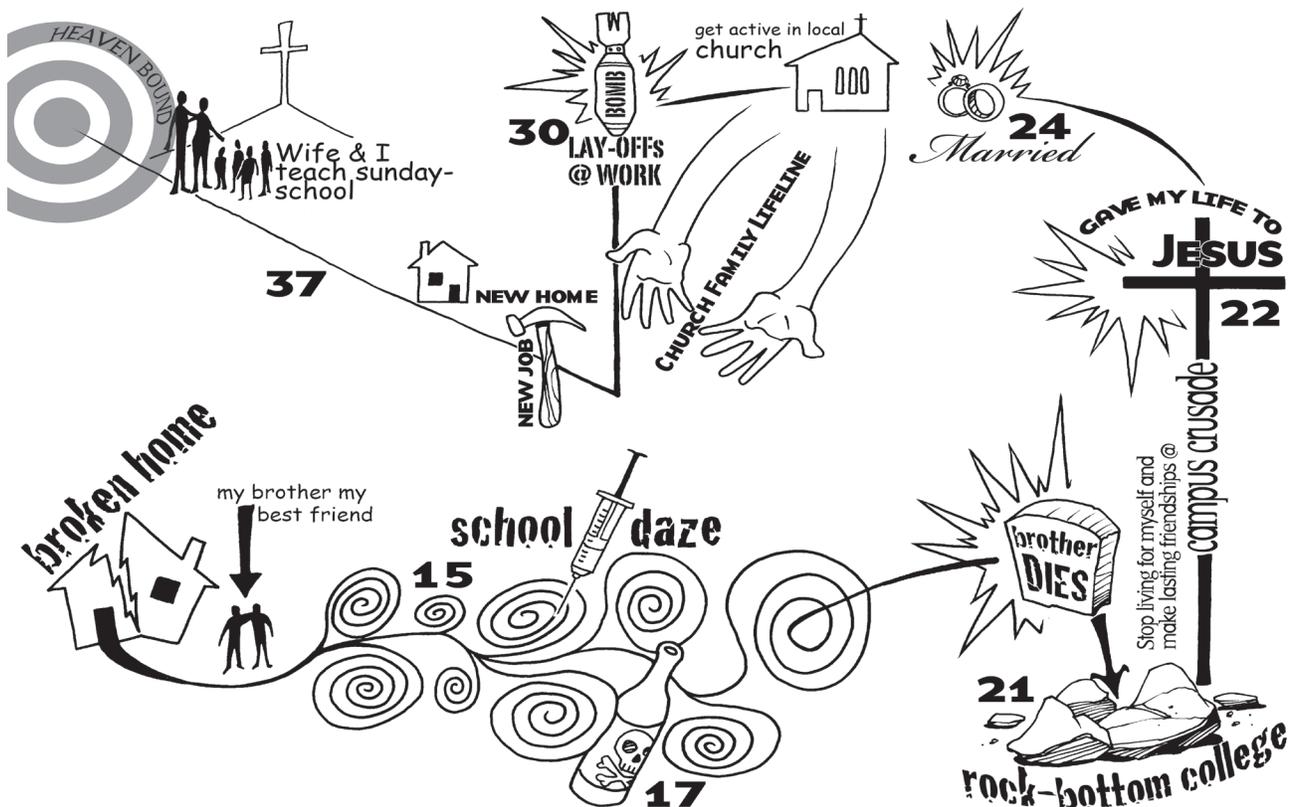
One of the most powerful tools for witnessing is your transforming story of how Christ has changed your life.

Every follower of Christ has a transforming story—a time when Christ entered his or her life. These stories are powerful examples of the saving and continuing grace of Christ in a believer's life and are often accepted or met with less resistance from non-Christians than stories from the Bible.

*...one thing I do know, I was blind, but now I see. (John 9:25)*

*If you've not discovered the value of telling others how God has rearranged your life, you've missed a vital link in the chain of blessing. —Charles Swindoll*

The spiritual life map is a tool which provides a picture of your spiritual journey. Much like a road map, spiritual life maps tell where you have come from, where you are now, and where you are going. Typically, the path proceeds from birth to present and then to death and the afterlife. The Sample Spiritual Life Map, begins in the bottom left with pictures and words from the person's life, and numbers representing his age at the time.



In this map, he grew up in a broken home where his brother was his best friend. During the ages from 15-17 he was going to school in a daze because of drugs and alcohol. His brother died and he hit rock bottom while in college. He participated in a Christian college group called Campus Crusade where he stopped living for himself and made lasting friends. At 22, he gave his life to Jesus. At 24 he married and he and his wife became active in a local church. At 30, he was laid off from work and during that trial, his church family reached out as a lifeline and helped meet his needs. He now has a new job, a new home, teaches Sunday school with his wife, and they are heaven bound.

## Transforming Stories

Another tool for witnessing is to develop your transforming story. Your story should take 1-2 minutes to share to keep the attention of your listener. Here are three examples:

**Example 1:** *I grew up living in the projects and gang banging. I thought life was about living for women, money, and drugs. I caught a murder case and while in jail, God spoke to me in a dream that I needed to give my life to him. I gave up my desire for revenge on another inmate and chose to leave the gang and become a follower of Christ. I no longer try to fill my life with the things of the streets, but with the word of God. My identity is not being a gang banger and a player, but a man of God.*

**Example 2:** *I grew up as an only child, who never received the affections or love that a growing child needs. I sought that love from others leading to drugs, abuse and incarceration. I was having sex at age 11, pregnant at 13, married with two kids at 15, in prison for the first time at 17. My life continued to spiral downhill and was back in prison for a fourth time with a 15 year sentence. Realizing my way of life wasn't working, I called out to God. He met me where I was and transformed my life into something beautiful. I now know what true love is.*

**Example 3:** *I grew up in a home and church that taught me that Jesus loved me and I could spend eternity with him. At a young age I decided to accept the free gift of eternal life by placing my faith in Christ as Savior and Lord of my life. But being a Christian doesn't mean life is always easy. When I was engaged to Mark, he was diagnosed with cancer and asked me if I still wanted to marry him. I said, "yes" and we married between treatments. Mark continued to battle his cancer when I was diagnosed with cancer and we spent our second anniversary sharing a hospital room. God chose to permanently heal Mark by taking him home to heaven and to temporarily heal me. This is what I know to be true, that God loves me and provides a peace that is beyond understanding and I am excited to be a follower of Christ.*

# Bible Study 6

## Your Transforming Story

### Objectives

By the end of this study you will be able to:

- Create your Spiritual Lifemap
- Write your one-two minute transforming story
- Share your transforming story

### Create your Spiritual Life Map

Draw or use magazine images to represent your Spiritual Life Map on page 80. Think about the people, places, events, and things (books, television shows, etc.) God has used to reveal himself to you and to shape your faith. Include major events in your life, along with spiritual resources, prayer, scriptures, music, etc. that helped you along your journey. Include what you want your life to look like in the future. This exercise is not about how well you can draw, but is a way to express and communicate your spiritual journey. Have fun!

### Write Your Transforming Story

Write your transforming story on page 79. Principles for writing your transforming story include:

- **Keep your audience in mind.** They may not be familiar with “Christianese”. Avoid phrases such as “accepted Christ,” “trusted Jesus,” “born again,” and “saved.” Possible alternatives are “received the gift of eternal life,” “found out I could be certain I was going to heaven,” and “received assurance that God was with me always.”
- **Avoid exaggeration.** The best stories are believable. At times, we want to make our story more exciting or try to connect with others so we may make it sound more dramatic. When we do that we are trying to be the center of attention rather than allowing God that position.
- **Be clear and concise.** Follow a natural progression of your need and God’s supply. Keep it to one hundred words so that it can be communicated in about one minute. Keeping it brief shows you respect people’s time, and it allows opportunity for questions if they want to know more. If your story is long, you will lose their attention before you get to the main points, and often lose the opportunity to expand the conversation.
- **Focus on Christ.** Make the essence of your story what Christ has done for you. Focus on a personal need or pain and how God met you (e.g., you lacked purpose and found it through a relationship with Christ). The goal of your story is not helping them to know you better, but to have them see where Christ has met you. Do not overemphasize how bad your life was or how great it is now. Keep it balanced.
- **Write it out, refine it, and rewrite it.** Share it with two Christian friends and get their feedback. Edit it again.

### Action Steps

1. Pray for opportunities to share your story with non-Christians.
2. Ask a non-Christian if you can share your transformation story. Let them know that it will only take 1-2 minutes.

# Lesson 7

## Share: God's Story

### Key Concept

We need to know God's story, the gospel, so we are ready to share this good news with those we are traveling with on their journey toward a relationship with Christ.

### The Gospel

The "gospel" means "good news". The good news is that while we are sinners and deserve death, God has paid the penalty of our sins through Jesus Christ dying on the cross. Listed below are examples of sharing the gospel.

**Example 1:** *God is the creator of everything and he's made himself known so anyone can have a personal relationship with him—one that helps us in this life and one that will last forever, in heaven. Everyone has fallen short of any decent standard of goodness. In other words, we've all got some sin in us that's messed up a lot of things—friendships, consciences, relationship with God, things like that. But Jesus is the answer for all our problems. He not only taught us lessons on how to live so we don't have these problems, but he also died on the cross to take away the penalty that we deserve for the problems we've created. He desires that we come to the point where we follow him every day of our lives.*<sup>3</sup>

### Example 2: Steps to Peace with God<sup>4</sup>

#### Step 1: God loves you and has a plan for you!

*The Bible says, "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, (Jesus Christ), that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16)*

*Jesus said, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly"—a complete life full of purpose (John 10:10).*

#### Step 2: The Problem: man is sinful and separated from God.

*We have all done, thought or said bad things, which the Bible calls "sin." The Bible says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).*

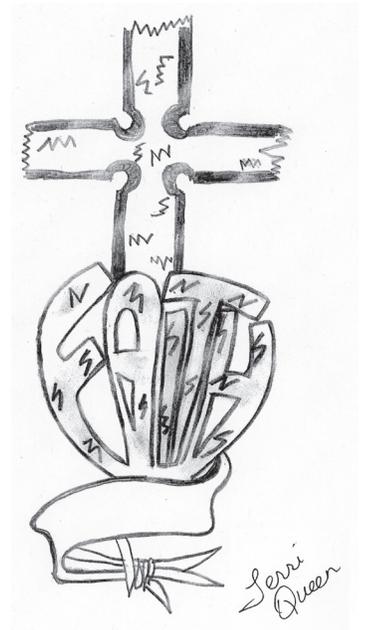
*The result of sin is death, spiritual separation from God (Romans 6:23)*

The good news?

#### Step 3: God sent His Son to die for your sins!

Jesus died in our place so we could have a relationship with God and be with Him forever.

*"But God demonstrated his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)*



But it didn't end with His death on the cross. He rose again and still lives.

*"Christ died for our sins ... He was buried ... He was raised on the third day according, to the Scriptures.  
(I Corinthians 15:3-4)*

Jesus is the only way to God.

*"Jesus said, I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, except through Me."  
(John 14:6).*

#### **Step 4: Would you like to receive God's forgiveness?**

We can't earn salvation; we are saved by grace when we have faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. All you have to do is believe you are a sinner, that Christ died for your sins, and ask His forgiveness. Then turn away from your sins—that's called repentance. Jesus Christ knows you and loves you. What matters to him is the attitude in your heart, your honesty.

To receive Christ, pray something like this:

*"Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. Thank you for sending your Son to die for my sins and that he rose from the dead so I can have eternal life. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life and change me. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior."*

## **Gospel Sharing Stories**

Since coming to Christ, John has radically turned his life around (from gang violence, drugs, etc.) and uses every opportunity to share the gospel with those around him.

*Most recently a very close friend from the streets came into the system and I was able to speak to him and explain the loving kindness that our Lord and Savior has imparted to teach us to follow him. —John*

*About two days after arriving at a prison, a neighbor to my bunk said he wanted to discuss my peace with me. I was assuming he was referring to my tattoo, commonly called a "piece" in prison terminology. Actually, he was referring to the "peace" he noted during my stay. I let the Holy Spirit speak through me and I heard my voice tell him about the goodness of God and how he will guide us, how everything will work out to the good, and how I just have faith. That man then asked me to help him become saved so that he could have the same peace. I led him through the ABCs (admit he is a sinner, believe in Christ, confess his sins) and repentance. His face seemed to grow softer and he looked more at peace as we wrapped up our discussion. I then gave him the Bible and told him to read the Gospel of John. I shipped out the next morning. As I reflected on our conversation, I realized I did not need to know scripture inside and out to spread the message. I just needed to let God speak through me. —Thomas*

*Rachel was a pen pal. She believed in God, but did not fully place her faith in Christ crucified for salvation. One day it dawned on me to share scripture with her, even if it meant she'd not write back. Rachel not only accepted the truth of what the Bible said, but she became on fire for the Lord. She started a Bible study with her neighbors. Her letters showed so much faith in Jesus that it affected my own life. You see, I was living on both sides of the fence. Once I saw the change in Rachel, I stepped up and made real changes and commitments in my own life. —Paul*

# Bible Study 7

## Sharing God's Story

### Objectives

By the end of this study you will be able to:

- Share God's story using a witnessing tool or create one to use
- Be confident in your ability to share the gospel
- Describe ways Jesus witnessed

There is a basic content to the gospel. Witnessing tools are very helpful and often give us confidence to share the gospel. The key is to become familiar with the gospel message and then be able to communicate it in a way that meets others on their spiritual journey.

1 Peter 3:15 tells us to "always be ready" to share about Christ with others. The first step is for you to become familiar with a way to share the gospel. This next section will help equip you and increase your confidence to share the gospel.

### 1. Select a Gospel tool or create one of your own

- **Steps to Peace with God from Lesson 7**
- ***Bridge to Eternal Life***

<p>Because all of us have sinned (Romans 3:23), we are not only destined to die physically (Romans 6:23), but are presently in a state of spiritual death or separation from God (Ephesians 2:1-4)</p> <p>When Jesus died on the cross, he took our condemnation and paid the price for our sins (Romans 4:25; 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3). By suffering and dying as our substitute, Jesus provided a righteousness that God can credit to our account (2 Corinthians 5:21) and made reconciliation possible between sinners and a holy God (1 John 2:1-2).</p>	<p><b>Our Pardon: Turn &amp; Trust</b></p> <p><b>Man's Problem: SIN</b></p> <p><b>Sin's Penalty: DEATH</b></p> <p><b>Christ's Payment</b></p> <p><b>God's Purpose</b></p> <p><b>God's Promise:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has ETERNAL LIFE</li> <li>• No condemnation</li> <li>• Passed from death to LIFE</li> </ul> <p><b>Eternal Death</b></p>
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Many people run into a major hurdle when they get to the point of asking someone if he or she would like to become a Christian. It will help you to practice what you might say at that point.

If the person answers yes, have him or her pray to God about it. Let him or her use his or her own words or provide a simple prayer like the one following:

*"Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior."*

• **One-Verse Evangelism<sup>5</sup>**

Here's a brief look at how it works.

One-Verse Evangelism® is a simple, interactive way to share Christ's love conversationally and visually. It is based on asking questions and sharing truth simply. It's easy to learn because it uses just one verse. One-Verse Evangelism can be shared in just 10 or 15 minutes, but can have impact for a lifetime.

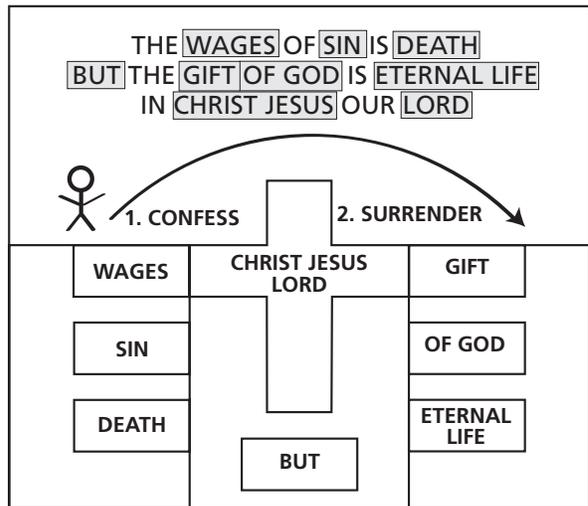
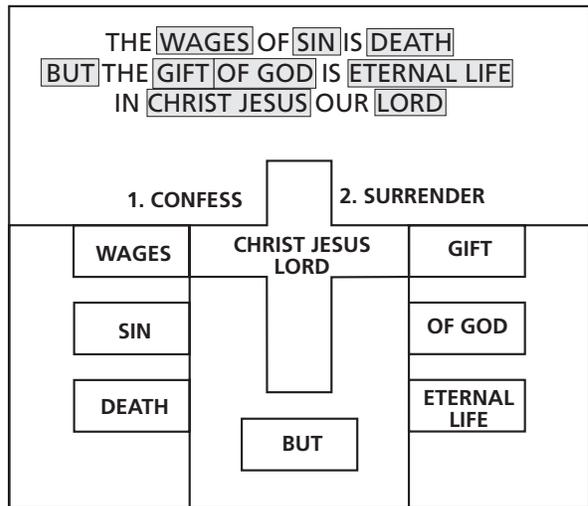
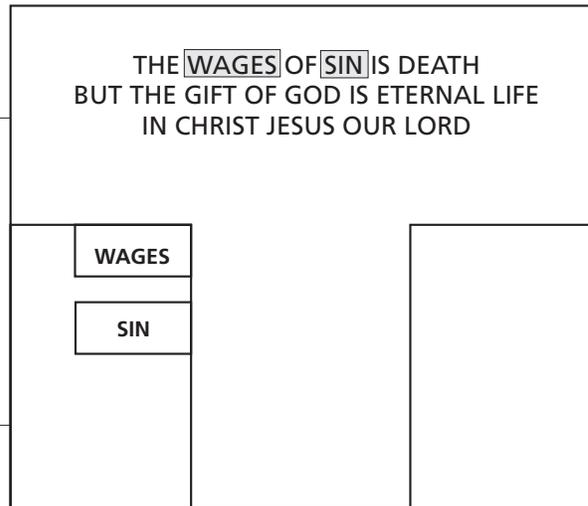
Let's say God is leading you to share the gospel with your friend, Chris. Write out Romans 6:23 on a piece of paper: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (NIV). All you need is contained in this single passage. Ask Chris if he would like to see a simple diagram based on this verse that will explain God's relationship with mankind (us).

**Wages** — Circle the word "wages" and ask, "How would you feel if your boss refused to pay you the wages that were due to you?" The answer, of course, is that he would want justice—in this case, the wages he had worked for. Deep down, we all know that it is only right that we get what we deserve. Similarly, we earn "wages" from God for how we have lived our lives.

**Sin** — Draw a circle around "sin," asking your friend Chris what he thinks when he hears this word. You might explain that sin is more an attitude than an action. It can be either actively fighting God or as simple as excluding Him from our lives. You can ask, "Has God ever seemed far away?" If he says "Yes," you can explain that that's one of the things sin does—it makes God seem far away. Now draw two opposing cliffs with a gap in between.

**Death** — Circle this word and ask what thoughts come to mind. Explain that death in the Bible always means some kind of separation—in its most basic sense, separation from life. Because God is the author of life, a spiritual death simply means separation from Him.

**BUT** — While circling this word, mention that it is important because it means that a sharp contrast in ideas is coming. What we have just looked at is the bad news; what comes next is the good news.



**Gift** — Draw a circle around this word. Ask, “If wages are what a person earns, then what is a gift?” Remind Chris that though every gift is free for the person receiving it, someone still has to purchase it.

**Of God** — Circle this and explain that the gift you are talking about is free. It is from God Himself. It’s so special that no one else can give it. Ask, “How do you feel when someone gives you a special gift?”

**Eternal Life** — Circle these two words next, and then ask, “How would you define these words?” Contrast one side of the cliff, death, with the other side, eternal life. Ask, “What is the opposite of separation from God?”

**Christ Jesus** — Write these words so they create a bridge between the two cliffs. Help your friend to consider that just as every gift has a unique giver, only Jesus Christ can give the gift of eternal life.

**Trust** — Write this word over the bridge you just drew. Explain that a true friend is a friend you can trust, and tell Chris that Jesus is offering to be a true friend to him. All Chris has to do is admit that he is responsible for his sin—either of fighting against God or excluding Him from his life. Trusting Jesus means believing that He has power to forgive us for rejecting God and that He will wash us clean from all that we have done wrong in life. At this point, you can ask him if he wants to start a relationship with God that will last forever. If he says “Yes,” invite him to pray a short prayer in his own words, asking Jesus to forgive him and make him new.

Close by reminding him that this simple illustration shows what God is like: Someone who really cares about people—especially him. Invite him to read all about it in the Bible—the Gospel of John is a great place to start.

## 2. Practice sharing the gospel out loud to yourself until you become familiar with it.

### Jesus Witnessing

Read Mark 10:17-31 or John 4:1-26. How did Jesus treat those he met and how did he make the gospel known?

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#### Action Steps

1. Pray for a person you would like to share the gospel with.
2. Share. Ask him or her if you can share the gospel presentation as part of your assignment for the *Answering the Call* training.
3. Reflect on your experience. What was effective? What would you do differently next time? How did he or she respond?

## Lesson 8

# Share: Strategies

### Key Concept

Our approach to the listeners influences their reception of the gospel. Developing witnessing strategies give us more ways to reach others for Christ.

## Our Approach

### With Gentleness and Respect

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Peter 3:15-16)*

### With Grace

*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:5-6)*

### With Humility

*In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. (1 Peter 5:6).*

*Sharing the gospel is like one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. —Paul Little*

### With Courage

*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. (Romans 1:16)*

## Witnessing Strategies

### The Art of Asking Questions

Learning to ask questions is a witnessing strategy to check for open doors to a spiritual conversation and to meet others where they are in their spiritual journey.

• **Interest-related Questions**

Interest-related questions are questions about an area of interest to the non-Christian because of their circumstances.

**Example 1**

- \* How are you doing being locked up? (Response: It's terrible)
- \* How are you dealing with the stress? (I am angry and get into fights)
- \* Have you found a way of dealing with the stress that doesn't make you feel worse or get you into trouble? (No)
- \* Do you think there is a God who can help you? (Maybe)
- \* Would you like to hear more about God and how he can help you? (Sure, why not?)



**Example 2:**

- \* Do you have kids? (I have three kids, ages 3, 5, and 8)
- \* Do you get to see or talk to them much? (I talk with them on the phone once a month, but it is too far for them to visit.)
- \* How do you feel about being separated from your family? (It sucks and it's lonely.)
- \* How do you cope with the loneliness? (I get depressed and angry)
- \* Do you think there is a God who cares about your loneliness and the pain of missing your kids? (Maybe)
- \* Would you like to hear more about him? (Sure.)

What other interest-related topics (struggles, feelings) could be used to ask someone in this community?

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• **Open Ended Spiritually-related Questions**

- \* Have you ever thought about God? What do you think He is like?
- \* What religious beliefs were you taught growing up?
- \* What do you believe happens to us after we die?
- \* What gives you purpose in life?
- \* What do you think about Christians or Christianity?
- \* Do you believe God loves you? Why or why not?

What are other spiritually-related questions you have used before or think would be effective when talking with an unbeliever from your community?

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# Addressing Resistant People

Some people are resistant to discussing anything to do with Christianity.

How do you respond when someone challenges what you believe?

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How do you think God wants us to respond?

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Some people are looking to argue with you about your faith or make statements that are resistant to the gospel. Be a good listener. The goal is to help individuals think about what they believe, why they believe it, and to help them take the next step toward an understanding of Christ. Avoid arguing or trying to “win” the conversation. When resistant statements are made, ask questions to dig deeper and to challenge their statements rather than becoming defensive.

## Example 1: All religions are right<sup>6</sup>

**Non-Christian (NC):** I don't think anyone has the right to say that his or her religion is right and someone else's is wrong. I think all religions are right.

**Christian (C):** Why do you think that?

**NC:** Because I think they all lead to God and that there are many ways to get to heaven.

**C:** Well, I used to believe that myself—that all religions were right and that no one's faith was better than anyone else's.

**NC:** So what happened to you?

**C:** Someone challenged me to think about it a little. I started finding out what different religions believed. I found that religions that disagree on such basic things can't all be right.

**NC:** They don't disagree about basic things. They just disagree about unimportant things like what kinds of clothes to wear or whether to worship on Sunday or Saturday or some other day.

**C:** I disagree. Different religions differ on major things.

**NC:** Like what?

**C:** Like what God is like or if there even is a god. Or what we humans are like, what the whole meaning of life is, whether we're supposed to try to connect with God (or whatever) through action or by withdrawing. And then there's the afterlife. Do we go to heaven, or do we just die and that's it?

## Example 2: I don't believe the Bible

**NC:** It's great that you've found something that works for you. But I just don't believe the Bible.

**C:** Why not?

**NC:** It's just too farfetched to believe.

**C:** What about it is farfetched?

**NC:** All of the miracles...parting the Red Sea, healing crippled people...

**C:** How much of the Bible have you read?

**NC:** Oh, hardly any of it. I just know a lot of the stories.

**C:** But you haven't read it?

**NC:** I've read some of it.

**C:** But not a lot of it?

**NC:** No.

**C:** Well, do you think it's possible that, if there is a God, and he wanted to communicate with us, that he could inspire some kind of written revelation?

**NC:** Yeah, I think so.

**C:** I encourage you to read it. It's a best seller, and many people say that it's helped them more than any other book.

What are other resistant statements that you have heard from non-Christians about Christians or the Christian faith?

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## Review

- ✓ Our approach to sharing the gospel is to be with \_\_\_\_\_ and respect, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ Witnessing strategies include the art of \_\_\_\_\_ and addressing \_\_\_\_\_ of people.

# Bible Study 8

## Sharing Strategies

### Objectives

**By the end of this study you will be able to:**

- Describe how to share Christ with gentleness, respect, grace, humility and courage.
- Ask questions which progress toward an opportunity to share Christ.
- Respond to resistant statements with questions rather than becoming defensive.

1. Describe how you can share the gospel with....

a. gentleness and respect rather than with force \_\_\_\_\_

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b. grace rather than with judgment \_\_\_\_\_

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c. humility rather than with pride \_\_\_\_\_

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d. courage rather than with fear \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Create a progression of questions based on a common interest or felt need which progresses toward an opportunity to share Christ.

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3. Select one of the resistant statements identified in Lesson 8. Write a list of questions that can be asked to help the person think about what they believe and why they believe it.

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### **Action Steps**

1. Pray for opportunities to ask questions which lead to learning more about where the person is on their spiritual journey and to make Christ known.
2. Respond to those who are resistant to Christians and the Christian faith with love, care, gentleness, respect, humility, and grace.

## Lesson 9

# Stay There: Discipleship, Part I

### Key Concept

Discipleship is a relationship, not a program.

When persons have placed their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, we are to stay there, teaching them to obey everything Jesus has commanded.

*Most people come to Christ to meet a need. But they stay with Christ when they know that he is the truth. When they understand what they have entered into—the fullness of salvation. —Ajith Fernando*

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)*

List the names of those who have helped you grow in your faith after becoming a Christian.

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## Discipleship

Discipleship is an intentional \_\_\_\_\_ in which we walk along-side other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love to grow toward \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ.<sup>7</sup>

## Goals of Discipleship

1. **Faith** \_\_\_\_\_. Disciples must own their faith so it goes with them wherever they go.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ **Faith**. Disciples must keep their faith the top priority in their life.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ . Disciples must take responsibility for their own spiritual growth.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ . Disciples must be able to teach others.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ . Disciples are to live Christ-centered lives where their relationship with Jesus is the most important relationship in their life and Christ guides everything they do.

*For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son. (Romans 8:29)*

## Discipleship Strategies

### • Spiritual friendships

Be there for others and invite others into your life.

- \* Mentor or Life Coach
- \* Discipleship/teacher
- \* Accountability
- \* Small group
- \* Friends

*Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character. (1 Corinthians 15:33)*

*He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm. (Proverbs 13:20)*

*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. (Proverbs 27:17)*

*I had been at this particular facility for about eight months and met a younger man whose faith was lost. As we got to know one another better, I asked if he would like to begin to study the Bible with me. He agreed. His anger and interests in false religions had taken him off the true path of Jesus. The Holy Spirit began to deal with his heart. I have seen a marked improvement in his behavior. The Bible has humbled him and put the spirit of praise on his mind and in his soul. I encourage him to stay strong and I lead by example. I have been there and am here for him and it's great to see us both grow together in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus far it has been awesome to disciple him and I look forward to continuing our progress in the Word of God! —Marc*

How will you go about developing spiritual friends?

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- **Role model**

Model a life of obedience, how to grow spiritually, how to handle temptation and trials and how to live in God's love for you.

*Therefore I urge you to imitate me...of my way of life in Christ Jesus... (1 Corinthians 4:16-17)*

- **Encourage**

- \* Welcome and accept believers into the family of faith
- \* Give words of encouragement and praise toward reaching the goals of discipleship
- \* Provide empathy and compassion when they are hurting
- \* Encourage to persevere in their faith and not give up when life gets hard
- \* Meet physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs
- \* Gently restore them back to the faith when they sin

*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. (Hebrews 3:13)*

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1:2-4)*

- **Equip**

Discipling others includes teaching biblical truth, doctrines of the faith, and spiritual attitudes needed to grow in ones faith.

- \* **Spiritual doctrines**<sup>8</sup>

- Salvation by grace: "I believe nothing I do or have done can earn my salvation." (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- The Trinity: "I believe the God of the Bible is the one true God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (2 Corinthians 13:14)
- Personal God: "I believe God is actively involved in my life." (Psalm 121)
- Christ is first: "I desire Jesus to be first in my life." (Matthew 6:33)
- Authority of the Bible: "I believe the Bible has decisive authority over what I say or do. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Identity in Christ: "I exist to know, love, and serve God." (John 1:12-13)

- \* **Spiritual attitudes**

- Humility: "Without Christ I can do nothing." (John 15:5)
- Stewardship: "I believe a Christian should live a sacrificial life that is not driven by pursuit of material things." (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

- Giving away my life: "I am willing to risk everything that is important in my life for Jesus Christ." (Romans 12:1-2)
- Giving away my faith: "I pray for non-Christians to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior." (Ephesians 6:19-20)
- Giving away my time: "I give away my time to serve and help others in my community." (Colossians 3:17)
- Giving away my money: "My first priority in spending is to support God's work." (2 Corinthians 8:7)
- Obedience: "I desire to live a life of obedience to Christ." — *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.* (James 1:22)
- Christ is First: "Christ is the priority in my life." — *You shall have no other gods before me.* (Deuteronomy 5:2)

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.* (Hebrews 12:1-3)

*Making disciples requires patient and careful instruction and prayerful and personal guidance of the individual over a considerable period. Disciples are not manufactured wholesale. They are produced one by one, because someone has taken the pains to discipline, to instruct and enlighten, to nurture and train one that is younger. —J. Oswald Sanders*

## Review

- ✓ Discipleship is an intentional \_\_\_\_\_ in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip, and challenge one another in love to grow toward \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ.
- ✓ The goals of discipleship are: faith \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ faith \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

# Bible Study 9

## Who I Am in Christ<sup>9</sup>

### Lesson 1: I Am Loved by God

God's love for us is greater than any human experience of love we have known. God made each of us to have a loving relationship with him, and he sent Jesus to die for us to show how much he loves us. As children of God, we can experience God's acceptance and love every day.

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**Jesus said:** *God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.* (John 3:16)

**Paul wrote:** *Here is how God has shown his love for us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* (Romans 5:8)

**John wrote:** *What is love, it is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.* (1 John 4:10)

**The Lord answers,** *"Can a mother forget the baby who is nursing at her breast? Can she stop showing her tender love to the child who was born to her? She might forget the child. But I will not forget you."* (Isaiah 49:15)

David prayed: *Lord, remember your great mercy and love. You have shown them to your people for a long time. Don't remember the sins I committed when I was young. Don't remember how often I refused to obey you. Remember me because you love me. Lord, you are good.* (Psalm 25:6-7)

2. What do we learn about God's love from these five scriptures?

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3. Memorize John 3:16. Quote it to one of your friends.

4. Verse Study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 1. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed.)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words.)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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## Lesson 2: I Am Forgiven by God

God's love for us through Jesus has provided something every person wants and needs; forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt! How wonderful to know that when we confess our sins, God promises to forgive and cleanse us completely. We don't have to carry the burden of unforgiven sins. We are truly clean and "free on the inside!"

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**John wrote:** *God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure. (1 John 1:9)*

**Paul wrote:** *We have been set free because of what Christ has done. Through his blood our sins have been forgiven. We have been set free because God's grace is so rich. (Ephesians 1:7)*

**David prayed:** *I admitted my sin to you. I didn't cover up the wrong I had done. I said, "I will admit my lawless acts to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. (Psalm 32:5)*

**The author of Hebrews wrote:** *Let us boldly approach the throne of grace. Then we will receive mercy. We will find grace to help us when we need it. (Hebrews 4:16)*

**David wrote:** *His love for those who have respect for him is as high as the heavens are above the earth. He has removed our lawless acts from us as far as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:11-12)*

2. What do we learn about God's forgiveness from these five scriptures?

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3. Memorize 1 John 1:9. Quote it to one of your friends.

4. Verse Study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 2. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed.)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words.)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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### Lesson 3: I Have Become a Child of God

We do not earn our relationship with God. We receive it as a gift from him. Paul wrote: God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it (Ephesians 2:8-9). Because of his love and our faith in Jesus, he accepts us as his very own sons and daughters!

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**John wrote:** *Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)*

**John wrote:** *How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's what we really are! The world doesn't know us because it didn't know him. (1 John 3:1)*

**Paul wrote:** *Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. (Romans 8:14)*

**Paul continued:** *You didn't receive a spirit that makes you a slave to fear once again. Instead you received the Holy Spirit, who makes you God's child. By the Spirit's power we call God "Abba." Abba means Father. The Spirit himself joins with our spirits. Together they give witness that we are God's children. (Romans 8:15-16)*

**David wrote:** *A father is tender and kind to his children. In the same way, the Lord is tender and kind to those who have respect for him. (Psalm 103:13)*

2. What do we learn about being God's child from these five scriptures?

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3. Memorize John 1:12. Quote it to one of your friends.

4. Verse Study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 3. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed.)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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## Lesson 4: I Am Secure in God

Our thoughts, feelings, and desires can often change from moment to moment. Sometimes, Satan makes us doubt that we are God's children and that we have eternal life. John said: I'm writing these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God. I'm doing it so you will know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:13). Romans 8, written by Paul, is a great chapter that helps us know how secure we are in God's love.

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**Romans 8:1-2:** *Those who belong to Christ Jesus are no longer under God's sentence. I am now controlled by the law of the Holy Spirit. That law gives me life because of what Christ Jesus has done. It has set me free from the law of sin that brings death.*

**Romans 8:28-29:** *We know that all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose. God planned that those he had chosen would become like his Son. In that way, Christ will be the first and most honored among many brothers.*

**Romans 8:31-32:** *What should we say then? Since God is on our side, who can be against us? God did not spare his own Son. He gave him up for us all. Then won't he also freely give us everything else?*

**Romans 8:38-39:** *I am absolutely sure that not even death or life can separate us from God's love. Not even angels or demons, the present or the future, or any powers can do that. Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can do that. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done.*

2. What do we learn about being secure in God from these four scriptures?

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3. Memorize Romans 8:1-2. Quote it to one of your friends.

4. Verse Study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 4. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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## Lesson 5: I Am God's Creation

Every person is a creation of God, but every Christian is also a new creation of God! At times, we may have wished we could “start over” in living our lives. We want a new life. That is exactly what happens when we believe in Jesus. We are brand new people in Christ—God has given us new life, abundant life, and eternal life! We are very special people to God.

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**Paul wrote:** *Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17) David wrote: You created the deepest parts of my being. You put me together inside my mother's body. How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that. What you have done is wonderful. I know that very well. (Psalm 139:13-14)*

**Paul wrote:** *God made us. He created us to belong to Christ Jesus. Now we can do good things. Long ago God prepared them for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)*

**Paul wrote:** *All things were created by him. He created everything in heaven and on earth. He created everything that can be seen and everything that can't be seen. He created kings, powers, rulers and authorities. Everything was created by him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)*

**John wrote:** *You are worthy, our Lord and God! You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power. You are worthy because you created all things. They were created and they exist. That is the way you planned it. (Revelation 4:11)*

2. What do we learn about being God's creation from these five scriptures?

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3. Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:17. Quote it to a friend.

4. Verse Study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 5. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed.)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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## Lesson 6: I Am God's Dwelling Place

The Bible tells us that if we believe in Jesus, we are "in Christ." We live in him. But another important Bible truth is that God lives within each Christian. Jesus said: Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you (John 15:4, The Message Bible). The God of the universe lives in you!

1. Circle key words or phrases in the following scriptures.

**Paul wrote:** *Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple? God's Spirit lives in you.*

(1 Corinthians 3:16)

**Paul wrote:** *Don't you know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit? The Spirit is in you. You have received him from God. You do not belong to yourselves. Christ has paid the price for you. So use your bodies in a way that honors God.* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

**Paul wrote:** *I have been crucified with Christ. I don't live any longer. Christ lives in me. My faith in the Son of God helps me to live my life in my body. He loved me. He gave himself for me.* (Galatians 2:20)

**Paul wrote:** *Because you belong to him, you too are being built together. You are being made into a house where God lives through his Spirit.* (Ephesians 2:22)

**Paul wrote:** *God has chosen to make known to them the glorious riches of the mystery. He has made it known among those who aren't Jews. And here is what it is. Christ is in you. He is your hope of glory.* (Colossians 1:27)

2. What do we learn about God living in us from these five scriptures?

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3. Memorize 1 Corinthians 3:16. Quote it to one of your friends.

4. Verse study. Select one of the scriptures in Lesson 2. List two key words and define them. (Use a dictionary if needed.)

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Key word: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does this scripture say? (Rewrite it in your own words)

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6. What does this scripture say to me? (How can I apply the truth of this scripture to my life today? How can I put it into practice?)

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## Lesson 10

# Stay There: Discipleship, Part II

### Key Concept

The goal of teaching spiritual practices to other believers is so they can learn to feed themselves spiritually.

## Spiritual Practices

Spiritual Practices (Disciplines) in and of themselves have no merit whatsoever. Just as we do not earn our salvation, we do not earn blessings from God. Training in the spiritual practices places us before God and is the God-ordained means for forming and transforming the human personality so that when we are in a crisis we can be “response-able”—able to respond appropriately.<sup>10</sup>

Following are a few spiritual practices. Teach not only what and how to participate in a particular spiritual practice, but why it is important.

### Reading and Reflection on Scriptures

**Definition:** Reading and thinking about what the Bible says and how it applies to every part of my life.

**Why:** It will help you learn more about God and deepen your relationship with him. It will help transform your thinking and lifestyle to be more Christ-like.

**Practices:** Read a book of the Bible, use a study guide, participate in a Bible study correspondence course, etc. Think about how what you read can apply to your life.

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16)*

### Prayer

**Definition:** To communicate with God my concerns and worries, to ask for forgiveness and to hear from God.

**Why:** Prayer helps develop a rhythm of turning to God. It reminds you of your dependence on God and to trust God. Confession gives you insight into your temptations and your need for God’s grace. Confession helps you have compassion toward the faults of others.

**Practices:**

- Pray for help and guidance

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

- Pray for confession

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

## Listening (Solitude and Silence)

**Definition:** Creating space to hear God.

**Why:** Helps us better listen to God.

**Practices:** Enter into a time without distractions, breathe deeply and become aware of God’s presence with you. Express what is on your heart—a question, an emotion, a longing, etc. Sit with what comes into your awareness—just be with God. How do you know if what comes to mind is from God? — It will never contradict scripture.

## Corporate Worship

**Definition:** A community of believers praising God for who he is and thanking him for what he has done.

**Why:** Worship helps you keep your priorities honoring to God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Corporate worship benefits believers through the fellowship with one another. Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

**Practices:** Find a local church and participate in worship weekly. In addition to worshipping, find an area to serve, and participate in a small group Bible study. It is up to you to get connected. Do NOT church-hop. Find a church as soon as possible. Remember there are no perfect churches—all are full of sinners.

## Questions to ask when selecting a Church

1. Is the church doctrinally correct? What does the Church believe? Examine their doctrinal statements. For example, the National Association of Evangelicals Statement of Faith includes key tenants of the Christian faith:
  - a. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
  - b. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - c. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his virgin birth, in his sinless life, in his miracles, in his vicarious and atoning death through his shed blood, in his bodily resurrection, in his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in his personal return in power and glory.
  - d. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
  - e. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
  - f. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
  - g. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Does the church teach from the Bible accurately? They teach scripture in context.
3. Does the church share the gospel with those who don’t know Christ?
4. Are the members honest about living Christian life, loving, caring, and forgiving?

5. Does the church help me grow spiritually and encourage accountability?
6. Do the church leaders model a Christ-like lifestyle?

*The true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.*  
(John 4:23)

## Service

**Definition:** To humbly reflect the helping, caring, and sharing love of God in the world.

**Why:** It puts action to our words and reflects Jesus.

**How:** Being available and vulnerable to anyone in need.

- Doing service projects
- Mentoring
- Helping and caring for those in need
- Seeking justice

*Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant.* (Matthew 20:26)

## Breath Prayer

**Definition:** It is six to eight syllables and prayed rhythmically with the inhalation and exhalation of breathing. It is an expression of our heart's deepest yearning, coupled with the name for God that is most meaningful and intimate for us at the time.

**Why:** It deepens our intimacy with God by calling out to him.

**How:** Breathe in, calling on a biblical name or image of God, and breathe out a simple God-given desire:

- *Breathe in: Lord, Here I am.*
- *Breathe out: Your servant listens.*
- *Breathe in: Jesus, Son of David.*
- *Breathe out: have mercy on me a sinner.*
- *Breathe in: Jesus.*
- *Breathe out: lover of my soul.*

*When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"* Mark 10:47

## Celebration

**Definition:** Out of gratitude, take delight and give praise for the Lord and what he has done.

**Why:** To enjoy every good and perfect gift and be reminded it is all from God.

**How:** Participate in activities that bring joy and deep gladness (e.g., time spent with others, listening to music, laughing, dancing, etc.)

*Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.* (Psalm 150:6)

## Examen (the daily review)

**Definition:** To notice God's work and presence throughout the day and an awareness of areas where we fell short of living for Christ throughout the day.

**Why:** Examen is an opportunity to look back over our day with God, to be more attentive to him and it is a healthy process of self-examination.

**How:**

- **Attentive to God**
  - \* How was God present with me today?
  - \* What promptings did I notice? How did I respond or not respond?
  - \* What is life-giving to me?
  - \* What drains me?
  
- **Conscience**
  - \* Ask God to bring to mind attitudes, actions, and moments when you fell short of exhibiting the character of Christ, or the fruit of the Spirit
  - \* Name the attitude or action
  - \* Confess it

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)*

## Fasting

**Definition:** The self-denial of normal necessities in order to intentionally attend to God in prayer.

**Why:** It reminds us that only God can satisfy us and frees up more time to pray.

**How:**

- Abstaining from food, drink, media, comforts, etc., intentionally in order to be with God
- Repenting of self-indulgent, addictive, or compulsive behaviors
- Seeking strength from God

*And when you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do. (Matthew 6:16-18)*

## Meditation

**Definition:** Slowing down and thinking about God's word and its application.

**Why:** We experience a greater awareness of the nearness of God.

**How:** Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading). Choose a passage of scripture (no more than six to eight verses). Recommended scriptures: Psalm 13; Psalm 63:1-5; Psalm 73:23-28; Psalm 103:8-12

1. **Silence.** Quiet yourself before the Lord with the desire to hear from God. Pray: "Come Lord Jesus," "Here I am," or "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."
2. **Read.** Read a short passage silently and slowly, attentively listening for a word or phrase that God has for you this day. Allow a moment of silence, repeating that word or phrase softly to yourself, pondering it and savoring it as though pondering the words of a loved one.
3. **Reflect.** Read the passage again and allow it to interact with your thoughts, hopes, memories, and desires. How is my life touched by this word? What in my life needed to hear this today? Where am I in the text, and what do I experience as I allow myself to be in this story? Silence.

4. **Respond.** Read it again. Is there an invitation or a challenge to which you need to respond? What is your response to God's invitation? (You may feel pain, frustration, or anger, a flash of self-knowledge, convicted of sin.) What is your response to God based on what you have read and encountered? Share with God the feelings the text has aroused—love, joy, sorrow, anger, repentance, desire, need, conviction. Pay attention to any sense that God is inviting you to act or to respond to the word you have heard. Pray.
5. **Rest.** Read it again. Rest with God and enjoy his presence, realizing that God is the one who will enable you to respond faithfully to whatever invitation you have heard from him. It is a posture of yieldedness.
6. **Resolve.** Incarnate the word of God (live it out). Resolve to carry this word with you and to live it out in the context of daily life and activity.

*But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:2)*

## Memorization

**Definition:** A way of remembering scripture.

**Why:** The Holy Spirit brings it to our mind when we are tempted and helps us know where to find scripture.

**How:** Reread portions of scripture until it is committed to memory. Memorize the books of the Bible so you can find references more easily

*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (Psalm 119:11)*

## Sabbath

**Definition:** Establishing a rhythm of work and rest that reflects God's pattern of creation.

**Why:** It allows us to rest and delight in God and his good gifts. It is a reminder that we are dependent on God, and that his work will be accomplished without burning ourselves out.

**How:** Cease work.

- Establish a regular day or time, rather than switching each week.
- Resting the body. What activities rest and replenish your body? What activities will you refuse to engage in so that it is truly a day of rest, worship, and delight?
- Replenishing the spirit. What activities renew you and bring you joy?
- Restoring the soul. Renew the soul through worship and quiet reflection. Remember all God has done for you and provided for you.

*Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27-28)*

## Simplicity

**Definition:** To uncomplicate and untangle our lives so we can focus on what really matters.<sup>11</sup>

**Why:** It brings freedom and generosity.

**How:** Downsizing, keeping God's priorities, enjoying simple pleasures.

*You cannot serve both God and money. (Luke 16:13)*

## Silence and Solitude

**Definition:** Creating space to hear God.

**Why:** We can better listen to God.

**How:** Find a place where you can shut out what is going on around you. Focus on God—talk and listen to him.

*Be still, and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)*

## Submission

**Definition:** The ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get our own way.<sup>12</sup>

**Why:** It allows us to grow more like Christ as we submit to others out of love.

**How:** Being teachable, submitting to those in authority, being free from a rebellious and self-sufficient spirit.

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)*

### My Commitment as a Christian

I'm part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I'm a disciple of his. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.

My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure. I'm finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap living, and dwarfed goals.

I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by faith, lean on his presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by power.

My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way rough, my companions few, my guide reliable, my mission clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of the adversary, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, shut up, let up, until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, preached up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till he comes, give till I drop, preach till all know, and work till he stops me. And when he comes for his own, he will have no problems recognizing me—my banner will be clear! —Author Unknown

# Bible Study 10

## Spiritual Plan

### Objectives

**By the end of this study you will be able to:**

- Identify which spiritual practices you want to use.
- Develop a personal spiritual plan.
- Apply and reflect on your spiritual plan.

A spiritual plan is a list of spiritual practices which meet your desire for a life-giving connection with God and authentic spiritual transformation. Pray for God's leading as you create a realistic plan which takes into consideration your stage of life, personality, and current circumstances. Ask questions such as:

1. What practices will I seek to engage in on a daily basis? Weekly? Monthly? Yearly? Include spiritual practices which come easily to you and those that stretch you.

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2. Where will I engage in these practices?

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3. What time of the day/week/month/year? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What other activities or practices are particularly suited to my personality?

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5. Are there certain practices that are particularly needed based on sins and negative patterns of which I am aware?

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6. What life/schedule changes will I need to make in order to consistently choose these life-giving practices? (get up earlier, stop hanging around, \_\_\_\_\_, etc.)

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## My Spiritual Plan

Create a spiritual plan by listing the spiritual practices you will use daily, weekly, monthly, yearly.

Spiritual Practice/ Description	Day/Time	Location	Life Changes Need

As you put your plan into practice, be flexible, not legalistic. Give yourself grace if you don't fulfill your plan each day. Meeting your plan is the goal, but recognize there are situations or circumstances which may interfere.

Evaluate your plan regularly—especially when you experience a major life change or every six months. Is the plan still realistic and life-giving?

A plan which works on the “inside” will not work in the “free world.” You will need to make realistic adjustments....continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. (Philippians 2:12b)

## The Nature of Discipleship

Read John 8:31. What is needed to be a disciple of Christ?

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Read Luke 14:25-35. What is needed to live your faith?

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Read 1 John 3:16-24. What is required of disciples?

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What keeps you from discipling others?

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### Action Steps

1. Practice your spiritual plan.
2. Pray for God to help you identify one person whom you can disciple. Look for someone who is responsible and teachable (willing to listen and learn with humility). Invite them to begin meeting together. Together determine if you are meeting for teaching, accountability, friendship, mentoring, etc.

## Lesson 11

# Celebration

*Congratulations on completing the training!*

*Well done!*

### **Our Prayer for You**

As followers of Christ, you have an incredible privilege and responsibility to share in the work of the Holy Spirit by communicating the gospel of Christ. We pray that by participating in *Answering the Call* you feel ready, equipped, and excited to share the gospel of Christ with those within your sphere of influence. Do not underestimate the power of the gospel—remember what Christ has done in your own life.

*I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philemon 1:6)*

*We pray that God will bless you as you further his kingdom through sharing the gospel and discipling others. The Institute for Prison Ministries would love to hear about your witnessing and discipling opportunities—both the positive and negative experiences. Thank you for participating in this training.*

## Endnotes

1. Henderson, David. 2005. "The Art of Voice Recognition." *Discipleship Journal* 150, 58-66.
2. Taken from *Going Public with the Gospel: Reviving Evangelistic Proclamation* by Lon Allison and Mark Anderson. Copyright © 2003 by Lon Allison and Mark Anderson. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515. [www.ivpress.com](http://www.ivpress.com). Slight modifications and additions have been made.
3. Newman, Randy. 2004. *Questioning Evangelism*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel.
4. [www.peacewithgod.net](http://www.peacewithgod.net)
5. [www.navigators.org/resource/one-verse-evangelism-share-christs-love-conversationally-visually/](http://www.navigators.org/resource/one-verse-evangelism-share-christs-love-conversationally-visually/)
6. Newman, Randy. 2004. *Questioning Evangelism*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel.
7. Ogden, Greg. 2003. *Transforming Discipleship*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 139.
8. Hawkins, Gary and Cally Parkinson. 2008. *Follow Me*. Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Resources, 34-35.
9. Portion of *Running the Race* Bible study by Navigators.
10. Foster, Richard. 2007. *Living the Mission*. New York: HarperOne, xiv
11. Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. 2005. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 74.
12. Foster, Richard. 1998. *Celebration of Discipline*. New York, N.Y: HarperCollins, 111.



# My Spiritual Lifemap