



Disciplemaking 2

Being His Witness

"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples." John 15:8

My name :

My teacher's name:



Disciplmaking 2 Being His Witness

Foreword

It is the official policy of Acts One Eight that this course not be just stored in your bookcase or on your hard drive. You have official permission and the strongest encouragement to apply it to yourself and to multiply it into the lives of others. This course can help you be a witnessing disciple of Jesus Christ ... and assist you in teaching others to be the same. Before teaching this course, review the *Teaching Others* appendix in the *Disciplmaking 1* course.

You may contact John Morris, the author, for an e-mail response to any question about this course. Just send an e-mail to John at questions@MyDisciplemaker.org.

Both *Disciplmaking 1 & 2* are available for free from www.MyDisciplemaker.org. On that site, you can study online ... and/or print your own free copies.

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INTRODUCTION

"And He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men'".
Matthew 4:19

FISHING. Jesus called His first disciples, Simon and Andrew, with the familiar words, *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."* They were fishermen by occupation. They could identify with His analogy of fishing for men. Two important principles appear in His statement. First, to follow Him as a disciple means that you will be fishing for men. Disciples fish ... non-fishers are non-disciples. A non-fishing believer is not a disciple. The second principle is that fishing for men is based on following Him. As you follow Him ... He teaches you to fish for men. Jesus said, *"By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples"* John 15:8. The word translated as *prove* in this verse means *be made to be* or *become*. Therefore, bearing the fruit of new believers is part of the process of becoming His disciple.

FRUIT AND FERTILIZER. Jesus declared in John 15 that His disciples are to bear fruit ... to bear much fruit ... to bear fruit that remains. Jesus said that abiding in Him was the key to bearing fruit. *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing"* John 15:4-5. Abiding results in fruit. If you are not bearing fruit there is something wrong. A spiritually barren, fruitless disciple is a contradiction. Maybe you need some food, some nutrients, some fertilizer around your roots ... that was the point of the parable Jesus told about the barren fig tree, Luke 13:6-9. God may use this course to dig around your roots ... to add the fertilizer you need to bear the fruit that you should. *"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls"* Proverbs 11:30. Are you righteous? Are you wise? Are you winning souls?

THIS COURSE. This course can help you at any stage in your spiritual development. If you are a new believer, you can get started in the right way with this course. If you have been a fruitless believer, it can get you on track to becoming a witnessing disciple. If you are already an effective witness, it can help you become even more effective. *"Every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit"* John 15:2. The object of this course is not that you become a more informed branch ... it is that you bear more fruit.

OUR PRAYER. Our prayer as we proceed in the disciples' life of fishing for men should be, *"God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations"* Psalm 67:1-2.

FIRST CENTURY WITNESSING

Different styles for different people. The book of Acts records the First Century believers' obedience to the Great Commission. They witnessed in many ways ... in many places ... to many varied people ... and most often from the strength of unity with at least one other believer. And in just one generation they spread the Gospel from Judea to Samaria, Galilee, Africa, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and Rome. Studying their example helps us learn to be more effective witnesses throughout our world.

How did they witness? What style or methodology did they use? They used varying methods in varying circumstances. There was no one method used by all. They preached, proclaimed, and testified about the Good News. Sometimes when talking with Jews, they started from Old Testament history to lay a foundation for the message of Christ. To Gentiles in Athens, Paul began by referring to their idols and one of their poets ... then he explained about Christ. In other situations, they gave evidence ... reasoning, proving, persuading, and encouraging. They debated, taught, conversed, and wrote about the Gospel. They spoke boldly in all circumstances ... relying on the Lord. The lesson for us is that we should use a variety of methods based on our gifts and abilities ... adjusted to varying circumstances ... made relevant to the needs and knowledge of the individual or group to whom we are witnessing. The First Century believers witnessed in many ways. We too should use any appropriate means to communicate the Gospel.

Where did they witness? The simple answer to this is in their obedience to Acts 1:8. *"You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."* They began where they were in Jerusalem ... then they took the Gospel into the surrounding area of Judea and Samaria ... and then continued out into the world. They witnessed in cities, in their travels, in the marketplace, and wherever persecution scattered them. They spoke of Christ in their court defense, in prison, and even at an execution. They witnessed in an upper room, at a riverside prayer meeting, in a school, in synagogues, in an open-air theater, and at a meeting of philosophers. The Early Church believers witnessed everywhere that God opened a door, Colossians 4:3, Acts 14:27, 1 Corinthians 16:9, 2 Corinthians 2:12. And when God shut the door, they moved on, Acts 16:6-7. The lesson for us is that we should pray for and seize every opportunity ... being sensitive to God's opening and closing doors. Start where you are. Look for opportunities everywhere ... witness to friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Follow God's leading where you live ... and out into the surrounding areas and into the world.

To whom did they witness? There is also no limiting answer to this question. There is no restrictive pattern found in the book of Acts. They witnessed to men, women, individuals, small groups, and large groups. They spoke of Jesus to Jews, Gentiles, Greeks, Romans, and others. They witnessed to interested people, non-religious people, idol worshippers, and people in false religions. They shared the Good News with Jewish leaders, Roman officials, guards, fellow prisoners, governors, and even a king. The First Century believers witnessed to anyone and everyone. The lesson for us is that we should witness to anyone and everyone. Look at every person as an opportunity ... as a possibility.

Were they alone when they witnessed? The basic pattern of witnessing in Acts follows the Biblical principle that *"two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up"* Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. Witnessing was done solo ... but it seems that more often it was done from the strength of unity with one or more other believers. Examples include Peter and John ... Philip and Simon ... Barnabas and Paul ... Barnabas and John Mark ... Paul, Silas, and Luke ... Silas and Timothy ... Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila ... Paul, Gaius, and Aristarchus ... Paul, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus. Sometimes they were alone as they witnessed. Examples of those who witnessed solo include Peter, Paul, Philip, and Stephen. However, more often they were in pairs or small groups. We see this same pattern in Jesus sending out the twelve in twos, Mark 6:7 ... and in His sending out the seventy in twos, Luke 10:1. The lesson for us is that we should witness both alone and with other like-minded believers. There is strength in witnessing with others. In addition, witnessing as an extension of a band of disciples gives extra strength from additional prayer, encouragement, and accountability.

Summary. The believers of the First Century Church witnessed using many varied methods ... using whatever approach was appropriate. They witnessed everywhere where God opened a door of opportunity. They witnessed to anybody and everybody. They witnessed alone ... but they often witnessed with other believers. Today we should do the same. We should use whatever methodology fits our abilities, gifts, and circumstances. We should actively pursue every opportunity ... going through every open door. We should see anyone and everyone as possibilities for the Gospel.

AN OVERVIEW OF WITNESSING

Witnessing is a process that takes many different external forms. However, there is a common basic pattern behind all the varied external forms. The basic pattern includes:

Preparation. Develop a sufficient spiritual life to produce and sustain your witness. Long-term witnessing is sustained by those who transition from being a believer to being a disciple. Disciples are rooted in (know and live in) the Word, John 8:31-32. *Disciplemaking 1* can help in understanding the Word ... and *Disciplemaking 2* in learning how to witness.

Prayer. There are many things to pray about before, during, and after witnessing. Pray for yourself ... and for your witnessing partner and co-laborers. Pray specifically for those who need Christ. Pray for boldness ... and for open doors.

Partnership. Co-laboring with committed, like-minded believers is very important. Recruit a witnessing partner or team.

Planning. Paul wrote, "*Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity*" Colossians 4:5. Jesus said, "*Be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves*" Matthew 10:16. Use your head ... think ... plan ... review ... strategize.

Penetration. There is no impact without contact. You must make meaningful contact with people if you are going to witness to them. You are the Gospel in flesh and blood. You must penetrate the world around you so that you can tell people about Jesus. Engage people with your life and words.

Practice. Put what you learn in *Disciplemaking 2* into practice. Prove yourself to be a doer of the Word and not merely a hearer, James 1:22-25. Study this course ... applying it as you learn.

Presentation. Presenting the Gospel (including the invitation to receive Christ) is only the tip of the iceberg ... but it is critically important. We have been given the ministry *and* word of reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19. Paul said, "*How shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?*" Romans 10:14. Give the Gospel to lost people ... and invite them to receive Christ as their savior.

Perseverance. Effective witnessing is exciting and joyful ... but it is also hard work. It is the result of God's work through you as you persevere. Witnessing takes effort ... continued effort. It requires perseverance, Luke 8:14-15, 1 Corinthians 15:58.

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WHERE DO I BEGIN?

"But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God." Acts 20:24

PRIORITIZE WITNESSING. The Apostle Paul had a passion to witness. For him, witnessing was a high priority. His heart was broken for lost people ... especially for his lost Jewish kinsmen, Romans 9:1-5. Paul described his priority in Romans 1:14-16 as *"I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."* Jesus' priority was also clear. He came to earth for the specific purpose *"to seek and to save that which was lost"* Luke 19:10. Jesus and Paul saw beyond the temporal to the eternal condition of man. You and I must give witnessing the same high priority that they did. Sharing the Gospel should not be your program ... it should be your passion.

SEE WITNESSING AS A PROCESS. Witnessing is a process. It is a lifestyle based on the Word and lived out in your world. It is not a program. In some circumstances you may be a sower ... in others a waterer ... in others a cultivator ... and in others a harvester, John 4:36-38, 1 Corinthians 3:6-9. You may be a combination of some of these ... or occasionally all. You are more than a postman. You are an ambassador living in a foreign land, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, 1 Peter 2:11. Being an ambassador is living among foreigners as a representative of your King.

SEEK PROGRESS FIRST ... THE PRODUCT SECOND. Desire to win others to Christ. Your specific objective should be their salvation. Paul used the phrase *"that I might win"* five times in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 ... and concluded with the words *"that I may by all means save some"*. You should desire and seek the goal of their salvation. However, you must realize that although it might take only one or two conversations, it might also take weeks, months, or years. Keep your focus on the goal. Witnessing is a process. It is like building a wall one brick at a time. It takes time. But be prepared because you may be called upon to lay the final brick. Seek progress first ... the product will come on God's schedule.

PAY THE PRICE OF OBEDIENCE. Witnessing isn't easy. It is often difficult and costly. Paul paid a high price to spread the Gospel, 2 Corinthians 11:23-27. And Jesus paid the ultimate price on the cross. His suffering and death, motivated by His love for lost people, is your example, John 3:16, 1 Peter 2:20-24. Follow their example. Be willing to live a life of sacrifice to bring the Gospel to lost people. Pay the price!

UNDERSTANDING THE GREAT COMMISSION

Several days before He ascended into Heaven, Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples, Matthew 28:18-20. It was their, and our, commission to take the Gospel to the whole world ... to make disciples ... baptizing and teaching those who come to faith in Him. Then in His very last words before He ascended, He detailed His expansion strategy, Acts 1:8. They were to begin where they were ... then move out into the surrounding areas ... and eventually into the remotest parts of the earth. All who are His disciples are included in this commission through His prayer in John 17:18-21. It is very important for us to understand how His Great Commission and expansion strategy apply to us today. We need to understand them both ... personalize them ... and then apply them as we witness and make disciples.

The Great Commission spoken by Jesus...

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18-20

and personalized for you today...

All heavenly and earthly authority has been given to Jesus. Therefore, based on that authority, go make disciples ... while you are going, make disciples. Baptize them and teach them to obey all that the Word commands (including the Great Commission). And as you go making disciples, Jesus is with you all the way.

The expansion strategy given by Jesus...

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

and personalized for you today...

You received power at the moment you were saved ... and you are empowered as you are filled with the Spirit. You have already been commissioned to be His witnesses. Take His Gospel to your friends, to your acquaintances, and to the strangers in your life. Start witnessing where you are ... to your present contacts. Then progressively move out to other people and other places.

PRAYER AND WITNESSING

Prayer is the starting point of witnessing. It is a non-negotiable, foundational ingredient in the continuing process of helping people come to Christ. Talk to God about people before you talk to people about God. Start with prayer ... or don't start at all. Continue praying as you continue witnessing. Study the prayer guidelines below ... and make them part of your witnessing prayer life.

How to pray...

Pray devotedly and alertly, Colossians 4:2.

Pray continually, frequently, steadily, 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Pray persistently ... keep at it, Luke 11:5-10, 18:1-8.

Whom to pray for...

Pray for those who need Christ, Romans 10:1.

Pray for your witnessing partner(s), Ephesians 6:18-20, 2 Thessalonians 3:1.

Pray that more Christians will witness, Matthew 9:37-38, Luke 10:2.

Pray for your enemies who need Christ, Matthew 5:44.

What to pray for...

Pray for the rapid spreading of His Word, 2 Thessalonians 3:1.

Pray for open doors for the Gospel, Colossians 4:3-4, Acts 14:27.

Pray for wisdom and the words to say, James 1:5, Ephesians 6:18-20.

Pray for clarity in presenting the Gospel, Colossians 4:4.

Pray for boldness, Ephesians 6:18-20, Acts 4:23-31

FOCUSING ON LOST PEOPLE

INSTRUCTIONS: Obeying the Great Commission means focusing your attention, your time, and your life on lost people. This worksheet is designed to help you do that. Follow the directions below to identify specific people that need the Gospel. As you do this, pray for God's wisdom in identifying the lost people in your world.

Pray.

Write names in each of the following categories.

Pray for them by name every day ... pray for their salvation.

Initiate meaningful contact and conversation with them.

Review and modify this list as needed.

Recruit a witnessing partner or partners ... pray daily for each other and each other's list.

FRIENDS (in your Jerusalem)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

ACQUAINTANCES (in your Jerusalem and Samaria)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

STRANGERS (in the remotest part of your world)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

GOSPEL MEMORIZATION VERSES ... NASB

Memorize the following verses in the Bible version you normally use.

- Matthew 5:48 *"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*
- John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*
- Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*
- Romans 3:23 *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*
- Isaiah 59:2 *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God."*
- Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
- 1 Peter 2:24 *"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."*
- John 10:11 *"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."*
- John 14:6 *"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'"*
- John 1:12 *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."*
- Acts 10:43 *"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."*
- John 11:25-26 *"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?'"*



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WHY DON'T I WITNESS?

"Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light." Luke 8:16

SHIRKING OR SHINING? Jesus said, *"While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world"* John 9:5. Did you notice the phrase *"while I am in the world"* in that verse? He also said, *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house"* Matthew 5:14-15. After He ascended, we became the light of the world. However, some Christians cover the light ... hiding it instead of displaying it. God passed the light on to you and to me to shine into the dark, lost world. He hasn't covered you with a basket or hidden you under the bed. If that has happened to you, who did it? Was it you, Satan, the world, or other Christians? This lesson will help you shine instead of shirk. You will learn how to overcome three common causes for not witnessing ... fear, spiritual imbalance, and lack of time. "Now no one

REASONS FOR SHINING. There are many reasons to shine ... reasons to witness. Each should motivate you to share the Gospel. Moreover, as a whole, they should irresistibly compel you to go to the harvest fields. You should witness because...

You are commanded to, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8.

You want to be pleasing to God, 2 Corinthians 5:9.

You want to be like Jesus ... seeking and saving the lost, Luke 19:10.

You want to follow Paul's example, 1 Corinthians 11:1.

It helps you become a disciple, John 15:8.

Jesus is the only way to God, John 14:6.

You should love lost people, Philippians 1:15-17, Romans 9:1-5.

It's too late after you are in Heaven, Luke 16:26-28.

Hell is an awful place, Mark 9:47-48.

Hell is forever, 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

You will be judged, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.

You will be rewarded, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

It results in joy, Luke 15:6-7.

It improves your prayer life, John 15:16.

It helps defeat Satan, Revelation 12:10-11.

REASONS FOR SHIRKING

Reason # 1 ... Fear

"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7

Fear is one of the most common reasons why believers don't witness. It causes many to hesitate. It immobilizes others. It can range from simple anxiety to something close to terror. God's words to Joshua seem to be appropriate for us. *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"* Joshua 1:9. God does not want you to be afraid. He wants you to be courageous.

Identify your fears from the list below ... then apply God's Word to them. Trust God. He is the source of your strength and courage. Fear subsides when you fix your eyes on Him. Common fears include:

Fear of people. This is the reaction that 10 of the 12 spies had when they returned to Kadesh from Canaan. God had commanded them to take the land ... but they were too afraid of the people in the land. Their fear of the people was verbalized as *"And we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight"* Numbers 13:33. Their *grasshopper-vision* came from seeing God as too small ... seeing the enemy as too big ... and seeing themselves as too important in the process. The same is true of believers who are afraid to witness. First, understand that God is all-powerful. No person or circumstance is impossible for God. You have a great God ... have a great faith in Him. Do not be afraid. And don't look at those you witness to as impossible cases. Nothing is impossible for God. Jesus said, *"The things impossible with men are possible with God"* Luke 18:27. Your non-believing friend is no match for God. Moreover, remember that your friend is not the enemy. He or she is a captive of the enemy, 2 Timothy 2:26. And don't think too highly of yourself in the witnessing process. You are not responsible for the results ... God is. You are responsible to witness ... but you are not the Savior. You witness ... but God saves. The Israelites marched around Jericho, blew their trumpets, and shouted ... but God brought the walls down, Joshua 6. It is the same in witnessing. Don't be afraid. God is much bigger than any witnessing obstacle or impossible case. Do your part ... God will do His. Why should you be afraid?

Fear of the unfamiliar. Many people have apprehension about new challenges. Fear of the unfamiliar is common when you first begin to witness. Experience eliminates this fear. And when you timidly press on into the unknown territory of witnessing, remember that *"the Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever"* Psalm 121:7-8. Jesus is with you as you witness. That promise is built into the Great Commission ... as Jesus said, *"I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* Matthew 28:18-20. The Lord is protecting and guarding you. Jesus is with you. Why should you be afraid of the unfamiliar?

Fear of failure. As a right fear, it is based on our concern to be accurate representatives of God. We should help the lost ... not be stumbling blocks to them. If you are afraid to witness because you are unprepared, get prepared, 2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15. However, don't let your lack of preparation stop you from witnessing. While you are studying to be a better witness, don't say more than you know ... don't guess at answers ... and don't make up answers. If you can't answer a non-believer's question, say *I don't know, I'll get an answer for you*. Then do it! Tell them what you do know. Jesus healed a blind man who was then vigorously questioned by non-believing Pharisees. Unable to answer their question, he said, *"I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see"* John 9:25. Don't hesitate to tell how Jesus has changed your life. Fear of failure can also be a wrong fear. It is wrong if it is based on pride. Don't worry about what non-believers will think of you if you can't answer all of their questions and challenges. You are not on trial ... they are. The Gospel is true. You are defending and representing truth. In addition, when you need to get an answer for them, it gives you a chance to show that you care for them. Get the answer and then give it to them. Make a commitment to never be asked the same question twice without knowing the answer.

Fear of discovery. Some believers don't witness because they are afraid that others will discover their ignorance, doubt, or dirt. If you are afraid that someone will discover your ignorance or doubt, then the answer is the same as above ... grow in your knowledge. Maturity produces conviction. Conviction authenticates the Gospel, 1 Thessalonians 1:5. However, it seems more common that people don't witness because they are afraid that others will see the inconsistency between their words and their deeds. They are afraid to be seen as hypocrites. Too many believers tolerate sin in their lives ... and consequently don't witness. However, the cure for hypocrisy is not silence. Don't bring your words down to your deeds. Bring your deeds up to your words ... the words of the Gospel. Purity, not silence, is the cure for hypocrisy. Jesus said, *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"* Matthew 5:16. Witnessing is show *and* tell time. The cure for ignorance and doubt is maturity. The cure for hypocrisy is purity. Take action to eliminate this fear. If fear of discovery is your fear, then pursue maturity and purity.

Fear of rejection and persecution. This is the fear of how others will treat you if you are serious about the Gospel ... and concerned about their eternity. To start with, don't worry about *fitting-in* with the world. Your citizenship is in Heaven ... not here, Philippians 3:20. You are to be in the world, but not of the world, John 17:14-18. Don't let the world squeeze you into its mold, Romans 12:2. You *will* be rejected and persecuted if you are obedient to God, 2 Timothy 3:12. Don't be surprised by it, 1 John 3:13. The world rejected Jesus ... they will treat you in the same way, John 15:18-21. The good news is that rejection and persecution are good for you. You will be blessed because of it, Matthew 5:10-12. It builds your character, James 1:2-4. Moreover, when you suffer for doing right, you find favor with God, 1 Peter 2:20. Rejection and persecution will happen as you witness ... they go with the territory. Don't be surprised. Don't be afraid.

Fear of offending. There can be a right offense or a wrong offense in witnessing. The message of the cross is offensive to some, 1 Peter 2:8. However, the messenger should not be offensive, 1 Corinthians 10:32-33. The offense of the message may legitimately result in rejection and persecution. But if the messenger is rude, crude, and offensive ... the resulting rejection and persecution should be expected as well. That is of no benefit to the messenger, 1 Peter 2:20. You must learn to give the message in a non-offensive way. Your delivery, in life and words, should be a gracious demonstration of the love of God ... then the fear of offending goes away.

Fear of judging. Some Christians fear being judgmental. They think it is wrong to judge someone as a non-believer ... believing that such judgment is sin. This fear comes from a misunderstanding of the Word. Jesus did say, *"Do not judge so that you will not be judged"* Matthew 7:1. Based on that verse some believers refuse to witness because witnessing requires first judging someone to be lost. However, people *are* either saved or lost. It is wrong to assume that everyone is saved ... or that everyone is lost. The Bible instructs us to look at people with spiritual discernment ... not according to the flesh, 2 Corinthians 5:16. God commands us to treat the saved and lost differently. The context of the words of Jesus about judging is about hypocritical judging ... pointing out the speck in someone else's eye, while ignoring the one in your own, Matthew 7:2-6. Jesus instructed us to judge others as we judge ourselves. He continued in verse 6, *"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine"*. How could we obey this without judging that someone is either a dog or not a dog ... a swine or not a swine? Understand the words of Jesus, and the fear of judging disappears.

Fear of Method. Wrong methods of evangelism are offensive. In addition, some right methods of evangelism when misused are offensive. Be afraid of wrong, offensive methods ... discard them ... don't use them. Be afraid of right methods used in wrong ways or in wrong situations. No single method is right for every believer or every non-believer. Be ready to use a variety of right methods ... and use them appropriately based on your gifts and on the needs of those to whom you witness. Then the fear of method disappears. Several right methods are described below ... described in exaggerated and negative ways to emphasize their limitations and potential misuse. However, each of these methods can be good if done appropriately and sensitively.

Secretarial evangelism involves the average believer as no more than an appointment maker ... connecting a non-believer with a professional Christian worker. This may be appropriate in some cases. However, the Great Commission commands us to make disciples ... not appointments.

Aquarium evangelism involves inviting, bringing, or sending non-believers to scheduled meetings of the church. The believers' hope in this is that the professional fisherman will catch their non-believing friends in the stained-glass aquarium. This can work for non-believers who are very interested and ready.

However, most non-believers are not interested in attending religious services or buildings. In general, fishermen go to where the fish are ... fish are seldom brought to the fisherman. God's evangelists are given to evangelize *and* to equip believers for their own work of evangelism, Ephesians 4:11-12. Over-emphasis on evangelists doing all the evangelism effectively steals this ministry from individual believers.

Ambush evangelism is a caricature of confrontational witnessing. It is good to make preemptive strikes with the Gospel. It can be appropriate to share the Gospel with strangers after only a few moments of contact. However, this must be done with skill and sensitivity. Paul did so in Athens. He didn't mug them ... he reasoned *"in the market place every day with those who happened to be present"* Acts 17:17. We should be open to such market-place opportunities given by God. Make preemptive strikes ... but never mug someone with the Gospel.

Safari evangelism involves a trek into hostile territory ... hunting for prey as you go. This caricature of door-to-door visitation illustrates how those visited may feel like prey. Visitation can be good when done with great love and sensitivity.

Landmine evangelism involves leaving printed Gospel messages in public places to catch people unaware. Such depersonalized forms of evangelism include such things as leaving tracts in phone booths and restrooms ... leaving tracts made to look like generous gratuities for waitresses ... and forgetting a book or tract at a neighbor's home. Littering for Jesus may have its place ... but be very careful in your choice of what you leave and where you leave it. Examine it through the eyes of the nonbeliever. Will it look like a booby trap? Will it be hurtful or helpful?

Friendship evangelism can be a sensitive and inoffensive means of evangelism. Sharing the Gospel over bridges of friendship can be very effective. However, it is wrong if it is all friendship and no Gospel. Are you really a friend if you don't tell them about Jesus? In addition, friendship evangelism is wrong if it is at the expense of purity. You do not have to sin to be a friend of sinners.

Applying God's Word to your fears. Fear is very real ... but it dissolves when you trust God and His Word. *"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it"* Luke 11:28. When Jesus faced Satan's temptations in the wilderness, He responded with God's word, Matthew 4:1-11. When you are afraid to witness, identify its source. Then apply God's Word to it. Check off your fears on the next page ... then memorize and meditate on the verses that apply to those fears. *"This is my comfort in my affliction, that Thy word has revived me"* Psalm 119:50.

Fear of people.

"The Lord is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" Psalm 118:6

Fear of the unfamiliar.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Fear of failure.

"The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the one who holds his hand." Psalm 37:23-24

Fear of discovery.

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Fear of rejection and persecution.

"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:10-12

Fear of offending.

"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a citadel." Proverbs 18:19

Fear of judging.

"Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest." John 4:35

Fear of method.

"I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some." 1 Corinthians 9:22

Reason # 2 ... Spiritual imbalance

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit."
John 15:2

Jesus said that bearing fruit is very important. He warned us of the consequence of not bearing fruit. Spiritual sterility can come from spiritual imbalance ... doing good things out of balance. Each and every believer should bear the fruit of new believers. However, imbalance can cause anything from slightly diminished effectiveness to total sterility. Surgery is needed when that happens. Correct spiritual balance is like a three-legged stool. The legs are *spiritual input*, *output to believers*, and *output to non-believers*. If one or two legs are too short or too long, the stool is out of balance. Although any one leg may be short ... it is most often *output to non-believers* that is short or missing. Are any of the following symptoms of imbalance present in your spiritual life?

Symptom #1: Gathering instead of scattering. Gathering is man's natural tendency. Scattering is God's command. Becoming inward is a symptom of spiritual imbalance. Noah and his descendants were commanded to *"be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth"* Genesis 9:1. However, at Babel they wanted to build for themselves a city, a tower, and a name ... *"otherwise we will be scattered"* Genesis 11:4. Commanded to scatter, they sinfully wanted to gather. Even the Early Church needed persuasion to scatter them in obedience to the command of Christ, Acts 1:8 and 8:1. Gathering without scattering is wrong for believers. Hiding in inward, holy huddles is not the goal of Christianity. You're missing the point of the Christian life if your greatest concern is how to decorate your foxhole. You are out of balance if you are not scattering with the Gospel.

Symptom #2: Isolation and malnutrition. The Christian life is not to be lived alone, 2 Timothy 2:22, Hebrews 10:25. Isolation brings weakness. Unity produces strength, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. Being together with other believers, serving and being served, is important. And good teaching (rather than weak or false teaching) is necessary for believers to be all that God wants them to be. You can't give more than you have. If your output exceeds your input, then your upkeep will be your downfall. A balanced believer is not isolated. Are you? A balanced believer is spiritually well fed. Are you?

Symptom #3: Spiritual obesity and atrophy. Too much spiritual food without exercise produces spiritual obesity and atrophy. God feeds us through many sources. Moreover, He expects us to apply what we have learned. We should not sit, soak, and sour. Paraphrasing Hebrews 5:11-14 ... *use it or lose it*. Learning plus time does not equal growth. Learning plus practice plus time does equal growth. Balanced believers are hearers and doers of the Word, Luke 11:28. Balanced believers put what they learn into practice ... serving believers and non-believers. A believer should be spiritually well exercised. Are you?

Achieving spiritual balance

Complete this worksheet to help restore your spiritual balance. And periodically re-evaluate yourself with it to maintain your balance.

1. List your present activities in each category below.
2. Carefully and prayerfully consider if the distribution of those activities represents sufficient balance.
3. Add new activities in any deficient category.
4. Cross off excess activities that contribute to imbalance ... the good can be an enemy of the best. Surgery is painful ... do it anyway.
5. Adjust your overall number of activities to achieve balance.

Spiritual input

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Spiritual output to believers

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Spiritual output to non-believers

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reason # 3 ... Lack of time

"Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:15-16

Time seems too short to accomplish all that we need to do. The clock seems to be our enemy. The day often ends before we finish. In addition, days, weeks, months, and years seem to go by faster each year. But in each day of our lives on earth, each of us is given an equal amount of time. No one gets more time in a day than anyone else does. The real issue is not quantity of time ... it is our stewardship of time. Jesus gave stern warnings about the stewardship of our gifts, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:12-27. Time is one of His most valuable gifts. How are you doing with your stewardship of His gift of time? God has given you all the time you need to do all that He wants you to do. If you are too busy to do all He wants you to do, then you are too busy doing the wrong things ... or too busy doing nothing. Lack of time comes from your own bad priorities, someone else's bad priorities imposed on you, no priorities at all, or simple lack of discipline. Does your life match God's schedule for you?

Everyone seems to have enough time to do what he or she really wants to do ... time to follow his or her passions. Maybe you need to adjust your passions to match God's passion. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Have you? His food was to do the will of the Father. Is yours? We all have a considerable amount of discretionary time each year. If you sleep 8 hours a night and work 40 hours a week (job, school, raising kids, etc.), you will spend 33% of your year sleeping ... that's four months per year. You will also spend 22% of your year working ... a little more than 2 and 1/2 months. During the other 45% of your year you will be awake and not working ... almost 5 and 1/2 months ... about 3,920 hours. That equals ninety-eight 40-hour workweeks each year. That's the equivalent of two full-time jobs. It is the stewardship of those hours that is important. Consider the three types of time usage described below.

A. Little pieces of time add up. A few minutes given to routine activities each day are hardly noticed. However, they become significant when measured over a few months, years, or a lifetime. Two 10-minute coffee or tea breaks a day at work may be needed ... but added up over a year they total 2 full workweeks. A relaxing extra 10 minutes a day in the shower, bathtub, or bed may seem insignificant ... but by age 75 that adds up to six extra months in hot water or between the sheets. Why not insert two-10-minute prayer breaks into your daily schedule ... or pray as you have your coffee or tea. Pray for your friends who need Christ. That would add up to 120 hours of prayer each year. Or maybe you could pray for them during that daily extra 10 minutes in the shower, bathtub, or bed.

B. Wasted time is costly. Obviously, a reasonable amount of time given to relaxation and recreation is of great value. Everyone needs some downtime to stay productive in the uptime. However, many routinely waste significant amounts of time ... thoughtlessly throwing it away.

A certain amount of TV or Internet surfing may be of value. However, one hour of mindless activity a day adds up to the same as two work-months a year. Three hours a day adds up to a half-year of full time work. Is it time for some discipline in your life? Identify and eliminate 3 hours of wasted time a week from your schedule. Replace it with meaningful contact with a non-believer. That will give you 156 hours of witnessing each year.

C. Low utilization wastes time. Many routine activities require little concentration. The time spent on such necessary and unavoidable activities of life can be improved. A 30-minute commute to work (5 days per week) adds up to 240 hours per year. Forty-five minutes of exercise or recreation each day (6 days a week) adds up to another 234 hours a year. And time eating meals adds up to even more ... maybe as much as 526 hours per year. Why not witness, memorize witnessing Scriptures, or study witnessing while commuting? Or why not exercise or recreate with a non-believer? And why not share some meals with those who need to hear the Gospel? Maybe you could do some of each. The three examples in this paragraph add up to 1,000 hours per year ... the equivalent of 25 workweeks. Couldn't you double-utilize *some* of this low utilization time for witnessing? Maximizing just 12.4 % of this time would recapture 124 hours per year for witnessing.

Being a better steward of time. Think of what could happen if you were a better steward of your time. Think about the possible redirected and recaptured time described in A, B, and C above ... 120 hours of prayer for non-believing friends + 156 hours of meaningful time with the lost + 124 hours of memorizing, studying, or witnessing. That totals 400 hours ... the equivalent of 10 weeks of full time work. In five years that would equal one full year of work. Think of it ... that's one full year of witnessing ministry every five years.

Take this challenge very seriously. Review A, B, and C above. Make the effort to be a better steward of your time. You have the time to do your part of the Great Commission. Decide what you will do in each of these categories ... and write your commitments below.

A. Little pieces of time.

B. Wasted time.

C. Low utilization time.

A PERSONAL REVIEW WORKSHEET

1. Which three reasons to shine (page 2-1) are especially meaningful or particularly convicting to you?

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. Which of the fears (pages 2-2 to 2-5) are your fears in witnessing?
Write the appropriate verses (from 2-6) next to them below.

a. The fear of _____.

Verse:

b. The fear of _____.

Verse:

c. The fear of _____.

Verse:

3. Is your life out of balance spiritually?

Which symptom(s) of imbalance (page 2-7) do you experience?

Page 2-12

4. If out of balance, which of the following is weakest in your life ...
spiritual input, spiritual output to believers, or output to non-believers?

What are you going to add to that area?

5. If out of balance, which of the following is overloaded in your life ...
spiritual input, spiritual output to believers, or output to non-believers?

What are you going to eliminate to that area?

6. Do you believe that you have been a good steward of time?

7. What commitments did you make about improving your use of
time (page 2-10)?

a.

b.

c.

8. This lesson can help you be a better witness ... by helping you deal
with fear, spiritual imbalance, and your stewardship of time. But you
need to be more than a hearer ... you need to be a doer. That takes
effort. And it takes prayer. Pray regularly about the commitments you
have made in this lesson. And share your needs in these areas with
your witnessing prayer partner. Pray for one another.



Page 3-1

Disciplmaking 2 Being His Witness

INCARNATING THE GOSPEL

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:1, 14

THE DEFINITION OF INCARNATE. To incarnate is to give substance or bodily form to something. Jesus was the incarnation of God as He took on human, tangible, physical form and dwelt among us. Jesus was the incarnation of God's love to lost people. Today we are the incarnation of His love to lost people. Believers give substance and bodily form to the Gospel. We are the Gospel in flesh and blood ... His good news in human, tangible, physical form.

LOVING LOST PEOPLE. God is our model for loving lost people. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life"* John 3:16. Jesus came to us ... loved us ... and died for us while we were lost. We need to follow God's example of love. We should love lost people. He has given us instructions in how to love the lost, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

JESUS AND PAUL. Jesus taught about how we should incarnate the Gospel in His parables about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the two lost sons. He also demonstrated it in His interactions with lost people. He incarnated the Gospel as He made meaningful contact with the woman at the well in Samaria ... as He made meaningful contact with the tax collector Levi ... and as He made meaningful contact with the businessman Zaccheus. We should follow the example of Jesus. Paul taught about incarnating the light of the Gospel as ambassadors and as clean vessels. Paul also demonstrated incarnation in giving his life to lost people. Paul's life was an expression of God's love for the lost. We should follow his example.

OUR INCARNATION. We are the incarnation of the Gospel in our dark and lost world. Following the instruction of the Word and the examples of Jesus and Paul, we should make meaningful contact with non-believers. Incarnating the Gospel involves taking the Gospel to them ... demonstrating it ... living it ... and offering it. Incarnating the Gospel is not a program ... not a project ... not a gimmick ... and not a harvest mechanism. It is a way of life ... a life of loving the lost ... a life of living for them. Incarnating the Gospel is God's love flowing through us to lost people.

LOVING LOST PEOPLE

God's love is our example. God loves the world ... that's why He sent Jesus to us. Jesus is the one *"who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood"* Revelation 1:5. He loved us *"even when we were dead in our transgressions"* Ephesians 2:5. Jesus loved us and died for us *"while we were helpless ... while we were yet sinners ... while we were enemies"* Romans 5:6-10. He loved us while we were lost. He is our example to follow. To be like God is to love lost people. To be like Jesus is to love lost people.

We must love the lost. The Bible commands, *"Walk in love, just as Christ also loved you"* Ephesians 5:2. Paul wrote, *"Let all that you do be done in love"* 1 Corinthians 16:14. Real love is more than words ... it results in action. It is practical ... not just theoretical. The second greatest commandment is, *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself"* Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, Matthew 22:39, Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:13-14. We are also commanded to love our enemies, Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27,35. Jesus said, *"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same"* Luke 6:32-33. Real love is not just words ... it is deeds. And it is not just deeds ... it is words too.

Instructions for loving the lost. Incarnate the Gospel in love ... not in neutrality ... and not in hostility. God has given us instructions for loving lost people, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. This classic passage on love is sandwiched into three chapters about the use of spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit has given at least one empowering gift to each believer ... given to build up the Body qualitatively and quantitatively. In building up the numbers of people in the Body, these gifts are to be used in witnessing. And love should motivate, control, and be expressed in our witnessing. Learn from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (in bold italics below) ... as it instructs you in how to love those who need the Gospel.

Love is patient - Be willing to take enough time with non-believers. Calmly proceed at their pace. Don't be hasty or impetuous. Recognize and respond to their pace.

love is kind - Be gentle and considerate. Don't be harsh. Be helpful rather than hurtful ... constructive rather than destructive.

and is not jealous - Don't be possessive of your time, life, fellowship in the Body, or the Gospel. Be willing to openly give your life and the Gospel away to the lost. In addition, when appropriate, bring other like-minded believers into your witnessing relationships.

love does not brag - Don't try to impress non-believers by glorifying yourself or fellow believers. *"For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake"* 2 Corinthians 4:5. Tell them *whose* you are ... not *who* you are.

and is not arrogant - Don't have a prideful attitude of superiority and exaggerated self-worth. Don't act holier-than-thou. Don't be condescending in attitude or words.

does not act unbecomingly - Don't be rude, discourteous, or obnoxious. Be a gracious example of the Gospel.

it does not seek its own - Be more concerned for their best interest rather than for your own. Paul wrote, *"Just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved"* 1 Corinthians 10:33.

is not provoked - Don't let yourself be offended. Don't get irritated or angry when a non-believer acts like a non-believer. Have thick skin and a tender heart. They will test you ... try to provoke you. Never strike back. Don't prosecute or condemn. Keep cool. *"He who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding"* Proverbs 17:27.

does not take into account a wrong suffered - Don't keep score of personal hurts. Don't take their criticism or rejection of the Gospel personally. *"Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions"* Proverbs 10:12.

does not rejoice in unrighteousness - Don't join in or approve of their sin, Romans 1:32. Love them ... but not their sin. Remember that you are a witness ... not the judge and jury.

but rejoices with the truth - The Gospel is the word of truth, Colossians 1:5. Joyously share the Gospel ... and rejoice when people come to the knowledge of the truth, John 4:36, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Timothy 2:25.

bears all things - Silently absorb and overlook the wounds they inflict. With sympathy and compassion, get beyond the things in them that you find displeasing and wrong. *"He who conceals a transgression seeks love"* Proverbs 17:9.

believes all things - Believe that God will work in their minds and hearts. Have unquenchable faith that they will come to faith in Christ.

hopes all things - Desire their salvation ... yearn for it. Expect them to come to Christ. Be positive and optimistic.

endures all things - Be steadfast. Persevere. Don't let difficulty, discomfort, or opposition stop you. Press on!

love never fails - Always be motivated by your love for them. *"For the love of Christ controls us"* 2 Corinthians 5:14. Never stop loving them. *"A friend loves at all times"* Proverbs 17:17.

JESUS ... INCARNATING THE GOSPEL

Jesus is God ... is the creator ... is the source of life ... is the true light ... and is the means of salvation, John 1:1-13. He became flesh and came to us, John 1:14. Jesus came to us as God in human form. He was God's ultimate communication to mankind, Hebrews 1:1-2. He was God incarnate ... in flesh and blood. As believers, we should be like Jesus. We should incarnate the Gospel in our world.

The teaching of Jesus. Jesus spent time with the people who needed Him. The Savior spent time with the lost. The Great Physician spent time with those dying from sin. Frequently Jesus was criticized for His contact with sinners. Luke 15 contains three parables ... His response to some of His critics. These parables can help us incarnate the Gospel. Consider the context of Luke 15 (the first two verses) ... then dig through the three parables for lessons for your incarnation of the Gospel. Write your notes in the margin along the side of the parables below.

His conduct ... and the criticism.

"Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.

The Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" Luke 15:1-2

The lost sheep parable, verses 3-7.

"So He told them this parable, saying, What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance." Luke 15:3-7

The lost coin parable.

"Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?

When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!' In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Luke 15:8-10

The two lost sons parable.

"And He said, 'A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me." So he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.'" Luke 15:11-16

"But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" So he got up and came to his father.'" Luke 15:17-20

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate." Luke 15:20-24

"Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'" Luke 15:25-30

"And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'" Luke 15:31-32

The example of Jesus. He came *"to seek and to save that which was lost"* Luke 19:10. His incarnation of God's love earned Him the label *"friend of sinners"* Matthew 11:19, Luke 7:34-35. Could you be called a *friend of sinners*? Understand His teaching ... and follow His example. Dig into your Bible ... read each of the three accounts mentioned below. Look for the facts listed for each ... and put notes in the margin below.

Jesus and the woman at the well, John 4:4-42.

He went through Samaria.

He made contact with a Samaritan woman at the well.

He did the unusual ... asking for a drink.

He talked with her.

He spoke to her need.

He refused to argue about the place of worship.

He revealed Himself to be the Messiah.

She believed.

She brought others to Jesus.

Jesus and the tax collector Levi, Luke 5:27-32, Matthew 9:9-13.

He walked by the tax office.

He made contact with Levi.

He called Levi to follow Him.

Jesus went to Levi's home.

Levi brought his friends to Jesus.

Religious leaders criticized His sinner-contact.

Jesus answered the critics.

Levi became a follower of Jesus.

Note: Levi became known as Matthew ... the Gospel author.

Jesus and the businessman Zaccheus, Luke 19:1-10.

Jesus walked through the streets of Jericho.

He saw the interest in Zaccheus.

He made contact with him.

He went to his home.

Jesus was criticized for His sinner-contact.

Zaccheus became a believer.

Jesus explained the purpose of His incarnation.

PAUL ... INCARNATING THE GOSPEL

Paul incarnated the Gospel. He not only gave the words of the Gospel to lost people, he also gave his life to them. He described himself as *"being poured out as a drink offering"* Philippians 2:17, 2 Timothy 4:6. He described his attitude and actions with the words, *"I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls"* 2 Corinthians 12:15. He taught about incarnating the Gospel ... and he lived it.

The teaching of Paul. Paul gave us clear teaching on incarnating the Gospel. Dig into each of the passages below for the key thoughts of his teaching on this. Write your notes in the margin below.

Bringing light to the blind.

"Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves." 2 Corinthians 4:1-7

Ambassadors of His love.

"For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:14-20

Clean and useful vessels.

"Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, 'Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.'

Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."
2 Timothy 2:19-21

The example of Paul. He wrote, *"I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me"* 1 Corinthians 4:16. Paul also wrote, *"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ"* 1 Corinthians 11:1. Jesus incarnated the Gospel ... and Paul followed His example. Paul incarnated the Gospel ... you should follow his example. Dig into the Biblical texts given below to learn from the details of Paul's examples. Add some notes in the margin.

Life lived in contact with lost people.

"For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake." 1 Thessalonians 1:5

Their Gospel was more than words.

There was power in their Gospel.

It was Holy Spirit delivered.

It was given with full conviction.

Their lives proved their Gospel.

They were among the people.

Love as the motivation.

"But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us."

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

They lived among them.

They were tender as a nursing mother.

They had fond affection for them.

They gave the Gospel to them.

They gave their lives to them.

Their love grew.

Being a chameleon.

"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it."

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Paul made himself as a slave to the lost.

To Jews ... he was a Jew.

To Gentiles converted to Judaism ... he was like them.

To Gentiles (not under law) ... he was as a Gentile.

He stayed pure ... under the law of Christ.

To the weak ... he acted weak.

He became anybody ... to win anybody.

He did it all for the Gospel.

Paul wrote five times that his goal was to win the lost.

He used *all* means to save *some*.

Note: Paul followed the example of Jesus ... who was a chameleon. Jesus, being God, took on human form to bring the Gospel to us, Philippians 2:5-8.

YOUR INCARNATING THE GOSPEL

Every believer has regular contacts with non-believers ... with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Seek opportunities with those in all three categories. Make preemptive strikes with the Gospel. Build bridges of friendship with lost people. Be creative ... make meaningful contact with them. Find common ground with them ... ground on which you are both comfortable. Share your life and the Gospel with them. Take the initiative to spend time with them. Some common ground opportunities include:

Eating together

- Breakfast or brunch
- Lunch or dinner
- Dessert
- Holiday meals
- International dinners
- Picnics or barbecues
- Neighborhood dinners
- Relief meals in times of illness or need

Regular activities

- Co-operative baby-sitting
- Clubs
- Commuting
- Exercise
- Music
- Politics
- Recreation (museums, aquariums, zoos, theaters, hikes)
- School organizations
- Shared chores (house, lawn, cars, gardening)
- Shopping
- Sports (lessons, playing, coaching, watching)
- Volunteerism

Celebrations

- Anniversaries
- Birthdays
- Graduations
- Holidays
- Sports Championships

Some believers have fallen into the ingathering, holy-huddling trap of having only Christian friends. If that has happened to you, pray and take action. Program your life to make new acquaintances. Work on reactivating old friendships ... and turn some acquaintances into friends. Meet new people ... turn some strangers into acquaintances. Make meaningful contact with non-believers and with their friends. This will take some effort if you have been isolated instead of insulated. Break out of the holy-huddle mentality ... or never let yourself develop it. Remember that you can't shoot the moose from the lodge.

INSULATED OR ISOLATED?

"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord, 'and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you.'"

2 Corinthians 6:17

Be a friend of sinners. Jesus was a friend of sinners ... follow His example. Follow the example of Paul making meaningful contact with lost people. However, don't sin to be a friend of sinners. Your personal purity authenticates your message. Friendship is different than being *yoked together* ... i.e., being bound together. There is a line drawn by the Bible for us. *"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' 'Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord. 'and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you'"* 2 Corinthians 6:14-17. Do not put yourself in a yoke with a non-believer. Marriage is a good application of that. Don't marry a non-believer. Don't marry someone in hopes of bringing him or her to Christ. Becoming one flesh (the sexual union of husband and wife) is to be taken very seriously. A violation of the sanctity of that one-flesh union is also very serious, 1 Corinthians 6:15-20. If you are already married, don't divorce your non-believing spouse, 1 Corinthians 7:12-14. Another example of being yoked together is a business partnership ... because it is being legally bound together. However, regular employment isn't a binding agreement and therefore is not being yoked together. Be a friend of sinners ... but don't yoke yourself together with them.

Can you associate with immoral people? Jesus did ... to bring His message to them. Paul did ... to tell them about Jesus. You can ... to share the Gospel. *"I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves"* 1 Corinthians 5:9-13. Dealing with another believer's sin should be done with great love, along Biblical guidelines, and for the purpose of restoration, Colossians 3:12-13, Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1.

Be in the world but not of the world. Jesus taught separation that is insulation but not isolation, John 17:15-18. Jesus didn't sin to be a friend of sinners, 1 Peter 2:22. Paul changed his behavior to be a more effective witness ... but stayed true to the law of Christ, 1 Corinthians 9:20-21. Avoid every appearing of evil, 1 Thessalonians 5:22. But don't avoid lost people. Separate yourself from sin ... but not from lost sinners.

A PERSONAL REVIEW WORKSHEET

1. Do you really have love for lost people?
Do you need to pray for a broken heart for them?
2. Which part of the instructions for loving lost people (3-2 and 3-3)
do you need to pray about and work on?
3. What did you learn from the incarnation teaching and example of
Jesus (3-4 to 3-6)?
4. What did you learn from the incarnation teaching and example of
Paul (3-7 to 3-9)?
5. What incarnation ideas from page 3-9, or from your own ideas,
will you do?
6. How is your purity? Are you a friend of sin?
What are you going to do about it?

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Disciplemaking 2
Being His Witness

COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL

"Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person." Colossians 4:5-6

MORE THAN WORDS. Good communication is Biblical. The Bible gives us many communication commands and principles. Communicating the Gospel message of Jesus is much more than just saying the words. It is multifaceted. Good communication requires the active use of your mind, ears, eyes, and mouth.

UNDERSTANDING LOST PEOPLE. A first step in communicating the Gospel is understanding non-believers. You need to understand their spiritual condition to help them move from where they are to Jesus. Non-believers are different than believers ... having different beliefs and opinions. Understanding lost people is very important to your effective communication of the words of the Gospel.

DEMONSTRATING THE MESSAGE. Who you are speaks louder than what you say. Your life overshadows your words ... adding to or taking away from your words. Your demonstration of the Gospel authenticates or depreciates your verbal presentation of the Gospel. Communicating the Gospel is show and tell time. It is a combination of your walk and your talk ... your works and your words ... your deeds and your seeds.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION. The obvious part of communication is the interchange of words. Think before you speak. Listen with your ears, eyes, and mouth. Develop continuing spiritual conversations with lost people. Make conversational progress. Show love and keep the door of opportunity open. And when the time is right, give the Gospel message to them (explained in the next chapter).

AN ETERNAL INVESTMENT. Make the effort and take the time to develop good communication skills. In addition, make the effort and take the time to develop good conversations. You will be investing in the eternities of lost people. To become a better witness ... become a better communicator.

UNDERSTANDING LOST PEOPLE

There are many differences between believers and non-believers. Understanding the differences helps you be a better witness. This is a first step in communicating the Gospel ... it is your step. You are trying to help them move from point A to point B. How can you do that if you don't know where point A is?

Their spiritual condition. Non-believers are in serious spiritual trouble. They are in critical condition. Their condition is sad ... not scary. It is heart breaking ... not heart stopping.

They are blind to the light of the Gospel.

"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

They are spiritually dead ... needing revival rather than repair.

"And you were dead in your trespasses and sins." Ephesians 2:1

They are robbed of the Gospel.

"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road." Matthew 13:19

They are held captive by Satan ... being victims rather than our enemies.

"And they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will." 2 Timothy 2:26

They are already judged ... not awaiting judgment.

"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18

They are separated from God.

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." Isaiah 59:2

They are lost without Jesus.

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

Their different beliefs and different opinions - Don't expect a non-believer to think or act like a believer. Understanding the differences between them and you will help you be a better communicator of the Gospel. Some areas of difference are listed below. In the chart below, record the differences between your Biblical beliefs and their beliefs.

Our beliefs/opinions		Their beliefs/opinions
	God	
	Man	
	Life	
	Death	
	Time	
	History	
	The future	
	Evolution	
	Truth	
	Morality	
	Marriage	
	Sex	
	Children	
	Divorce	
	Abortion	
	Homosexuality	
	AIDS	
	Church	
	Clergy	
	Bible	
	Religion	
	Cults	
	Occult	
	Satan	
	Humor	
	Entertainment	
	Money	
	Success	
	Failure	
	Employment	
	Unemployment	
	Illness	
	Old age	
	Israel	
	The Middle East	
	Dictators	
	Wars	
	Famine	
	Earthquakes	
	End of the world	

COMMUNICATION COMMANDS AND PRINCIPLES

God has given us many how-to instructions on communication ... covering demonstration, listening, thinking, and speaking. Following His instructions will make you a better communicator of the Gospel ... and it is obedience. Not following them makes you a poor communicator. That is disobedience. That is sin.

Demonstrate the message. Who you are says more than your words. Your actions speak louder than your words. To communicate the Gospel effectively ... live it and give it.

Your message is words plus works. Communicate the Gospel with words and works. Words without the works to back them up is hypocrisy. Good works without the words of the Gospel is robbery ... stealing God's credit for the change in your life. *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"* Matthew 5:16.

Prove your words with your life. Your life authenticates or depreciates your Gospel communication. *"For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake"* 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

How do you smell? Your life is a fragrance of the knowledge of God in every place ... an aroma that permeates your world. *"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life"* 2 Corinthians 2:14-16.

A wife's silent witness. The believing wife of a non-believing husband has a difficult witnessing assignment. She is called upon to communicate the Gospel without words. *"In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be merely external--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God"* 1 Peter 3:1-4. The words of the Gospel are necessary. The Gospel message could come from her in response to questions prompted by her behavior ... or could come from believing men in support of her witness to her husband.

Listen to lost people. Be a ready listener. Much of good communication is responsive ... listening before you speak. Learn to be a good listener. Develop your listening skills. God gave you two ears and one mouth ... use them proportionately.

Be ready, willing, and able to respond. *"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence"* 1 Peter 3:15. Submit to the Lordship of Christ. Be ready in heart and mind to witness.

Understanding or understood? Seek to be understanding before being understood. Don't be all mouth and no ears. *"A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind"* Proverbs 18:2. Have you ever left a witnessing encounter saying, *At least he (or she) knows where I'm coming from?* If you have ever said that, then take this verse to heart.

Ears before mouth. Listen and understand before you give an answer. Listen with your ears and your mouth ... ask questions. Don't assume that you understand their words. Hear what is really being said ... then answer their questions. *"He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him"* Proverbs 18:13.

Quick ears and a slow mouth. Use your ears before your mouth ... and use them more frequently than your mouth. *"But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger"* James 1:19. Don't let anger provoke you to have slow ears and a fast mouth. Listen more than you speak. Weigh your words carefully. And don't argue. Sprout antennae ... not horns.

Think before you speak. Your mind should be very active in communication. Think before you speak. Think before you enter a conversation ... think during it ... and think after it. Plan and prepare for witnessing conversations. Use your mind to participate meaningfully in a conversation. Think about the effective use of your conversation.

Think before you answer. Think about the how and what of your answers. *"The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things"* Proverbs 15:28.

Maximize the opportunity. Be effective. Think about making progress toward the Gospel. *"Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity"* Colossians 4:5. Don't sinfully manipulate ... but be shrewd. Jesus said, *"Be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves"* Matthew 10:16. In your witnessing ... be clever, discerning, wise, artful, using every advantage.

Speak correctly. Your words should be a gracious representation of your message. Let your words be kind, interesting, helpful, convincing, gentle, fitting, timely, right, and correcting.

Feed them salt. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink ... but you can feed him salt. Make non-believers thirsty for spiritual discussion. Be gracious and spiritually interesting. Prompt thought by your words. Make them curious. *"Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person"* Colossians 4:6.

Be helpful ... not hurtful. Let your words be a salve rather than a sword. *"There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing"* Proverbs 12:18. *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger"* Proverbs 15:1.

Be convincing. Persuade people to believe in Jesus. *"The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly"* Proverbs 15:2. Give them the answers they need to help them move toward belief in Jesus. *"A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word!"* Proverbs 15:23. *"He kisses the lips who gives a right answer"* Proverbs 24:26.

Gently correct. Skillfully help them understand the Gospel. Give them the information they need. Kindly and gently correcting their misconceptions about the Gospel. *"But be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition"* 2 Timothy 2:24-25.

Don't talk too much. Be restrained ... even when provoked. Too few words can be better than too many. *"Yet the fool multiplies words"* Ecclesiastes 10:14. *"Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is considered prudent"* Proverbs 17:28.

Don't offend them. Don't be rude, crude, or obnoxious. *"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a citadel"* Proverbs 18:19.

Don't argue ... don't argue ... don't argue. You can't argue or fight someone into the Kingdom. Give a defense of your faith. Be convincing and corrective ... but don't argue. *"The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out"* Proverbs 17:14. *"Scorners set a city aflame, but wise men turn away anger"* Proverbs 29:8. *"Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers"* 2 Timothy 2:14. *"But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome"* 2 Timothy 2:23-24.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Obeying God's commands and principles makes us better communicators of the Gospel. Good communication skills need to be learned. The following guidelines can help you become a better communicator. Study them. Think about them. Evaluate your own communication skills. Identify your weak areas. Make any needed changes. Ask a kind and truthful friend to evaluate your communication skills with these guidelines. Be receptive to constructive criticism ... and make any needed changes. Re-evaluate yourself periodically. And again, make any needed changes.

Create a listening environment.

Decide to listen ... and listen.

Take the initiative in conversation ... ask questions early.

Indirectly direct the conversation toward them.

Set the tone with your words.

Care for them more than for their words.

Accept and respect them.

Earn the right to listen.

Earn the right to be heard.

Listen attentively.

Look at them.

Don't just listen ... look like you're listening.

Pay attention ... don't daydream.

Don't listen to ... and don't enter a different conversation.

Consider the overall context ... micro-listen and macro-listen.

Remember what was said ... develop a listening continuum.

Listen for opportunities, progress, and turning points.

Ask questions

Be on their side.

Don't be a prosecuting attorney.

Ask clarifying questions to gain understanding.

Draw them out.

Ask questions that cause thought and evaluation.

Ask open-ended questions ... *How? ... Why? ... In what way?*

Ask third-party questions ... *What do most people think about ____?*

Ask for opinions rather than facts?

Ask for definitions ... *What do you mean?*

Ask questions paraphrasing their statements ... *Do you mean ____?*

Ask complicating questions ... *If that's true, then how can _____?*

Ask questions that cause doubt?

Ask for conclusions?

Cultivate the conversation

Be friendly.

Make small talk.

Ask about them?

Keep things simple.

Make thought-provoking statements.

Keep the door open for continuing conversations.

Continue the conversation.

Allow for disagreement without argument.

Correct ... but do so non-confrontationally.

Move toward the important

- Move from the trivial to the important.
- Move from the general to the specific.
- Move from the impersonal to the personal.
- Move from the indirect to the direct.
- Move from the theoretical to the practical.
- Be selective ... focus on key issues.
- Use the Bible ... but don't spout memorized verses.
- Emphasize understanding over belief.
- Bring eternity into the conversation.
- Stay focused as long as they do.

Speak graciously

- Be humble.
- Be sincere.
- Be truthful *and* credible.
- Be kind, considerate, and sympathetic.
- Be as open, agreeable, and flexible as possible.
- Be respectful.
- Be complimentary.
- Be interesting.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Be human ... be real.

The don'ts of communicating the Gospel

Don't use Christian jargon.

Don't talk too much.

Don't talk too long.

Don't keep talking when they've stopped listening.

Don't preach.

Don't be pushy.

Don't guess at answers.

Don't interrupt.

Don't finish their sentences.

Don't assume you understand their words, questions, or answers.

Don't act holier-than-thou.

Don't be condescending.

Don't overreact.

Don't be defensive.

Don't argue.

Don't criticize.

Don't prosecute.

Don't judge ... don't condemn.

Don't get angry.

Don't get even.

Don't embarrass.

Don't belittle.

Don't entrap.

Don't manipulate.

Don't get to the Gospel too soon, too late, too often, or too seldom.

READING BODY LANGUAGE

Face-to-face communication involves so much more than the words spoken. Tone of voice, context, and body language can say more than the words. Your posture, position, expression, and mannerisms communicate ... often overriding or redefining your words. Your body often expresses your heart more clearly than your words do. Pay attention to your own body language. In addition, learn to read the body language of others. Listen with your eyes. However, be careful ... body language can vary individually and culturally. And combined or mixed signals can be difficult to interpret. Be a student of nonverbal communication.

Signs of openness, interest, and thought.

The head nodding indicates agreement.

Head nodding with pursed lips indicates probable agreement.

Head tilted to side and nodding indicates a definite maybe.

A finger held to the cheek indicates evaluation.

Both eyebrows lifted shows surprise.

Eyebrows lifted and head nodding indicates surprised agreement.

Leaning back in chair, hands behind head, indicates thought.

The body leaning forward indicates openness.

Legs crossed toward you shows openness.

Sitting down may indicate openness.

Signs of indifference and disinterest.

Loss of eye contact indicates loss of attention.

Finger tapping or pencil drumming shows nervous impatience.

House cleaning or body grooming shows disinterest.

Shrugging shoulders says, *I don't know and I don't care.*

Yawning and/or rubbing eyes shows indifference.

Signs of disbelief, rejection, or hostility.

Shaking head side-to-side expresses disagreement and rejection.

One eyebrow lifted indicates disbelief.

Both eyes squinting, head turned to side, indicates greater disbelief.

Lips up on one side and head tilted to opposite side shows doubt.

Forehead wrinkled down shows puzzlement or dislike.

Arms folded across chest shows defensiveness, hostility, or fear.

The chin thrust out or up expresses hostility.

Signs of untruthfulness and restraint.

A hand partially covering the mouth indicates untruthful speech.

Ankles around the chair legs shows restraint ... holding back.

Looking away while speaking indicates insincerity or deceit.

Signs that a conversation is over.

Your conversation is over when

... the other person stands up if you have been sitting.

... he or she keeps looking at their watch.

... he or she starts doing something else.

... the other person dozes off.

... the other person turns the TV, radio, or stereo on or up.

... he or she takes out the car keys and starts playing with them.

... the other person starts walking away.

... the other person goes to the door ... or opens it.

... he or she starts shutting the door between you.

A PERSONAL REVIEW WORKSHEET

1. Describe your reaction to the spiritual condition of lost people (4-2).
2. How is your demonstration of the Gospel (4-4)?
3. Which verses on listening (4-4) address your weaknesses?
4. Do you need to think more before you speak (4-5)?
5. Which instructions on speaking correctly (4-5 and 4-6) do you need to work on more?
6. Which communication guidelines (4-7 through 4-10) do you need to master?



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Disciplemaking 2 Being His Witness

OFFERING THE GOSPEL

"Now how can they call on one in whom they have never believed? How can they believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how can they hear unless someone proclaims Him?" Romans 10:14 (Phillips)

THE IMPORTANCE OF INVITING PEOPLE. No one can believe a message that they have never heard. We must proclaim the Gospel message of Jesus to non-believers ... and we must invite them to believe in Him. The Gospel message and invitation may only be the tip of the witnessing iceberg ... but without them, no one sees the iceberg. Proclaiming the Gospel and inviting people to believe in Jesus are critically important.

PAUL INVITED PEOPLE. Paul invited people to put their faith in Jesus. He begged people to be reconciled to God, 2 Corinthians 5:20. He reasoned with non-believers ... explained the Gospel to them ... gave evidence ... and did all he could to persuade them to believe, Acts 17:2-4.

JESUS INVITED PEOPLE. Jesus challenged Nicodemus with the words, *"You must be born again"* John 3:7. Later some non-believers asked Jesus, *"What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"* And He responded, *"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent"* John 6:28-29. Jesus did more than state the facts ... He asked for commitment. When Jesus called His disciples Peter, Andrew, and Levi (Matthew), He challenged them to make a commitment with the words, *"Follow Me"* Matthew 4:19, Luke 5:27.

OUR INVITING PEOPLE. The examples and teaching of the New Testament compel us to proclaim the Gospel ... and compel us to invite non-believers to *believe in* Jesus. We must be prepared to do those two things ... to proclaim and to invite. Be able to explain the Gospel clearly and simply. Know how to invite people to receive Christ as Savior. First ... be sure that you understand the Gospel. Know the facts, the flow, the invitation, and the prayer. Be bold and sensitive ... those two are not mutually exclusive. Apply the communication guidelines explained in the previous chapter as you share the Gospel. In addition, learn to illustrate the Gospel ... adding clarity rather than clutter to your presentation. Be ready and willing to help people come to faith in Jesus.

KNOW THE GOSPEL

Understanding the Gospel enough to believe in Jesus as your own Savior is easier than understanding it enough to explain it to someone else. Learn the Gospel so thoroughly that you can concentrate on the other person getting it right rather than on you getting it right. Know the facts, the flow, the verses, the prayer, and the invitation. Become comfortable with the *what* and the *how* of sharing the Gospel.

The facts of the Gospel.

In simple form:

There is a *problem* ... the problem is *separation*.

There is a *solution* ... the solution is *substitution*.

In expanded form:

The *problem* is that there is a sin-caused *separation* between each person and God. He is perfect and loving ... but our imperfection *separates* us from Him.

The *solution* is that Jesus died on the cross as a *substitution* for us ... that is *God's part* of the solution. And each person needs to personally *believe in* Him as our Savior ... that's *our part* of the solution.

In verse form:

The problem ... separation.

God is perfect, Matthew 5:48, Leviticus 19:2 ... and He is loving, John 3:16, and Romans 5:8.

Man is imperfect, Romans 3:23, James 2:10 ... and is *separated* from God, Isaiah 59:2, Romans 6:23, and 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9.

The solution ... substitution.

God's part ... *Jesus died on the cross* as our substitution, 1 Peter 2:24, John 10:11, John 14:6, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, and 1 Timothy 2:5-6.

Man's part ... each person must *believe in* Jesus as Savior, John 1:12, Acts 10:43, and John 11:25-26.

The prayer.

Learn a prayer that you can suggest as a way that people can receive Christ. Learn it in outline form and in word-for-word form. Memorize the prayer. Be able to explain it. The first letters of the outline form of the prayer given below are easy to remember ... **A - R - B - I.**

In outline form:

Tell Him that you ...

Admit your need.

Repent ... turn to Him and away from sin.

Believe in Jesus ... that, being God, He died on the cross for you.

Invoke Jesus to be your Savior.

In word-for-word form:

Dear God,

I admit that I am a sinner.

I turn to you from my sin.

I believe that Jesus, being God, died on the cross for me.

I invite Him to be my Savior.

Amen

The invitation.

After explaining the Gospel, and after explaining the prayer of acceptance, you need to invite him or her to personally take the step of believing in Jesus. A simple invitation to do that is:

Would you like to be sure that Christ is yours? You can settle this right now by praying that simple prayer. Don't pray it unless you really mean it. But if you are ready, I could pray and then you could say that prayer. Would you like to do that right now?

HOW TO OFFER THE GOSPEL

Offering the Gospel and the invitation is a goal in witnessing. When the time is right ... just do it. Stopping short would be like quitting a marathon race just a few steps before the finish line. Don't cram the Gospel down anyone's throat. Nevertheless, press on when the time is right. The guidelines below will help you with the process.

Be prepared. Pray everyday for your non-believing friends and acquaintances. Pray for opportunities and results. Be willing in your heart to bring someone to Christ. Be mentally prepared to bring someone to Christ. Know the Gospel, prayer, and invitation.

Know when. The obvious time to present the Gospel is when you know that someone is ready to believe in Jesus. At that point, you are under obligation to do so. But it can be wise to present the Gospel early in the witnessing process. Although the person may not be ready, it sets the course for further discussion. It is also good to go back to the Gospel if your continuing conversation has lost its focus. Be sensitive to what you see in that person. But more importantly, be sensitive to the Spirit's leading. When He prompts you, just do it.

Get alone. The ideal setting is one-on-one, away from other people, and away from distractions. Suggest sitting down at a quiet table ... in the corner of the room ... in another room ... or on the porch or deck. In a restaurant, pick a quiet table or booth in the corner ... and sit with your back to the corner. But setting isn't everything. Don't put off offering the Gospel because of an unchangeable and less than ideal setting ... stay where you are and proceed.

Get started. Initial inertia can be a difficult obstacle. The step of getting started can be the most challenging step. Therefore, at the start, verbally commit yourself to presenting the Gospel to that person.

You could say ... *After all of our conversations, there is something I think we should talk about. Could I take just a few minutes to explain something to you?*

Or you could say ... *From our conversations, it seems that you might be at a point of making sure that Christ is yours. Could I take just a few minutes to show you how to do that?*

Or you could say ... *I've got an idea. We have talked about God ... but it seems like we could get a clearer focus. Could I take just a few minutes to show you something? It could make things interesting.* If these not-ready people agree ... present the Gospel, explain the prayer, and make the invitation. Most likely, they will reject the invitation to believe in Jesus. Then say ... *I didn't think you were ready to do that. But I've got a good question. What do you think is standing in your way? Or maybe a better question is ... Why do you think people in general aren't quite ready to do that?* At that point, you are refocused and making progress.

Present the Gospel. Explain it to them. Be clear and simple. Make sure that they understand the facts ... but don't give more facts to them than they need to know. Be thorough ... but be as brief as possible. Use a Gospel booklet, 3x5 card, sheet of paper, or napkin. Leave it with them for further consideration if they don't make a decision ... or for re-enforcement if they do. Don't spout memorized verses. Show the verses to them. Sit so that you both can read it ... or sit opposite them with you reading it upside down. Explain the prayer of invitation. Acts One Eight's, *The Gospel ... Our Problem and God's Solution*, is an effective presentation tool. That Gospel presentation is found in *Appendix A*. Learn it thoroughly so that you can comfortably share it with someone. Hold it so that they can read it as you explain each section. Personalize it by adding your own words of explanation and encouragement. When you come to the invitation ... make it!

Invite that person to pray. Ask for the decision. Invite them to receive Christ. You could say ... *What do you think? Would you like to be sure that Christ is yours? If you would like to do that, I'd like to be your witness forever. I'll pray a short prayer ... then you could say that prayer. Don't pray it unless you mean it. Would you like me to pray ... and then you pray that prayer?*

If that person's answer is *yes*, then you could say ... *Great. I'll pray and then you pray that prayer.* Then say a short simple prayer like ... *Dear God. Thank you that we have been able to talk about these things. Thank you that Jim is ready to receive Jesus as his Savior. Amen.* Then say ... *Go ahead Jim. Say that prayer if it truly expresses the desire of your heart.* After the prayer, rejoice that he or she has been born again ... that today is his or her spiritual birthday. Sometimes it is good to mention that the angels are rejoicing in Heaven because of what just happened. *"In just the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents"* Luke 15:10. Tell them that they are now safe forever in God's love. Show them verses on eternal security such as John 5:24, 6:37, 10:28-29, and Romans 8:35-39. Suggest that they begin reading the Gospel of John. Get a good Bible for them if they don't have one (such as a New American Standard Version Ryrie Study Bible). And proceed into some easy follow-up lessons like Acts One Eight's *Bible Basics One*. Make an appointment to meet with them again.

If that person's answer is *no*, then remember that rejection can be one of the early steps to acceptance. Don't take it personally. Show love ... and keep the door open for continuing conversation. You could say ... *I really appreciate your honesty in this. You can't make such an important decision until you are really ready. But let me ask you a question. What do you think might be standing in your way ... or what do you think keeps people in general from taking this step?* At that point, you are refocused on the key issues, responsive to them, and progressing toward their rebirth.

BE BOLD WITH THE GOSPEL

Be bold with the Gospel. Be fearless, courageous, and daring. Be open and direct with the Gospel. Realize your obligation to witness ... be eager to share your faith ... do not be ashamed of the Gospel. Paul wrote, *"I am under obligation ... I am eager to preach the gospel to you ... I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes"* Romans 1:14-16. Be bold ... but be sensitive at the same time. Boldness and sensitivity are not mutually exclusive. Don't sacrifice sensitivity to be bold. Do not sacrifice boldness to be sensitive.

Boldness is obedience. Paul asked for prayer for his own boldness ... that he would speak the Gospel boldly as he ought to speak, Ephesians 6:19-20. Every believer ought to speak the Gospel boldly and courageously. *"Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the Lord"* Psalm 31:24. *"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong"* 1 Corinthians 16:13. *"The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, but the righteous are bold as a lion"* Proverbs 28:1.

Boldness is the example. Paul spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord in Damascus and in Jerusalem, Acts 9:27-28. In Ephesus, he spoke out boldly in the synagogue for three months ... reasoning with them and persuading them about the kingdom, Acts 19:8. Facing opposition in Iconium, Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, Acts 14:3. Follow their example. Speak boldly ... speak boldly even in the face of opposition.

Boldness is an answer to prayer. Pray for boldness. Believers in the Early Church faced severe opposition. Therefore they prayed, *"And now Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence"* Acts 4:29. They didn't pray for a change in their circumstances ... they prayed for a change in their courage. *"And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness"* Acts 4:31. Pray ... and God will answer. David wrote, *"On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul"* Psalm 138:3.

Boldness is God's provision. God is the source of boldness, strength, and courage. *"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him and I am helped"* Psalm 28:7. Paul wrote, *"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline"* 2 Timothy 1:7. Pray and then trust God for boldness. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly *"with reliance on the Lord"* Acts 14:3. Paul wrote, *"We had the boldness in our God to speak to you the Gospel of God amid much opposition"* 1 Thessalonians 2:2. Pray ... trust ... and then say with Paul, *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me"* Philippians 4:13.

ILLUSTRATE THE GOSPEL

Jesus taught in parables ... word pictures to add clarity to His teaching. He explained the unknown in terms of the known ... the uncommon in terms of the common ... the eternal in terms of the temporal ... the spiritual in terms of the secular. Parables (illustrations) can help non-believers understand spiritual truth. Follow the example of Jesus ... use illustrations. Keep your parables simple and to the point. Expand the following illustrations ... put them in your own words.

Sin and imperfection.

Adding up my sins. Think about my life ... let's say that I have been accountable before God for my bad thoughts and actions for the past 20 years. And let's say that I have had three bad thoughts or commit three bad deeds every day (actually that would be a good day for me). That's 1,000 bad marks against me in just one year ... 10,000 in ten years. By age 65 I could have more than 50,000 bad marks ... far from perfection. If the quality of my sins doesn't get me, the quantity will.

A pile of rocks. Imagine that I throw a small rock into the middle of the room every time I do something wrong. Then the quality of my life could be measured by the size and rate of growth of the pile. Early in my life, I would have had to move the pile out into an open field. Then one day I decide to improve my life ... I cut down on my sins per day. Let's say down to 10/day. And later to 7/day ... 5/day ... and so on until I plateau at one or two per day. All of this was done with great effort and sincerity. However, the only thing that I accomplished was to make the pile get bigger slower. I can do no more than that on my own. What I really need is someone to take the pile of rocks away. No matter how hard I try, I cannot improve my record ... I can only make it get worse slower.

A picture window. Imagine that you hired a contractor to install a picture window in your living room ... one that will give you an unobstructed view of the mountains. As he pounds the final nail into the wood trim, the hammer slips from his hand and hits the window. Small cracks spread out from the point of impact covering 5% of the window. He then turns to you ... and hands the bill to you. Would you accept it? No! The imperfect window is not acceptable. He states that it is 95% perfect. You tell him that imperfect is imperfect. Anything less than perfect is imperfect. In the same way, a little amount of sin causes imperfection.

An unexpected pregnancy. A variation of the window illustration is that of an unexpected pregnancy. A young couple decided to wait four years to begin their family. However, 12 months after the honeymoon she tells the good news and bad news to her husband. The bad news is that she is pregnant three years ahead of schedule. The good news is that she is only a little pregnant. He responds that pregnant is pregnant.

The impossibility of making it on our own.

Swimming across the ocean. This illustrates the great separation between God and man ... a chasm too great to cross by man. Imagine the separation between God and man is the distance across the Atlantic Ocean from Boston to England. You and I have a personally unsolvable problem if we must swim that distance to reach God. You may swim two times or ten times farther than I do ... but we both fall very short. We will both drown if someone doesn't rescue us. We don't need swimming lessons ... we need to be saved.

Jumping to the next skyscraper. This is a variation on the previous illustration. We have a significant problem if reaching God requires jumping from the roof of one 50-story building to the roof of another one across the street. You may leap three times farther than I do ... but that will be of little value as we accelerate toward the sidewalk below. We don't need long jump lessons from an Olympic coach ... we need a bridge. Jesus is the bridge to God.

Love motivated substitution.

A firing squad. Picture yourself condemned to death by firing squad. At the execution wall, you face six guards with rifles. The captain of the guard begins with, *ready ... Aim.* But he stops when a man cries out from the crowd, *Wait ... Wait!* The innocent man volunteers to take your place. You are released as he walks to the wall. And as you pass through the courtyard gate into freedom you hear, *Ready ... Aim ... Fire!* With one last glimpse back you see him in a pool of blood at the base of the wall. He died in your place ... died to give freedom to you.

Saved from drowning. This is a variation of the previous illustration. Imagine that you tried to swim across a wide lake. Halfway across, your legs begin to cramp. You are weak and exhausted. With what could be your last breaths, you call to a man in a small passing boat. He circles around to save you. He jumps into the water to help you into the safety of the boat. However, in doing that he slips below the water and drowns. He gave his life to save you.

Donating a kidney. This is a variation of the previous two illustrations. Imagine that you are terminally ill because both of your kidneys have failed. Without a compatible transplant, you will die in just a few hours. Your best friend offers to donate a kidney to you. There is organ compatibility. Immediately you are in surgery to receive your friend's life-giving gift. After the surgery, you are anxious to thank your friend. But you find out that your friend only had one kidney ... he voluntarily gave his life for you. He gave life to you through his death.

Believing *in* Christ rather than *about* Christ.

Sitting in a chair. All of us sit in chairs every day. We do so without much thought. We *believe about* chairs ... assuming that they will hold our weight when we sit. But actually sitting in one is more than *believing about* a chair ... it is *believing in* a chair. When you entrust yourself to it, you are *believing in* it. This choice becomes clearer when you are in an antique store inspecting a rickety old wooden chair. It is a beautiful chair ... but will you sit in it?

Surgery. There is an interesting moment just before surgery. It is the time when you hear about all of the dangers and risks ... and then are asked to sign a release form granting the surgeon permission to cut into you. It is at that moment when you choose between *believing about* the surgeon and *believing in* the surgeon. You may have looked at the certificates on his office wall ... looked up pending malpractice suits on the Internet ... and even talked to previous patients. Intellectually you *believe about* the surgeon ... but in your will, you must make the decision about *believing in* him. *Believing about* him can be at any level ... 51%, 75%, or 90%. However, the choice about *believing in* him is either 0% or 100%.

Parachuting. Imagine that you are in a burning airplane somewhere over the Pacific Ocean. The pilot has announced that parachuting out is your only salvation. You pull the contraption out from under your seat ... and strap it onto your back. You have heard about parachutes ... read about them ... and even seen them in use at air shows. You have always *believed about* parachutes. However, standing at the plane's open door looking down at the clouds is different. It is time to step out in faith ... time to *believe in* your parachute. A question runs through your mind ... is this really a parachute or is it some college student's backpack? Only a true parachute will save you. And stepping out in faith doesn't save you ... it allows you to be saved. The same is true about *believing in* Christ. We are all on a flight that is doomed to crash. *Believing about* Him is not enough. Our only hope is to step out in faith by *believing in* Him. Stepping out doesn't save you ... but it lets Him save you.

Dating or married? This is a very good illustration for religious people. There is a difference between dating and marriage. Dating involves *believing about* someone ... marriage involves *believing in* someone. Before marriage, you may love the other person very much ... go to his or her home often ... talk to that person several times a day ... and give gifts to him or her. However, you are only dating. It is at the marriage ceremony that you must choose between *believing about* that person and *believing in* that person. Many people are like that with God. They *believe about Him*. They love Him very much ... go to His house often ... and talk to Him every day. They even give gifts (time, money, and talents) to Him. But they have never said *I do* to God. They need to do more than *believe about* Him ... they need to *believe in* Him.

A PERSONAL REVIEW WORKSHEET

1. Have you memorized the Gospel verses?
2. In simple form the Gospel is:
3. Add verse references to each section of the Gospel in #2.
4. What four letters represent the Gospel prayer ... and what do they stand for?
5. Write out a word-for-word Gospel prayer.
6. If you did poorly on this worksheet, will you learn the Gospel soon?
When will you?



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Disciplemaking 2 Being His Witness

CONCLUSION

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18-20

These words are our Great Commission. Witnessing is the beginning of disciplemaking. Be available and ready to bring people to faith in Jesus. And after they have come to Christ, help them become disciples. This lesson gives some ideas to start that process. It also provides a simple overview of *Disciplemaking 2 ... Being His Witness* to help you stay on course.

New Believers: The first steps of discipling new believers.

The starting point of the Christian life is when a person believes in Jesus ... that moment when he or she is born again. New birth produces a spiritual baby. Then obstetrics need to be replaced by pediatrics. Your role changes from witness to disciplemaker.

Teach the basics of being a Christian to them. Do this in the first several days after they have received Christ. *Bible Basics One* (available from Acts One Eight) provides good starting material for this. It includes four simple lessons on Salvation, Eternal Security, Prayer, and the Bible. It is easy to teach and easy to learn.

Get them into a good Bible. If needed, buy it for them. A New American Standard translation is good. A *Ryrie Study Bible* version of the *New American Standard Bible* includes helpful notes and study tools. An *NIV* might be good if they need an easier-to-read Bible (7th grade reading level) ... but it compromises accuracy for readability. Suggest that they begin reading the Gospel of John.

Encourage them to be baptized ... or baptize them. It's part of the Great Commission.

Get them into a Christ-honoring fellowship of believers. Be sure that it includes meaningful worship and accurate teaching. Explain communion to them so that they understand its significance.

After they have a basic foundation, get them on a milk-to-meat growth plan. Teach *Disciplemaking 1* to them at some point after teaching *Bible Basics One*. Then teach *Disciplemaking 2* to them. All of these are available from www.MyDisciplemaker.org.

A REVIEW OF WITNESSING

This course can help you become a better witness. Study it, learn it, apply it ... and you will be a better witness. Review the whole course about once per year to brush up on your skills ... or to get back on track. And for a quick review, study this overview of the process of witnessing.

Get ready.

Recruit a witnessing partner or team. Follow the Biblical pattern ... there is strength in numbers. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, Proverbs 27:17

Pray. Pray every day for the boldness to speak, for the words to say, and for opportunities to witness (open doors). Pray specifically for lost people, for yourself, and for your witnessing partner. Ephesians 6:18-20, Colossians 4:2-4, James 5:16-18

Learn the Gospel. You can't explain what you don't know. Learn the facts, the flow, the verses, the prayer, and the invitation. Be able to explain it and illustrate it. Practice until you are comfortable sharing the Gospel. Ephesians 6:15, 2 Timothy 2:15, 24, 1 Peter 3:15

Get with them.

Be in the world. Spend time with non-believers ... don't be isolated. Make meaningful contact with them. Give your life away to them, care for them, and serve them. Earn the right to listen ... and earn the right to be heard. Speak with your words and actions. Luke 15:1-10, John 17:13-18, 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:7-8

But don't be of the world. Be a friend of sinners ... but don't be a friend of sin. They will believe your message if your life is consistent with your words. Be a clean and useful vessel. John 17:13-18, 1 Corinthians 9:20-22, 2 Timothy 2:19-20

Get to the Gospel.

Make progress. Think of witnessing as a process ... not a one-time event. Witnessing is like building a brick wall ... one brick at a time. Seek to make progress. Keep the door of opportunity open. Moreover, be helpful rather than hurtful. Let your words be a salve rather than a sword. Gently correct ... don't stir up anger. Proverbs 15:1-2, Colossians 4:5-6, 2 Timothy 2:24-26

Invite them. Offer the Gospel and invite them to put their faith in Christ. Have the goal of winning them to Christ. Be bold and sensitive. Persuade ... exhort ... beg ... invite them. 1 Corinthians 9:19-22, 2 Corinthians 5:11, 20, Matthew 11:28-30



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Disciplemaking 2 Being His Witness

THE GOSPEL

The Gospel presentation tool in this appendix is for your use in studying or teaching Chapter 5 ... and for your use as you offer the Gospel to the lost men and women in your life.

It is copyrighted ... but you may make unlimited copies, without any change to it, for free distribution. Permission to translate it to other languages will be granted upon request ... with limited restrictions covering accuracy, content, and reciprocal free use.

Gospel printing instructions.

1. Please do *not* print from the next two pages.
2. Instead, print by visiting www.MyDisciplemaker.org/gospel/gospel.pdf
3. Print on a good quality paper ... 24# is a good weight.
4. Print on a white or cream-colored paper.
5. Darker colored papers are more difficult to read. Bright and fluorescent colors don't seem appropriate for the Gospel.
6. Pray that *the Gospel "will spread rapidly."* 2 Thessalonians 3:1
7. Make enough copies ... trusting God to answer that prayer.
8. The Gospel reprints will print with our www.911GOD.org logo.

Another tool.

A Gospel presentation is on the Website www.911GOD.org. It might help you think through an alternate presentation ... or may be useful for you in directing a lost cyber-friend to it.

The Gospel ... Our Problem and God's Solution

Our Problem ... Separation

God is perfect.

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:48

"You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." Leviticus 19:2

God is loving.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (satisfactory sacrifice) for our sins." 1 John 4:10

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

Man is imperfect.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." James 2:10

Man is separated from God.

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God." Isaiah 59:2

"Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

God's Solution ... Substitution

Jesus, being God, died for us ... this is God's part of the solution.

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." John 8:24

"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." 1 Peter 2:24

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." John 10:11

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" John 14:6

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day." 1 Corinthians 15:3-5

"There is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time." 1 Timothy 2:5-6

You need to **believe in Him ... this is your part of the solution.**

To be sure that Christ is yours, you need to *believe in Him*.

Believing *in* Jesus is more than believing *about* Jesus. Believing *in* Him is personally putting your trust in Him ... trusting *in* Him as your personal Savior as the One who died for you.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." Acts 10:43

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?'" John 11:25-26

Would you like to be sure that Christ is yours?

Then tell Him in this simple prayer if it expresses the true desire of your heart.

Dear God,
I admit my need ... I am a sinner.
I repent ... I turn to You from my sin.
I believe in Jesus ... that being God, He died on the cross for me.
I invite Him to be my Savior.
Amen

If you prayed that prayer, you are now safe with God for all of eternity. God has promised that you now have eternal life ... that you will not come into judgment ... that you have passed out of death into life ... and that He will not cast you out. You are secure because no one can snatch you out of His all-powerful hand ... He is holding on to you rather than you holding on to Him.

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out." John 6:37

"I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." John 10:28-29

If you prayed that prayer, you need to start growing as a child of God. *Bible Basics One* can help you do that ... these four short lessons are available for free to help you start your walk with God. Visit www.MyDisciplemaker.org for your free copy of *Bible Basics One* ... see Level 1 on the homepage.

If you weren't ready to say that prayer, make your consideration of it your highest priority. You are at a fork in the road to your eternal destiny. Your decision is of eternal importance and consequence. If you have unanswered questions that stand in the way of your decision, talk to the person who gave this paper to you... or you may contact its author, John Morris, at John@911GOD.org. In addition, please visit www.911GOD.org for a more detailed explanation of God's solution to our problem.

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