



EVANGELISM TRAINING MANUAL

Equipping for Ministry

We believe that materials such as these are always “in process” and able to be improved. We will be grateful to receive any feedback you have to share with us.

Please send any comments and/or suggestions to:

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Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated are from the New International Version of the Bible, © 1978 by New York International Bible Society

NOTE: In the interest of editorial brevity and simplicity, these documents treat gender-neutral and gender-plural references with the masculine pronoun “he” rather than “she,” “he or she” or other constructions. When clarity is better served by other words, we follow whatever usage seems to aid readers best. Worldwide Discipleship Association follows Scripture in joyfully recognizing that God created man and woman in His image as equal recipients of His grace and mercy.

Evangelism Training Manual, Equipping for Ministry

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EVANGELISM TRAINING MANUAL

Table of Contents

	Page
Instructions to the Leader	4
Preparation for Evangelism— Field Training Experience: Instructions to Leader	5
Suggested Retreat Schedules	14
Handout: “A Community Questionnaire on God and Values”	17
Session #1 Introduction to the Gospel (Teaching Outline)	19
Session #2-A What is the Gospel? (Teaching Outline)	22
What is the Gospel? (Pocket Principle)	25
#2-B How to Prepare and Give a Testimony (Teaching Outline)	29
Handouts	
Testimony:	
Chronological & Thematic Testimonies	33
Testimony Worksheets (Chronological & Thematic)	34
Sample Testimonies (2)	36
Language Barriers Worksheet	39
Session #3 Presenting the Gospel—Part I (Teaching Outline)	40
Session #4 Presenting the Gospel—Part II (Teaching Outline)	43
Session #5 Presenting the Gospel—Part III (Teaching Outline)	46
Session #6 Dealing with Common Questions (Teaching Outline)	49
Handout: Dealing with Common Questions People Ask	51
Handout: Personal Objections Non-Christians Have to Becoming Christians	58
Session #7 Evangelism As a Process—Part I (Teaching Outline)	60
Session #8 Evangelism As a Process—Part II (Teaching Outline)	63
Handout: Levels of Openness to Christ	

Evangelism Training Manual

Instructions to the Leader

The goal of this manual is to train Christians to effectively communicate the Gospel. These Christians should be at a Phase III spiritual maturity level. That is, they should have a consistent, stable relationship with God, have a regular personal devotion time, faithfully attend a Bible study (or other small group), seek fellowship with Christians, and show beginning concern for friends and relatives who are not Christians.

There are 8 sessions in this manual. Some of the sessions are lecture-oriented while others are more interactive. There are homework assignments for some sessions, and it is very important that students be faithful to complete the assignments. In each case, the following session is based on the content of the assignment, and if the assignment is not done, it will negatively affect the session.

The Teaching Outlines are for you, the leader. (Instructions to you are in *bold italics*. Content for you to teach to students is in regular type.) For some subjects, there are Pocket Principles, which are for you and the students, and Handouts.

The Ministry Training group meeting should last for 2 to 2½ hours. The lesson portion of the meeting time should be 45 minutes to 1 hour in length. The evangelism training materials (Quarter 1) may be presented either in a weekly meeting format or in a weekend retreat. More about this in "Preparation for the Evangelism Field Training Experience".

There are many effective Gospel presentations. The one we have chosen to use here, The 4-Laws from Campus Crusade for Christ, has been used extensively and effectively all over the world. It is straightforward and simple to use and therefore, is good for training. If you have a Gospel presentation you prefer to use, feel free to do so. You may order copies of the 4-Law booklet at the Crusade web-site <http://www.campuscrusade.org> or call toll free 800-827-2788.

There is a book used in Quarter 1, that we highly recommend that the students purchase: *More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell. This book has had many printings and is considered a "classic" in the area of "user-friendly" apologetics.

When learning evangelism skills, actually doing evangelism, not just hearing teaching about it, is very important. Thus, the role of the mentor in the life of a disciple is very important. The mentor needs to make sure that the disciple has numerous opportunities to share his testimony and his faith so this will become a part of his lifestyle.

PREPARATION FOR THE EVANGELISM FIELD TRAINING EXPERIENCE

Instructions to the Leader

There is an oft-quoted maxim in the business community that says: “Those who can, DO; and those who can’t, TEACH!” (The point of course, is to emphasize the importance of practical implementation.) But the very best doers are most often good teachers, and the very best teachers are also doers. Nowhere is this more important than in the training for evangelism. For this reason, we must instruct in theology and methodology, but we must also include a practical field experience as part of our evangelism training.

It was Jesus Himself who said, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.” What occurs next in the Gospel account is a field experience conducted in the Galilean hills where Jesus trains His disciples in effective evangelism methods by allowing them to work alongside Him in ministry. They initially observed Christ conducting ministry, then they participated in ministry alongside Him which led to them being supervised, and finally they were sent out independent of Him. This four-fold training pattern is central to Christ’s disciple building methodology. (See *Disciple Building: Mentoring for Progressive Growth*, WDA) To be effective, our training in evangelism must follow a similar, transferable pattern.

Certainly a successful evangelism encounter can occur randomly and spontaneously. But the most effective forms of training in evangelism occur when planning and forethought are involved. It is the responsibility of the leader to decide what is the best setting for the training and then prepare accordingly. This will require good planning coupled with a confidence that God will go before us and sovereignly orchestrate opportunities for evangelism. A balance of preparation and faith will insure a positive training experience. Let’s look at some of the elements involved in preparing for an effective evangelism field experience.

I. Heart Preparation

The writer of Proverbs reminds us that, first and foremost, we should keep watch over our hearts. Nowhere is this more important than in evangelism. Evangelistic heart preparation means focusing our attention on certain specific truths, among them: the power of the Gospel to heal and restore the souls of men, the serious stewardship entrusted to us, the availability of God’s power and presence, the reality of spiritual warfare, etc. (to mention a few).

Heart preparation also involves mental self-control. For most Christians there is a certain queasiness associated with sharing Christ with others. These feelings are normal and can be very strong in spite of our understanding of the power and value of

the Gospel. We may be fully convinced of the importance and relevance of evangelism and be skilled in effective evangelism methods, yet still experience doubts and misgivings about sharing our faith with others. These fears are common and must be recognized and addressed before we proceed.

Some of these concerns are linked to a fear of rejection by others. Often we underestimate the power and subtlety of our enemy who desires to hinder the expansion of the Kingdom through the proclamation of the Gospel, or we forget the lingering seduction of needing to be thought well of by others in order to feel important. Regardless of the source, we must be on guard against fear and have our hearts and minds prepared. Here are some reminders about fear that may be helpful to you and others:

- 1) Be prepared to admit your fear. It serves no purpose to pretend you are not afraid. But you can also demonstrate confidence in your training and in the promise that God will go before you.
- 2) Ask God to break any residual thoughts that might hold you captive to fearing what others think of you. Renounce these thoughts as not originating from Christ but from the world.
- 3) Thank God for the privilege to represent His Kingdom as ambassadors and even for the privilege of potential rejection and persecution that could result.
- 4) Ask God for sensitivity and wisdom to know how best to approach people and what to say.
- 5) Ask God for strength and courage to proceed.
- 6) Gather together and agree to “bind the strongman” in the community. Jesus understood that we wrestle with principalities and powers that are more powerful than our human resources. It is not wrong to admit and confess our inadequacy.
- 7) Jesus declared that He had been given ALL authority in heaven and also on earth. But the authority was for the purpose of accompanying our efforts to make and build disciples. We should expect His authority to be available. In fact one sure way to understand Him better as King and Christ is by sharing our faith with others. (Philemon 6)
- 8) Memorize and meditate on specific Scripture passages that encourage faith and obedience and the rewards of faithfully managing the Good News that has been entrusted to our keeping.
- 9) Find a partner who can go with you for both encouragement and accountability.
- 10) Practice communicating your presentation with someone who you already know. Share with him that you are just learning how to verbalize your faith and that you are nervous. Ask if he would let you “practice” and then give you feedback. (There are many friends and family members who have come to Christ this way. Some of these have been church members.)

- 11) Don't wait until you feel courageous. Often the feelings of courage don't develop until we have made a commitment to proceed. Even then it may not be until afterward that we experience the exhilaration of obedience.
- 12) Remember that it is NOT our responsibility to persuade or convert anyone. That is the job of the Holy Spirit. It is our job to be a caring messenger of the Gospel.

II. Logistical Preparation

I (Bob) asked a friend of mine (who is in much better physical condition than I am) to share with me the best form of cardiovascular exercise. His answer was simple: "Any exercise that you will actually DO, is best!" The same is true of evangelism. There are many different types and approaches to sharing Christ. Countless books and training manuals have been produced that offer valuable tools and training methods. If your ministry or denomination has already established some training approaches it would be wise to consider using or adapting these for your group. Remember, the best approach is the one that you will actually do. (See Sessions #3-5 of this Manual for WDA's suggestions.)

It is imperative that you as a leader be realistic and practical as you plan. It would be better to implement an event that is simple, but attainable, than to plan a more elaborate project that may require too much of your trainees or infrastructure. However, a successful field experience is one that contains the following components:

- 1) The trainee has an opportunity to meaningfully encounter people who may not be believers.
- 2) The listener has an opportunity to hear about Christ.
- 3) The trainee prays for the listener (either in person during the encounter or privately after the encounter occurs).
- 4) There is appropriate follow-up to the event.

There are many different types of field training experiences. The leader should seek the specific guidance of the Holy Spirit and be creative and sensitive in how to best approach their unbelieving community. (Remember, your goal in presenting the Gospel is not just to communicate information, your goal is to communicate a credible witness.) It is important to be authentic people who really care about others. This underlying worldview and value system is a strategic part of the training that you transmit to your disciples. Any field experience we plan should take this into account.

Earlier in the Instructions to the Leader (page 4), it was pointed out that the material in this Evangelism Training Manual can effectively be presented in several different venues. We suggest either presenting the material in a weekly meeting or in a weekend retreat. You will find the weekly session suggestions on the Quarter 1 Assignment

page. There are eight evangelism sessions, but additional real life experience (i.e. actually sharing the Gospel and testimony with others) is essential.

Our suggestions for the Retreat Schedule are on pages 14-16 of this document. The life experiences of sharing the Gospel will need to be done outside of the Retreat unless you are able to arrange a venue for sharing during that weekend. This would be ideal. In the suggested Retreat Schedule, 5 (or 6) of the sessions are covered leaving the remaining session to be covered during a weekly meeting. Of course, there are many other variations. You and your leadership must implement the schedule that is best for your situation. There is no “right” schedule.

III. Types of Evangelism Field Training Experiences

1] Questionnaires

In this approach, trainees are sent out equipped with a brief set of specific questions regarding religious life in the community.¹ This is especially effective in reaching specific groups or neighborhoods and has the added benefit of providing real demographics for future ministry. The introduction should explain that your group is conducting a questionnaire to better understand what people are thinking about God and/or organized religion. The results may be published in some form (a newsletter or local bulletin is sufficient), and the responder should be offered a copy if they are interested. It is best to keep the questionnaire as brief as possible and yet allow you to collect helpful information. See a sample Questionnaire on page 18.

The last few questions of the questionnaire should include an opportunity to present the Gospel if the person is interested. Examples of final questions:

Q: “Have you ever considered what a personal relationship with God might involve?”

Q: “Would you be interested in what the Bible says about this?”
(Presentation of “4 Spiritual Laws”)

2] Contact Lists

In this approach, the leader must first secure a list of people who have exhibited some type of interest in spiritual matters. The list might be from visitor contacts to area churches, cards that were collected from a special event, or even those listed on Sunday

¹ There are many different kinds of surveys available. (For an example see Handout entitled “Community Questionnaire on God and Values”. A *Microsoft Word* version of the Questionnaire is found in this folder so you can insert your group’s name, etc.)

School rolls. In this approach it is important to insure the contact is approachable and interested in discussing spiritual issues. This can occur through a phone contact set up beforehand. (The phone call can actually be included as a part of the training.) If a phone call is impractical, then a visit to the residence should include an introduction about why the visit is being conducted. Be extremely sensitive about timing and current interest. It is better to return later or set up another visit than to press someone who feels inconvenienced or cornered.

3] Tract Distribution

This involves approaching people with some type of literature that explains the importance of developing a relationship with Christ. It might target a felt need in the community and show the benefits of a biblical perspective. This should be done prayerfully and politely, and the literature itself should be tasteful and sensitive.

This approach is most effective in areas where there are significant numbers of people, such as shopping malls or sporting events. (Be sure to secure permission for distributing materials from the appropriate authorities.) One primary advantage of this approach is that it allows the trainee to be associated with the Gospel before having to actually present its claims. This is a very effective way of involving Phase II believers in ministry situations or initially training Phase III believers. This approach is somewhat limited however, because although some people may be interested in discussing the tracts (thus affording an opportunity to share Christ), most will probably just take them and move on.

4] Special Events

This is a situation where potential evangelistic contacts are invited to attend a pre-planned event. This can be something as simple as inviting someone to attend a standing meeting of your group, or it may involve making special arrangements for a major project. Examples can include: concerts, magic shows, street theater, sporting events, celebrities, special dinners, school assemblies, seasonal presentations, socials, etc. The most effective are events that either offer some type of entertainment or address a felt need of unbelievers. This approach can have the benefit of including Phase II believers, who also can be challenged to help with the logistics. The downside of this approach is that it requires lots of preparation to be effective. Unless there is adequate manpower and time, we suggest you choose another form for evangelism.

Sometimes other Christian groups in the community may be planning an event that you can incorporate into your training. (Examples might include a local church that offers a Christmas or Easter pageant, or an evangelistic speaker who has been invited into the community.) Contact the group planning the event and offer your group as part of the counseling or follow-up team.

Regardless of the logistics, two opportune moments for evangelism training can exist. The first occurs either during or immediately following the event. In this situation the attendee is approached and asked what he thought of the presentation and then asked if he would be interested in discussing further the ideas presented. This can be discussed at the moment or another appointment can be arranged for a later time. The second moment occurs, of course, if there are any contacts generated by the event itself. (See contact lists, number 2 on page 8)

5] Other Evangelism Ministries

In many churches and communities there are existing ministries that conduct ongoing evangelism. Often churches and para-church ministries plan evangelistic forays or hold evangelism training that include pre-planned outreaches. When practical, use these events as part of your training. Besides saving time and effort for other ministry purposes, it teaches your disciples the benefits of body life and team ministry. Investigate to make sure the style and approaches utilized by others are compatible with your group.

6] Small Groups

Periodically in every effective disciple building ministry, a new generation of small groups needs to be launched. The focus of these groups should initially be to reach out to unbelievers. Small groups are another effective way of leading people to Christ. There is a unique set of skills a person needs to be effective at leading evangelistic small groups, and a different set of resources needs to be made available to the evangelistic small group leader. It is better to keep the specialized training needed for small group evangelism separate from the standard evangelism training given to the Phase III Ministry Team. It is very valuable to allow the Ministry Trainees to observe how an evangelistic small group functions.

7] Acts of Service

In this approach, specific acts of service are conducted in hopes of generating further opportunities to share the good news about Christ. This approach takes seriously the command to let our good deeds be demonstrated so that men might have occasion to glorify God. Often effective in reaching groups that are either suspicious or resistant to other forms of evangelism, this “soft approach” to presenting Christ also has advantages in communities where the “words” of the church have not been backed up by the “works” of the church.

Another advantage of this approach is that it can generate relational networks that provide other opportunities to share our faith as a way of life. This is also another situation where Phase II believers can be included in ministry situations. Some

examples of service evangelism include:

- Food Distribution
- Community Service (garbage pick up, mentoring in schools, teacher/fire/police appreciation, etc.)
- Disaster Relief
- Anti-Drug Campaigns
- Hospice Volunteers
- Homeless Programs
- Recreation Sports
- Homeland Security Projects

Caution should be exercised however. Unless we genuinely want to serve, this approach can appear manipulative. Evangelism associated with this type of program should be presented with care and sensitivity. At the same time, we should expect the Spirit to be working. This may be what Peter meant when he said that we should “sanctify Christ as Lord in our heart and always be ready to make a defense to anyone who asks us to give an account for the hope that is within us. But we should do so with gentleness and reverence, keeping a good conscience, so that those who would malign our good behavior in Christ might be put to shame” (I Pet. 3: 15-16).

IV. A Team Approach

Regardless of the type of outreach that you consider, it is best if the entire Ministry Team can be involved in the planning process. There are several reasons for this. Initially it provides team ownership of any method, thus insuring better buy-in and deployment. Mutual brainstorming also employs the creativity of the group versus the creativity of one individual. This “group-think” can insure a better outcome. Team planning also begins to lay the foundation for ongoing team ministry. This dynamic will grow and develop even more in the next phase of disciple building.

It is the job of the leader to keep the group focused on the goals and specific outcomes. The group may be willing to settle for something less than the results needed to insure effective training, but the leader must demonstrate a willingness to flex with the specifics without abandoning the non-negotiables. This will require wisdom and the Spirit’s anointing.

V. A Ministry-Wide Focus on Evangelism

To be most effective, the evangelism field experience should be part of a ministry-wide coordinated effort. For this to occur, the ministry leadership must plan a series of evangelistic outreach projects that work in concert with the Phase III Ministry Training. Then, training in evangelism becomes more than a single event. It is a sustained focus

with many different approaches that are blended together. In this way, momentum is maintained and more options for training are made available.

In addition, this evangelistic focus helps to produce an entire new generation of disciples. These disciples will need help in their spiritual growth and development. As the Phase III ministry trainees mature, they become the next group of new leaders. This pattern of outreach, followed by subsequent assimilation and development, is optimum for healthy growth in the church. Repeated generational development occurring in the context of equipping existing disciples through challenges appropriate to their level of maturity, is what we call “building a movement” and is central to Christ’s training of the original disciples.

VI. Mentor Modeling and Evangelistic Partnerships

We spoke earlier of the four-fold training pattern used by Jesus. Jesus was willing to model what He hoped to teach His disciples. For evangelism training to be most effective, the leader must be involved. Not every leader has the gift of evangelism, but as Paul admonished Timothy, every leader should “do the work of an evangelist”. How many people we lead to Christ is not as important as the fact that we are making an effort to lead people to Christ. As our disciples see us sharing our faith, they are more likely to model what we do.

Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs. This was probably for encouragement and accountability. Practically this means that we should pair our evangelism trainees with a more experienced evangelist. This may prove difficult if there are only a few who know how to share their faith in your group. If this is the case, ask others in your community to help during the field training experience. If you are unable to find enough trained disciples, then pair the trainees up with one another and challenge them to have faith and go, trusting God to help them. The results will amaze and gratify you!

VII. Follow-up

More often than not, you will see results from your evangelism field experience. People will come to Christ. These new believers need to be discipled. They need to understand how to begin to grow and they need to know the One who called them out of the domain of darkness and into His new Kingdom. As a leader, it is your responsibility to see that these new Christians are handled with loving care, just as a mother or father would care for a new baby.

If you are uncertain how to accomplish this, prepare beforehand to receive training in the initial care of young Christians, or make arrangements to direct these people into the care of a local church or disciple building ministry that is able to care for them. Do not simply abandon them. Your trainees will learn much about your love and concern

for them, as they see how you care for those who receive Christ.

Not everyone contacted will receive Christ. Add people who were interested to the list of contacts for prayer. Make notes of their responses and ways that you might contact them in the future. Do this immediately while things are still fresh on your mind.

VIII. Debriefing

After the evangelism field experience has been implemented, it is important to have a session where the participants can meet together for a brief period of sharing. During this time, ask them to tell about what happened. As they share their experiences, it will encourage everyone as they see the result of their efforts. Not everyone will have a “war story” that involves leading someone to Christ, but everyone should have a testimony of God’s faithfulness in some way. Your role as the leader is to facilitate the sharing, summarize, and give perspective, if necessary. Remind everyone that God is responsible for results. As people share, listen for ways to make future training experiences even more successful.

Evangelism does more than bring new children into the family of believers. It also reminds existing believers of the nature of God’s Kingdom and allows them to experience Christ in a deeper way. Jesus reminded the disciples that serving in His Name was wonderful, but it was no substitute for knowing His eternal love and acceptance. This balanced view of ministry helps to address the crying need for significance that so many feel. God may use us mightily in His Kingdom through His Spirit, but His love for us is unconditional and unmerited.

End this final session by praying together. Have the trainees pray for the people who went and those who heard. Include a prayer of thanksgiving and praise for the privilege of being His ambassadors. Pray for faithfulness in future opportunities. Make sure that you affirm everyone who participated. Take note of anyone who may have had a difficult experience, and look for ways to encourage them. Remember, the goal is to help people develop lifelong skills and convictions about evangelism.

SUGGESTED EVANGELISM TRAINING RETREAT SCHEDULE

OPTION 1

NOTE: This schedule includes only the evangelism material to be presented. Of course, other retreat-type activities should be scheduled: free time, recreation, devotions, ample time for rest, etc.

Friday night:

Teaching

- Session #1**
- Evangelism Training #1
Introduction to the Gospel (TO)
(TO = Teaching Outline)

Assignment

Read “What is the Gospel?” (PP)
(at Retreat before morning session)

Saturday Morning

Teaching

- Session #2**
- Evangelism Training #2
What is the Gospel? (TO)
Preparing Your Testimony (TO)

Assignment

Write testimony and give to mentor
for evaluation, revise, if necessary. Do
this during week after Retreat

Saturday Afternoon

Teaching

- Session #3**
- Evangelism Session #3
Presentation of Gospel—Part I (TO)
- Session #4**
- Evangelism Session #4
Presentation of Gospel—Part II (TO)

Assignment

Practice with a friend.

Saturday Evening

Teaching

- Session #5**
- Evangelism Session #5
Presentation of Gospel—Part III (TO)

Assignment

Read *Dealing with Common Questions #6* (Handou)
Write “Ten Most Wanted” List (Do week
after Retreat)

Sunday Morning

Teaching

- Session #6**
- Evangelism Session #6
Common Questions (TO)

Assignment

None

SUGGESTED EVANGELISM TRAINING RETREAT SCHEDULE

OPTION 2 (Less content presented)

NOTE: This schedule includes only the evangelism material to be presented. Of course, other retreat-type activities should be scheduled: free time, recreation, devotions, ample time for rest, etc.

Friday night:

Teaching

- Session #1**
- Evangelism Training #1
Introduction to the Gospel (TO)
(TO = Teaching Outline)

Assignment

Read "What is the Gospel?" (PP)
(at Retreat before morning session)

Saturday Morning

Teaching

- Session #2**
- Evangelism Training #2
What is the Gospel? (TO)
Preparing Your Testimony (TO)

Assignment

Write testimony and give to mentor
for evaluation, revise, if necessary. Do
this during week after Retreat

Saturday Afternoon

Teaching

- Session #3**
- Evangelism Session #3
Presentation of Gospel—Part I (TO)

Assignment

None

Saturday Evening

Teaching

- Session #4**
- Evangelism Session #4
Presentation of Gospel—Part II (TO)

Assignment

Practice with a friend.

Sunday Morning

Teaching

- Session #5**
- Evangelism Session #5
Presentation of Gospel—Part III (TO)

Assignment

Read *Dealing with Common Questions* #6 (Handou)
Write "Ten Most Wanted" List (Do week
after the Retreat)

SUGGESTED EVANGELISM TRAINING RETREAT SCHEDULE

OPTION 3 (shorter retreat)

NOTE: This schedule includes only the evangelism material to be presented. Of course, other retreat-type activities should be scheduled: free time, recreation, devotions, ample time for rest, etc.

Friday night:

Teaching

- Session #1**
- Evangelism Training #1
Introduction to the Gospel (TO)
(TO = Teaching Outline)

Assignment

Read "What is the Gospel?" (PP)
(at Retreat before morning session)

Saturday Morning

Teaching

- Session #2**
- Evangelism Training #2
What is the Gospel? (TO)
Preparing Your Testimony (TO)

Assignment

Write testimony and give to mentor
for evaluation, re-do if necessary. Do
this during week after Retreat

Saturday Afternoon

Teaching

- Session #3**
- Evangelism Session #3
Presentation of Gospel—Part I (TO)
- Session #4**
- Evangelism Session #4
Presentation of Gospel—Part II (TO)

Assignment

Practice with a friend.

Saturday Evening

Teaching

- Session #5**
- Evangelism Session #5
Presentation of Gospel—Part III(TO)

Assignment

Read *Dealing with Common Questions #6* (Handou)
Write "Ten Most Wanted" List (Do week
after Retreat)

A COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE ON GOD AND VALUES

1. What is your occupation/What school do you attend?
2. How old are you? (optional)
3. What is your favorite movie?
4. What is your favorite TV show?
5. What radio station(s) do you listen to?
6. What do you like to do in your spare time?
7. What person has influenced you the most?
8. What is the greatest challenge facing mankind today?
9. How do you determine what is right and what is wrong?
10. Are you now, or have you ever been, involved with a church or religious group?
11. How often do you attend church?
12. Do you feel that church is relevant to everyday life?
13. Do you believe God exists?
14. How would you describe God?
15. Would you like to be closer to God?
16. Who is Jesus Christ?
17. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me."?
18. Would you be interested in hearing what the Bible says about some of the greatest challenges facing us today?

Brief Instructions for Conducting the Community Questionnaire

One person should ask the questions while the other records the answers. It is best if the questionnaire partners take turns, with the more experienced person asking questions first. The recorder is responsible for distributing the literature, gathering information, etc. IMPORTANT! ALWAYS BE POLITE AND RESPECTFUL OF A PERSON'S TIME.

Opening

"Hello, my name is _____ and this is my friend _____".
"We are with a group _____ (your group) _____ assisting the _____ (local church or ministry) in finding out what people in this community think about God and values."
"Could we take just a few minutes and ask you some questions?"
[If "yes"]
Ask the Survey questions.
[If "no"]
Thank them, and ask if you could leave some literature.

Closing #1

[If they answered "yes" to the last survey Q]
"Could we take another minute or so and share some Biblical answers to today's challenges?"
[If "now"]
Share The 4 *Spiritual Laws* booklet
[If "later"]
"Would you like someone from our church to give you a call?" (If yes, get their phone #)
[If "no"]
"This concludes our questions. Thank you for participating, you have been most helpful."
Ask for their name and address
[If "no"]
"Could I leave some literature about our church and the Christian faith?"

Closing #2

[If they answered "no" to the last survey Q]
"This concludes our questions. Thank you for participating, you have been most helpful."
Ask for their name and address
[If "no"]
"Could I leave some literature about our church and the Christian faith?"

INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL

Session #1

Note to Leader: This outline contains the major points to be covered in this session. Use the outline to formulate a lecture, or design a discussion, or some type of interactive session.

GOAL: For a disciple to be motivated to learn to share the Gospel.

I. Introduction

- A. All believers are called to do evangelism, although some have special gifts and calling in this area.
 - 1. General instructions are given to all believers (I Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:5-6; II Corinthians 5:19b-20).
 - 2. Jesus trained His followers as a part of the disciple building process (Matthew 4:19).
 - 3. The early church provides a good model: the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem while other believers did evangelism (Acts 8:1b-4).
- B. Overview of upcoming training:
 - 1. Preparing and writing a testimony
 - 2. Sharing the Gospel
 - 3. Doing follow-up with a new Christian
 - 4. Answering common questions
 - 5. Seeing evangelism as a process

II. Motivations for sharing the Gospel

- A. Obedience - God has commanded all believers throughout all the ages to share the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20, especially "I will be with you to the end of the age").
- B. Privilege - Preaching the Gospel is a treasure that has been entrusted to God's people, and therefore, it is a privilege to share it with others (I Corinthians 9:16-18).
- C. Power - There is power discharged in the preaching of the Gospel, both inherent in the Gospel itself (Romans 1:16) and in the believer through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).
- D. Love - The purest motivation is love for the lost (II Corinthians 5:14).
- E. Spiritual Growth - Evangelism produces spiritual growth in the evangelist (Philemon 6).

- F. Treasure in Heaven - The person who offers eternal life to others stores up treasure in heaven for himself (Matthew 6:19-20).

III. Obstacles to sharing the Gospel

- A. Complacency - Everyone struggles with the problem of inertia, at times. It is often hard to begin sharing your faith, but it is generally easier to keep going once you have started. Being in a group with others who are committed to learning to share their faith helps overcome our complacency.
- B. Fear of rejection - Everyone has a need to be valued, seen as worthy, and tends to avoid rejection.
 - 1. It is important to understand that if we experience rejection as a result of sharing our faith, it is Christ who is being rejected, not us.
 - 2. Most of the time we do not experience rejection but are encouraged by the openness and appreciation of the people with whom we share the Gospel.
 - 3. *Note to leader: Refer back to "Preparation for Evangelism Field Training Experience" and emphasize any reminders you feel are pertinent to the group.*
- C. Satan - Our adversary will try to prevent the Gospel from being proclaimed and those in the world from hearing it (Matthew 13:18-29; II Corinthians 4:3-4). Prayer needs to surround all our efforts to share the Gospel because evangelism is spiritual warfare. The Gospel is the means God uses to free those who are in bondage to Satan.
- D. Lack of knowledge - We often feel inadequate to share the Gospel.
 - 1. We don't feel that we know what to say or how to answer questions that may come up.
 - 2. We need training. Jesus trained His followers, and we need to follow His example.

IV. Role of prayer

- A. Prayer plays a significant role in evangelism, as we ask God to do the things we cannot do and to give us the power and wisdom to do what we need to do.
- B. Paul gives us a four-fold example of how to pray as he requests prayer from other believers for his evangelism.
 - 1. Ask God to open a door for the gospel (Colossians 4:3).
 - 2. Ask God for the power to speak boldly (Ephesians 6:19-20).
 - 3. Ask God for the wisdom to speak clearly (Colossians 4:4).
 - 4. Ask God for the specific words to speak in each situations (Ephesians 6:19).

V. God's role in evangelism

- A. God's role is necessary because no one would come to Him for salvation if left to himself.
 - 1. When Paul was summarizing the condition of man apart from Christ, he concluded that no one seeks God or understands Him (Romans 3:11).
 - 2. Paul also noted that those who are perishing are blinded by Satan (II Corinthians 4:3-4).

- B. What God does in evangelism:
 - 1. He provided his Son as a sacrifice for sin and a way to return to a relationship with Himself (John 3:16-21; I Peter 3:18).
 - 2. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11).
 - 3. He draws men to Jesus (John 6:44).

VI. Man's role in evangelism

- A. We are to be witnesses by the way we live our lives.
 - 1. We are to live holy lives (Matthew 5:48; I Peter 3:15-17).
 - 2. We are to do good deeds (Matthew 14:14-16).
 - 3. We are to reach out in loving ways to non-believers (Matthew 19:19, Colossians 4:5-6).

- B. We are to be witnesses by proclaiming the Gospel.
 - 1. God chooses to use His people as His mouthpiece (Romans 10:14-15,17).
 - 2. We are to be prepared to take the Gospel to the whole world. Jesus prepared His disciples and then commissioned them to do this (Matthew 28:18-20).

Summary: As disciples, God wants us to share the Gospel, out of love for Him and others. He provides the power, the message, the opportunities and even the words, as we are obedient and have compassion for the lost.

Assignment For Next Session: Read the Pocket Principle entitled "What is the Gospel?"

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL? Session #2-A

Note to Leader: This is the outline of the Pocket Principle "What is the Gospel?" that the students were assigned to read for this session (PP can be found on page 25). During this session, focus your teaching only on portions I.B. and II.D. Repentance and faith (on the second page of this outline). The content of this section is particularly important and sometimes misunderstood, and thus, it needs to be emphasized. This discussion of repentance and faith should be approximately 10-15 minutes in length, leaving the remainder of the time for preparing testimonies (using Outline #2-B). Of course, address any questions students have about other portions of the content.

GOAL: For the disciple to understand the Gospel.

I. Introduction: What is the Gospel?

- A. In order to clearly present the Gospel, we must have an accurate understanding of it.

Note to leader: This is a section to emphasize.

- B. In order to challenge others to respond to the Gospel, we need to be able to explain how a person becomes a Christian.**
- 1. This is a bit confusing. We have fallen into a habit of telling people to "receive Christ" in order to become a Christian. "Receiving Christ" describes what happens when a person becomes a Christian, not how one becomes a Christian. Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to dwell inside the believer at salvation. And in that sense, the believer has "received Christ."**
 - 2. Scripture tells us that we must repent and have faith in order to become a Christian (Acts 20:21).**
 - 3. We can tell people that they need to receive Christ; however, we must explain that we receive Christ through repentance and faith.**

II. The parts of the Gospel

- A. God's love and purpose
1. God created man in His own image out of His love and desire to have a mutual relationship with him (Genesis 1:26-27).
 2. Man was God's highest creation. He was created to reflect God, and therefore, to bring glory to God.
 3. God gave man authority to rule over and subdue the earth (Genesis 1:26,28) and made them male and female in order to populate the earth (Genesis 1:28).

4. Man was created to live in a dependent relationship with God who would lead him, help him mature and provide for all his needs.
- B. Man's sin and separation from God.
1. Instead of living in a dependent and trusting relationship with God, man doubted the goodness of God and disobeyed Him (sinned against God - Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-7).
 2. The consequence of sin and rebellion is death (Romans 6:23).
 - a. Man would experience physical death as a result of sin (Romans 5:12) and spiritual death which is separation from God (Ephesians 2:1).
 - b. Man is born with a sin nature, which is a bent against God (Romans 8:7).
 3. All men are under condemnation and cannot save themselves (Romans 3:19-20, 23).
 4. This is the bad news.
- C. Christ's sacrifice for sin
1. Since man could not save himself, God, in His great love, reached out to man by providing the way of salvation from sin and condemnation (Ephesians 2:4-5). His goal was to reconcile man to Himself (Romans 5:11).
 2. God provided for man's salvation by sending His Son to die as man's substitute (I Peter 3:18). Christ's sacrifice gave man the opportunity for forgiveness and the possibility of receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 3:19).
 3. Through Christ, God offers salvation to all men. But, salvation is more than just forgiveness. It is the offer of an abundant and purposeful life in this world and eternal life with Christ (John 3:16, 10:10b).
 4. This is the good news.

Note to leader: This is a section to emphasize.

D. Repentance and faith

1. **To receive the provision God has offered, man must repent of his sins and put his faith in Christ alone for salvation (Acts 20:21).**
2. **Repentance is the appropriate response to the bad news (Acts 3:19).**
 - a. **The OT word for repentance is "shubv" which means "to turn."**
 - b. **The NT word for repentance is "metanoeo" which means "to change one's mind." It does not mean to change one's life. Apart from God's power, man cannot change his life.**
 - c. **The meaning of repentance can be summed up by the phrase "a willingness to change."**
3. **Faith is the appropriate response to the good news (John 3:16).**
 - a. **Faith is placing trust in the fact that what God says He has done through Christ is true.**
 - b. **Faith is expressed in a willingness to follow Christ.**

- 4. Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin. They both describe the same act. As a person is turning away from sin, he is turning to Christ at the same time.**

Summary: A disciple must know the elements of the Gospel in order to understand it:

- God's love and purpose
- Man's sin and separation from God
- Christ's sacrifice for sin
- Repentance and faith

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Session #2-A

My children often ask me (Jack) to help them with their math. Although I have a strong math background, there have been many times I have not been able to solve the problems. In those situations, I have to go back and study the chapter before I can help with the homework. It is very difficult to show someone else how to do something until you understand it well yourself. The same is true of the Gospel. We must have a sufficient understanding of it before we will be able to adequately explain it to others.

The goal of this session is to discuss the parts of the Gospel, to be sure it is clearly understood. There is one area in particular in which there has been

We must explain to people how to receive Christ through repentance and faith.

confusion. It is in the terminology commonly used to explain how to become a Christian. We often tell a person that he needs to “receive Christ” in order to become a Christian.

“Receiving Christ “ actually describes what happens as a result of becoming a Christian, rather than instructing how to become a Christian. If a person is told he needs to receive Christ, his next question should be

“how do I do that?” The answer to this question is “repent and put your faith in Christ”. In other words: “You need to turn from your sins (repent) and trust in Christ for salvation (faith). “ The result of doing this will be that you “receive Christ.” That is, Jesus Christ will come to dwell inside the Christian through His personal representative, the Holy Spirit.

The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Acts 20:21 where he summarizes his appeal to all men,

I have declared to both Jews and Gentiles that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

With this point in mind, it is fine to tell people that they need to receive Christ, but we must also explain how to receive Christ through repentance and faith.

The Four Parts to the Gospel

God's Love and Purpose

The Gospel begins on a positive note. I have heard that when Bill Bright wrote the Four Spiritual Laws he originally started it by talking about man’s sin problem. But at the last minute before it went to press, he added the first law, which is a positive message of God’s

love for man and purpose for His existence. It says, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." This was a wise addition for the Gospel should start with the positive intent of God toward those He created.

Jesus, our best example of ministry, started His witnessing experiences in a positive way as well. When talking to Nicodemus, He began by telling him that he needed to be "born again" to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3). In saying this Jesus was communicating that God wanted to give Nicodemus a new birth, a new life. Jesus went on to explain what it meant to be born again, but He began with a positive statement of what God wanted to do for Nicodemus. Likewise, in John chapter four Jesus began talking to the woman

When we share the gospel with another person we should tell him first of God's loving intent toward him.

at the well by telling her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." He started with the positive. God wants to give you living water that can cause you to never be thirsty again and will well up to eternal life (John 4:10-14).

There are many ways to start the Gospel message with the positive. God originally created man in His own image out of His love and desire to have

a mutual relationship with him (Genesis 1:26-28). Man was God's highest creation. He was created to reflect God, and therefore, to bring glory to God. God gave man authority to rule over and subdue the earth. He made them male and female in order to populate the earth and to better reflect His image. These are all positive statements of what God created mankind to be. There was purpose and meaning to their existence. God also created man to live in a dependent relationship with Him where He would take a loving fatherly role with them. He would lead man, help him mature and provide ways for his needs to be met.

When we share the Gospel with another person we should tell him first of God's loving intent toward him. He needs to know that God desires a relationship with him before he hears the bad news about the situation he is in.

Man's Sin and Separation from God

Instead of living in a dependent and trusting relationship with God, man doubted God's goodness and disobeyed Him (Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-7). The Bible calls this rebellion sin. Sometimes sin manifests itself as indifference toward God, but whatever form it takes, sin is the opposite of trusting God and has led to a separation from God. The consequence of sin is death (Romans 5:12, 6:23). The death referred to here is not just physical death, but also spiritual death. From the moment Adam sinned

he began to die physically, and he also died spiritually.

All men have this sin problem (Romans 3:23). Because of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden, we are all born with a sin nature that is selfish and bent against God—we are all sinful and separated from God. We are dead spiritually and unable to respond to God. Although we sense that there is something wrong, something missing, nothing we do to fill that hole seems to work. Blaise Pascal put it this way, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of all men that can only be filled by Jesus Christ."

There is nothing any man can do to save himself. Commenting on the hopeless condition of mankind, Paul said we are "without hope and without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12)." Man's sin problem was in the way of his relationship with God. Something had to be done to take care of that sin problem.

Christ's Sacrifice for Sin

God wanted to reconcile man to Himself, but He needed to be true to Himself. He could not just overlook man's sin problem because His holy and just nature demanded a payment for sin. Since man could not make that payment himself and still live, God made the payment of death for him by sending His son to die. God did for man what he could not do for himself.

God sent His one and only son as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus came to this world and lived life just as we do, in order to become a worthy sacrificial substitute for us. The penalty for sin is death. Jesus, our perfect substitute who was without sin, died in our place in order to provide a way to God. In this sacrificial act we see God's immeasurable love and grace as well as His incredible brilliance.

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God (I Peter 3:18).

Jesus' death was for all of mankind, the whole world (John 3:16). It was sufficient for all men, but it was only effective for some. Something was required of man to receive what God had done through Christ.

Repentance and Faith

There once was a man who was condemned to die in the electric chair. At the last moment the Governor called granting the man a pardon. The man,

God offered us a pardon, but it must be received, and it must be received in the way God prescribes.

however, said, "Thanks, but no thanks. I want to die." No one knew what to do so the courts had to decide. It eventually reached the Supreme Court which ruled that

a person can be offered a pardon, but it

must be received to be effective. So, the man was executed.

In the same way, God has offered us a pardon, but it must be received, and it must be received in the way God prescribes. God has told us that it is received through repentance and faith (Acts 20:21). Salvation is received in this manner whether in the New Testament or the Old. Therefore it is imperative that we understand the meaning of repentance and faith.

There are two important words, one Old Testament and one New Testament, that are translated “repentance.” The Old Testament word is “shubv”, and it means “to turn.” The New Testament word is “metanoeo” which means “to change one’s mind.” It does not mean to change one’s life. Only God can change a person’s life. So the meaning of repentance must incorporate both the OT and NT meanings. It must involve turning from sin to God and changing one’s mind. The simplest phrase that captures both meanings is “a willingness to change.” It does not mean an ability to change because repentance is not a work. Ephesians 2:8-9 clearly says that salvation is by grace alone, and that it is not a work.

Whereas repentance is focused on our relationship to sin, faith is focused on our response to Christ and what God accomplished through Christ’s death and resurrection. Faith is the ability to place trust in the fact that what God

says He has done through Christ is true. It is believing that Christ’s sacrifice for sins was for me. It is expressed in a “willingness to trust Christ alone for salvation and to follow Christ.”

Repentance is the appropriate response to the bad news of man’s sinfulness and separation from God. Faith is the appropriate response to the good news of Christ’s sacrifice for our sins. Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. They both describe the same act from two different perspectives. As a person is turning away from sin (repentance), he is turning to Christ (faith) at the same time.

Conclusion

Once we fully understand the parts of the Gospel, we can clearly present it to others. But no matter how clearly we present the Gospel, a person will not repent and come to faith unless God convicts the person that it is true. Fortunately, God continues to this day to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11) and to draw men to Himself (John 6:44).

HOW TO PREPARE AND GIVE A TESTIMONY

Session #2-B

(adapted from Campus Crusade for Christ)

GOAL: For a disciple to be able to clearly and concisely present his testimony in a way that is interesting and points to Christ.

Note to Leader: An effective way to begin this portion of session #2 is to give your own testimony give or ask an experienced person to give theirs. Be careful to follow the guidelines that you will give your disciples so that you will provide a good model for them to follow.

After the testimony, present the following information. This portion of the session should take approximately 30-45 min.

I. Introduction

- A. Careful organization is one of the keys to effective presentation of any subject matter.
- B. A carefully prepared testimony, given in the power of the Holy Spirit, can be used effectively in nearly every witnessing situation.
- C. A testimony should present Christ clearly, attractively, and in a comfortable, simple manner so that those who hear will want to understand how to know Him personally.
- D. A concise and carefully worded three-minute testimony will communicate far more effectively than a lengthy message that includes extraneous material which will distract from, rather than emphasize, the point of personal commitment to Christ.

II. Preparation

- A. As you begin to prepare your testimony, ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance (James 1:5).
- B. Look at sample testimonies (See handouts).
- C. Remember, the same Christ lives in you whether you trusted Him early or later in life. Do not be concerned that your testimony be exciting, just that it be interesting.

- D. You will be asked to write out your testimony. This will force you to think it through carefully.

III. Important Elements to Include

- A. Choose something characteristic of your experience which is of general interest to non-Christians. Build your testimony around a theme: success, money as the answer, dreams of the future, God's personal plan for me, what I want most out of life, desire to help others, etc.
- B. Follow a three- or four-point outline (see Chronological and Thematic Testimonies Handout)
- C. Begin with an interesting, attention-getting sentence which might require a question mark or exclamation point. Close with a good conclusion. Include relevant, thought-provoking facts and experiences.
- D. Talk (write) in such a way that others will feel associated with you in past and present experiences. You may have several different testimonies. That is, your testimony can be built around different themes in different situations. Use the testimony most appropriate to the audience you are addressing. For example, if you are talking to a church group, you might begin by talking about growing up in the church, but not understanding what a real Christian was.
- E. Emphasize that what made the difference in your life was accepting Christ as Savior and making Him Lord and Master of your life. Keep in mind someone else should be able to trust the Lord through your testimony.
- F. Be realistic, but positive. Christ does not eliminate all problems, but enables you to face them with peace and confidence.
- G. If you use a Scripture verse, use no more than one.
- H. Edit your written testimony carefully. Don't ramble. Rewrite and/or shorten as necessary before final draft.

IV. What to Avoid When Writing and Giving Your Testimony:

- A. Avoid making statements which reflect negatively on the church and other organizations or people.
- B. Avoid mentioning denominations, especially in a derogatory way.
- C. Avoid using stereotypes. Be yourself — don't try to copy others.
- D. Avoid using words that are meaningless (or may be offensive) to non-Christians. Terms like “salvation,” “saved,” “born again,” and “conversion,” need to be defined, if used at all. (See Handout entitled “Language Barriers.”)
- E. Avoid using poor posture (crossing your feet, standing on one foot, leaning on podium) or exhibiting nervous habits (especially with your hands).
- F. Avoid being long-winded, and using unnecessary words. Get to the point. Adhere strictly to the time schedule if there is one.

V. How to Share Your Testimony:

- A. Share your testimony with loving enthusiasm in the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
- B. Speak loudly and clearly in a natural, relaxed tone of voice .
- C. Avoid mannerisms when you speak, such as rubbing your nose, jingling coins in your pocket, swaying, clearing your throat, and using “uh's” and “ah's.”
- D. Avoid arguing and other high pressure methods of getting a “decision” for Christ. Remember, men are “born of the Spirit”, not through the persuasiveness or logic of men; though God may use both.
- E. Smile often! Ask God to give you a happy, radiant countenance.
- F. Memorize your testimony and practice it until it becomes natural.

Assignment:

If this evangelism training is being given during weekly Ministry Training sessions, give the students the following assignment. The role of the mentor is critical in this training. Be sure students have all of the handouts.

If this evangelism training is being given during a weekend retreat, give the students the same assignments, but they obviously cannot be done until after the retreat is over. Again, the role of the mentor is very important! (See "Preparation for the Evangelism Field Training" beginning on page 5 of this Manual.)

1. Write a 3-5 minute testimony using the Testimony Worksheet and the Guidelines for "Chronological and Thematic Testimonies". (Choose either the Chronological or Thematic outline for your testimony.)
2. Turn the written testimony in to your mentor before next week so that he can critique it. Make any changes/adjustments he suggests.
3. Make specific plans with your mentor to share your testimony. It is wise to begin with "safe" groups of people such as your Sunday School class, the Ministry Training group, etc.. Other possibilities to consider are: sharing it with people on church visitation calls, at outreach events (with a large group or with an individual), at a small group bible study, with a non-Christian at work, with a non-Christian at an appointment with your mentor, etc.

It is important to share your testimony often enough so that you become comfortable talking about how you came to know Christ and can adapt your testimony (in length and focus) to whatever situation arises.

CHRONOLOGICAL AND THEMATIC TESTIMONIES

Adapted from *Master Life* by Avery T. Willis, Jr., (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 126.

A. Chronological Testimony

One of the most common approaches to writing your testimony is to do it chronologically. This approach is better when enough significant experiences happened before your conversion to distinguish clearly between your life before and after conversion.

Basic Chronological Outline

1. My life and attitudes before I followed Christ.
2. How I realized that God was speaking to me.
3. How I became a Christian.
4. What being a Christian means to me.

Alternative Chronological Outline

(from *Campus Crusade for Christ*)

1. Before I received Christ I lived and thought this way.
2. How I received Christ.
3. After I received Christ, these changes took place.
4. Pertinent or favorite verse with which I might close.

B. Thematic Testimony

If you became a Christian as a child and/or do not remember enough significant events before your conversion for the other person to identify with, then you may choose the thematic approach. In that case, begin by focusing on an experience, problem, issue or feeling, such as fear of death, a desire for success, a basic character flaw, a search for identity, or a crisis. In this case, you will use the flash back approach.

Basic Thematic Outline

1. A theme, need or problem
2. How I became a Christian
3. What being a Christian means to me/how becoming a Christian met the need, helped with the problem, etc.

TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

Chronological

BEFORE I RECEIVED CHRIST I LIVED AND THOUGHT THIS WAY:

HOW I RECEIVED CHRIST:

AFTER I RECEIVED CHRIST, THESE CHANGES TOOK PLACE:

TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

Thematic

BEFORE I RECEIVED CHRIST I HAD THIS PROBLEM OR NEED:

HOW I BECAME A CHRISTIAN:

AFTER I BECAME A CHRISTIAN, THIS IS HOW GOD MET THIS NEED / HELPED WITH THIS PROBLEM:

OR

WHAT BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS TO ME:

Sample Testimony #1

(edited to first person from Worldwide Challenge magazine)

The fight was on! Everybody gets hooked on something ... and I was hooked on fishing. The hard jerk on my line made my heart jump, and I could tell that weekend escape to the lakes outside Indianapolis would yield a prize catch.

Here I thought I had found serenity, as my 15-foot boat sputtered to a stop and I enjoyed the solitude of the deep, dark-blue lake. Now I enjoyed fishing even more than I did several years ago -- but in a different way. That's because my wife Becky, had a spiritual awakening. Since then, this fisherman has been following the Lord as my Savior.

Before I became a Christian, I had observed my wife's changed life. Although she had been a believer since childhood, Becky had not really shown it. She resented me not including her in my fishing expeditions and argued with me all the way out the door every time I left. Later, however, Becky recommitted her life to Christ during a *Here's Life*, Indianapolis. She began to shower me with love and affection.

She also displayed genuine interest in how well I had done every time I returned from a fishing trip. She was happy to see me when I got home. I began to feel guilty and thought I should show more concern for her. Then I offered to take the family to church one Sunday. There I discovered others -- including several fellow fishermen -- who seemed to enjoy being in church. As I continued attending services there for several months, I noticed these people exhibited true love and peace. I knew I needed what they had, but I didn't know how to get it.

Then one afternoon, as the pastor was visiting with us in our living room, he asked me if I was a Christian. I didn't know how to answer. "Would you like to be?" the pastor continued. With a definite "yes" I responded. Then he explained the gospel to me until I understood. At that moment, I made the decision to trust Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Since that summer afternoon in 1978, I have become bold in sharing my faith. As vice-president of the four Naturalizer Shoe Stores in my area, I eagerly share Christ's love. I slip a pamphlet of my testimony into shoeboxes whenever I make a sale, and also share it with friends, waitresses and store clerks.

As local president of the Gideons, one day I helped hand out 9,000 New Testaments to Purdue University students. Another rewarding experience has been serving as counselor for the Bill Glass Prison Ministry, witnessing to individual prisoners.

Accepting Christ into my life has bought me new pleasures as a family man. I now take my wife and two children fishing on occasion. Somewhere on a placid lake, I may throw out my fishing line -- perhaps with a friend or two. Now I am hooked on being a fisher of men.

Rob Englin
Indianapolis, Indiana

Sample Testimony #2

(edited to first person from Worldwide Challenge magazine)

It was the last thing I expected! The totally exciting feeling which now describes my life and ministry for Jesus Christ began one quiet night as I casually opened a Bible.

As a high school freshman, I thought being a Christian meant attending choir, Sunday School, vacation Bible School and praying on Sundays and Wednesdays. Then one night, unable to sleep, I picked up a copy of the Living Bible.

Flipping to the New Testament, I read the accounts of Christ's healings. It really scared me when I read about casting out demons. I thought Hell didn't really exist and because God is good, everyone was going to Heaven.

I must have read for two hours that night.

Then I prayed, "Lord, I have sinned. I don't really know what being a Christian is all about, but You say You stand at the door and knock, and if I open that door You will come in. I want You to be in my life."

The first year after that decision, everything I prayed for came through. I got straight A's at school, and also became a cheerleader. God let that happen to show me He could do those things in my life, but I realized there's a lot more to prayer than getting everything I wanted.

Soon after came the disappointments. During my senior year I didn't make the cheerleading team. I prayed, "God, it really hurts, but please give me love for the girls who made it." That was probably the first time I really experienced His strength.

Then my mother died in August of 1979 in a car accident. My father had just undergone open-heart surgery the month before following a near-fatal heart attack that spring. When my friends wondered how I could be so strong during those ordeals, I knew I drew my strength from Christ, strength I never knew I had.

That strength was also demonstrated two months later when as a junior at the University of Arizona, I was being interviewed during the Homecoming Queen contest. The question: "If you could go back in history and talk with the person whom you could learn the most, who would it be?"

"Jesus Christ," I answered.

Afterward, the student who asked me the question (the only Jewish member of the 13-member panel) told me, "You got my vote because you took a stand for Christ. I was just waiting for somebody to talk about Christ."

That year God brought me many opportunities to take a stand for Him, and the strength He gave me after my mother's death was something "opportune" to share with others. I also

continued to attend a Bible study in my sorority, although I wasn't committed to it because I was content with where I was with my faith.

Then, during a spring retreat, I was challenged by a message on satanic influences in our society. It really hit me then. I started praying that when I got back I'd really start seeking God.

The following Summer I took part in a Leadership Training Class (LTC) Bible study and was impressed by the true leadership I found there. I knew fellowship existed, but I thought it was only a camp-type thing, where you come away and it's all over.

But it wasn't all over. During my senior year I became involved in an action group and continued LTC. Recently I have experienced the joy of leading a woman to Christ. I was so excited just to know God was using me to help her ask someone as glorious as Christ into her life.

Now I am thinking about joining the campus ministry of a Christian organization after graduation instead of going to veterinary school. At first I thought I'd go into my own profession and have a ministry through that. But I don't think I want to sacrifice another four years of diligent study if I can't give myself wholeheartedly to ministry. Christ has instilled in me the attitude Paul speaks of in Philippians 1:21: "For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Sandy Frey
Tucson, Arizona

LANGUAGE BARRIERS WORKSHEET

Explain the following terms in your own words, as if you were talking with someone who had no biblical or church background. Do not use any of the words listed in any of your explanations. Use synonyms where possible or a short phrase; no long sentences.

1. lost -

2. saved -

3. born again -

4. repent -

5. justified -

6. atonement -

7. propitiation -

8. spiritual -

9. holy -

10. sin -

11. salvation -

12. saving faith -

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL—Part I

Session #3

(adapted from Campus Crusade for Christ)

GOAL: For a disciple to be able to share the Gospel with a non-believer in a confident, clear manner.

Note to Leader: [Instructions to the leader are in bold italics. Content to be taught to students is in regular print.]

To begin this session, share one of your first witnessing experiences with your students. Be honest about the experience. If you were nervous, admit it. If possible, choose an experience that had some humor in it. The purpose of telling this experience is to engage your students and focus their attention on sharing the Gospel. This is a lengthy lesson so time must be used wisely. There is some information that will probably best be covered by lecture (in regular print), but most of the lesson is interactive.

I. Introduction of the 4-Laws

- A. Most of us know what we believe but have difficulty communicating our faith to someone else.
- B. We will be using the 4-Laws booklet in our training. The statements in this booklet have been worded to communicate to a non-Christian how one can know Christ personally.
- C. Everything a person needs to know in order to receive Christ is included in the 4-Laws booklet.
- D. **KEY IDEA:** Success in witnessing is simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God!! *(Remind students of this often.)*

II. 4-Laws Demonstration

- A. *At this point, ask one person to help you. Ask this person to respond in a positive way, giving the "right" answers.*
- B. *Proceed by sharing the 4-Laws with this person. Give the 4-Laws exactly as you will ask your students to. Hold the booklet so the person you are sharing with can see it and follow along as you point to the words you are reading with your finger or a pencil as you read.*

III. Benefits of the 4-Laws approach

- A. It begins with a positive: “God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.”
- B. It clearly presents the claims of Christ.
- C. It includes an invitation to receive Christ.
- D. It gives the sharer confidence because you know what you are going to say and how you are going to say it.
- E. It enables the sharer to stay on the subject or get back to it.
- F. It makes it possible to be brief.
- G. It is a “transferable technique” for presenting Christ to others.
- H. It gives you at least three possible presentations of the Gospel, suitable to the amount of time you have to share:
 - 1. Give just the Laws: very brief
 - 2. Give the Laws and references: longer time
 - 3. Give the laws and Scriptures: unlimited time available

IV. 4-Laws Practice

- A. *Pair up the students, and inform them that the purpose of the practice is to become familiar with the contents of the booklet and to give them confidence in reading it aloud. For these reasons, they should read it as it is written.*
- B. *Explain that each will present the 4-Laws to the other, and that you will let them know when they are halfway through the time period so that the other partner can share. Tell them to actually read the contents of the booklet without any additions and to avoid making it difficult for the partner. Problem areas will be dealt with at a later time. Tell them to read through the prayer (page 10).*
- C. *Remind them that: Success in witnessing is simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God!!*
- D. *Get feedback about their experience. Keep feedback brief.*

V. Memorization of 4 Laws

A. Memorizing the 4 Laws, the Scripture references that go with them (John 3:16, John 10:10, etc.) and the transitions at the bottom of each page is a very helpful exercise. Having them memorized will enable you to be more at ease while you share the Gospel. Also, if you find yourself without a 4 Laws booklet, you can share the Gospel using just the Bible!

B. *Give your students 60-90 seconds to look over the 4 Laws and begin to memorize them.*

C. *Choose one of the following methods to help your students memorize the 4 Laws, the Scripture references and the transitions.*

1. *Have the students repeat in unison with you each of the laws, the accompanying Scripture references and the transitions.*

OR

2. *Divide the students into pairs and have them practice repeating the 4 Laws, the accompanying Scripture references and the transitions to each other from memory.*

Law 1 God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life. John 3:16, John 10:10
Why is it that most people are not experiencing the abundant life?
Because. . .

Law 2 Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life. Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23
The third law explains the only way to bridge this gulf. . .

Law 3 Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know God's love and plan for your life. Romans 5:8, I Corinthians 15:3-6, John 14:6
It is not enough just to know these three laws. . .

Law 4 We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives. John 1:12, Ephesians 2:8,9, John 3:1-8

VI. Next session: Will continue with the 4-Laws

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL—Part II

Session #4

(adapted from Campus Crusade for Christ)

GOAL: For a disciple to be able to share the Gospel with a non-believer in a confident, clear manner.

Note to Leader: [As before, instructions to the leader are in bold italics. Content to be taught to students is in regular type.]

I. Introduction and Review

- A. In the previous session, we discussed and role-played the Four Spiritual Laws through Law 4. In this session, we will continue beginning with the circles on page 9.
- B. Briefly review the Four Laws
 1. God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.
 2. Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.
 3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.
 4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

REMINDER: Success in witnessing is simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

II. Demonstration - Circles (page 9)

- A. *The circles on page 9 need special attention in this training. You will need an assistant to help you who has been briefed prior to the session.*
- B. *Begin the demonstration by reading at the top of page 9, explaining the circles, and ask the question "which circle represents your life?"*
 1. *If he responds "left circle," continue with the demonstration showing how, in response, you would simply tell the student to continue reading the booklet and move on into the prayer. When demonstrating STOP JUST BEFORE THE PRAYER.*

2. *If he responds “not sure” or “in-between,” explain to the students that you simply go on to the next question and the prayer.*
 3. *If he responds, “right circle, say “I would like to finish the booklet so that you can also use it to share your faith with someone else. After you have gone through the prayer, say, “Have you ever committed your life to Christ in this way?” If he has not, simply lead him in the prayer as you would anyone else. Explain to the students that not everyone who says that he is in the right-hand circle actually is. Sometimes people do not understand exactly what you mean. By using this approach and going through the prayer, we can help people to be sure of their commitment to Christ.*
- C. *“Which circle would you like to have represent your life? Do not demonstrate these, but simply explain to the students how to respond to the various answers.*
1. *If the person answers, “the one on the right,” simply continue on into the prayer.*
 2. *If the person answers, “not sure,” or “the left circle,”*
 - a. *Maintain a positive and loving attitude*
 - b. *Say, “If at sometime you decide that you want your life to be represented by the circle on the right, let me show you how you can invite Christ into your life.” Continue through the booklet.*

III. Practice - Circles

- A. *Again, pair up the students and give them a few moments to practice their responses to these questions. Allow them to choose which response they want to give and ask the other to reply as explained.*
- B. *Then, ask the other partner to give another response and practice answering as explained.*

IV. Demonstration of Receiving Christ Through Prayer (Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?— p.10)

Ask one person to help you demonstrate this point.

- A. *Demonstrate a “yes” answer. Read the statement “If it does, I invite you to pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.” Then pray with the person. Ask him if he would like to pray out loud with you or pray silently as you pray out loud.*
- B. *Then demonstrate a “no” answer. Maintain a positive and loving attitude. Say, “Let me show you what would happen if you did ask Christ to come into your life.” Proceed by going over*

the steps on assurance (pp. 11 and 12), and give the person another opportunity to pray.

If he still does not wish to pray, be sure to leave him with the understanding that this is a decision that he may want to make later. Encourage him to re-read the booklet later.

C. *Pair up the students and give them time to practice their responses to the prayer.*

V. **Demonstration of Assurance**

A. When we share Christ with others we have the unique privilege of seeing them “become new” in Christ.

B. We also have a unique responsibility of assuring the new believer that his relationship with Christ is secure, by faith alone. (Ephesians 2:8,9)

C. Some people pray over and over to receive Christ because

1. they want to be kind to the person sharing with them.
2. they have never felt that Christ is alive within them.
3. they did not receive full assurance when they prayed before.

D. *Demonstrate “How to Know that Christ is in Your Life,” “The Bible Promises Eternal Life and “Do Not Depend on Feelings.”*

E. *Pair up the students and let them practice the “Assurance” section.*

Assignment For Next Session: *Ask the students to share the 4 Laws with a friend before the next session. They might approach the friend this way: “I am attending training (or a seminar) and one of our assignments is to share this booklet with a person and get his opinion. Can I get your opinion? Have you heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?”*

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL—Part III

Session #5

GOALS: For a disciple to be able to follow-up a Christian in his new faith.
For a disciple to learn how to think through ways of turning a conversation to spiritual issues and begin focusing prayer on specific non-Christians

I. *Brief Review—Have the students recite the 4-Laws and the Scripture references with you from memory.*

Law 1 God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life. John 3:16,
John 10:10

Law 2 Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life. Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23

Law 3 Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know God's love and plan for your life. Romans 5:8, I Corinthians 15:3-6,
John 14:6

Law 4 We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives. John 1:12,
Ephesians 2:8,9, John 3:1-8

II. The Importance of Follow-Up

A. Give an example of a person in your life who was influential in helping you understand the Christian life better.

B. Definition of follow-up: instructing and equipping someone for the Christian walk. “spiritual pediatrics”

C. Follow-up is the beginning point of disciple building. Christ-likeness is the goal of growing as a disciple. (Romans 8:29)

1. Growth is God's responsibility (Philippians 1:6)

2. Our responsibility is to:

a. Pray (Colossians 1:9-11).

b. Care; love (I Thessalonians 2:7-12).

c. Share the Gospel.

d. Be an example (Philippians 3:17).

III. Demonstration of Immediate Follow-up

- A. *Read through the 4 Laws booklet from the prayer to the end. Explain the immediate follow-up that takes place as soon as a person has prayed to receive Christ. Show the students the need for spending time in that section to help the person see clearly his new relationship with God (p.13) and suggestions for Christian growth (p.14).*
- B. Emphasize the importance of attending church and of having Christian fellowship.
- C. Arrange an appointment with the person within 48 hours and continue follow-up. Tell him that you want to interact with him regarding any questions that might come to his mind about his new relationship with Christ and help him develop this new relationship.
- D. *Pair up the students and give them time to practice the "follow-up" section of the 4 Laws.*

IV. Introduction to Extended Follow-Up: WDA has Follow-Up studies on the basic truths a new believer needs to understand early in his Christian life.

- A. *Pocket Principles* that can be read by the new believer and then discussed with a mentor cover these topics: assurance of salvation (2 studies), baptism, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. (There are *Teaching Outlines* that accompany these *Pocket Principles*.)
- B. *Bible study materials* that can be used one-to-one or in a small group cover these topics: 1) *Who is God?* about the character of God: His holiness (and our response in repentance and faith; His justice and righteousness, His love, mercy and grace; and 2) *Getting Started* about the means of growth available to a new believer: the Word and prayer, fellowship and worship, the Spirit-filled life, walking in the Spirit, and baptism.

V. Turning a Conversation to Christ

- A. *Share an example from your own life when God gave you an opportunity to turn the conversation to Christ.*
- B. Ask "Are you interested in spiritual things?"
- C. Ask "Would you help me by giving me your opinion on the 4 Spiritual Laws?"
- D. "May I share with you a message that has meant a great deal to me—a booklet

entitled the 4 Spiritual Laws?”

- E. Look for a felt need that person has. Then share how Christ could help meet that need. (Share how Christ has met a similar need in your own life, if possible.)

VI. Making Evangelistic Contacts

- A. Pray for divine appointments. Pray that God would supernaturally bring individuals your way to share with and that He will open your eyes to see opportunities.
- B. Use an upcoming event at your church as an opportunity to invite a non-Christian friend.
- C. Plan a children's program in your neighborhood centered around a theme such as Easter, harvest celebration, Christmas, etc.
- D. Participate in your church's visitation program.
- E. Conduct an informal questionnaire in your neighborhood seeking people's opinions about spiritual matters. Use as an opportunity to share your testimony.
- F. Ask God to bring to your mind the "Ten Most Wanted" evangelistic contacts in your life. List them, and begin to pray regularly for these people.

VII. If there is time, have several students share their testimonies with the group.

Assignments For Next Session:

1. Read the handout entitled *Dealing with Common Questions People Ask* It is very important that students complete this assignment. In order to participate in next week's session students will need to be familiar with information in this handout. They should bring the handout to the session.
2. Students write their own "Ten Most Wanted" list of evangelistic contacts and begin praying for them regularly. Share the list with their mentor.

DEALING WITH COMMON QUESTIONS

Session #6

GOAL: For a disciple to be able to answer, in a loving, calm manner, the common questions that non-believers ask.

Note to Leader: [As before, instructions to the leader are in bold italics. Content to be taught to students is in regular print.]

This session begins with information to be communicated to the students by lecture (points I and II). The rest of the session is interactive.

I. Attitude is very important when dealing with a person's objections to Christianity.

- A. Communicate an attitude of love and respect while disagreeing about philosophy and ideas.
- B. Accept the person even though you do not accept his beliefs. Do not try to force a person to believe or make a decision.
- C. Do not argue. Arguing promotes competition and contention.
- D. Remember that non-verbals (such as body language, eye contact, etc.) communicate as much as your words do.
- E. Be genuine. Ask God to work in you to love the person you are sharing with.

II. What to do with intellectual objections

- A. Intellectual objections may be a smoke-screen designed to protect the person. But at the same time, they may indicate that the person is hurting and in need of love and attention, or the person may have legitimate intellectual questions.
- B. God must be the One to convict the person of the Truth. Don't depend on your own ability to persuade. Spiritual forces are at work.
- C. Because spiritual forces are at work, prayer is an essential weapon to use.
- D. Ask God for the grace to continue to love the person regardless of his response.

III. Refer to the Handout entitled “Personal Objections Non-Christians Have to Becoming Christians”.

- A. Give examples of some of the objections from your own experience. Ask the students to add some also.
- B. Assignment for coming week: Read over the objections, look up and become familiar with the verses.

Note to Leader: The remainder of this session deals with the questions and objections often raised by non-Christians. The students should have read the Handout “Dealing with Common Questions People Ask.” Divide the group into pairs, and assign each pair one of the questions. The pairs of students are then given time (5-10 min.) to work up a role play that demonstrates the asking and answering of that difficult question. The role plays are then presented to the group. Discussion and feedback can follow as time allows.

Seven Basic Questions

1. What About Those Who Never Hear About Jesus?
2. Is Christ the Only Way to God?
3. Why Do Innocent People Suffer?
4. How Can Miracles Be Possible?
5. Isn't the Bible Full of Errors?
6. Isn't the Christian Experience Only Psychological?
7. Won't a Good Moral Life Get Me to Heaven?

DEALING WITH COMMON QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

There are many questions that non-believers (and sometimes believers) ask about God and the Christian faith. Here we are addressing seven of the most common questions that arise in discussions about spiritual matters. These answers have been written for the believing Christian who is encountering these questions to use to formulate his response to those who are questioning. For more extensive answers, refer to Paul Little's book How Give Away Your Faith (InterVarsity Press)

(1) What About Those Who Never Hear About Jesus?

Many people worry that, if it takes the conscious decision of *believing in Jesus and turning to Him in repentance* to cover one's sins and be saved, that seems to leave out the masses of people who never hear about Jesus. In some areas of the world there are myriads of people groups who have never heard the gospel. It doesn't seem fair that they would miss heaven just because we couldn't reach them.

First, notice that this worry makes us seem more compassionate than God. In other words, we seem to be more concerned about unreached people than He is. However, we know that He is the One who went to the cross for sinful people, and it is safe to believe that He is more concerned about the lost than any of us will ever be. It is a biblical truth that God is just and merciful, and we can count on Him to do the right thing.

Second, remember that the Bible indicates that there are many ways God gets messages through to people. Sometimes He uses people as His messengers; sometimes He uses angels; sometimes He uses dreams and visions; and so on. In Acts Chapter 17, God used a vision to get Peter to a Gentile (Cornelius) who was ready to repent. There seems to be a principle in the Bible that God will give more light (truth) to those who respond positively to the light (truth) that He has already given to them (e.g., in Creation, as in Psalm 19). We can trust that God will use every avenue possible to bring people to Himself. II Peter 3:9 says that He desires none to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

A third point is that we know that anyone who is in heaven will have gotten there because of Jesus Christ. However, there is much that God hasn't revealed to us about exactly how the blood of Christ is appropriated to all of the saved. For instance, we don't know how God will act with regard to babies who die in infancy, the mentally handicapped, etc. In other words, just because a person hasn't heard about Jesus doesn't mean the blood of Christ cannot be appropriated to them in special circumstances. (E.g., In II Samuel 12:23; King David said, when his first baby with Bathsheba died, that he would see the baby again one day.)

Fourth, remember that often this objection is brought up by people who *have* heard about Christ. We DO know what will happen to those who have heard but have rejected Christ. So, it is important to emphasize what we do know, and then rest in God's goodness, justice, and mercy regarding what we don't know.

Relevant passages: Psalm 19, Acts 10, John 14:6, II Peter 3:9.

(2) Is Christ the Only Way to God?

The crux of this question is usually that it doesn't seem fair for God to exclude a sincere believer of another faith from heaven. What about the sincere Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, or Muslim? Aren't we all trying to get to God in the best way we know how?

This question seems to imply that sincerity is all that is needed for one to go to heaven. This seems to be based on the idea that if our good deeds are greater than our bad deeds when judgment day comes, what difference does it make what religion we adhered to as long as we were seriously trying to follow God as we best we knew Him? At this point, it is important to remember that the Bible's standard for getting into heaven is perfection. No unrighteousness belongs there. "That would make it impossible for us," someone might say. And, that is true. That is why Jesus died for us; because we could not make ourselves fit for heaven – we need His sacrifice to cover all our sins. Do you see why the gospel is such good news?

As far as sincerity goes, remember Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus, an apparently very sincere Jewish leader. Jesus told him that he needed to be born again. Also notice that Paul in Acts 10 encountered some Athenians that he noted were very sincere in their religious practice. He commended what was right in their thinking, but then went on to explain the truth about Jesus to them and why they needed Him to escape judgment. In other words, Paul showed them where they were sincere, but wrong.

If someone is sincerely seeking God and responding positively to the light God has already given them (see Question 1), we can trust that God will send them more light. Having said that, it is also possible (but speculative) that there are today some people in a position similar to the believers in the Old Testament. They know that they have sinned against a most high God; they look to Him to be gracious and forgiving; but they don't know exactly how He will make things right. Our responsibility is to tell people like this about the Messiah that they don't yet know.

Relevant passages: Isaiah 6: 1-7, Acts 10, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, John 14:6, John 3.

(3) Why Do Innocent People Suffer?

This is sometimes given as one of the greatest arguments against Christianity. Basically, it goes like this: (1) *If God is so good, why does He let terribly bad things happen to people who don't deserve them?* Another version goes like this: (2) *If God is all good, and He created everything, then why is there evil? Wouldn't He have created it? Why would an all-good and all-powerful God create evil?* There are more variations of this question, but these are perhaps the two main ones. Many books that have been written attempting to deal with these questions. Below is a very brief summary of a few ideas.

The first question above can be called the *experiential* problem of evil. While the second might be termed the *logical* problem of evil. The book of Job is about the first question, the *experiential problem of evil*.² Job is shown to be suffering horribly, and all of it for nothing that he had done wrong. It turns out in the end that Job realizes that God's knowledge and ways are higher than any human's, and he decides to trust God regardless of how things look. This is the way out of the experiential problem of evil; trusting that God has a higher plan in which it all makes sense and is perfectly just. However, as Job illustrates, this is easier said than done. That's the life of faith. You trust a parent whom you know loves you, even though the parent is allowing some difficult things happen to you. We need to trust God in the same way.

The *logical problem of evil* tries to show that there is a contradiction involved in the following argument:

- (1) God is all-good and all-powerful.
- (2) An all-good God would want there to be no evil.
- (3) An all-powerful God would have the power to eradicate evil.
- (4) There is evil.
- (5) Therefore, God is not both all-good and all-powerful.

In other words, either God wants there to be evil (in which case He is not good), or He is not powerful enough to stop it (in which case He is not omnipotent). This dilemma is solved by maintaining that God is all-good and all-powerful, but that He has reasons to allow evil for a time until He destroys it. The reasons have to do, in part, with the fact that in order for there to be a universe where beings could truly love and follow God, people (and angels) had to be given a choice whether or not to align themselves with God. At the end of the world, God will ultimately judge and destroy evil.

This does not wrap up all the loose ends. To some degree, the origin of evil is a mystery (e.g., Why would a good angel like Satan become evil in a perfect world?). And, the problem of evil takes on new dimensions when we ourselves are suffering. But, the Cross of Christ should be our ultimate refuge concerning the problem of evil. God Himself knows firsthand the experience of unjust suffering. If the ultimate sinless One could suffer so unjustly but bring so much good and blessing to humanity, we can trust that He will eventually bring things to a good conclusion.

² An excellent, popularly written exposition of the book of Job and the problem of evil is Philip Yancey's book *Disappointment With God*.

(4) How Can Miracles Be Possible?

This question seems to be asked more often in parts of the world that have seen many technological advances. Such advances sometimes lead people to think that the world obeys “natural laws” that cannot be broken. Concerning this, the first question to ask yourself is “what is a natural law?” Isn’t it just a description about how the world seems to work most of the time? If so, then *why* does the world work that way most of the time? The important thing to notice about this kind of “why” question is that science, as good and helpful as it can be, cannot answer a question like this. This is because it is not an experimentally testable question of science; you can’t answer a “why” question by just looking at things and making theories. Rather, it is a philosophical question *about* what science is. Therefore, it cannot be answered by the “scientific method.” You have to answer this question by theological/philosophical methods.

From a Christian point of view, what we call the “laws of nature” are observations about how God has made the world and sustains it. If He wants to interrupt the usual framework from time to time, He can do so. In other words, this is really a question about God. As someone has remarked, *if God exists, then miracles are possible.*

The Apostle Paul, in I Corinthians 15, stakes the whole claim of Christianity on the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The Bible unashamedly proclaims certain miracles, but it also records periods of time when there were very few miracles. There wasn’t even a prophet in Israel for 400 years between the times of the Old and New Testaments. God has reasons for doing certain miracles at certain times.

An important observation is that miracles don’t necessarily breed belief in God. For instance, some miracles that Jesus performed were admitted to be miracles by some of the Pharisees, but they attributed His power to perform them to be from Satan. So, if someone tells you that he would believe if only he saw a miracle, that is not necessarily true.

Relevant passages: I Corinthians 12:12; 15, John 11: 1-53, Luke 16: 19-31.

(5) Isn't the Bible Full of Errors?

This objection usually comes from someone who asserts that “everyone knows” the Bible is full of errors. However, when pressed for a particular example, the person is often at a loss for words. So, a good way to get at this objection is to ask, “Which errors do you have in mind?” Then you can work on each alleged error, one at a time.

The Bible does have many hard passages. People have been aware of them for thousands of years. The Bible has been carefully scrutinized by believers and by skeptics, perhaps more so than any other book. But, as someone once said, “After all this time, no one is going to find the passage which makes Christianity come tumbling down.” Over the years Christians have discovered a wealth of reasonable solutions for most of the difficult passages; a good Bible commentary can help you to find many of these explanations.

However, every now and then, you will come upon some difficult passages about which the commentary explanations do not seem very likely to you. The thing to remember is that, although such explanations do not seem likely to you, that does not necessarily make them wrong. As you know from life experience, there are times when seemingly unlikely things turn out to be true. One needs to be very careful before one totally dismisses an explanation that comes from a respected source.

Some difficulties concerning the Bible arise because of translation issues and matters of how copies of the Bible were made. You need to know that there is a whole field of study, called “textual criticism,” which can provide evidence for why it is reasonable to trust many copies of the Scriptures. An excellent place to start learning about textual criticism is the book *A General Introduction to the Bible (Revised and Expanded Edition)* by Norman L. Geisler and William Nix (Chicago: Moody, 1986). An excellent book to help you in understanding how to handle difficult passages is *Hard Sayings of the Bible* by Walter Kaiser, et. al. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996).

There is a wealth of Bible commentary knowledge, from the early church fathers down to the most recent contemporary commentators, available. It would be unwise for you to miss taking advantage of these resources when you come upon alleged errors and contradictions. Tackle them one at a time, praying and trusting that the God of truth will lead you into whatever the truth is. Then, studying, talk to people you trust, and pray it through. It is hard work, but it's worth it. And it will increase your ability to help others also.

(6) Isn't the Christian Experience Only Psychological?

To charge that the Christian experience is only psychological is to say that Christians believe what they do because something in the past has “programmed” them to think that way. There are two main versions of this charge.

Version One: You Were Brought Up That Way

This objection usually goes something like this: “Christianity isn't the only true religion. You only believe in Christianity because you were raised that way. If you had been raised as a Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, or Muslim, you would probably be one of those types of believers.” There are two main problems with this objection. The first is that it doesn't account for conversions to Christ by people who were not brought up with any kind of Christian background. There are people who have been raised in almost every imaginable kind of worldview other than Christianity, who have repented and believed in the Messiah. The second problem is this: just because someone is taught a certain worldview from a young age doesn't necessarily mean that the worldview isn't true. (For instance, just because you are taught multiplication tables at a young age doesn't mean that the multiplication tables aren't true.)

A few believers are somewhat embarrassed that they were taught the Scriptures early on in their childhood because they believe that shows that they didn't come to it by way of their own reasoning. But, that is an unnecessary worry if they come to their own faith in Christ later in life. Actually, it is a great blessing to have had Scriptural truths taught to you from an early age, and a life like that can glorify God and save you a lot of unnecessary pain, heartache, and meaninglessness. That is why the Bible instructs parents to “raise up a child in the way he should go”.

Version Two: Christians' Beliefs Are Just Wishes, Used To Help People Cope with the Harsh Realities of Life

This objection means, “You only believe it because you wish it were true”. This objection has two parts. The first part is that the Christian faith is not grounded in anything of substance. The second part is that the Christian faith is just wishful thinking, a false hope, based on a false desire.

Actually, a Christian response to the first part of this objection might begin by agreeing that Christians shouldn't want to believe anything just because it makes them feel good, or just helps them cope with life. Paul said in I Corinthians 15 that if the resurrection of Christ didn't happen, then we are of all people to be most pitied, because we would have staked our lives on a lie. But, Paul says the resurrection did happen, and he goes on to give evidence for it. This means that we can have intellectual integrity. We don't have to disengage our brains to believe. So, Christians should want to hold beliefs because they have good reasons for believing them to be true.

Secondly, as far as the objection concerning false wish-fulfillment goes, the accusation is that beliefs (like those about heaven) are only held because they are useful fictions to help people get through life. But the reason that the desire (to live with God in a heavenly eternity) is in people is because God implanted that desire in all of us when He created us (e.g., Ecclesiastes 3:11). In other words, it's what we were made for. C. S. Lewis used this argument persuasively in his work *The Weight of Glory*. St. Augustine, an early church father, also said in his book *Confessions* that God has implanted in us a desire for Himself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Him. So, heaven and life with God forever (and His help during this often difficult life) may be seen by some people as wishing, but again, that doesn't mean that it's not true. It is one of the many reasons for believing that it is true.

(7) Won't A Good Moral Life Get Me To Heaven?

This is a variation of Question #2, and it assumes that if you're a basically good person, things will be all right for you in the end. Of course, most people assume that they are basically good. The important question is, "What standard or measuring rod are you using to determine whether or not you are good?"

If you want to measure something, you need some kind of standard against which to compare the object. For instance, if you want to know what an inch is, there needs to be a ruler somewhere that is the standard for a foot or yard, which is divided into inches. If you want to know how far a town is from your town, you need some kind of measurement standard, say miles or kilometers, etc. Similarly, if you want to know if you're good or not, you need a standard of goodness to measure yourself against. (The saying, "Nobody's perfect" is meaningless, unless you have some kind of standard of what perfection is.)

The measurement standard is God the Father, revealed in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Compared to this standard, everyone falls short (e.g., Psalm 130:3; "If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?"). If you want to go to heaven, you must be perfect. There is no unrighteousness or imperfection in heaven. That is why it is so important that Jesus' sacrifice covers our sins, and that His righteousness is given to us. That is why Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again (John 3).

This does not mean that Christians think they are the only moral people. It does mean, though, that all of us, Christians and non-Christians, are incapable of being morally good enough to merit heaven. None of us can say to God, "I have been so good that I deserve for You to give me heaven."

As an analogy, think of a trail up the side of Ethical Mountain. (The higher up on the mountain you are, the more ethical you are.) Now, all people will be on various points of the trail; some more-sincere people will be higher than others, some more-compassionate people will be higher than others, some more truthful people will be higher than others, etc. But, there is a deep chasm in the mountain on the way up that NO ONE will be able to cross. Therefore, no one will ever get to the top, which is perfection. This chasm has been bridged for us by the Cross, and it is the only way to a relationship with God and to heaven (John 14:6).

PERSONAL OBJECTIONS NON-CHRISTIANS HAVE TO BECOMING CHRISTIANS

1. My present lifestyle is sufficient.

I'm doing the best I can.

I think if we are good people and don't hurt anyone, we'll go to heaven.

I go to church, serve on such-and-such committee and was raised in a good home.

I pray to the Lord all the time.

I've always been a Christian.

I joined a church or I have been baptized so I'm already a Christian.

I'm a Baptist, Presbyterian, etc.

Relevant verses:

Ephesians 2;8,9

Isaiah 64:6

Romans 3:23

I Peter 3:18

2. God is a kill-joy.

I will miss out on so much.

God will make me go to Africa or Siberia as a missionary.

Relevant verses:

John 10:10b

John 16:24

3. I see problems with what Christians do.

I've seen too many hypocrites.

What about the Crusades or abortion activities or the rioting in Ireland between Christians and Catholics?

Christians are narrow-minded and non-intellectual.

Relevant verses:

I John 1:8,9

Galatians 5:17

Ephesians 5:11-13

4. I'll do it later.

I'm not interested now.

I'm too young.

I must clean up my life first.

Relevant verses:

Hebrews 9:27

James 4:13-15

5. I'm offended by some things in the Bible.

The violence in the Old Testament where God orders everyone including animals to be killed. That Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to God. What about other religions? (Refer to Paul Little's book *How to Give Away Your Faith* Chapter 6.)

Relevant verses:

John 14:6

I Corinthians 1:22-25

I Peter 2:5-8

EVANGELISM AS A PROCESS—PART I

Session #7

Note to Leader: This outline contains the major points to be covered in this session. Use the outline to formulate a lecture, or design a discussion, or some other type of interactive lesson.

GOAL: For a disciple to understand the necessity of seeing evangelism as a process

I. Introduction: Past tendencies in evangelism

- A. Much evangelism has been event-oriented.
 - 1. This evangelism is revival-based with emotional pressure for a decision.
 - 2. This method is not as effective now as it once was because there is a greater ideological distance between Christians and non-Christians
- B. Most evangelism training is decision-oriented
 - 1. There is aggressive sharing of the gospel with pressure to make a decision now, with no ongoing contact.
 - 2. We call it “raiding party mentality” - Send out a group of evangelists, throw the Gospel at a few people, bag a few and scurry back to the safe haven of the church.
 - 3. But there is a problem: What if the people are not ready to respond to the Gospel? The average believer has heard the gospel seven times before responding.

II. Factors that affect how we do evangelism

- A. There have been changes in the values and presuppositions in Western culture.
 - 1. Examples
 - a. People no longer assume that there is a God or that the Christian view of God is correct.
 - b. Christian values are attacked rather than reinforced by society (e.g. taking “under God” out of the pledge of allegiance).
 - c. The present younger generation is looking for authenticity and genuineness in people.
 - 2. Because of these changes, our culture does not prepare the way for our evangelism as it once did. Now, people are generally farther away from Christ than in the past and more skeptical about Christianity.

- B. We sometimes have misperceptions (wrong thinking) about non-believers.
 - 1. Often Christians are afraid to get too close to non-believers for fear of catching their “diseases” (immorality, greed, drugs, materialism, etc.).
 - a. We already have them (“diseases”), but we also have a remedy.
 - b. There is some danger. The question we need to answer is, “Who is influencing whom?” If non-Christians are influencing us more than we are influencing them, then we need to increase our Christian fellowship and decrease the time we are spending with non-Christians.
 - 2. Christians have a tendency to see non-believers as the enemy.
 - a. Non-believers are not the enemy. The spiritual forces of darkness are (Ephesians 6:12). Non-believers are blinded by Satan but are not the enemy (II Corinthians 4:3-4).
 - b. It is generally wise to stay away from truly evil people, but they are the exception and not the rule.
 - 3. Christians sometimes fear that non-believers will reject them. Scripture says to fear God, not man (Proverbs 29:25).
 - 4. The instruction and example of Jesus
 - a. Jesus was willing to involve Himself in people's lives, whether rich or poor, publican or sinner (Mark 2:15-17; Luke 7:34; John 3:1-8).
 - b. Jesus sent us to do as He did (John 20:21).
 - c. He promises to protect us as we obey Him (John 17:15-17).
- C. Sometimes we build barriers, rather than bridges, between ourselves and non-believers.
 - 1. We tend to associate with non-believers only when we are witnessing to them which sends the message that they only have worth if they give a positive response to our message.
 - 2. We sometimes feel it is wrong to do things that bring us into social contact with non-believers, thus limiting our opportunities to share the Gospel.
 - 3. We appear self-righteous if we refuse to socialize with non-believers while, in reality, we struggle with the same types of problems they have.

III. We need to change our approach to evangelism.

- A. We need to change the way we relate to non-believers.
 - 1. We must spend more time preparing the way for the Gospel by building relationships with non-believers, showing them that we are real and our faith is real.
 - 2. We must build relationships with non-believers, whether or not they are interested in the Gospel (Matthew 22:39).
 - 3. Suggestions:
 - a. Treat everyone with respect and kindness.

- b. Be honest and transparent about struggles.
 - c. Talk about your relationship with Christ in a natural manner when it is appropriate. (E.g. sharing an answer to prayer)
 - d. Put yourself in social situations with non-believers (e.g. a fitness club, in sports, PTA, school functions, a computer class, etc.)
4. Jesus created interest in spiritual ideas by creating “positive confusion.”
- a. “Positive confusion” is created when a Christian makes an intriguing statement or question that generates curiosity, opening a door for further conversation about spiritual issues.
 - b. Example: Jesus, in His discussion with Nicodemus, created an opportunity to share the Gospel by saying that one had to be “born again” in order to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3).
 - c. Example: Jesus again created an opportunity to share the gospel by saying to the woman at the well, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10).
- B. We need to understand that salvation is a process.
- 1. A person comes to Christ over time.
 - a. It is a mistake for Christians to give up on a relationship with a non-believer just because he does not show interest in spiritual things at first.
 - b. There is a point at which a person makes a decision for Christ and becomes a Christian, but there are many important steps that lead up to that decision.
 - c. Having a relationship with a genuine Christian may be an important part of that process.
 - 2. God often uses crises to speed up the salvation process.
 - a. Every person has a belief system. A crisis often shows that the belief system is inadequate, thus creating a crisis of faith.
 - b. When a person can no longer rely on his belief system, he will often become open to new ways of thinking. If he is in a relationship with a Christian, the crisis may offer the opportunity to introduce the person to Christ.

SUMMARY: To effectively reach our culture for Christ we must understand evangelism as a process. In the next session we will develop this idea further.

EVANGELISM AS A PROCESS—PART II

Session #8

Note to Leader: This outline contains the major points to be covered in this session. Use the outline to formulate a lecture, or design a discussion, or some other type of interactive lesson. Because there is so much content in this session a handout entitled “Levels of Openness to Christ” is provided for the student.

GOAL: For a disciple to understand the levels of openness to Christ, be able to evaluate a non-believer's receptivity and plan appropriate action.

I. Introduction:

- A. Believers need to build relationships with non-believers in order to share the Gospel with them and help them through the process of coming to Christ.
- B. Jesus modeled building relationships (John 3:22) and commissioned His followers to do the same (John 17:18).
- C. It is possible to determine how open a person is to Christ, and knowing this, we can determine an appropriate way to relate to him.
- D. The following describes 6 different levels of openness to Christ as well as suggestions about how to relate to people at various levels (adapted from Ralph Neighbor).

II. Level Six - Total Resistance

- A. This person is least open to Christ.
- B. This person may have had a variety of spiritual experiences.
 - 1. He may have never heard the Gospel.
 - 2. He may have heard a distorted Gospel presentation and rejected it.
 - 3. He may have heard a good presentation of the Gospel and still rejected it.
 - 4. He may have had a bad experience with a religious person or group.
 - 5. It is most likely that he won't let anyone talk to him about spiritual truth.
- C. Trying to share the Gospel with this person will not only be ineffective, it may be damaging to your relationship with the person.

- D. Your responsibility
1. You might be able to share your testimony, or a portion of it, with him.
 2. You can speak in a natural way about your beliefs, if you have a relationship with him (e.g. something that God did for you or an answered prayer).
 3. Pray
 - a. That God will help you see and take opportunities to talk about your beliefs in natural situations.
 - b. That God will create an interest in spiritual things.
 - c. That God will give you the ability to love him even if he is obnoxious and offensive.
 4. Since you cannot reason with this person about Christ, you need to touch him with the love of Christ (Luke 6:27-36, Matthew 5:14-16).
 - a. The non-believer needs to experience love in action and to be treated with dignity and respect.
 - b. He needs to see the difference between a believer and a non-believer.
 - c. Be aware of his felt needs, and be there for him in case of a crisis.

III. Level Five - Awareness

- A. This person is aware of Christ in us.
1. In some way he has become aware of Christ in us and cannot deny it. He may simply be aware that there is something different about us that he cannot explain.
 2. For this awareness to be developed, there must be a relationship.
- B. His initial judgment of Christ and Christianity may be negative.
1. He does not see how the Gospel applies to him. It is fine for you but irrelevant to him.
 2. If he is not a religious person, the Gospel will seem foolish to him. If he is religious, the Gospel will seem offensive to him. (I Corinthians 1:23)
- C. Your responsibility
1. Naturally and inoffensively reveal the reality of Christ in your life and in your communication.
 - a. Give your testimony.
 - b. Talk about spiritual matters as a natural part of your conversation.
 - c. Don't act super-religious.
 - d. Don't start an argument about spiritual truth.
 - e. Don't debate theology. Simply state what you believe if the opportunity arises.

2. Tailor acts of love to the non-believer's needs and interests.
 - a. Show interest in what he is interested in (at least ask about it).
 - b. I Corinthians 9:19-23 - Paul says, "I have become all things to all men so by all possible means I might save some" (v. 22).
3. Pray

IV. Level Four - Guarded Receptivity

- A. Curiosity is awakened.
 1. The person's attitude has changed, and he is more open to spiritual issues.
 2. The person may or not be verbal about the change; indications may be subtle.
- B. The non-believer has a need to prove that the believer is authentic.
 1. He may do this by challenging, questioning or probing in a negative way. Or he may just watch you and not say much.
 2. This is a period of testing.
 3. The non-believer may have many distorted ideas about Christianity. He may not like what he sees in Christianity and will probably point it out.
- C. Your responsibility
 1. Don't take what the non-believer says personally.
 2. Avoid arguing or passing judgment.
 3. Don't become discouraged or draw back. Don't cover up Christ in your life.
 4. Don't make excuses for the bad actions of other believers.
 5. Continue to love the person.

V. Level Three - Limited Spiritual Concern (interest)

- A. The person becomes cautiously open and shows measured interest. He wants to know more, but on his terms.
 1. There is greater trust so the person is not so negative.
 2. A desire for more information develops as the person sees your values in contrast to his own. He is undergoing a re-evaluation of what is important in life.
- B. The person is often more open to a closer relationship with you.
 1. Before now, he usually keeps distance in the relationship.
 2. Now, he wants to spend more time talking.
 3. He may be willing to discuss the Gospel now, but probably does not want pressure to respond.

C. Our responsibility

1. Witness to him gently and cautiously. Don't go any further than he wants to go. Remember, it is God who draws a person to Himself, not you, although He will work through you.
2. This may be a good time to introduce the person to other Christians. You could invite him to church, an evangelistic group, or a small group.

VI. Level Two - Open Desire to Learn (understand)**A. This is an information gathering time.**

1. He is willing to learn on your terms and do what you tell him to do.
2. Since the Christian message is gradually understood, the non-believer needs a greater knowledge of the Gospel.
3. There may still be some legitimate intellectual hang-ups that need to be answered. Not all questions are easily answered or have answers. Be intellectually honest: if there is not a clear answer, say so.
4. The person is usually willing to read books, but he especially needs to read the Bible. (The Gospel of John is a good place to start.)

B. Your responsibility

1. We need to be available to guide the non-believer and help him find answers.
2. You may not have all the answers. Be willing to find the answers by asking others or doing your own study.
3. Invite him into a study of basic Christian beliefs or into an evangelistic Bible study.
4. Bring him to church with you.

VII. Level One - Decision/Commitment**A. At this point, the person needs to put it all together by understanding exactly how to become a Christian.****B. Your responsibility**

1. Present the gospel clearly.
2. Boldly ask for a decision.
3. Pray that God will give you the words you need (Ephesians 6:19).
4. Provide immediate follow-up.

VIII. Conclusion**A. Many people will gradually go through this process before making a decision for Christ.**

1. Others may get stuck in one place and never move.

2. Remember that it is God who must move a person along.
 3. It is our responsibility to relate to a person appropriately according to his openness to Christ.
- B. God may speed this process up by bringing a crisis into the person's life, suddenly moving him ahead.
- C. Evaluate the non-believers you know. ("Ten Most Wanted List")
1. Determine where they are in this process.
 2. Determine what would be an appropriate way to relate to each person at this time.
 3. Develop a plan of action that would be appropriate.
- D. Continue to pray that God would draw non-believers to Himself and give you wisdom about how to reach out to them.

Assignments For Next Session:

1. Read *More Than a Carpenter* Chapters 1-5.
2. Do "Ten Most Wanted" evaluation.
 - a. Determine where they are in their openness to Christ.
 - b. Determine what would be an appropriate way to relate to each person at this time.
 - c. Develop a plan of action that would be appropriate.

LEVELS OF OPENNESS TO CHRIST

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answered. Not all questions are easily answered or have answers. Be intellectually honest: if there is not a clear answer, say so.

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