



GIVING AWAY YOUR FAITH

From the Moving Toward Maturity Series



Barry St. Clair



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The usage of the pronouns "his/he/him" has been used throughout this book for the sake of continuity and uniformity. The reader should assume these references refer to both male and female.

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To Lawanna, my wife, my fellow struggler in death and life, and my heart's companion for the second half of my life.

To the Lord Jesus Christ for teaching me the realities in this book.

A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

People have described the importance of sharing our faith in a variety of ways:

- > Telling people about Jesus Christ is the greatest thing since peanut butter.
- > Witnessing is one hungry beggar telling another hungry beggar where to find bread.
- > The Christian life without witnessing is like eating cold mashed potatoes.

But the Apostle Paul described it best, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes; first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).

Soon after I accepted Jesus Christ, I stood up in a church with sweaty palms and a pounding heart and told those people I had invited Jesus to live in me. I told them I wanted Romans 1:16 to be true about me. I wanted to be an unashamed witness for Jesus Christ. Since then, communicating Christ to other people has proven to be both an exciting adventure and a faith-stretching experience.

Communicating our faith stimulates us to grow in our faith. This book will help you become a Romans 1:16 Christian — unashamed of the Gospel. I challenge you to join me in the daily privilege and challenge of giving away our faith.

The Moving Toward Maturity series includes five books designed to help you grow in Christ and give your life away to others. By going through

Following Jesus, Spending Time Alone with God, and Making Jesus Lord you will have a solid understanding of who God is and who you are in Christ. Now it's time to focus on other people. They, like us, have a deep need for Jesus and somewhere down inside a desperate desire to find Him. God wants to use you to encourage them to know Him.

After you complete this book, finish the series by going through *Influencing Your World*.

God's desire and my prayer for you is that the things you discover on the following pages will become not just a part of you notes, but a part of your life. May all that's accomplished in your life be for His honor and glory.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danny". The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'D' and a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

PURPOSE

This book will help you grasp one of the basics of living life with Jesus Christ. You will discover your place in God's plan to lead people to Himself. Through what you learn you will take the next step along the path of true discipleship.

Discipleship can be partially defined as:

- > becoming independently dependent on Jesus Christ, and
 - > teaching people to be taught by God.
-

Paul summarized the personal discipleship process when he said, "(I am) 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).

Before you begin doing the Bible studies in this book, ask Jesus Christ to complete all He wants to do in your life.

USES FOR THIS BOOK

1. **SMALL GROUPS:** You can use this book as a member of an organized group (Discipleship Group) led by an adult leader.* Each person in this group signs the commitment sheet on page 11, and agrees to use the book week by week for personal growth.
2. **INDIVIDUALS:** You can go through this book on your own, doing one lesson each week for your own personal growth.
3. **DISCIPLING YOUNGER STUDENTS:** After you apply each session in this book to your own life, you can help a younger person or younger group through *Giving Away Your Faith*.

*The Leader's Guide for the *Moving Toward Maturity* series can be purchased from Reach Out Youth Solutions. See the order information in the back of this book.

PRACTICAL HINTS

(How to get the most out of this book)

If you want to grow as a Christian, you must get real with God and apply the Bible to your life. Sometimes that's hard, but this book can help you if you will:



1. Begin each session with prayer.
Ask God to speak to you.



2. Use a Bible that's easy to read.
Try the *New International Version*.



3. Work through the entire session.
 - > Look up the Bible verses.
 - > Think through the answers.
 - > Write the answers.
 - > Jot down any questions you have.
 - > Memorize the assigned verse(s).

(Use the Bible memory cards in the back of the book. Groups should select a single translation to memorize, in order to recite the verse(s) together.)



4. Apply each session to your life.
 - > Ask God to show you how to act on what you're learning from His Word.
 - > Obey Him in your relationships, attitudes, and actions.
 - > Talk over the results with other believers who can encourage and advise you.

IF YOU'RE IN A DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

- > Set aside two separate times each week to work on the assigned session. If possible, complete the whole Bible Study during the first time. Then during the second time (the day of or the day before your next group meeting), review what you've learned.
- > Take your Bible, this book, and a pen or pencil to every group meeting.

PERSONAL COMMITMENT

I, _____, hereby
dedicate myself to the following commitments:

1. To submit myself daily to God and to all that He wants to teach me about growing as a follower of Jesus.
2. To attend all weekly group meetings unless a serious illness or circumstance makes that impossible. If I miss more than one meeting, I will withdraw willingly from the group if it is determined necessary after meeting with the group leader.
3. To complete the assignments without fail as they are due each week.
4. To be actively involved in my local church.

I understand that these commitments are not only to the Lord but to the group and to myself as well. With God's help, I will do my very best to completely fulfill each one.

Signed _____ Date _____

S E S S I O N 1

LOST!



Seeing the Need

Last Wednesday night, Andy's youth leader talked to their group about communicating their faith. He challenged each person to express his/her faith to one person during the next week. Andy immediately thought of his friend, John.

John comes from a respected family. His dad makes plenty of money at his job. His parents are happily married. John has lots of friends and gets along well at school. He has everything going for him. But Andy isn't sure John is a follower of Jesus and even wonders why John would need Jesus Christ. What advice would you give Andy?

When you think about giving away your faith, what kind of mental picture do you get?

→ Thumping some stranger's head with a 50-pound Bible?

- > Telling your friends they are going to hell?
- > Standing on a street corner, preaching at the top of your lungs?
- > Scattering tracts all over the lunchroom?

If the word witnessing conjures up any of the above images, you are probably not too excited about giving away your faith. Maybe you are apathetic. Or scared to death of what your friends will think. But let's look at giving away your faith from another perspective.

Imagine going for a swim with your friends. You are resting on the shore when one of your friends gets a cramp and goes under twice. A life preserver is next to you. What is your reaction? Are you turned off, indifferent, or too scared to take action? Do you stop to wonder if that person would mind if you saved his life? No! Your instincts tell you to do whatever you can to save your friend. Witnessing is sharing the Gospel (the life preserver of Jesus Christ) with your friends to save them from spiritual death and offer them an incredible personal relationship with Jesus now and forever.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE LOST

The Bible describes a person without Jesus Christ as lost (Luke 19:10). Describe an experience in your life when you were lost. How did you feel?



In Acts 3:1-10 we read of a man who symbolizes the lostness of humanity. Read the passage and then note the following realities about his condition.



The Man Was Lame (Acts 3:2)

This man, lame from birth, had tremendous needs. He was lost but did not know it. Even though he was living in the shadow of the temple, he had just enough religion to make him ignorant of the living God.

Have you noticed that most lost people are religious to some extent? They believe in something. They have some kind of god. Some live moral lives. But they are lame — either emotionally, physically, or spiritually — with needs they cannot fill.



Think of someone you know who fits that "religious, but lost" category. Describe him or her below.



The Lame Man Was Limited (Acts 3:3)

All this man knew how to do was beg. He lived every day trying to make just enough money to survive. Because of his limited view of himself, he had no idea who he was or who he could become.

Like this man, many students have limited views of their lives. They get new cars, new stereos, the right clothes, and other material things. Yet they seem to have little concern for God. Sometimes we look at those people and think, I wish I had what they have. We may even be tempted to think they don't need God. But in spite of their substitute gods, they are lost. They will never have life without knowing Jesus Christ and growing in a strong relationship with Him.



Describe one of your friends who has a limited view of himself and his life.



The Lame, Limited Man Was Looking (Acts 3:3-5)

When Peter and John told the lame man to look at them, he "gave them his attention." He expected to receive something. He was looking...searching...hoping for something better around the next corner.



Many people at your school are looking for satisfaction in what they do or what they have. Who is one person you know who is looking for something better? What is he or she like?

Let's explore more deeply what a person without Jesus Christ is like.

- > Spiritual (is crippled by guilt and fears death)
- > Mental (experiences low self-esteem and boredom with life)
- > Emotional (has an aching loneliness and distrusting love)
- > Social (performs for success, tries to prove himself, and puts himself first)

This person has these characteristics not because of what he does, but because of who he is — a person without Jesus Christ in the center of his life. This person may look like a real loser or look like he has everything. He may be "in the pits" morally or he may have high moral standards and attend church regularly. Either way, this person is lame and limited in every area of life.



With this list in mind, look back at the three people you listed above and write a sentence about why each one needs Christ.

Name

Reason

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Picture the three people you listed out on the ocean in a boat with a big hole in it. It's sinking. They need someone to rescue them or they will drown. That's where you come in. Your friends are lost; you have the

help they need — Jesus.



Read Luke 15. Three parables center around one theme. What is the main theme of this chapter?

What did you discover from this passage about Jesus' attitude toward people who are lost?

Jesus has compassion for lost people. He challenges us to desire His compassion and to help people find their way to Him.

LOVING LOST PEOPLE

Now that we understand that people without Christ are lost, and that God wants to give us compassion for them, how can we help them find their way to Christ? Let's see what Peter and John did.



Reread Acts 3:6-10. Peter and John stood ready to help the lame man in any way possible. Peter told him, "What I have I give you" (v.6). What an attitude!

How can you develop an attitude of love toward others like Peter's and John's attitude?

**People don't care
how much you know
until they know
how much you care.**



The Reality of Jesus' Love for You

Love for people occurs when you understand how important Jesus Christ is to you personally. Peter and John had experienced Jesus' love when they were lost and unlovable. Many years after Peter and John saw the lame man in the temple, John wrote: "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with

us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete" (1 John 1:2-4).



Jesus' love was so real for Peter and John. Is Jesus' love real to you? When have you experienced that Jesus loves you even when you are not lovable?



The Conviction That Jesus Is the Ultimate Answer to Life

Are you convinced that people without Jesus Christ are lost — living outside the presence of God now and for eternity?

Michael Green said: "If you believe that outside of Jesus Christ there is no hope, it is impossible to possess an atom of love and kindness without being gripped with the great desire to bring men to this one way of salvation" (*Evangelism in the Early Church*, Eerdmans, p.249).



Read Matthew 25:40. What did Jesus say about a believer's conviction to help lost people? What do you think He meant?



According to Acts 4:10-12, why is there "salvation...in no one else" except Jesus Christ?

When you become convinced of this truth, you will want to give Jesus' love to your friends.



If you do not have this desire to see lost people know Christ, ask yourself why not:

- > Am I disobeying God?
- > Do I have any unconfessed sin?
- > Is anything in my life more important than Jesus?



The Habit of Living in Jesus' Presence Every Day



Read Acts 4:13. How did living in Jesus' presence affect Peter and John?

By living every day in Jesus' presence, you will develop the boldness to tell your friends about Christ.



Think of one creative, practical idea to remind you that you are living in Jesus' presence every moment of the day.

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR LOVING LOST PEOPLE

At this point you might be thinking, *I'm not Peter or John*. You're right, but you are *you*. Since you know Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit, you have what it takes to love lost people. God has already put His love in your heart. Now you need to learn to pass it on to others.

How do you show the love of Christ to a lost person?

If I know the love of Christ...
and if I know a lost person...
then I can express the love
of Christ to that person.



Get to Know Lost People

The lame man could not go to Peter and John, so they went to him.

Lame people will not come to us either. When was the last time someone came up to you and asked you how they could know Jesus. We must go to them. John Stott describes "rabbit-hole Christians" as those who are around non-Christians all day, but never go to them. They pop their heads out of their Christian homes every morning and scurry to class, only to frantically search for Christian friends to sit by. At school they proceed from class to class, then regroup in the cafeteria for what the athletes call the "holy huddle" (the corner for all the Christians). And all the time the Christians are thinking, *What a witness!* At night they go to their all-Christian Bible study where they will probably pray for non-believers. Then they scurry home, glad to be safely through the day without getting their fur ruffled by the world! (*Out of the Salt Shaker*, Rebecca Manley Pippert, InterVarsity Press, p. 124)



Would you describe yourself as a "rabbit-hole Christian"?

In what ways do you "rub shoulders" with lost people?

Name one friend who you think needs to know Jesus Christ.

2

Establish a Common Interest

Peter and John picked up on the lame man's interest in money. They turned that interest into an opportunity to talk about Jesus with him.



Your friend who is lost, what is one of his/her interests?
(Think hobbies, sports, trips, books, other friends, etc.)

3

Meet the Other Person's Need

The lame man thought he wanted money, but he really wanted to walk. Peter and John met that need and healed the lame man.



What do you think is a real need of your lost friend? How can you specifically meet that need?

**The greatest need you
can meet is to lead your
friend to Jesus Christ.**

4

Make Jesus the Issue

Peter and John didn't focus on the lame man or on their healing miracle. Their focus was on Jesus Christ.



How can you make Jesus the issue with your friend?

**If the previous questions were
tough to answer, don't worry. The
rest of this book focuses on specific
ways to love your friends and
lead them to Jesus.**

People

are not abstract souls to be saved. They will not respond unless they know you are genuinely interested in them. People who try to communicate Christ without an attitude of love, present Christianity as something to avoid. But with Jesus' love alive in you, He will come to life to your friends who aren't yet believers.



This week use the five hints in this Bible study to establish a deeper relationship with your unbelieving friend.

1. *Determine to whom you will offer the love of Jesus this week.*
2. *Meet with that person for a fun time together. Hang out over a coke or pizza.*
3. *Discover his needs. Tell him your greatest need, then ask him what his is.*
4. *During your conversation, mention Jesus' name at least one time.*
5. *Pray for him. Ask Jesus to become real to him.*

Complete this session by memorizing John 17:3.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Have a time alone with God every day this week, using the following Bible readings.

Day 1: Acts 1:1-11

Day 2: Acts 1:12-36

Day 3: Acts 2:1-13

Day 4: Acts 2:14-28

Day 5: Acts 2:29-47

Day 6: Acts 3:1-10

Day 7: Acts 3:11-36

2. Complete Session 2.

3. Review all of the verses you have learned if you studied *Following Jesus*, *Spending Time Alone with God*, and *Making Jesus Lord*. Learn them word-perfect to say to a partner next week.

4. Get together with a non-Christian friend and follow the instructions given in this Bible study.

S E S S I O N 2

FROM
FEAR
TO
FAITH



Overcoming fear

Andy sees his friend John every day in English class. Andy wants to tell John about his relationship with Jesus. But Andy is scared. If you were Andy, would you be afraid? Why?

If you are scared to tell others about Christ, should you just forget it?
Can it really be that important?



In 1 John 1:3-4, John, Jesus' disciple, had some good reasons for telling others about Jesus. What were they?

Imagine sitting down to supper. Your mom has fixed thick, juicy steak, homemade bread with butter melted all over it, a delicious chocolate cake for dessert...and cold mashed potatoes! Yuk! Paul Little says, "The Christian life without witnessing is like eating cold mashed potatoes" (*How to Give Away Your Faith*, InterVarsity).

If you don't tell others about Jesus, your Christian life will never "taste" delicious. It will taste like cold mashed potatoes.

Yet knowing that doesn't take away our fears. And our fears tend to paralyze us and cause us to do nothing. How can we overcome our fears?

FEAR CAN BUILD OUR FAITH

Fear is normal. I have talked to people about Jesus Christ for over 30 years, and I still get scared. It's not too hard to converse about sports or school, but people often become uncomfortable when someone begins to discuss issues of deep personal significance.



In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 how did Paul deal with his fears.

What was Paul's problem? (v.3)

Fear is healthy as long as it teaches us to depend on Christ.

What caused Paul to overcome his fear? (v.2)

What did that fear do to Paul's ability to witness for Christ? (v. 4)

That fear caused Paul to respond "not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (v. 5). When we have fear, we can grow in our faith as we confront those fears and trust Christ and His power to overcome them.

FEAR CAN CRIPPLE OUR FAITH

If we are afraid and don't learn to depend on Christ, our fear becomes unhealthy.



Read John 20:19-22. How did fear cripple the faith of the disciples?

Faith can conquer our fears, but fear can cripple our faith.

How did faith conquer the fears of the disciples?

After Jesus was arrested and crucified, the disciples sneaked into a room and hid. Imagine the scene. The doors are shut — locked tight! Every noise from outside causes them to jump. They are jittery. They bite their nails as they talk. They ask each other, "What is going to happen now? How will we get out of the city without being arrested? With all of these stories about Jesus' tomb being empty, the authorities will surely be looking for us."

The disciples had valid reasons for fear. Check out these verses to see why.

Matthew 26:55-56

Luke 9:18-25

John 18:19

SOURCES OF FEAR

The disciples had no intentions of moving out from behind closed doors to talk about Jesus Christ! Fear can be negative, keeping us from taking action. What are some of the things that cause people to be afraid to talk about Jesus Christ?



Guilt

The excuse: "I've got too many things wrong in my life. I'm afraid of being a hypocrite."

The problem: Not seeing ourselves as totally loved, accepted, and forgiven by Jesus. When we don't receive what Jesus did on the cross we will feel guilty. The more guilty we feel the more afraid we are to talk to others about Jesus.

The solution: Accepting God's love and forgiveness.



Read Romans 8:1; 1 John 1:9-10. How can you deal with guilt?



Doubt

The excuse: "I'm afraid to talk about Jesus because I'm not really sure about my relationship with Him."

The problem: Lack of confidence. As long as we doubt our personal relationship with Christ, we will never be confident about sharing Him with others.

The solution: Confidence. The Bible promises that we can have confidence in our relationship to Jesus Christ.



Read 1 John 5:11-13. How can you experience confidence in your relationship with Christ?

3

Possibility of Failure

The excuse: "I'm afraid I will fail. What if the other person doesn't receive Christ?"

The problem: Relying on our ability. When we rely on our own strength, we can be sure that we will fail. That is why we need to depend on God's power. Our responsibility is not to insure that people receive Christ. That's the responsibility of the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility is to faithfully tell others about Him.

The solution: The power of the Holy Spirit.



Read Isaiah 41:10; John 20:22. How can the power of the Holy Spirit help you overcome your fear of failure?

4

Indifference

The excuse: "I don't really care about where people are with God. What's the big deal?"

The problem: Selfish desires. We care more about ourselves than about other people or God's desires. That makes us apathetic toward God and other people.

The solution: God's desires.



In Mark 4:19 Jesus describes the sources of many wrong desires. According to this verse, what do you need to do to remove any apathy that prevents you from sharing Christ?

5

Possibility of Offending Others

The excuse: "I might invade other people's privacy. They probably don't want to know anyway. I don't want to offend anybody."

The problem: Wrong assumptions. We sometimes assume that people are not interested in Jesus Christ. Most people don't enjoy having the

gospel crammed down their throats, but usually people appreciate loving concern and honesty.

If you wake up in the night to discover that your neighbor's house is on fire, what would you do? You wouldn't say, "I don't want to invade his privacy by telling him that his house is on fire." Instead you would run to his house, beat on the door until he answered, and let him know that his house is on fire. Your actions would not be offensive; they would show your genuine concern for the other person.

The solution: Concern.



Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8. What kind of concern does it take to overcome hesitation about offending someone? How can you develop that degree of concern for others?



Lack of Knowledge

The excuse: "What if someone asks a question I can't answer? I don't know what to say."

The problem: Ignorance. How do we overcome our ignorance of God and His Word? When someone asks us a question we can't answer, we should admit it, go find the answer, and get back to the person. That's the best way to learn.

The solution: Discipleship.



Read Acts 2:42 and see how the early church overcame their lack of knowledge. List the specific activities that they enjoyed.



Rejection

The excuse: "I'm afraid of what others will say about me. They might laugh or think I'm weird."

The problem: Sense of inferiority. Surveys have shown that 95 percent of all students don't really like themselves. Among other things, they want to change their appearances, their abilities, and their parents. If a person rejects himself, he will not share his faith. Why would someone who doesn't like himself try to project his way of life on someone else? He won't.

The solution: Security.



Read Colossians 3:3 to discover where our security lies and how we overcome the fear of rejection.

When we receive Christ we are totally accepted by Him as His child. So when we share Christ with others we can't be hurt by their rejection because we know that our acceptance is in Jesus.



Of the previous seven sources of fear, which one causes you the most trouble? Why?

SOURCES OF FAITH

The disciples' fears were conquered through faith.



Reread John 20:19-22. Prior to this time the disciples were scared to death. But in a little over a month they were standing before the rulers who condemned Jesus to death — the same people who were hunting them down. Yet when the disciples stood trial, they proclaimed that Jesus died, rose again, and was alive. They told the court that they could not deny the truth even if the court chose to kill them. (See Acts 4:8-12)

What caused the shift from overpowering fear to confidence, power, boldness, enthusiasm, and joy? Jesus Christ can make that kind of difference in your life too. Check out the following faith sources from John 20:19-22 so you can learn to overcome fear in giving away your faith.

**Our faith
to share
Christ is
fear that
has taken
up the
Cross.**

1

Jesus' Presence

"Jesus came and stood among them" (John 20:19). Since the Resurrection, we have always had Jesus' presence with us.



Read Matthew 28:19-20. How often and how long will Jesus' presence be with us?

2

Jesus' Peace

"Peace be with you," Jesus says (John 20:19). After denying Jesus, the disciples expected Him to accuse them of letting Him down. Instead, Jesus offered them His peace. Why? Because condemnation and guilt trips are not part of the life Jesus wants His followers to live. He provides His peace to overcome anxiety and fear.



Read John 14:27. How does Jesus' promise of peace apply to you?

3

Jesus' Plan

"As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). Jesus' mission is our mission. Just as the Father sent Him into the world to proclaim the gospel, He sends us into our world to do the same.

As we tell others about Jesus, we can expect rejection from some people. In fact, the Greek word for witness (marturia) is the same word we

translate as "martyr," or one who dies for a cause he strongly believes in.



Read Luke 9:23-26. How can you prepare to face rejection?

Even though some people are sure to reject our message, others will respond. We may think that people will not be interested in what we have to say, but most people are eager to know Jesus Christ. We can also count on the fact that God is at work in the lives of other people before we talk to them.



Read Acts 2:37-41. After God had prepared the hearts of the people on the Day of Pentecost, what response did they make to Peter's message?



Jesus' Penetration

Jesus said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). The disciples first knew Jesus externally, but when they received the Holy Spirit they began to know Him internally.

God's Spirit made all the difference, because He penetrated their lives. (See Colossians 1:27-28.)

Not only is Jesus present with us and in us, but also He provides power for us — the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes us bold, gives us wisdom and insight, tears down the other person's defenses and makes that person open to what we share. He can penetrate any barrier.

**God's
desire to
reach
people is
greater
than our
fear.**



Read 1 Corinthians 2:4-5. What difference will God's power make when you express your faith?



Jesus' Position

In referring to Jesus, John repeatedly uses one word that expresses our position with Jesus.



See John 20:18, 25, 28; 21:7, 15, 21, 24

and write the word here.

**A Spirit-filled
Christian will
never find himself
in a one-to-one
witnessing
situation because
Jesus will always
be with him.**

Verbally identifying Jesus Christ as

Lord will establish your position when you share your faith.

**Because
I belong
to Jesus
Christ...**

When your friends ask you to do something wrong, when they ask your advice, or when they just want to talk, bring the lordship of Christ into your response.

For example, a friend says, "Let's go get a six-pack Friday night." Your usual response might be something like, "My mom won't let me." But a better

response is, "I appreciate the invitation, but because I belong to Jesus Christ I don't want to do that. Thanks anyway."

Or a friend in history class whispers, "Let me see your answer to question 12." Your usual response might be, "Well, I shouldn't, but OK." Instead you reply, "Because I belong to Jesus Christ, I can't give you the answer. But I'll be glad to help you study for the next test."

The phrase, "Because I belong to Jesus Christ..." is a personal confession that the Lord Jesus owns you. It is also a bold statement to others whenever you're under pressure, tempted, or afraid. It not only puts you in a position to avoid wrong choices, but also gives a positive witness for Jesus.

When we first mentioned the disciples, they were scared and locked in a room — hiding from anyone who might have thought they were associated with Jesus. But seven weeks later, they had overcome their fear and were boldly talking to people about Jesus Christ.

Right now you may feel like the disciples felt when they sat in the locked room. But the resurrected Christ can give you power to remove your fears just like He did for His first-century followers. To enjoy freedom from your fear and boldness in communicating your faith, take these action steps.



1. Pray this "fear prayer" asking God to overcome the spirit of fear in you:

"Lord Jesus, I bring my fear before You. I honestly admit that I am afraid to talk about You. I confess that my fear stems from:

I want You to tear down the barrier of fear that keeps me from sharing my faith. I desire my life to demonstrate Your Spirit and Your power! In Jesus' name, Amen."

Pray that prayer every day until you finish this book.

2. At school use the phrase:

Because I belong to Jesus Christ...

Use that phrase every time you are asked to do something not honoring to Christ. Team up with someone in your group to help you get started.

Complete this session by memorizing Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Have a time alone with God every day this week, using the

following Bible readings.

Day 1: Acts 4:1-12

Day 2: Acts 4:13-22

Day 3: Acts 4:23-37

Day 4: Acts 5:1-11

Day 5: Acts 5:12-26

Day 6: Acts 5:27-42

Day 7: Acts 6:1-15

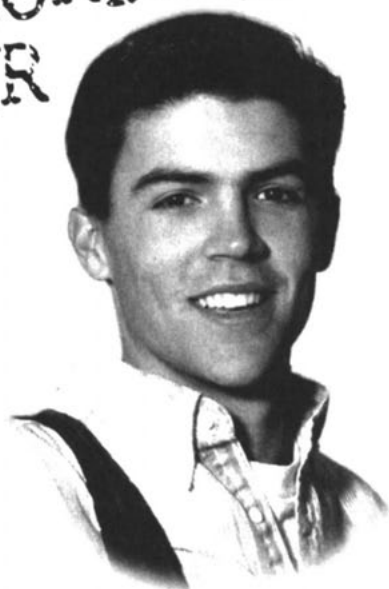
2. Complete Session 3.

3. Remember to pray the "fear prayer" and use the phrase, *"Because I belong to Jesus Christ..."*

4. Review the verses you learned when you studied *Following Jesus* to quote to the group next week.

S E S S I O N 3

EXTRAORDINARY POWER



Boldness in the Spirit

Andy and John talk often after school. John has a lot going for him, yet he is struggling to make sense of life. Andy wants to help, but he feels so inadequate...so ordinary...so powerless.

Andy's feeling is a common one. Many of us think, *I'm just an ordinary person. Who am I to talk about Jesus Christ?* In what ways do you feel like "just an ordinary person?"

We tend to think of the New Testament Christians as superheros with no weaknesses. But they were ordinary people who had problems just like ours. One quality set them apart and enabled them to lead extraordinary

lives — they experienced daily the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit.

THE PROMISE OF POWER

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He told His disciples to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). But He knew they needed His power for the job, so He told them not to leave Jerusalem until they were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4).



According to Acts 1:8, what happens to a person "when the Holy Spirit comes?"

Acts 1:8 is Jesus' promise that unlocks the door to boldly expressing your faith. It ensures you of power to do things beyond the "ordinary." But Jesus gave more than one promise about the Holy Spirit.



Check out the following verses and put each promise in your own words.

Joel 2:28 _____

Mark 1:8 _____

Luke 24:49 _____

Acts 1:5 _____

**Jesus' promise is
that the Holy Spirit
will make you a
powerful witness.**

Notice that when you have the power of the Holy Spirit, your influence becomes greater and greater.



Reread Acts 1:8. Look for a map of the New Testament world. (You may have one in the back of your Bible.) You will discover that Jerusalem was a city within the small province of Judea. Samaria was the section north of Judea. (Most Jews hated Samaritans.) And the "ends of the earth" includes all points beyond. So Jesus wanted His disciples to start where they were, move outward, and eventually make disciples throughout the whole world.



But the geographic regions to which Jesus referred are also a symbol of your personal areas of ministry.

-> "Jerusalem" represents your home. Who needs your witness in your home?

- > "Judea" symbolizes your friends. Which of your friends need your witness?

- > "Samaria" includes your enemies and those who are hardest to love. Who is an enemy who needs your witness?

- > "The ends of the earth" stands for your potential influence to change the entire world. How do you think God might use you to help reach the world?

When you begin to express your faith boldly to your family, your friends, and your enemies, then in time God will use you to make a worldwide impact!

I had the privilege of leading a high school student named Lee to Christ. Immediately he went home and told his parents about his new commitment. During the next year he used his position as editor of the school yearbook to share his faith. Later, as a leader of the Christian movement on his college campus, Lee experienced opposition to his faith from non-believers. But negative newspaper articles didn't stop him. Because he continued to share his faith in his home, with his friends, and even in the face of opposition, God honored Lee's persistent witness. Later, he became the editor of a newspaper that proclaimed Jesus Christ to more college students than any other newspaper in the world. Now, he is editor of the largest Christian magazine in the world. By beginning his witness first in Jerusalem, then moving to Judea and Samaria, God is using Lee to reach the ends of the earth through his witness for Jesus Christ.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED



Acts 2 describes the coming of the Holy Spirit. The disciples were meeting together when "all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4). In your own words, describe the scene detailed in Act 2:1-4.

What did God accomplish through releasing the power of the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:5-11)



Each of the following passages describes how the Holy Spirit helped the disciples communicate their faith. Write what you learn from each passage:

Acts 2:3 _____

Acts 4:8 _____

Acts 4:31 _____

Acts 6:1-6 _____

Acts 7:54-60 _____

Acts 8:14-17 _____

Acts 9:17 _____

Acts 9:31 _____

Acts 10:44-48 _____

Acts 11:22-24 _____

Acts 16:6-10 _____

After examining all that God did in the lives of these ordinary people through the power of the Holy Spirit, don't you think He can give you power to speak to your friends about Jesus?

J.B. Phillips writes:

One great difference between present-day Christianity and that of which we read in these letters [New Testament epistles] is that to us it is primarily a performance; to them it was a real experience. We are apt to reduce the Christian religion to a code or, at best, a rule of heart and life. To these men it is quite plainly the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether. They do not hesitate to describe this as Christ living in them.

(Letters to the Young Churches, Macmillan)

The same first-century power -- the power of the Holy Spirit -- is still available to us today!



THE POWER MADE PERSONAL

Jesus wants us to be filled with the Holy Spirit so we can live for and tell others about Him.

We discussed how to be filled with the Holy Spirit in *Session 7 of Making Jesus Lord*. Review that chapter and summarize what you discover.

- > Remember to pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit daily.
- > Write a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to fill you so that you can have the power to witness for Christ.



Read Galatians 5:22-23. Now examine the results of having the power of the Holy Spirit in you. What qualities do you have when you are "filled with the Spirit?"



Read 1 Thessalonians 1:5. Describe how the Holy Spirit gives your message extraordinary power.

Communicating Jesus isn't easy. While I was in college I tried to talk to

Craig about Jesus. But I made him angry by insensitively pushing too hard with my personal arguments. As a result, he began to avoid my room and we never talked about Christ again.

Later, while I was playing basketball with Athletes In Action, our team leader explained how I could be filled with the Holy Spirit. That was a turning point in my spiritual life. I began to experience a new boldness, compassion, and sensitivity that I didn't have before.

One afternoon, a few days later, a friend and I had three opportunities to talk with athletes from Northern Illinois University. We spent all afternoon talking, listening, and sharing the Gospel. All three received Christ.

The difference in those two experiences was the Holy Spirit.

**When we
are filled
with the
Holy Spirit,
we have the
power to
share Christ.**

WITNESSING IN THE SPIRIT

After the disciples experienced the power of the Holy Spirit, they began to talk about Jesus Christ. In Acts 4 (after healing the lame man) Peter and John, ordinary people, demonstrate five signs of witnessing in the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit. The same five signs will be present when we witness in the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's check them out.

1

Persecution

In Acts 4:18-21, Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin. Why?

Peter tells us that it is honorable to suffer for Christ.



From Peter's writings in 1 Peter 4:12-16, determine how you might be persecuted for sharing Christ.

**When we
witness in
the power
of the Holy
Spirit,
persecution
will follow.**



Someone has asked the question: "If you were arrested as a follower of Jesus Christ, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" In Peter's and John's case, the answer was obviously yes. Would there be enough evidence to convict you?



Pointing to Jesus

Peter and John pointed people to Jesus. They were absolutely convinced that the only way to know God was through Jesus Christ.



Read Acts 4:8-12 and write down some facts they used to point others to Jesus.



What can you learn from the disciples' experience to point your friends at school to Jesus?



Boldness

Peter and John spoke with boldness. They weren't scared or intimidated by the people around them.



Read Acts 4:13. What obstacle did their boldness overcome?



Think of an opportunity to express boldness at school. How could you demonstrate boldness in that situation?



Changed Lives

The religious leaders recognized that Jesus Christ radically influenced Peter and John.



Read again Acts 4:13.



Can your friends see the same kind of radical change in you? In what ways?



Praise to God

Peter and John weren't the only ones around with changed lives. No one could deny that the lame man had been healed, because he was standing there with them (Acts 4:14). Nor could anyone deny that the disciples lacked the ability to perform such a miracle. The lame man's changed life could be credited only to God's power. In spite of the fact that these supernatural events took place through Peter and John, they were quick to give the credit to God.



From Acts 4:21-22, what was the result of expressing their faith?

Isn't it exciting to know that when you witness in the power of the Holy Spirit, the result will be that many people will praise God? At your school

many people want to know Jesus and many Christians want to witness. Your example of witnessing can set in motion one wave of non-Christians coming to know Christ and another wave of Christians who, through your witness, find the boldness to speak up for Christ.



Think back over your life and list everyone whose witness influenced your decision to become a follower of Jesus. Praise God for each person on your list.

Now list some people who can praise God because of your witness to them.

Witnessing does not usually bring about immediate results. There are no guarantees or magic formulas. But when you faithfully witness, then God will faithfully bring about results at the right time.

Soon after I became a believer, I had to give a persuasive speech in my speech class. I decided to talk about how I came to know Christ. I wanted to persuade the class to do the same. I studied hard to prepare for the speech. I presented it with confidence and boldness. But as my professor and fellow students evaluated my speech they cut it to shreds. As we walked out of the classroom, a classmate said, "St. Clair, you really made a *#!% out of yourself this time." As I returned to my room, my confidence and boldness had completely disappeared.

But four years later, my sister met a friend named Clay. She discovered that he had become a Christian leader, and had recently written a book about how Christ had changed his life. She asked how he had come to know Christ.

He answered, "In a speech class in college, your brother Barry gave a talk on how Christ changed his life. His speech started me thinking, and I accepted Christ."

It took four years for me to realize that my speech had led to any positive results. This single incident reminds us that we need to share our faith boldly in the power of the Spirit and leave the results to God.

**Share Christ in the
power of the Holy
Spirit and leave the
results to God.**

This week meet with one other person in your group. Select a mutual friend who is not a believer with whom you can discuss your relationships with Christ. Remember that you are ordinary people with extraordinary power. God will use you beyond your ability. Then...

**MAKING IT
PERSONAL**



1. *Pray together for the friend to whom you will witness.*
2. *Set up a time to meet with your friend.*
3. *Speak to that person boldly about what Jesus Christ means to you.*

Complete this session by memorizing Hebrews 9:27.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue your daily times alone with God, using the following Bible readings.

Day 1: Acts 7:1-16

Day 2: Acts 7:17-34

Day 3: Acts 7:35-53

Day 4: Acts 7:54-8:3

Day 5: Acts 8:4-25

Day 6: Acts 8:26-40

Day 7: Acts 9:1-19a

2. Complete *Session 4*.

3. Carry out your project of talking to a non-believing friend sometime this week.

4. Review the first five memory verses from *Spending Time Alone with God* to quote to the group next week.

S E S S I O N 4

A FRIEND IN NEED



Making friends for Christ

Andy and John have become friends. When school started this year, they didn't even know each other. All they had in common was English class. But somewhere along the way a friendship began.

Probably no two friendships are exactly alike, but they all have some common elements. Think about one friendship you have now. How did you get the friendship started? What did you do to keep it going?

COMPASSION — THE MAIN INGREDIENT

Friendships are often taken for granted. Some people think, "I've got all the friends I need." But they miss the point. Other people need *them*! Jesus wants us to become friends with as many people as we can. We are to seek out people who need friends and make ourselves available to them.



Study Matthew 9:35-38 and record below your insights concerning how Jesus wants us to treat other people.

We are told that Jesus had compassion. Look up the definition of compassion and write it below.



Read Paul's definition of compassion in 1 Corinthians 13. He uses the Greek word *agape*, which is translated as "love." *Agape* love is unconditional.

Only God loves unconditionally. We experience this unconditional love by knowing Jesus Christ. And we can love unconditionally only by allowing the Holy Spirit to love others through us.

How do we respond to God's *agape* love? By loving and obeying Him. Through our love and obedience, God will fill our lives with compassion for others. God's *agape* love is always inside us, even when we do not express it. God wants us to pour it out — not just a drop here and there, but running over like a glass under a wide-open faucet. The more we pour out, the more God will fill us.

God doesn't care if you're the greatest debater in your school, the greatest football player or cheerleader, the greatest musician, or the president of your youth group. None of your abilities matter if you don't love others.



Read 1 Corinthians 13 again and make a list of what love is *not*. After each item you list, honestly ask, *Are these characteristics present in my life?* Write down any specific examples where these have appeared in your life. Then ask God to replace those characteristics with His love.

What love is not	How I demonstrate this characteristic
------------------	---------------------------------------

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

When we encounter lost people with no love the results are never positive.

God wants us to get rid of attitudes that keep us from loving others. Ask Him to begin to remove your wrong attitudes by...

- > *Revealing* how unloving you really are;
- > *Removing* all your negative attitudes, using any means necessary;
- > *Replacing* your unloving attitudes with compassion.



Now read 1 Corinthians 13 once again. This time make an outline of what love is.

What love is

How I demonstrate this characteristic

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

When we allow Jesus' love to flow through us, others become more open to hear what we have to say.



Read 1 Corinthians 13 once more, if you want to make God's love more personal. This time replace every reference about "love" with the word "Jesus." For example: Jesus is patient...Jesus is kind...

Since Jesus lives in us, He has already put those loving qualities inside of us. But we must still learn to trust Him every day to express those qualities through us.

WHY BE A FRIEND?

Jesus saw non-believers as "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd".



In Matthew 9:36 they were lost, wandering around, not knowing where they were going with no true friends to guide them. You probably have friends in the same condition who need to know Jesus Christ.

Why do your non-Christian friends need your friendship so much?
Consider the following reasons.



Friends Are Comforters

Can you think of someone who has problems but doesn't have any friends to share problems with? How do you think that person feels?

Friends comfort others: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, this friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).



Think about these verses and think of some ways you can comfort your non-Christian friends.



Friends Are Counselors

You know people who are headed in the wrong direction. If you were friends, that person would listen to your advice. Being that person's friend gives you the opportunity to listen to problems and then offer advice.

The Bible encourages that kind of openness and honesty between friends. "Better is open rebuke than hidden love" (Proverbs 27:5). That makes you a counselor to your friend.




What are some ways you can help your friend with his or her problem?

How can you help lead your friend closer to God?

Friends Are Challengers

Most of us know people who need to pick up the pace if they are going to reach their full potential. They need to study, to exercise, to use their time better, or get motivated. True friends challenge each other to be their best in every aspect of their lives. The Bible encourages us to sharpen each other. "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

 What is one way you can become a challenger who "sharpens" your non-Christian friend?

MAKING FRIENDS

One of the closest friendships in history was between David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-4). That friendship can help us deepen friendships with people who do not know Christ.

It is surprising that David and Jonathan were friends at all — much less close friends. Jonathan was the son of King Saul, and by all rights should have been in line to inherit the kingdom. Yet God had designated David as the successor to Saul. David was well known for his courage — both as a shepherd and as the slayer of Goliath.

Jonathan was a great warrior who had killed thousands of Philistines. He was courageous. He and his armor-bearer killed 20 men at one time (1 Samuel 14:14). The people loved him. So imagine how he might have felt when he discovered that *David*, not himself, would become the next king.

Let's put the same situation in some settings around you.

- Imagine you've been a cheerleader since the seventh grade. Just before the team trials a new girl moves to town, beats you in

tryouts, and becomes the head cheerleader instead of you.

- > Imagine you've been playing basketball since you were old enough to dribble. You're getting ready to start your senior year when a 6'10" freshman moves to your school and bumps you from the starting team.
- > Imagine you're dating a girl you really care about. But she decides she likes your best friend better, and the two of them begin to date.

In situations like these, you are likely to express more of the "what love is not" characteristics than the "what love is" attitudes. It's difficult to be patient and kind when your hopes are shattered. Yet look at Jonathan and the way he responded with love to his potential enemy, David. Even if we're not naturally attracted to people who are hard to love, God loves them. He wants to make them His friends. He does that by using us to make them our friends.

**God loves people we
find hard to love.**



Look at 1 Samuel 18:1-4 and find four steps Jonathan took to build a deep friendship with his potential enemy, David.



Attraction

"Jonathan became one in spirit with David" (1 Samuel 18:1). Jonathan took the initiative to build the friendship. If you have trouble initiating conversations and friendships, use the following suggestions.

- > Say "Hi." Instead of walking down the hall with your head down and your face toward the lockers, learn to smile and be friendly. It may not be by chance that a person crosses your path. God may want you, in some way, to affect that person's life. By saying "Hi" with a smile, you can open the way to begin a relationship.
- > Remember names. If you don't know a person's name, ask. After

you ask, remember it. Use the name several times in order to make sure that you remember. "Hello, John, how's it going, John?"

- > *Asking questions.* When you can't think of anything to talk about, remember the acrostic FRIEND. The letters stand for:



Learn that acrostic and use it to carry on a conversation simply by asking questions in each of the areas. For example, "Do you know Fred? What position do you play in soccer? How did you get interested in it? What's your favorite subject? Least favorite? Why? What's your biggest struggle? What do you think the future holds for you?"

- > *Give your full attention.* Look them in the eye. Don't look around and act as if you're not interested. Listening to others is not automatic. It takes practice.



What three people would you like to say "Hi" to or carry on a conversation with this week? Write their names in the space below.

Affection

2 "And [Jonathan] loved [David] as himself" (1 Samuel 18:1). David and Jonathan developed such a closeness that Jonathan helped protect David from his own father, Saul.

How can you go about developing an affection for other people — especially those who are not believers?

- > *Discover common goals.* It could be basketball or cross-stitch. If you look you will find something that you have in common.
- > *Build common experiences around those goals.* Do something that allows you to reach your goals together. Get up a basketball game, plan an overnight cross-stitching party. Do what it takes.



For each of the three people that you listed, write down one common goal and experience that you share with that person.



Accountability

"Jonathan made a covenant with David" (1 Samuel 18:3). They were committed to each other. Covenant-making in the Old Testament was serious business. It was unbreakable. In a covenant, people gave each other a gift of great value. That gift expressed commitment and accountability. A covenant friendship was definitely a deeper-than-normal relationship.

How can you develop deeper friendships? With your believing friends? With a non-Christian friend? Discover your friends' needs and desires. Help them fulfill their needs and desires.

Allow your friend to discover and fulfill *your* needs and desires.



For each of the three people you previously listed, write down one specific way you can deepen that friendship.



Agape Love

"Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow, and his belt" (1

Samuel 18:4). These were a symbol of Jonathan's willingness to make personal sacrifices for David. The same was true of David toward Jonathan. They grew in their friendship until it reached a level that they were willing to die for each another.

Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). How can you reach that level of friendship?

- > Go through joy *and* pain together.
- > Share strengths *and* weaknesses with one another.
- > Resolve conflicts when they arise by learning to ask forgiveness.



Think of the three people on your list one more time. Decide one practical way that you can personally sacrifice for each of your friends.

HANDLE WITH PRAYER

The greatest need of non-Christian friends is to know Jesus Christ. You fill that need by praying for them and by sharing the Good News of Christ with them. Your consistent prayers will help break down the resistance of your non-believing friends to Christ.

Here's how you can develop a prayer strategy.



Meet with two friends from your discipleship group or youth group and pray together regularly for your friends who do not know Christ. God's presence will be with you. Jesus promised, "Where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20).

praying for 3 believers times a week non-believing friends.

Write the names of your Christian prayer partners here.

1. Your name _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write the names of your non-believing friends here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Decide when you will pray together and write it here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HERE'S HELP!

You can discover how to do this in detail by looking at *Awesome Way to Pray* at www.reach-out.org or call 1.800.473.9456.

As you pray for a non-Christian friend, realize that on the cross Jesus has already purchased that person as His own possession.

Because of that you can pray...

- > That God will tear down the strongholds that keep your friends from receiving Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).
- > That your friends will repent and believe.
- > That God's purpose will be accomplished in and through your friends' lives.

Through prayer, you can present your friends to God. As you pray for your friends, God will work in their lives to bring them to Himself.

As you pray for
your friends, God
will work in their
lives to bring them
to Himself.

Decide

on which *three* non-Christian friends you will focus your prayers

MAKING IT PERSONAL



1. *Make a list of everyone you would like to see come to know Christ* (relatives, fellow students, or people at your job.) Then determine those whom you consider priorities to reach for Christ. Ask the Lord to speak to you. As you pray, consider these options.

- > Those you think are closest to coming to Christ.

- > Those with whom you have frequent and good communication.
- > Those who have shown spiritual interest.
- > Those who respect you.
- > Those you may have limited time to reach.
- > Those for whom the Holy Spirit has given you a spiritual concern.
- > Those whom God seems to bring across your path repeatedly.

2. *Make a final list of the three people you consider your highest priorities.*
Write their names here:

3. *Pray for these three friends daily.*

4. *Meet with your Christian friends regularly to pray for each other's non-Christian friends.*

5. *Take one specific action to express your friendship to each of your three non-believing friends.*

Complete this session by memorizing Romans 5:8.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue your times alone with God this week, using the following Bible readings:

Day 1: Acts 9:19b-31

Day 2: Acts 9:32-43

Day 3: Acts 10:1-16

Day 4: Acts 10:17-33

Day 5: Acts 10:34-48

Day 6: Acts 11:1-18

Day 7: Acts 11:19-30

2. Complete Session 5.

3. Follow through on your prayers and acts of friendship to your non-believing friends.

4. Review all memory verses you learned when you studied *Following Jesus*, *Spending Time Alone with God*, and *Making Jesus Lord*.

S E S S I O N 5



Starting a conversation

Every day for the past week Andy has been praying for John and asking God to open up an opportunity to talk about Jesus Christ. Today they are riding home after school. Andy feels that this is the opportunity he has waited for, but he has no idea how to get started. How can he bring Christ into the conversation?

Write a few suggestions you might give Andy.

If you worry about how to begin a conversation about Jesus Christ, join the club. I don't know anyone who doesn't have difficulty getting started

in a conversation. Yet others have learned to talk about Jesus Christ and you can too.

THE BEST MODEL

If you decide to become a good athlete, musician, or student, the best way to start is to find a model. Look for a person who excels in that area and discover how that person did it. The best model for learning how to share your faith is Jesus Christ Himself, so let's look at and learn from Him.



Read John 4:1-42, which describes an encounter Jesus had with a Samaritan woman. As you read the passage, jot down some of the barriers Jesus faced and how He overcame them.

BARRIER-BREAKERS

Based on Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well, let's look at some ways He broke down barriers to steer the conversation toward spiritual issues. You can use these barrier-breakers as well.



Relax

Jesus was sitting at the well — tired, casual, and relaxed. It is natural to get uptight when the subject of Jesus comes up, but the tenseness will disappear if you just relax and be yourself. Don't feel as if you have to force the conversation. God wants to use you to spread His message, but it is up to the Holy Spirit to convert your friend. If you have nervous hands, tense shoulders, and a squeaky voice during a conversation, you are likely to throw up before you can even begin to discuss spiritual matters. Even worse, you will make your friend feel nervous.

Write down your thoughts on ways you can relax, be yourself, and enjoy your friend.

2

Ask Questions

When the woman came to draw water, Jesus asked, "Will you give me a drink?" What a great way to begin a conversation. If you're worried about what to say and how to carry on a conversation, just remember to ask questions. And if you come across someone whose only response is yes or no, ask questions that begin with Who? What? Where? When? and Why? These questions will help draw your non-talking friend into the conversation. Use the FRIEND acronym.

**Friends,
Recreation,
Interests,
Education,
Needs, and
Destiny.**



Write some questions you can ask your friend.

3

Listen

Jesus listened intently to the woman. He listened well enough to hear not only what she was saying, but also what she was not saying. We need to learn how to listen with the same sensitivity.

You show an interest in the other person when you listen, instead of interrupting or forcing your own point of view. Listen patiently for needs, fears, problems, and questions. The better you understand the other person, the better your opportunity for talking about Christ.



Do you listen well? List your positive and negative tendencies when it comes to listening to others.



Establish a Common Interest

Jesus told the Samaritan woman He was thirsty. Obviously, the woman had come to the well for water. Jesus was able to start a conversation based on their common interest in water.



How do you identify with your friends? Through sports? Music? Homework? Common friends? Write out some common interests you have with your three non-believing friends.



Find the Nerve

Jesus told the woman to get her husband and come back. She told Him she didn't have a husband. Jesus agreed, but told her she had previously had five husbands and was presently living with a man who was not her husband. Jesus definitely touched a nerve!

Do you remember your first cavity? As the dentist probed, nothing happened at first. But then he got to the infected tooth and WHAMMO — he had to scrape you off the ceiling. He struck a nerve.

Your friends have tender nerves as well. If you can discover what they are, you will have their full attention. Here are some of the more common sensitive "nerves" your friends may have.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| -> parents | -> boyfriend/girlfriend |
| -> self-image | -> grades |
| -> honesty | -> friends/loneliness |
| -> dating/sex | -> suicide |

Remember, these are tender nerves. The more tender the nerve, the more it hurts to have someone touch it. Be sensitive.



What do you think are the most evident exposed nerves of each of your non-believing friends?



Avoid Distractions

In the course of the conversation, the woman brought up social differences, water-drawing instruments, her ancestors, and differences in worship. But Jesus kept coming back to the woman's need to know Him.

After you begin to discuss Jesus, don't get sidetracked on other things. Keep bringing the conversation back to talk about Him.



Jot down some ideas for bringing a conversation back to Christ if it gets off track.



Don't Fold Under Pressure

Jesus didn't stop when the conversation got a little tense, yet He never forced the woman to listen against her will either. In talking to your friends, take the conversation as far as you can toward leading the other person to Christ, but never to the point of rudeness or insensitivity. Just because the other person feels a little uncomfortable doesn't mean it's time to stop the conversation. Keep on communicating. If you remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit, you will know how far to take the conversation.



Creatively think about some clues that will help you know whether or not to stop or to continue a discussion about Jesus.



Talk Creatively

When Jesus talked to the woman at the well, His conversation was natural — and it was creative. He didn't try to memorize it and repeat it to the next person He met. In fact, His conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21) was very different from his talk with the Samaritan woman. You don't need to memorize a “gospel speech” because witnessing is creative.

**Share what you
know and trust the
Holy Spirit to speak
to people.**



Write down what you know so far that you want to communicate about Jesus.

Now think of some ways that you can creatively and naturally express what you know.

BRIDGE-BUILDERS

Jesus didn't just break down barriers; He built bridges to reach other people. At each point in His conversation with the Samaritan woman He built bridges to tell her who He is. In the same way we need to learn to build bridges in our conversations.

Questions to help you become a bridge-builder:

- > What has your life been like up to now? Tell me about yourself. I'm interested in your story.
- > Do you ever think about spiritual things? Rate your spiritual interest on a scale of 1 to 10.
- > Do you mind if I share with you the greatest thing that ever happened to me?
- > Are you a follower of Jesus or are you still on the way?
- > What, if anything, is keeping you from following Jesus?

THE CHALLENGE



John 4:27-42 describes what happened in Jesus' conversation with the woman. Jesus had started a casual discussion that resulted in the woman believing that He was the promised Messiah.

Look at the progression of events:

- > The woman believed in Christ (vv. 28-29).
- > The woman told others, who then believed in Christ (v. 39).
- > Still others came to believe in Christ because of the testimony of the first group of believers (vv. 40-41).

What a challenge! Every time we begin a conversation about Jesus it is possible that multiplied numbers of people will eventually come to Christ. *But it won't happen unless we speak up!*

Notice another important fact. The woman's testimony was instrumental in bringing others to Christ, but she wasn't the reason they believed. All the woman did was tell others what she had seen and heard. God did the rest. John 4:42 quotes the other Samaritans: "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this Man really is the Savior of the world."

Later, Jesus used the incident with the Samaritan woman to teach His disciples an important lesson. The disciples had just observed that harvest time was four months away. Jesus applied that spiritually and told them that *now* is the time for *spiritual* harvest. He said, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).

The Holy Spirit will draw people to Jesus. But God will use you in the process!

Jesus'

statement that the harvest is ripe is true at your school and with your friends.

Jesus also said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send our workers into his harvest field" (Luke 10:2). You are one of those workers. Jesus wants every believer to become a harvester. Jesus wants us to go out every day to see what harvest can be gathered today.

Since Jesus has already told us that the harvest is ready, we don't need to wonder whether or not God wants us to tell our friends about Him. He does. And He doesn't want us to develop friendships only to wait and wait to bring up the Gospel. We need to speak up about Jesus Christ now. In fact, you can start each morning with a prayer such as,

MAKING IT PERSONAL



"Lord if You don't want me to share with someone today, please let me know. Otherwise, I'm going to talk to at least one friend today about You."

God will honor your prayers. He will lead you to people who want to know more about Him. Your own faith will grow as you see God work through you to reach your friends.

**Complete this session by memorizing
I Corinthians 15:3-4.**

**God will
use you to
gather His
harvest.**



ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue your daily times alone with God, using the following readings:

Day 1: Acts 12:1-19

Day 2: Acts 12:20-13:3

Day 3: Acts 13:4-12

Day 4: Acts 13:13-41

Day 5: Acts 13:42-52

Day 6: Acts 14:1-20

Day 7: Acts 14:21-28

2. Complete Session 6.

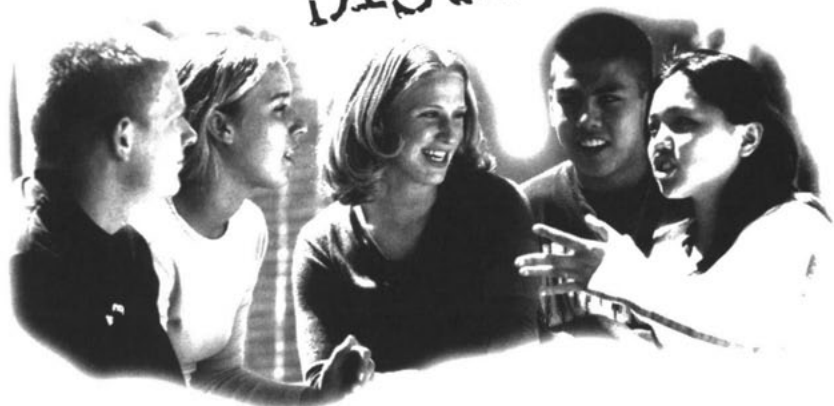
3. Memorize the five questions under the "Bridge-Builders" section of this Bible study.

4. Use those questions to carry on a conversation with one friend whose name you wrote in Session 4. Record the results of your conversation here.

5. Review the memory verses of the first five sessions and be ready to say them to the group next week.

S E S S I O N 6

MY GREAT DISCOVERY



Giving a personal testimony

On the way home from school, Andy and John were discussing last week's football game. Their school won and Andy tried to draw a parallel telling John that Jesus makes us winners in our lives. So Andy said, "John, I don't play football, but Jesus has made me a winner in my life." Now what? Put yourself in Andy's place. What would you say next? How do you express what is on your heart about your relationship to Jesus Christ? Will you mumble, bumble, and stumble around, or will you be able to speak clearly?

Summarize what you would say next.

FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE

Knowing your feelings and experiences is one thing, but telling others about them is another.



In 1 Peter 3:15 the Apostle Peter challenges us, "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."

The most effective tool you have for sharing your faith is, "to give the reason for the hope that you have" — your firsthand experience with Jesus Christ. Jesus' disciples used their personal experiences with Christ to convince others to believe: "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Why do you think John was so intent on telling others about his firsthand experience with Jesus Christ?

One time the Apostle Paul stood before a king named Agrippa. To help Agrippa understand the Gospel, Paul chose to talk about his personal conversion experience.



Read Acts 6:1-23 and outline Paul's testimony below.

Paul's life before he met Christ:

How Paul met Christ:

How Christ changed Paul's life:

Paul had a dramatic conversion experience. His testimony was a thrilling story. Many of us read accounts of people who have overcome drugs, prison, and other major problems through the power of Jesus Christ. And we are tempted to wonder, *Who will be interested in my story?* When our testimonies don't sound dramatic, we often hesitate to share them. But every Christian has a unique story to tell because Jesus Christ has changed each one of us in a unique way. Each of us will find people we can reach with our story more effectively than anyone else can.



Read Mark 5:19-20. After Jesus healed the demon-possessed man He said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you." How did the man respond to Jesus' command and what was the result?

THINKING THROUGH YOUR TESTIMONY

We need to learn to express our experiences with Christ just as Paul and the demon-possessed man expressed theirs. And we can use the same outline to write our testimonies that Paul used in Acts 26.



Answer the following questions to build the outline of your testimony.

Your Life Before You Met Christ

-> What was your one biggest need, struggle, or problem?

Give an example of that need, struggle, problem. How did that struggle affect you?

- > Where did you turn for security, peace of mind, and happiness?
- > In what ways did you find life unsatisfying?

In this first phase of your testimony, try to identify with the other person.

If you grew up in the church, talk about that, but avoid a religious focus. If you met Jesus at an early age then focus on a struggle you had after you came to Christ.

How You Met Christ

- > When did you first hear the Gospel? How were you first exposed to a dynamic, life-changing relationship to Jesus?
- > What were your initial reactions to Jesus Christ?
- > When did you begin to seriously consider following Jesus?
- > What was the turning point?
- > How did you receive Christ? What were the details of that experience?

Mention God's love, your sin, Christ's payment for your sin, and how you received Christ.

How Christ Changed Your Life

- > What changes did you see in your life after becoming a Christian? Parallel these changes with the problems that you expressed in the first part of your testimony. Doing this will cause your testimony to flow smoothly.
- > How has Jesus dealt with your struggles?
- > What changes have other people seen?
- > What does Jesus Christ mean to you now?

People remember specifics. You could say, "Knowing Jesus is wonderful." But *how* is knowing Jesus wonderful? Or you could say, "I have peace." But *in what way* do you have peace? Give specific illustrations from your life to describe how Jesus has changed you. Be as descriptive and specific as possible.

PREPARING YOUR TESTIMONY



After you answer the previous questions, use the following guidelines to communicate more clearly. These ideas will help you write and present your story better.

Be Exciting

Begin with an attention-getting sentence or incident. A statement like, "All of my life I've struggled with loving and being loved," can quickly capture the other person's attention. Then tell your story about that.

Be Thematic

Choose a central theme for your testimony that non-believers can relate to. Love, self-acceptance, dating, parents, popularity, success, or friendship are options. Use the topic that focuses on your biggest struggle.

Be Positive

Some people give testimonies similar to this one: "When I received Christ I lost all my friends. They won't have anything to do with me now that I've given up all worldly things that used to be fun." Who would even want to become a Christian after sharing that "good" news? Emphasize the positive changes that Jesus has made in your life.

Be Conversational

Use your own vocabulary. Don't use statements such as "I viewed the crimson sunset and pondered within my innermost being" (unless you talk that way in real life). Write and speak naturally.

Be Personal

Use "I" and "me", not "you". The use of "you" sounds like you are preaching to your listeners. But first-person accounts are intriguing. People like to hear experiences of others told in the first person.

Be Relevant

Make statements that other people can relate to. Imagine a non-Christian hearing for the first time that, "Being a Christian means to walk an aisle

and get washed in the blood of the Lamb to become justified, sanctified, and glorified. After that, you get out your sword, dive into the Word, and really get a blessing, praise the Lord." Your friend will think you dropped in from Mars for a short visit (hopefully very short). Avoid religious clichés.

Be Graphic

Give enough details to arouse your listeners' interest. Tell the story so your hearers can visualize it. Take them with you into that experience.

Be Illustrative

Think back on the experiences that have impacted your life since you became a believer. Include several of those life-changing experiences in your testimony.

Be Accurate

Don't try to "spice up" your testimony by stretching the truth. If someone discovers you have exaggerated the events of your past, how can you expect him to believe what you are saying about Jesus?

Be Relaxed

Smile and laugh. Make your story fun. It will help you and the other person be more at ease.

Be Biblical

Use one verse that means something to you to tie together your entire testimony. Or use two or three verses when they fit naturally into what you are saying. For example, you might quote Revelation 3:20 and build your testimony around opening the door of your life to Christ. But you distract from your presentation if you use too many verses or try to force all your favorite verses into your testimonies when they don't really fit.

WRITING YOUR TESTIMONY



Use the following steps to write your testimony.

- > Before you write the first word, pray for God's help. Ask Him to give you wisdom and insight as you work on your testimony.
- > Begin to make brief notes on three separate pieces of paper: "My Life Before Christ," "How I Met Christ," and "How Christ Changed My Life."

- > Write a first draft using the notes from the three sheets of paper. Apply all the "Preparing Your Testimony" hints from the preceding section.
- > Meet with your discipleship group leader and revise your draft based on suggested improvements.
- > Condense your testimony so that you can read it in three minutes.
- > Read your testimony to your leader or to another person in your group. Ask for their further suggestions.
- > Rewrite your testimony once again, this time to clarify and state concisely everything that you want to say. Add or remove details where necessary.
- > Outline your presentation on a 3" x 5" card.
- > Give your testimony to your discipleship group leader using only the 3" x 5" card.
- > Practice until you can give your testimony in three minutes without using your notes.

PRESENTING YOUR TESTIMONY



Before you present your testimony, consider the following finishing touches.

- > Rehearse until your testimony becomes natural.
- > Share your story enthusiastically in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- > Smile. Ask the Lord to help you be positive and relaxed.
- > Speak clearly, but naturally. Speak loudly enough to be heard.
- > Avoid nervous habits such as swaying, playing with a pencil, clearing your throat, jingling coins in your pocket, or using phrases like, "you know," "uh," or "ahh."

- > Avoid arguing if someone interrupts and questions you. Answer the question and go on.
- > Don't preach. Remember you are talking with one of your friends.

All these steps may sound like a lot of detail, but once you've put all the facts together in a logical order, these will help your testimony to flow.

Follow

the steps in the Bible study to prepare your testimony. Set aside at least two hours to write it. Go through your testimony several times with a friend in your group. Then memorize the points and illustrations from your 3" x 5" card and present your testimony to your leader. Finally, present your testimony to a non-Christian friend.



Complete this session by memorizing 1 Peter 3:18.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Write, condense, and memorize your testimony.
2. Enjoy your daily times alone with God. Use the following readings:

Day 1: Acts 15:1-11

Day 2: Acts 15:12-29

Day 3: Acts 15:30-41

Day 4: Acts 16:1-15

Day 5: Acts 16:16-34

Day 6: Acts 16:35-40

Day 7: Acts 17:1-15

3. Complete *Session 7*.

4. Give your testimony to at least one person this week.

[Some of the ideas in this Bible study were taken from *The Spirit-filled Christian*, NavPress, 1980 and *How to Make Your Mark*, Campus Crusade for Christ, 1983.]

S E S S I O N 7

THE MESSAGE



Presenting the truth of the Gospel

After a lot of prayer and preparation, Andy has finally overcome his fears and has just given his testimony to John. He concludes by asking, "Can I tell you how you can know Jesus too?"

John says, "Yep." Now what does Andy say?

What would *you* say?

We often hesitate to ask our friends if we can tell them about knowing Jesus Christ because we think they won't be interested. After all:

- > Bob is a super athlete.
- > Janet's life is running smoothly.
- > Lisa goes to church, so she must be a Christian.
- > Kevin is an agnostic.

But take a look at the lives of the following people before they became Christians.

- > Deion Sanders was a famous athlete.
- > Billy Graham was a typical high school student.
- > Stephen Curtis Chapman was a regular church attender.
- > Josh McDowell was an agnostic.

Somewhere along the way, someone "bothered" to tell each of these people the good news about Jesus Christ. The result was that they became believers and began to share their testimonies. Now thousands of other people know Jesus because of them.

Every person has an inner desire to know God personally. Every person — no matter how famous or insignificant he might appear — has a need to hear the truth of the Gospel.

Pascal, a famous French scientist, said, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man that cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator made known through Jesus Christ."

**You are a
person through
whom God wants
to reveal
Himself to many
other people.**

GET INTO THE MESSAGE

Scattered throughout the Book of Acts are clear messages the apostles preached to bring people to Jesus Christ. These messages follow a pattern that repeats itself over and over in the New Testament. Study the following passages



where the Gospel message is proclaimed. You have read them already during recent times alone with God, but now look for the common theme that runs through them all.

-> Acts 2:14-39

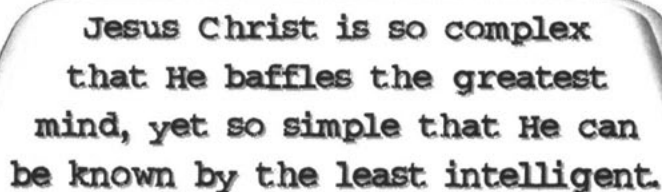
-> Acts 3:11-16

-> Acts 4:8-12

-> Acts 7:51-53

-> Acts 13:26-33

In two words, summarize the message that is expressed over and over again in these passages.



Jesus Christ is so complex
that He baffles the greatest
mind, yet so simple that He can
be known by the least intelligent.

GET READY TO SHARE THE FACTS

It is important for us to learn how to present the Gospel too. People in the 20th century have as great a need as 1st-century people to know that Jesus Christ can change their lives. In the last Bible study you developed a simple presentation of your testimony. Now let's learn a simple approach to presenting the facts of the Gospel to your friends.

Take the Next Step

After your friend has heard your testimony, say, "Can I show you how you can know Jesus Christ personally?"

If your friend still shows interest, you can say, "I'd like to tell you what it

means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Would you mind?"

If he says yes, you may proceed. But if you feel that the person is backing off or has heard all that he can handle for right now, you can say something like, "You know, John, I would like to get back together again soon and talk about this some more. Could we do that?" That leaves the door open to meet with him at a later date and continue to present the Gospel.

Don't let your fear of rejection cause you to back off and prevent you from presenting the Gospel. The other person will tell you whether he wants to do this or not. If he says no, then don't do it. But if he says yes, press on.

Know The Facts

It's important to thoroughly prepare to talk to your friends. When you start sharing one-on-one, you'll be glad you did your homework on these six basic truths of the Gospel.

The Gospel

1. God loves us and created us to know Him.
2. Our sin keeps us from knowing God.
3. We can come to know God only through Jesus Christ.
4. We must receive Jesus Christ into our lives.
5. When we know Jesus, our lives are changed.
6. A relationship with Jesus is characterized by spiritual growth.

USE THE "JESUS: NO EQUAL" BOOKLET

While you are practicing and the first few times you present these six basic truths of the Gospel, read them word for word to your friend. Read with excitement and expression, stopping after each fact to ask, "Does that make sense to you?"

Practice reading them through right now. Go to a place where you won't disturb anyone, and read them as if you were going over it with a non-believing friend.

Jesus: No Equal

Friends. Money. Popularity. Dates. Sports. Sex. School. Parties. Reputation. Clothes. Music. When people pursue these things, they experience disappointment. So where then do we find real meaning in life?

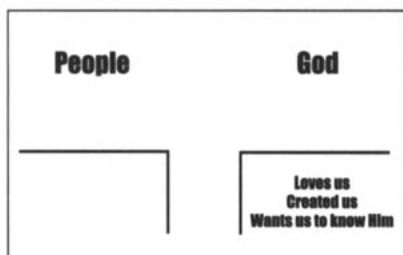
Reality #1 — God Loves Us and Created Us to Know Him

God loves us. Jesus said, "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).

God created us. We read in the Bible, "For You [God] created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb..." (Psalm 139:13).

God wants us to know Him. God's Word tells us, "Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" (John 17:3).

Since Reality #1 is true, why is it that many people don't know God?



DIGGING DEEPER

To help you prepare to effectively communicate Reality #1, study Psalm 139:13-18 and complete this statement: God designed me because...

Study John 3:16 and complete this statement: God loves me because...

Study John 17:3 and complete this statement: God wants me to know Him because...

Reality #2 — Our Sins Keep Us from Knowing God

Some people think of sin as getting drunk, or telling lies. True, but *sin* involves much more.

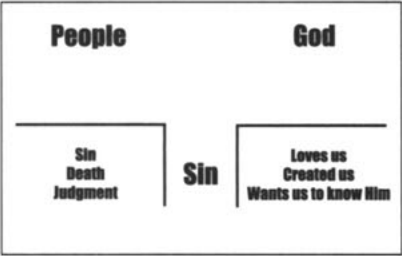
What is sin? Sin is our choice to disobey God and go our own way. "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6).

Who has sinned? Everyone. In the Bible we read, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

What happens when we sin? Sin results in separation from God, leading to death and judgment. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and "Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

As long as sin separates us from God, we cannot know Him.

What, then, is the solution to our separation from God?





DIGGING DEEPER

Using some of the passages listed in Reality #2, write out your definition of sin in one column. In the other column write the results of sin.

Sin	The results of sin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Reality #3 — We Can Know God Only through Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the only solution to our sin problem.

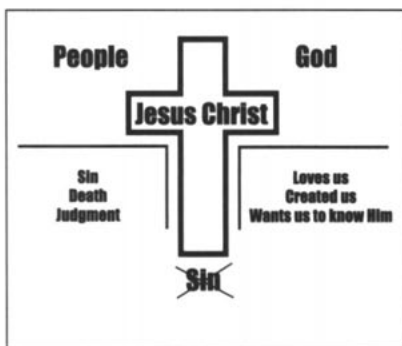
Jesus died for our sin. "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Jesus rose from the dead to give us life. "Just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4).

Jesus opened the way for us to know God. "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God" (1 Peter 3:18).

The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ built the bridge from God to us.

How can we know Jesus Christ personally?



DIGGING DEEPER

Spend some time thinking about the verses in Reality #3. Then list three reasons why Jesus Christ had to die and be raised from the dead so you and your friends can be restored to right relationships with God.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Reality #4 — To Know Jesus We Must Receive Him.

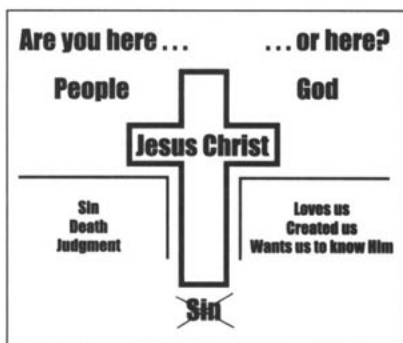
Many people know *about* God, but don't *know* Him personally. The only way to know God personally is to receive Jesus Christ. So how can we receive Him?

Turn away from our sin. Jesus said, "The time has come... Repent and believe the Good News" (Mark 1:15). To repent means to turn away from sin.

Believe in Jesus. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). To believe means to *turn* to Jesus.

Respond to Jesus. Jesus promises, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Which way will you choose?



Is there any good reason why you cannot choose Jesus Christ right now?

You can turn away from your sin and ask Jesus into your life now. You receive Jesus by praying to Him.

Prayer is simply talking to God. He will hear your prayer. Can you say this to God and mean it?

"Dear Jesus, I know that You created me, love me, and want me to know You. My sin has kept me from knowing You. I turn from my sin. I receive Jesus Christ, who died to forgive my sin and rose from the dead to live in me. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Now that you have received Jesus Christ, what happens?



DIGGING DEEPER

Study the verses in Reality #4, then answer the following question.
Why must a person respond to Jesus Christ in order to know God?

Reality #5 — Jesus Changes Our Lives When We Know Him

Receiving Jesus Christ is just the beginning. When He comes into our lives, we experience many changes — some immediately and others gradually.

A new identity. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Forgiveness. "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions [sin and guilt] from us" (Psalm 103:12).

Love. "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

Freedom. "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Confidence. "We have confidence before God because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him" (1 John 3:21-22).

Victory over temptation. "When you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Guidance. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Nothing equals knowing Jesus!

How can we get to know Jesus better?



DIGGING DEEPER

Look up each verse in Reality #5. Think about how Jesus has changed your life in each area. Write a sentence about it, giving a specific illustration.

Reality #6 -- We Mature as We Know Jesus Better

You have now begun a relationship with Jesus. How can you grow in that relationship?

Spend time in prayer daily (Philippians 4:6-7).

_____ I will pray five minutes every day.

Study God's Word daily (2 Timothy 3:16).

_____ I will read one Bible chapter every day, beginning with the Book of Mark.

Submit to God consistently (James 1:22).

_____ I will obey God as I become aware of His instructions. I will get baptized as soon as possible. (Acts 2:38)

Search for a church (Hebrews 10:24-25).

_____ I will go to a church that teaches clearly about Jesus.

Share Jesus with others (Romans 1:16).

_____ I will tell my family and best friend about my new relationship with Jesus Christ this week.

Seek Jesus completely (John 5:22-23).

_____ I will look to Jesus to change my attitudes and actions every day.



DIGGING DEEPER

Read each verse on growth, then describe how you are growing in that area. Give specific examples so you can help your friend.

Go back through the six facts point by point. Write out any questions you think your friend might have.

HERE'S HELP!

This material is from a booklet entitled *Jesus: No Equal*. This booklet is available from Reach Out Youth Solutions, www.reach-out.org or call 1.800.473.9456. Get copies of the booklet to give to your friends as you present the Gospel.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

These six realities can take from 3 to 20 minutes to present. Be flexible as you present the Gospel to your friends. Tailor your approach to the time, specific situation, and the person.

The Holy Spirit will lead you to witness in different ways. Be observant and sensitive as you are relating to your friend. In any type of witnessing situation it is important to pray silently and ask God for guidance and wisdom to communicate the Gospel clearly.

Use these seven hints to communicate the realities in the booklet most clearly.

1. Read the booklet as it is.
2. Hold the booklet so that it can be seen clearly by the other person.
3. Wait to answer questions until the end.
4. Use your finger to point to the paragraph where you are reading.
5. If a person appears disinterested, ask the question, "Does this make sense to you?"
6. If you make a mistake, laugh about it and then keep on going.
7. If your friend has heard the Gospel before, ask that person to explain the Gospel to you. That will help you know if he/she really understands it.

To make this Gospel presentation a part of your life, read it five times. Outline it on paper. Practice the presentation with another Christian at least twice. Finally, read it to at least one non-believer before your next discipleship group meeting.



Complete this session by memorizing Mark 1:15.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Have time alone with God every day this week, using the following Bible readings.

Day 1: Acts 17:16-34

Day 2: Acts 18:1-17

Day 3: Acts 18:18-28

Day 4: Acts 19:1-22

Day 5: Acts 19:23-41

Day 6: Acts 20:1-12

Day 7: Acts 20:13-24

2. Complete *Session 8*.

3. Review your memory verses.

4. Go through the *Jesus: No Equal* booklet. Read it five times. Outline it on paper. Read through it with two Christian friends and read it with one non-Christian friend.

S E S S I O N 8

DRAW
THE
NET



Leading friends to a decision

Andy has talked with John about Jesus Christ. He has given his personal testimony and explained the Gospel. What does Andy do next to give John the best opportunity to respond to Christ?



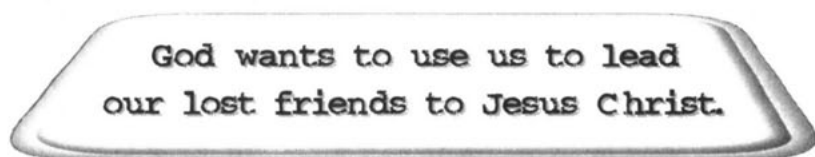
Read Acts 8:26-40 and summarize the passage by answering the following questions.

What was the Ethiopian's problem? (vv. 30-31)

What did he need? (v. 31)

How did Philip meet his need? (v. 35)

Like the Ethiopian, our non-Christian friends often don't understand how they can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. But God used Philip to lead the Ethiopian to Christ.

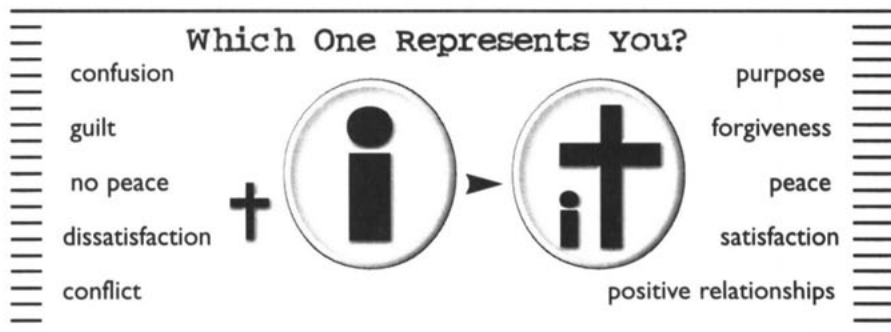


GETTING THE PICTURE

Jesus want us to learn how to fish for people (Matthew 4:19). A good fisherman doesn't just throw out his net and then forget about it. He has to know how to draw the net.

When you share your faith, you can't draw the net before your friends understand the Gospel message. Make sure they grasp the first three realities of the Gospel before you go on to Reality #4.

You can use the following diagram to explain how your friend can have a personal relationship with Christ.



The person on the left is in control of his or her own life. This lifestyle results in sin, death, and judgment.

The figure on the right represents someone whose life is under Jesus Christ's control. Christ is at the center of that life. The person submits to Christ and experiences purpose, forgiveness, peace, satisfaction, and positive relationships. This happens when a person turns from his own way of life and allows Jesus Christ to have control of his life.



Spend a few minutes looking over the diagram and mentally present it to a non-Christian friend. Use the following space for notes or questions.

ASKING FOR A DECISION

Once you have explained the illustration to your friend, be prepared to ask four questions:

1

Which figure better represents your life? If the answer is, "The one on the left," move on to question 2. If the answer is, "The one on the right," say, "Tell me how you asked Jesus into your life."

2

Which figure would you like to represent your life? If the person answers, "The one of the left," go on to question 3. If he says, "The one on the right," ask him to explain how Jesus has changed his life.

3

Do you know of anything that would keep you from turning your life over to Jesus Christ right now? If the answer is no, say, "Let's read this prayer to see if it expresses your desire to receive Christ." If the answer is yes, ask, "What?"



Would you pray this prayer now to receive Jesus Christ? If the answer is yes, encourage your friend to pray out loud with you the prayer from Jesus: *No Equal* (Reality #4). If the answer is no, ask, "Why not?" Then deal with the issues raised by your friend. (See "Handling Tough Questions" below and/or Session 9.) Then ask the question again, "Would you pray this prayer now to receive Jesus Christ?" Let your friend know that this is the critical decision that he must make to follow Jesus.

HANDLING TOUGH QUESTIONS

Many times your friends will respond positively to the Gospel. But sometimes they will have questions or reasons for not receiving Christ. To prepare to handle those questions,



Look up the following verses. Write a clear and simple response to each objection.

Objection #1 — *I tried Christianity before and it didn't work.*

Your response (Romans 10:9-10)

Objection #2 — *I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to hold out.*

Your response (Isaiah 41:10; 2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13)

Objection #3 — *What will my friends think?*

Your response (Galatians 1:10; 1 Peter 4:14-16; 5:10)

Objection #4 — *But I want to enjoy myself.*

Your response (Psalm 16:11; 84:10; John 10:10)

Objection #5 — *God won't forgive me.*

Your response (Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 1:18)

Objection #6 — *I've always tried to be good.*

Your response (Ephesians 2:8-9; James 2:10)

Objection #7 — *I'm as good as or better than most Christians.*

Your response (1 Samuel 16:7; Proverbs 21:2)

Objection #8 — *I would have to give up too much.*

Your response (Mark 8:34-36; Philippians 3:7-8)

Objection #9 — *I will become a Christian later in life, but not now.*

Your response (Proverbs 27:1; 29:1; 2 Corinthians 6:2)

Objection #10 — *I can't believe a loving God would send anyone to hell.*

Your response (Matthew 25:41, 46)

When dealing with these objections, remember:

- > Be polite.
- > Don't argue.
- > Be patient.
- > Keep coming back to the real issue — Jesus Christ.

PRESSING ON

Assuming your friend is still open to discussing Jesus Christ, go back and summarize the Gospel. Have the person respond to each part of the Gospel by having him answer the following questions:

- > Do you realize how much God loves you and wants you to know him?
- > Do you see that your sin has separated you from God?
- > Do you understand why God sent His Son to die for your sins?
- > Do you want to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord?
- > Are you willing to make this a lifelong commitment?
- > Do you want to grow spiritually?

These questions summarize everything that you have said to this point. They draw your friend from a general response to a personal response to Jesus Christ. However, if you are not convinced that he understands the Gospel or is insincere, don't encourage him to pray to receive Christ. If your friend makes a decision too soon without really understanding, he is likely to struggle with this more later. Be sensitive to where your friend is at this point.

FOLLOWING THROUGH

If your friend prays the prayer with you, then take this path in the conversation.

- > Ask, "Where is Jesus Christ right now?" Explain that Christ now lives in his heart. Express your excitement over his decision.
- > Then say, "Let's see what God gives you when you receive Jesus." Read Fact #5 from the *Jesus: No Equal* booklet. Read each quality that Jesus gives, then read the verse. Stop on several of them to tell how Christ has changed your life in that area.
- > Read through each point under Reality #6, looking up the verses and discussing each point. Tell your friend you want to help him grow. Suggest you do the things in Reality #6 together. Invite him to your church.
- > Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving. Have your friend pray again, this time thanking God for coming into his life, forgiving

him for every sin and giving him life in Jesus.

- > Set up a time when you can meet with your friend again to help him grow (see *Bible Study 10*).

Practice

your presentation.



1. *Memorize* the diagram and questions on pages 94 - 96. Explain the illustration to a Christian friend until you feel comfortable with your presentation.
2. *Deal with the tough questions* by meeting with a Christian friend in your group and asking each other tough questions about becoming a Christian. Practice your answer to any questions a non-Christian might ask.
3. *Share your testimony and the Gospel with a friend this week.* Set up the time early.
4. *Pray for your friend* every day before you meet with him.

Complete this session by memorizing John 1:12.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue your daily times alone with God, using the following readings.

Day 1: Acts 20:25-38

Day 2: Acts 21:1-16

Day 3: Acts 21:17-26

Day 4: Acts 21:27-36

Day 5: Acts 21:37-22:21

Day 6: Acts 22:22-30

Day 7: Acts 23:1-11

2. Complete Session 9.

3. Review this chapter until you know from memory the diagrams and the key questions to ask a non-Christian friend. Also be prepared to answer any objections he might present.

4. Give your testimony and go through the *Jesus: No Equal* booklet with one non-Christian friend this week.

S E S S I O N 9

HARD QUESTIONS



Answering questions non-Christians ask

John and Andy are still discussing Christianity. Andy has described his personal experience with Jesus Christ. Together they have read through the booklet explaining the Gospel. But John still has several questions, such as, "How do you know God exists?" Andy feels nervous because he doesn't know the answers or what he should do. What do you think Andy should do?

WHY ANSWER

We'll never know all the answers to everything about God and the Bible, but we do need to know answers to some common questions. We need to think through not only *what* we believe, but also *why* we believe. Providing these answers for those to whom we witness gives them

confidence in the intellectual reliability of the Gospel.

When we know the answers, we will be more confident in our faith, and therefore, bolder witnesses. Also, we will be better equipped to help non-Christians understand Jesus and the impact He can have on their lives.



Read Acts 17:1-4. How did Paul convince people of the truth of Jesus Christ? What lessons can you learn from his experience?

What Paul did

What I can learn

Paul later traveled to Athens and encountered people from a variety of backgrounds.



Read Acts 17:16-21 and describe what happened.

The Epicureans were a group of people who sought happiness in everything they did. Their ultimate goal and top priority was pleasure. The Stoics believed that people should avoid showing any feelings, including any reaction to happiness or distress.

What are some of the philosophies of life that your friends have that differ from yours?



Read Acts 17:22-31. How did Paul reach his reluctant listeners?

What can we learn from Paul that will help us respond effectively to people who think differently than we do?



Read Acts 17:32-34. After Paul spoke, how did the people respond? How do you think people will respond to you?

HOW TO ANSWER

When people ask hard questions, sometimes we don't know how to respond. One option is to argue with them or defend our responses by hitting the other person over the head with a fifty-pound *King James Bible*. Another option is to crawl in a hole. But let's look at some better responses.

- > **Be honest.** Knowing Jesus Christ does not mean you will know the answer to every question asked about Him. If you don't know the answer right away, promise to look it up and get back with the questioner. Then the next time someone asks the same question, you'll know the answer.
- > **Never argue.** You are trying to lead a person to Christ — not win a debate. Jesus reasoned with people about what they believed. He didn't argue and neither should you.

- > *Listen carefully.* You must learn to listen intently to discover the spiritual condition of the other person. Look beyond his questions and find his real needs.
- > *Stay on track.* People often interrupt what you are saying with questions that are off the subject. When this happens, promise to discuss their questions as soon as you finish sharing your thoughts about Jesus Christ.

Deal with sincere questions to clarify confusion the other person might have, but postpone "intellectual" questions that are used as a smoke screen to dodge the real issue of Jesus Christ.

WHAT TO ANSWER



The following questions are those most asked by students about Jesus. If you know the answers to these questions, you will be able to deal with almost any objection that someone will raise when you share your faith. After each question, you will find suggested answers to stimulate your thinking.



Does God Exist?

The arguments for God's existence include:

- > *A universal belief in God.* Sociology and archeology reveal overwhelming evidence of belief in one supreme God. Even the most remote and primitive people worship God in some way. And the majority of people through history have believed in some kind of god or gods.
- > *The law of cause and effect.* This scientific law states that no effect is produced without a cause. Human beings and the universe itself are effects which point to a cause. Behind these "effects" is God Himself, the great "Cause."
- > *The order and design of the universe.* Evidences of design are everywhere. It is as unlikely that the world was created with a coincidental "big bang" as it is that Lincoln's Gettysburg Address could be written by a monkey playing on a computer. (Read Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:19-20.)

- > *The Incarnation.* The invisible God "out there" chose to communicate with people "down here." He did this by sending Jesus Christ in human form to live with us. Suppose that as you begin to pull into your driveway, you see an anthill, but you don't want to hurt the ants. How can you get them to react? You can yell, write them letters, or wave a flag, but you can't communicate with them unless you become an ant. When Jesus came to earth as a Man, He was able to reveal God's love to us. (Read John 1:18 and Hebrews 1:1-2.)
- > *Changed lives today.* How can we explain the dramatic and lasting changes in the lives of followers of Jesus apart from Jesus Christ? Changed lives, including yours, can be the most personal and powerful illustration to someone else of the fact that God exists.



MY ANSWER

Now suppose a friend asks you, "How do you know God exists?" How would you answer?



What If I Don't Believe the Bible?

If a person asks this question, have him clarify it by asking two questions of your own:

- > "Why don't you believe the Bible is God's Word?"
- > "Can you show me any errors in the Bible?"

Take the initiative and show that the Bible is a reliable historical document

that can be trusted. Here are some facts to support your answer:

- > The Bible claims to be God's Word. Over and over again the writers use the phrase "The Lord says..." to indicate that God is the true authority.
- > The Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The word *inspired* means "God-breathed," so every word of it has come from God.
- > The Bible writers were eyewitnesses (2 Peter 1:16). They wrote what they absolutely *knew* to be true.
- > The Bible passes all tests of historical accuracy.

How can a document be determined to be historically accurate? In *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (Here's Life), Josh McDowell cites C. Sander's four tests:

1. *The biographical test.* How reliable are the manuscripts? How much time elapsed between the original and the oldest manuscript that is available?

No one questions the reliability of the documents that record Caesar's Gaelic Wars of 58 B.C. or the writings of Roman historian Tacitus. Yet the earliest manuscripts in existence are dated anywhere from 600 to 1,000 years after the *original* manuscripts were written. In other words, the original manuscript was copied, then the copy was copied, and on and on and on for hundreds of years. Now in existence are only a handful of manuscripts that have been recopied and passed down through centuries. Yet historians trust those manuscripts to be reliable.

Historians haven't found a few manuscripts to support the New Testament — they have found *thousands* of them. Two excellent examples from the fourth century contain the entire New Testament, and others contain portions of the New Testament that were written from A.D. 200-300. One fragment of the book of John is dated as early as A.D. 130. When it comes to historical accuracy, no one can question the validity of the New Testament.

2. *The internal evidence test.* This test has to do with authorship and style

to determine reliability. Can the testimony of the writers be trusted?

The authority of the New Testament writers is proven by the fact that they actually knew Jesus or were eyewitnesses of His works. Since the disciples lived and wrote during a time when their critics were everywhere, those critics would have delighted in exposing them as frauds — especially over the subject of the Resurrection. If the apostles had lied as they wrote the Bible, thousands of living witnesses would have exposed them as frauds and Christianity would have ended before it ever began. The New Testament is reliable because the authors could back up their testimony as eyewitnesses. (See Luke 1:1-3; Acts 2:22; and 1 John 1:3.)

3. *The external evidence test.* External evidence offers support from sources other than the New Testament writers to confirm the reliability of the New Testament. One such source is the writings of the early church fathers. Vast quantities of independent materials exist which quote from the New Testament. Some of the authors include Clement (A.D. 95), Ignatius (A.D. 70-110), Polycarp (A.D. 70-156), and Irenaeus (A.D. 180).

Another powerful source of external evidence is archeology. This science of excavating ancient relics has never failed to authenticate the Bible. According to Nelson Glueck, a renowned Jewish archeologist, "No archeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference."

4. *The test of fulfilled prophecy.* The biblical standard for a true prophet was 100 percent accuracy (Deuteronomy 18:21-22). Many of the Old Testament prophets spoke of the Messiah to come. Over 300 of those prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. According to Peter Stoner (*Science Speaks*, Moody Press), "The chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power" (1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000). Stoner continues to illustrate that 10¹⁷ silver dollars could be stacked two feet deep over the entire state of Texas. Suppose you marked only one of those silver dollars, hid it and blindfolded a volunteer. Your volunteer would have as much chance of choosing the correct silver dollar on a single choice as a person would have of randomly fulfilling only *eight* of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. Yet, Jesus fulfilled not 8 prophecies, but over 300!



MY ANSWER

Now, without looking back, briefly outline how you would respond to a friend who questions the authority of the Bible.



Is Jesus the Only Way to God?

Some people question Christianity's claim to be the only way to God. They point out that Muslims and Jews are sincere in their beliefs. Christians are accused of being narrow-minded on this matter, yet we, as believers, have to let the Bible speak for itself.

- > Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).
- > Peter (and the other apostles) taught that, "Salvation is found in no one else [other than Jesus Christ], for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- > Jesus reveals God to us (John 1:18).
- > Jesus makes it possible to have a personal relationship with the Father (1 Peter 3:18).
- > No other religious leader ever rose from the dead. The graves of Muhammad, Buddha, Confucius, and numerous others who

started religious movements all contain dead bodies. Only Jesus the Christ conquered death, and only through Him is eternal life possible.



MY ANSWER

Now summarize how you would explain to someone that Jesus Christ is the only way to God.



How Could Jesus Have Been Raised from the Dead?

The evidence of Jesus' resurrection is overwhelming. Consider the following proofs:

1. *The witness of scholars.* A simple presentation of the facts of Jesus' death and resurrection has convinced many of the world's wisest people that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead.

One example is Lord Lindhurst, one of the greatest legal authorities in English history. Lindhurst writes, "I know pretty well what evidence is; and I tell you such evidence as that of the Resurrection has never broken down yet" (*Therefore Stand: Christian Apologetics*, Wilbur M. Smith, cited by Josh McDowell in *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Campus Crusade for Christ).

Another example is former Harvard law professor, Simon Greenleaf. Challenged by two students about whether the Resurrection would stand up in a court of law, Greenleaf answered yes. After thorough study, Greenleaf concluded, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most established fact of history" (*Testimony of the Evangelist*, Baker).

2. *The undisturbed graveclothes* (John 20:1-8). When Peter and John saw the burial wrapping of Jesus, they saw the strips of linen but no body. The

head cloth was "folded up by itself." With this evidence in front of them, they "saw and believed."

3. *The empty tomb.* The authorities took great precautions to prevent the disappearance of Jesus' body.

- > Jesus was placed in a new tomb carved out of solid rock (Matthew 27:60).
- > Jesus' body was wrapped in strips of linen and about 75 pounds of burial spices (John 19:39-40).
- > Jesus' tomb was closed with a large stone that weighed two tons (Matthew 27:60).
- > The Jewish leaders made the tomb secure by having Pilate seal the stone (Matthew 27:60). The emperor's official insignia over the tomb meant death to anyone who broke it.
- > The Romans placed a guard around the tomb (Matthew 27:65). This guard consisted of 16 of the best trained soldiers in the world.

Even though Jesus' resurrection required that He overcome the tomb, the wrappings, the spices, the seal, the Jewish leaders, and the Roman guard, nothing is too hard for God. In fact, the only *reasonable* explanation when Jesus' body was missing was that Jesus' Christ had been raised from the dead. No other explanation fits all of the facts.

4. *The ten appearances.* Jesus appeared at least 10 different times in 40 days after His resurrection and was seen by as many as 500 people. He ate fish. He talked. Some of the disciples touched Him. The following verses contain references to Jesus' appearances: Matthew 28:9-10, 16-20; Mark 1:14; Luke 24:13-32, 34, 36-43; John 20:14, 26-29; 21:1-23; 1 Corinthians 15:6-7.

5. *The disciples' changed lives.* While Jesus was alive, His family and friends didn't really understand what He was trying to teach them concerning His death and resurrection. At one point, His family members even thought He was "out of His mind" (Mark 3:20-21). But after the Resurrection, Jesus' followers began to comprehend what had happened. His disciples

began to speak with boldness and power, and His own brother, James, introduced his epistle, "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 1:1).

6. *The changed lives of people through the centuries.* Millions of lives have been changed by Jesus Christ in the nearly 2,000 plus years since His resurrection. And many non-believers, who tend to disregard historical evidence, have come to know Jesus Christ because someone they knew modeled a genuine Christian lifestyle.

**The presence of Jesus Christ
in your life may be the best
evidence of the Resurrection
you can give to a friend.**



MY ANSWER

Now, briefly describe from memory what you would say to someone who wants to know how you can believe that Jesus rose from the dead.



How Can a Good God Send People to Hell?

If a judge sends guilty people to jail, no one accuses him of being a bad judge. He is only doing what is fair. Yet some people think God is bad or mean or unfair because He says that guilty people will be judged and sentenced. When dealing with people who hold these views, help them understand the facts:

-> God is just (Job 34:12). It is impossible for Him to be unfair.

- > God provides enough evidence of Himself through nature for people to respond to Him (Romans 1:19-20).
- > God doesn't hold people accountable for what they don't know. If you have a Bible and the ability to read, you are responsible for obeying God's commands recorded in Scripture. But in remote areas of the world where Bibles (and reading) are unknown, God doesn't judge the people by how well they live by the Ten Commandments. Instead, He makes Himself known through their consciences (Romans 2:12-16).
- > All people have received some degree of light. If you go out at night, you can see a little bit by starlight. You can see better if a full moon is out. But the best light by far is sunlight. People receive different quantities of God's "light," and are expected to respond to the amount of light they have received. When they choose to reject that light, they walk in darkness and judgment (John 3:19-21).
- > No one can be saved apart from Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Jesus is the only way to God.
- > God doesn't *want* to send anyone to hell (2 Peter 3:9). Hell was created for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). God desires that all people repent and live with Him forever.



MY ANSWER

Suppose a friend asks you how a good God can send people to hell. Write your answer below from memory.



Won't I Go to Heaven If I'm Good Enough?

God doesn't grade on a curve! A person's salvation is pass/fail. When a person believes in and receives Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he "passes" and is assured of heaven. If he never makes that decision, it is impossible for him to be "good enough" to get into heaven. He "fails." Consider the following reasoning:

- > It is possible to be a good person without being a Christian. Nicodemus was a highly educated, wealthy, and moral Jewish leader, yet Jesus told him, "You must be born again" (John 3:1-7).
- > A good moral life cannot save anyone. God's standard is sinless perfection. If we are guilty of even one sin, we cannot enter into God's presence on the basis of our "goodness" (James 2:10).
- > Jesus came to earth to die on the cross for our sins. If we had the ability to be good enough to get to heaven (and to God) on our own, then God would not have sacrificed His Son Jesus on the cross. That would have been unnecessary (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

Anyone who thinks he is good enough to get to heaven probably has a problem with pride. Only seeing from God's perspective will change that person's mind (Psalms 10:4).



MY ANSWER

What would you say to someone who asks, "Won't I go to heaven if I'm a good person?"

7

Why Does God Allow Evil and Suffering?

This is a difficult question to answer. Yet if the existence of evil causes us to think there's no God, we have an even greater problem. Dostoevski, the Russian novelist, said, "If there is no God, then anything is permitted." So assuming that God exists, why would He allow evil?

- > The universe that God created was perfect, yet humans were given the freedom to disobey God. Evil was one result of human disobedience (Genesis 3:22).
- > Evil is temporary. Jesus Christ died on the cross to solve the problem of evil (Isaiah 53:4-6). Evil will be a problem only while we are in this world (Revelation 21:4).
- > God's goodness is greater than the evil we face. God is involved in our suffering and hurt. He cares for us (2 Corinthians 1:3-5; 1 Peter 5:7).
- > Evil causes us to see our hopelessness and turn to God.



MY ANSWER

Now, from memory, record how you would explain the presence of evil to a friend who asks.

MAKING IT PERSONAL



After your
friends ask their questions, give them
four questions to think about.

4 Questions

1. *Who is Jesus Christ?* Based on the claims that He made, there are only four options: He was a liar, a lunatic, a legend, or the Lord.
2. *How do you explain Jesus rising from the dead?* The proof of the Resurrection is overwhelming. The burden of proof is on the non-believer to explain it away!
3. *What if you are wrong?* The non-believer loses everything by not giving his life to Jesus Christ.
4. *If you became convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, would you give your life to Him?* Some people use questions to hide their fears about confronting Christ personally. This question cuts through that and gets to their real needs.

**Intellectual arguments do not win
people. It takes the love of Jesus
Christ flowing through you!**

Review the questions in this Bible study several times. Memorize the answers to each question. Add your own points, illustrations, and Scripture references. Meet with a Christian friend and go over each question until each outline is clear in your mind. Then set up a time this

week to talk with a friend who struggles with one of these questions. Face the question head-on. Record the results of your meeting below.

Complete this session by memorizing Revelation 3:20.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Continue your daily times alone with God, using the following readings:

Day 1: Acts 23:12-35

Day 2: Acts 24:1-9

Day 3: Acts 24:10-27

Day 4: Acts 25:1-12

Day 5: Acts 25:13-27

Day 6: Acts 26:1-11

Day 7: Acts 26:12-32

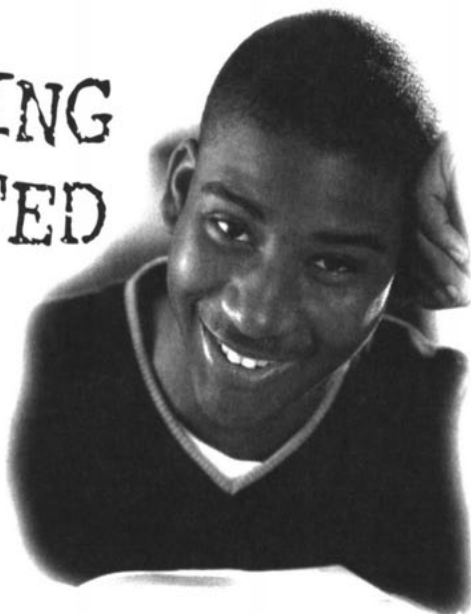
2. Complete *Session 10*.

3. Share your testimony and the Gospel presentation with a non-believing friend this week.

4. Continue to review the questions and answers from this Bible study. Meet with one person who is struggling with one of the questions and talk it through.

S E S S I O N 10

GETTING STARTED



Helping a new Christian grow

After many talks with Andy, John has received Christ and has a strong desire to grow in his relationship with Jesus. Andy is excited. He wants to witness to everyone! So he begins to spend time with another non-Christian friend, leaving John on his own. He doesn't see John much, except casually at school. When Andy and John finally sit down and talk again, Andy discovers that John has lost his excitement for Christ.

What could Andy have done to help John grow as a new believer and stay excited about following Jesus?

HOW DO THEY GROW?

When you lead a friend to Christ, you have the opportunity and the

responsibility to see that your friend grows. As a "spiritual parent," you can't assume that he can feed and care for himself. What is needed by new babies and new believers? Why? (1 Peter 2:2)

New Christians' needs are similar to those of new babies. They need someone to feed them and take care of them. Let's look at some of those needs.



Love

A new Christian needs to experience the security and acceptance that comes from being loved. Genuine love involves more than talking; it includes action as well.



Read 1 John 3:16-18. In what ways can we put our love into action with a new believer?



Food

New believers totally depend on someone else to feed them. No one expects a newborn baby to go to the kitchen and make eggs for breakfast. But sometimes we assume a new Christian knows how to eat spiritual food.



Read 1 Timothy 4:6. What are some ways you can help feed and nourish a new believer?



Response

Young Christians and babies are like sheep. When it comes to protecting themselves, they are helpless.



Read 1 Peter 5:8 and Ephesians 6:10-17. From what do new believers need to be protected? How can they learn to protect themselves?



Training

It's not enough for a parent to love, feed, and protect a baby. The child must be trained.



According to Colossians 2:7, what kind of training do new believers need?

Young Christians need training in many areas including knowledge of Jesus Christ, prayer, Bible study, fellowship, witnessing, and obedience to God. With training in these basic areas, they can become strong in their faith.

WHY ME?

Meeting the needs of new believers in order to help them live for Christ demands a commitment on our part. Consider some good reasons to commit ourselves to such a large responsibility:



If we take part in a spiritual birth then we are responsible for spiritual growth. The Apostle Paul took missionary journeys to preach and establish new churches. But he didn't stop there. He would double back later and check on the growth of the new churches (Acts 14:21-28). Sometimes he couldn't visit in person, so he wrote letters (1 Corinthians 16:21; Galatians 6:11). And Paul always supported his new brothers and sisters in Christ by praying for them (Colossians 1:3-4, 9-12). From these verses, what specific things can you do to follow up a new believer?



As members of the body of Christ all of us have the opportunity to help young believers grow. How did the Apostle Paul describe this responsibility? (Ephesians 4:11-16)



If we love Jesus, we will take care of those who belong to Him. Loving younger Christians gives evidence of our love for Jesus. How did Jesus make that point to Peter? (John 21:15-17)



Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). Making disciples is not the same as making converts. Disciple-making involves "teaching them to obey everything" that Jesus taught. What can we do to help people become consistent followers of Christ according to Matthew 28:18-20?

Our challenge to "present everyone perfect in Christ" (Colossians 1:28) is a great responsibility, but it is also a tremendous privilege. It is exciting to consider how God wants to use us to build up our younger brothers and sisters in Christ.

HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

No more than 48 hours after your friend receives Christ, follow these steps precisely to get your friend "out of the blocks" and on the road to an exciting, growing relationship to Jesus.

1. *Replay the Decision.* Go through the Gospel presentation again. Read the prayer again. Reaffirm that your friend has received Jesus Christ. Pray and thank God again for what Jesus has done.

2. *Offer the Challenge.* Tell him that you want to help him grow in his new relationship with Jesus. Read together Colossians 2:6-7. Talk about growing a garden. "Suppose you have just planted a garden. What would happen if you never watered, weeded, or fertilized it? But with watering, weeding, and fertilizing it will grow. The same is true in your relationship with Christ." Ask him if he will get together with you once or twice a week for the next six weeks to concentrate on his growth in Christ. Tell him you will work together, but that it will take some work on his part.

3. *Be honest.* Explain that you aren't perfect and don't know all of the answers. Look to the Bible for the answers. Make it clear that you will let each other down. You will experience setbacks, but you can't quit loving Jesus or each other.

4. *Use Getting Started.* Order a copy of *Getting Started* for both of you.

Let him know that this is what you will discuss.

Set up a time and a place to meet. Remember to call beforehand to remind him.

Getting Started is available from Reach Out Youth Solutions at
www.reach-out.org or 1-800-473-9456

WHAT DO WE DO?

A new Christian needs support, encouragement, prayer, and the opportunity to discuss his faith with another Christian. Talking about the Bible and answering the questions in *Getting Started* will help your friend grow spiritually. Keep these ideas in mind as you meet:

- > *Tell him what.* Tell him the goal of the session and what he should know when you complete it.
- > *Tell him why.* Give him answers from Scripture and from your experience with Christ.

- > *Show him how.* Show him how you put into practice the practical ideas in *Getting Started*. For example, show him what you do when you read the Bible and pray.
- > *Get him going.* Meet with him to work on the lesson together. Make sure both of you do it separately, then discuss it together.
- > *Pass it on.* Help him to express to others what he is learning about Jesus Christ. Go with him to do that. Before long he will lead others to Christ. This is the kind of spiritual reproduction Jesus had in mind when He gave us the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)!

Follow this format to get the most out of the discussions.

1. *Spend a few minutes catching up on each other's personal lives.*

2. *Go through the session and answer each question.* Look up each Bible verse and talk about it. Make sure you do each session yourself.

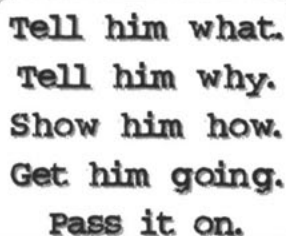
3. *Have him summarize each point in the session.*

4. *Discuss how the session applies to your everyday lives.* Help him be specific in his application.

5. *Go over the memory verse together.* Use these guidelines to help him learn it:

- > Quote the topic and reference at the beginning and end of the verse.
- > Learn one phrase at a time and repeat it until you know it, then say the next phrase.
- > Review the verse every day that week.

6. *Pray for each other.* Ask him what his needs are. Share your needs too.



**Tell him what.
Tell him why.
Show him how.
Get him going.
Pass it on.**

**The way you can
help your new Christian
friend the most is to PRAY!**

- > Pray for his protection from Satan and the world.
- > Pray that he will grow to maturity in Christ.
- > Pray that he will understand each lesson and obey God completely in applying it to his life.

Talk

to your group leader about your friend who is a new believer. If someone you know has not become a believer, ask your discipleship group leader if there is someone else you can help grow in Christ. Consider working with someone who is a year or two younger than you. Write that person's name here:



Ask the person whose name you wrote down to meet with you one-on-one for six weeks to go through *Getting Started*. As you prepare for each session, follow the instructions in this session.



Complete this session by memorizing 2 Corinthians 5:17.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Have a time alone with God every day this week, using the following

Bible readings:

Day 1: Acts 27:1-12

Day 2: Acts 27:13-26

Day 3: Acts 27:27-44

Day 4: Acts 28:1-10

Day 5: Acts 28:11-16

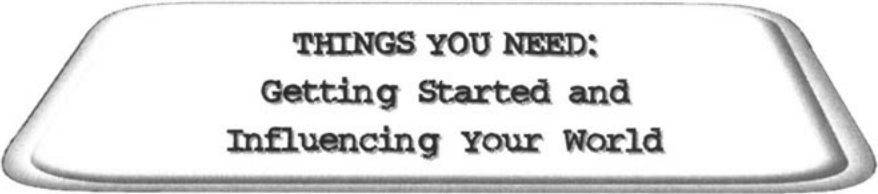
Day 6: Acts 28:17-22

Day 7: Acts 28:23-31

2. Continue to share your testimony and the Gospel presentation every week.

3. Continue to go through *Getting Started* with a new believer, getting him going forward in his relationship with Jesus Christ.

4. Talk to your group leader about continuing in the Moving Toward Maturity series by studying *Influencing Your World*. Order from Reach Out Youth Solutions at www.reach-out.org or call 1-800-473-9456.



THINGS YOU NEED:
Getting Started and
Influencing Your World



BIBLE MEMORY CARDS

Each memory verse on these cards is printed in the *New International Version* (NIV). The verses correspond with the Bible studies in this book.

ALWAYS CARRY THE CARDS WITH YOU.

Use what helps you most:

- > Put a rubber band around them.
- > Carry them in an envelope.
- > Place them in your wallet or pocketbook.
- > Put them on the visor of your car.
- > Carry them in your Bible.
- > Daily review each verse you've learned.
- > Have someone check your progress each week.
- > Apply each verse to your daily life.

1. KNOWING GOD

John 17:3

Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. (NIV)

2. EFFECTS OF SIN

Romans 3:23, 6:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV)

3. JUDGMENT

Hebrews 9:27

Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment. (NIV)

4. GOD'S LOVE

Romans 5:8

God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (NIV)

5. RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance; that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. (NIV)

6. RESULTS OF RESURRECTION

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. (NIV)

7. REPENTANCE

Mark 1:5

"The time has come," he [Jesus] said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the Good News." (NIV)

8. CHILDREN OF GOD

John 1:12

Yet to all who receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. (NIV)

9. JESUS KNOCKS

Revelation 3:20

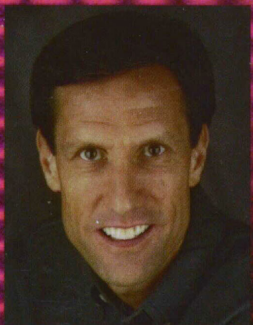
Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with Me. (NIV)

10. NEW CREATION

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (NIV)

Barry St. Clair desires to influence as many teenagers as possible to follow Christ. As the president of Reach Out Youth Solutions, he speaks to thousands of students each year and has written more than 20 books, including the **Moving Toward Maturity** series. Barry travels all over the world equipping youth leaders, parents and students. Through his leadership, thousands of churches have implemented strategies for Jesus-focused youth ministry. Barry played on the #3 basketball team in the country and has run the Boston Marathon. He and his wife, Lawanna, have eight children and live in Atlanta, Georgia.



MOVING TOWARD MATURITY SERIES OVER 1,000,000 BOOKS IN PRINT!

How will your friends find Jesus? Through you! Overcoming the fear of rejection and finding the faith to speak the name of Jesus boldly to your friends is a risk. Taking the risk to communicate Christ will lead you on a wild adventure. This book will help you give away your faith as you:

- See people's needs
- Overcome fear
- Discover boldness
- Make friends for Christ
- Start a conversation
- Tell your story
- Communicate the message
- Lead friends to a decision
- Answer hard questions
- Help a new believer grow

Other books in the Moving Toward Maturity series are:

- *Getting Started*
- *Following Jesus*
- *Spending Time Alone with God*
- *Making Jesus Lord*
- *Influencing Your World*
- *Time Alone with God Notebook*
- *Leader's Guide*