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Introduction

Her name was Karen. I met Karen a number of years ago in an unusual way. Her son had visited the Dowlen Road church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas. After services, he spoke to someone about setting up a Bible study with his mother. She was battling cancer at the time and was not well.

I and a few other brethren set up a Bible study with her. She had been a part of a denominational church but didn't really know too much about the scriptures. She was interested in learning. Although she was weak, she was willing to listen and study.

In the process of time, Karen recognized she was in need of God's saving grace. She knew she was lost and desired to be saved by the blood of Jesus. One cold Friday afternoon, we picked up Karen and brought her to the building. She was in her pajamas. At the building, there are a number of stairs to climb to get to the baptistery. Karen was too weak to climb, so she sat on the first step, and then me and another brother pulled her up step by step. Once we got her to the top, a few sisters helped her get undressed. After that was accomplished, it was time to baptize Karen. There were three of us in the baptistery because she was so weak, and we had to be super gentle lowering her in the water. This entire process took at least 30 minutes. But it was well worth the time. Karen was saved. We rejoiced that day! For the next few months, Karen would do her best to attend worship services and Wednesday Bible classes. She would come in her wheelchair and often in her pajamas. We were happy to see her. Sadly, she would lose her fight with cancer. This brief interaction I had with Karen has had a tremendous impact on me when it comes to reaching the lost. I've shared this story in a number of places when I talk about evangelism. In fact, I've already shared this story here. But I wanted to share it again because it's a powerful reminder to me and hopefully to you, that when it comes to evangelism, it isn't rocket science.

Before we move forward, write out a conversion story of someone close to you that's had an impact on you. Or if you like, choose one of the conversion stories we read about in the book of Acts that impacts you in some way.

This workbook is called *It's Not Rocket Science: Simple Ways to Reach the Lost*. Rocket science is hard. Evangelism is not. All of us can be successful. Successful evangelism doesn't require the following:

- Being fluent in Greek and/or Hebrew.
- Knowing how to answer every question one may ask you during a study.
- That you be an extrovert.
- That you have tons of time to hold a number of studies.
- That you have to live in a certain part of the country to be successful.
- One being a Christian for a long period of time.

I'm sure there are more things we could put on that list. At times, we can allow excuses to get in the way. I know I have at times. But when it comes to reaching the lost, there really are no excuses. All of us can be successful. The West Main church can be successful.

For the next quarter, we will be talking about doing God's great work: Reaching the Lost. I'm excited about this quarter and I hope you are as well.

As I think about Karen and other interactions I've had with people studying the Bible, there's one passage in particular that has helped me tremendously with how I view evangelism. It's John 4:34-38. Before we dive into that, let's consider what happened leading up to these verses and what we might be able to learn when it comes to evangelism.

Read John 4:1-33 and answer the following questions.

Where was Jesus and His disciples?

What was Jesus doing?

Who did He meet and why was His conversation with this person such a big deal?

How did Jesus turn the conversation into a spiritual conversation?

What controversial topics did Jesus and this person discuss? Would you feel uncomfortable talking about these issues with someone?

How did the woman respond as Jesus spoke to her? Are you surprised at how she responded? Explain.

Having this background, let's now consider John 4:34-38. Here's what the text says.

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest?' Behold, I

say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

This passage has given me so much comfort when it comes to reaching the lost. It's a reminder for me and hopefully to you that:

- We need to open up our eyes and see that indeed there are opportunities when it comes to reaching the lost.
- Evangelism is a team effort. It can be easy to feel like you have to do everything on your own. That's not true. Rather, we need one another.
- There's great joy that will come when we do the work of God. Remember this is a great motivator to continue to remain optimistic about evangelism. Also remember that God is also at work. He will give the increase.

What other thoughts stand out to you from John 4:34-38?

In this class, we will look at what the Bible has to say about reaching the lost. The layout of the book will be based upon what we learn from John 4:34-38:

THE WHY: "Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest." There is great work to be done. Consider what Jesus also taught in Matthew 9:35-38.

THE HOW: "*For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'*" We all have a part to play in evangelism. We will discuss in detail how to go about sowing and reaping.

THE RESULT: "Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together." One of the greatest experiences is to see someone saved by the blood of Jesus. Helping people learn about Jesus and what He

has done is something that never gets old. Indeed, it's reason to rejoice as we seek to reach the lost.

MOVING FORWARD

As we go through this material please come prepared to class having read the Bible passages and answered the questions, so we can discuss.

Please complete the action items and be ready and willing to discuss during class. Below are the action items I would like the class to do each week:

- **PRAY:** Spend a few minutes in prayer each day about current Bible studies and asking God to open up doors of opportunity.
- **INVITE:** Pass out one visitor card each week.
- **READ:** Read one chapter daily from either Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. As you read, write out what you learn about Jesus and how that will help you when it comes to evangelism.



It's Not Rocket Science: The WHY

There Are No Excuses

It was a dark moment for God's people. A godly man by the name of Stephen was brutally murdered, [Acts 7:54-60](#). He had been falsely accused, [Acts 6:11-15](#). He had preached the truth, [Acts 7:1-53](#). Now he was dead. But more persecution was about to happen. Here's what it says in [Acts 8:1-4](#).

Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Some devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison. Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.

I'm so impressed with the response from the saints. It could've been easy for them to say, "If this is what happens when you speak about Jesus, I'm not going to say or do anything." But that wasn't their response. Instead, what we see is that this tragic event only furthered the cause for Jesus. The saints weren't going to be silenced. What I see is that God's people in the first century had a NO EXCUSES mindset.

- Their lives were suddenly disrupted yet they continued to do God's work.
- There was great potential for them to be killed because of their beliefs yet they continued to do God's work.
- Nothing was going to get in their way of accomplishing God's great work.

What about us? When it comes to evangelism, do you ever find yourself coming up with excuses? I have and still from time to time do. Spend a few minutes and write out excuses you have used in times past or maybe even currently that are holding you back from accomplishing God's great work.

In this lesson, we will consider some common excuses that sometimes hold back the people of God. To help us with our study, we will consider Moses.

Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Moses was hesitant when came to doing the work of God.

A. Read Exodus chapters 2–4 and then answer the following questions.

1. What did God tell Moses He was going to do in Exodus 3:7-10?

 2. In Exodus 3:11, Moses doesn't appear to be happy about this news from God. What reason does Moses give to God?

 3. What other objections do you see Moses giving to God throughout the rest of chapter 3 and chapter 4? Write them below. Additionally, write out how God responded.
-
-
-
-

4. As you look at these objections Moses raised, do you think he was trying to make excuses, or do you think he was just trying to be humble in nature?

5. What other thoughts stood out to you from the interaction Moses had with God?

B. Can you relate to Moses at all?

1. Of all of the things that Moses said to God when it came to leading the Israelites, which one can you best relate to that may sometimes hold you back from being more involved in God's work of reaching the lost?

2. When I read the story of Moses, I am encouraged to see how God encouraged him. Moses needed encouragement leading God's people out of bondage. The Apostle Paul needed encouragement when it came to preaching the gospel and leading people out of spiritual bondage.

- a. Read Acts 18:9-10.

(1) What did Jesus say to Paul? _____

(2) Why did Jesus have to say what He said? _____

- b. Read Acts 23:11.

(1) What did Jesus say to Paul? _____

(2) Why did Jesus have to say what He said? _____

3. If Paul needed encouragement, certainly we will too. If Moses needed encouragement, certainly we will too. As we think about God's great work, always remember: God is with us. There are souls at stake. The devil wants us to make excuses. He loves it when we do. Let's not make him happy.

- C. Go back and read John 4:34-38. Let's remember that there are souls who are need of salvation (OUR WHY). We have work to do. There are no excuses.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The Why

Why We Struggle with Evangelism

Hurt and probably tired they continued to worship God. Both Paul and Silas had been thrown into prison in [Acts 16](#). But it didn't stop them from worshipping God. They sang praises to God. They had an audience as the other prisoners were listening to them. Then something amazing happened.

...And suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chain were unfastened. When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

[Acts 16:26-31](#)

I'm so impressed with how Paul cried out to this man. This man was about to harm himself and yet Paul cared enough to stop him. Paul knew this man was in need of salvation. As I think about this story, I am humbled and ashamed when I think about myself. Would I be singing at midnight after being beaten with many blows (Acts 16:22-24)? Would I care enough to cry out to this man who was about to commit suicide? We need to have hearts like Paul and Silas. They cared enough to say something. They cared enough to cry out. Do we care? Do we care enough? Before we can address "THE HOW" of evangelism, we all have to ask ourselves some questions.

- Am I fully on board when it comes to evangelism?
- Do I truly recognize how bad sin is and how many are lost in their sins?
- Do I care enough to get out on the battlefield for King Jesus?

In this lesson, we will look at why we sometimes struggle with evangelism and what we can do about some of these challenges.

Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

Let's consider some reasons as to why we struggle. These points came from a preacher named Andy Cantrell. I heard another preacher discuss these points in a sermon, and they stuck with me. I have added some additional thoughts to them as well.

I. Consciousness

A. Sometimes we may struggle because we aren't conscious about opportunities.

1. When I think back to the story of Paul in Acts 16, we see that he was aware of his surroundings. He was aware with the state of the jailer. Paul could have easily been consumed with his current status and not have been concerned about him.

a. Read Matthew 9:35-38. Who was Jesus aware of?

b. Read Luke 19:1-10. Who was Jesus aware of?

c. Acts 17:16. Who or what was Paul aware of?

2. What can sometimes get in our way of being more conscious of opportunities we may have to share the gospel with others?

- B. What are some simple things we can do to raise our consciousness about opportunities around us?
-

II. Confidence

- A. One of the big reasons Christians sometimes struggle with evangelism is due to lack of confidence. We saw a little bit of this in our previous lesson with Moses.
- B. It can be easy to look at Paul and the other apostles and say, “These men were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They didn’t have to worry about what they would say. I on the other hand have to worry about what I’m going to say or how I’m going to say it.”
- C. Read Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39
1. What happened in these passages? _____
 2. After the man was healed, what did he want to do? _____
 3. What did Jesus tell him to do? _____
 4. This man could have easily said, “I don’t have the confidence to talk to everyone in the town. After all, they all hate me.” But he didn’t do that. Instead, he did as Jesus instructed and the people were amazed.
 5. Read John 4:25-42.
 - a. What did the Samaritan woman do? _____
 - b. What was the response of the city as a result? _____
 - c. This woman knew enough to speak. So do we. What’s something you can begin to do to increase your confidence when it comes to doing God’s work?
-

III. Courage

- A. Many Christians struggle having the courage to take those initial steps of talking about Jesus. Yet God has called us to be bold and courageous.
- B. A passage that is often overlooked when it comes to evangelism in the book of Acts is Acts 6:7 where it says:
- “The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.”*

- C. It's interesting that Luke recorded that there was a great number of priests becoming obedient to the faith. It can often be the case that religious leaders can be the most difficult to convert. The saints had the courage to interact with these men and to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah. That required courage. The same is true for us.

IV. Care

- A. This may be the biggest reason as to why we can struggle with evangelism.
- B. It is not necessarily the case that we don't care AT ALL, but rather we don't care ENOUGH.
- C. Jesus is to be our example. We know that Jesus cared, Matthew 9:35-38.
- D. We know He cared because He would die on the cross for the sin of the world, John 3:16; Romans 5:6-11.
- E. The apostle Paul cared enough when it came to the Philippian jailer.
- F. What is coming for those who don't repent of their sins, Romans 2:5-11? _____
 - 1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:10-11. What can we learn from Paul? _____
 - 2. We need to care because people are lost and they need to be rescued. As we think about all of these things:
 - a. Do we believe we have people in our lives outside of Jesus who are lost and headed to hell?
 - b. Do we care about them to move and take action?
 - 3. This last point about "CARING" is the game changer. The gospel has the power to save souls. The opportunities are there. But do we care?

I shared at the beginning of this workbook a story about a woman named Karen. Now let me share with you a story about a man named Shannon. I was at the gym working out. I wasn't looking for any opportunities. If I'm honest, my mind wasn't on evangelism at all. But another brother in Christ (Roger) was also at the gym, and asked me to speak to Shannon. This brother didn't know Shannon's name at the time. He wanted me to speak to him. When I asked him if he would like to study, he said "YES!" I was shocked. This simple request would eventually turn into Shannon being saved along with his wife a year later. When we care, good things will happen. When we're conscious of opportunities, good things will happen. When we have the courage and confidence, good things will happen.

V. We may struggle with evangelism, but it doesn't have to remain that way.

A. Let's know that we can be successful. Let's remember the example of Jesus.

B. Read John 4:34-38. Remember the opportunities are endless. Let's take action.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The How

Presenting the Gospel Part #1

Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, 'This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.' And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women" Acts 17:1-4.

The apostle Paul went to where there were opportunities to share the good news. He interacted with people on multiple occasions explaining from the scriptures to them that Jesus is the Messiah. We are to do the same. We have a great responsibility. We have great opportunities. We should be excited. All of us play important roles when it comes to making disciples. Remember what we have discussed in John 4:34-38.

When we follow God's pattern, good things will happen, Acts 2:36-42, 14:21-22. So, here's the game plan. For the next few weeks, we will spend our time focusing on "THE HOW." Hopefully, we know THE WHY. If we don't, then no matter how many methods or tactics I provide will be of any real benefit. Let's begin the process of looking at some methods of how we can be even more successful reaching the lost. Much of the thoughts in this section are from material by Steven Estes. I have also added some additional thoughts to them as well.

Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Evangelism will cost us something

A. We will lose some of our life doing the work of God.

1. What can we learn from what Jesus says in Matthew 10:39? _____

2. We should structure our lives so that we can share God's truth. We need to keep His commands, 1 John 2:3-6. Talk is cheap. Action means something.

a. We may need to cut down on the sports we play.

b. We may need to cut back on a hobby we have.

c. We may need to reduce our relaxation time.

d. We may need to cut back on work.

3. This will test our integrity. We will have to be all in.

4. Sacrifices will have to be made, but it will not be as hard as you think, Matthew 6:33-34. When we seek first the kingdom of God, our Father will provide what we need.

B. What are you willing to sacrifice? _____

II. We will have to grow in our knowledge

A. As Christians, there should be a steady growth in our understanding of the Bible.

1. Christians grow, 2 Peter 1:5-9; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:15.

2. This will be critical for us being successful.

B. Part of the fear many Christians have teaching others is knowing what to say.

1. One the best ways to crush fear is to study. Then study some more. Then study some more. We can't take any shortcuts.

2. A lot of our knowledge will also come from actually interacting with others. This is why inviting, striking up conversations, sitting in Bible studies will be so important.

3. The gospel has the power to save souls. Our job is to believe it and share it.

4. What specific questions/topics have caused you to fear?

5. After you've identified that topic, question, etc., ask yourself this: "What have I done to improve my confidence?"
6. If you haven't taken action to become better, now is the time.

III. How to find prospects

- A. There are opportunities everywhere to teach others the gospel. Spend some time going through the book of Acts. Where did the saints find opportunities to talk to people about Jesus?

1. **The home:** Do you have children? An unbelieving spouse? Those are opportunities.
2. **The church building:** There are a number of opportunities every Wednesday/Sunday.
 - a. The 5-minute rule will help us with this one. When you see a visitor, take the initiative and talk to them. If you need help, ask me (Ben). This is how to find prospects.
 - b. People who come to work on the building from the community.
 - c. Attending the group meeting is a simple way to get contact information of our visitors. We do well getting their information. A phone call/email is a way to reach out to contacts.
3. **Neighbors:** Neighbors are a great place to look. Having your neighbor over for dinner will also go a long way.
4. **Impersonal Contacts:** People you don't know yet, but could very easily.
 - a. Show kindness to others.
 - b. Ask people about themselves.

- c. Bridge the formality gap by opening up about yourself too.
- d. Pray before you eat a meal even with acquaintances.

B. Can you think of other opportunities? If so, please share.

Remember John 4:34-38. We will have opportunities to sow the word in some shape or form.
Look for those opportunities.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The HOW

Presenting the Gospel Part #2

So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship, and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go and join this chariot." Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Acts 8:27-30.

Philip asked the eunuch a question and from there good things happened. He opened his mouth and a study eventually took place. When it comes to evangelism, remember it's not rocket science. Can you think of other examples in the book of Acts where a simple question or comment opened up a door of opportunity? Write your thoughts below.

As we continue looking at THE HOW of evangelism, we will focus our thoughts on talking to people. This lesson will cover how to start a conversation, invite someone to services, ask if they are interested in a Bible study, etc. We will also consider what to expect when they say YES and you have your first study.

Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. General Recommendations

- A. When talking to others, asking questions is a great place to begin.
1. Questions are often better than statements. Do you agree? Explain.
-

Below is an example of a statement vs. a question.

- a. **Statement:** The weather sure is nice today.
 - b. **Question:** So how are you going to spend this day with such nice weather?
2. As you talk to people about setting up a Bible study, offer something that's structured so you will not waste their time. At the end of this workbook is my Bible study called *Getting to Know Jesus*. This is something I always have ready. Be ready to deliver. Don't offer studies to more people than you have time to do. Be honest with them and with yourself.
3. If you can, ask someone in person.
- B. Here are some recommendations for when you to speak to personal and impersonal contacts.
1. **Personal Contacts.**
 - a. "I've begun teaching one-on-one Bible studies. Would you be interested in studying with me? It takes about an hour a week and last for about 7 weeks. We could arrange a time that would work for your schedule. Are there certain days of the week that are better for you than others?"
 - b. "When I was in my 20s, someone took me aside and showed me how the Bible fit together. There's actually a common theme that strings the whole book together and when you know the fundamental chronology it makes it so much easier to understand. Would you be interested in studying together where I could show you the same thing? It will really help your understanding of the Bible from this point forward."

- c. “Do you have any plans this weekend?” “I worship God every Sunday morning in Lewisville with a group of Christians. Would you like to come worship with me on Sunday? We could spend some time studying the Bible after services that morning too. It would only take about an hour or so. I really want to show you what I’ve been studying lately?”
 - d. “How is your faith these days?” This is more for those who have become weak or seem to have lost their focus and turned back to worldly things.
 - e. What other questions might you be able to ask?
-
-
-
-

2. Impersonal Contacts

- a. After some brief introductions, name, where they are from, what brings them to Lewisville... “I really appreciate that you’re here and have an interest in spiritual things. Would you be interested in studying the Bible with me sometime? I’ve got a really good Bible study that takes you through the whole Bible in a few weeks. Ever since someone helped me like this with a Bible study it took my understanding of the scriptures to a whole new level. Are there certain times during the week that work better for you than others? Each study only takes about an hour or so.”
- b. “Would you be interested in a Bible study?”
- c. “Someone shared the good news about Jesus with me and it has completely changed my life. Would you be interested in studying the Bible with me sometime?”

II. What to Do When They Say YES or NO.

- A. What to do when they say yes.
 - 1. Respond by saying, “REALLY?” Just kidding! Don’t do that. Expect people to say yes.
 - 2. Set the appointment RIGHT THEN, even if they say they may need to change it.
 - 3. Give them confirmation they have made a good choice.

4. Request that the student commit to one Bible study per week and attend the worship services at the local congregation every Sunday morning.
5. Walk AWAY...don't over do it.
6. Be excited. This is a good thing.

B. What to do when they say no.

1. Appreciate the fact that they will not be wasting your time by agreeing and then not showing up.
2. Remember people can change their minds. Respect that they can make their own decisions.
3. Follow up with them in about three months.
4. No pressure or guilt should be applied. Continue to talk to them like you used to. We shouldn't force people. We want to give people opportunities.
5. If the person gets upset that you asked, let them know that nothing negative was implied by the invitation and you had hoped to learn something during the study too.
6. "Let me tell you a little bit more about what you're going to get out of the study..." Go into a more detailed description of what you will be doing.
7. What else might you be able to do if someone says no?

III. Anatomy of your first meeting

- A. The time will come when you will have a Bible study. This is really exciting.
1. There are people who want to hear and learn. Read the following passage. Who was Paul's audience, Acts 17:16-30?

2. Below are some recommendations.
 - a. If you're studying with the opposite sex, having someone else with you. Or you may want to refer them to another person.
 - b. Meet at the church building or place where you're not distracted from spouses, children, pets, etc.
 - c. Ask questions to determine where to begin, Acts 26:27.
 - (1) "Tell me a little bit about yourself. I know we've seen each other at work a lot but I really don't know much about you."
 - (2) "What do you believe about God? Who is He and what are some of His characteristics?"
 - (3) "Do you believe God created everything or do you believe in evolution?"
 - (4) "Who do you think Jesus is?"
 - (5) "Do you think Jesus was raised from the dead? If so, why?"
 - (6) "Do you own a Bible?" "What do you believe about the Bible?"
 - (7) "If the person does believe in God, Jesus, and the word of God, then you ask them if they have been saved from their sins. If they say, "Yes" then I ask them when it happened and how.
 - (8) "Do you have any particular questions about the Bible you want answers to?"
 - (9) Any other questions?

3. Drawing out a timeline of their life on a piece of paper is sometimes a good visual.

- B. Decide which lesson to study during this first meeting.
1. Based upon your answers, you will know which study to begin.
 2. Write down their conversion story. I began doing this a few years ago. It helps that the person writes it out in their words, and as we discuss salvation, we can see if what they did matches with what the scriptures have to say.
 3. Write down questions they may have.
 4. Stick to your plan of action.

- C. Teach the lesson that fits for that person. Start where they are. This was Paul's method.
 - 1. Read Acts 17:1-4. Who was his audience? _____
 - 2. Read Acts 17:16-29. Who was his audience? _____
- D. What to do when you finish the first lesson.
 - 1. Ask them if it was helpful. Ask if they would benefit studying once a week.
 - 2. Thank them for their time and interest in spiritual matters.
 - 3. Encourage them to read their Bibles (Bible reading program, gospel). Walk them through their Bible if necessary (many don't know where books are).
 - 4. Pray and go home.
- E. After the student leaves.
 - 1. Review what happened.
 - 2. Figure out what needs to be studied next.
 - 3. What else might need to be done?

IV. Some Final Thoughts

- A. Dealing with life issues from the unbeliever.
 - 1. Remember our mission is to give a reason for the hope that is within us. We are not family/marriage counselors, physicians, or psychologists.
 - 2. Sometimes the person will bring up a lot of things. Help them to focus on the word.
- B. Patience and Forgiveness
 - 1. Not everyone will be converted after one sermon or study, Acts 2:40-41. For some, it will take much longer, Acts 11:26, 18:11, 19:10. That's okay. We will have to be patient.
 - 2. People will sometimes sin during the time we study with them and sometimes even sin against us. Don't let this stop you from teaching. Forgive.
- C. Spend time preparing:
 - 1. Practice lessons before you deliver them.
 - 2. Study topics outside of the general course of study to present when needed.
 - 3. Provide the proper reminders to the student about the studies. Pray. Be consistent.
- D. Go back and read John 4:34-38. Let's remember that there are souls who are need of salvation. Let's be sowers and reapers. We have work to do. There are no excuses.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The HOW

Presenting the Gospel Part #3

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”
Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, “We shall hear you again concerning this.” So Paul went out of their midst. But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.
Acts 17:30-34.

What stands out to you about this interaction Paul had while he was in Athens?

Paul didn't convert everyone he studied with or talked to. That's okay. He was still sowing the seed. As we have seen from previous studies, Paul needed encouragement from Jesus, Acts 18:9-10. We will need to remember that we are not alone as we seek to do the will of God. There will be times when we will have to overcome adversity and develop courage. What other people come to mind in the scriptures who needed some encouragement? List them below.

In this lesson, we will discuss overcoming adversity, developing courage, remembering who our real enemy is, and answering objections we will face along the way. Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Remember We Have an Enemy

A. As Christians, always remember who the real enemy is: the devil, 1 Peter 5:8.

1. Satan doesn't like the fact that we are working to do more for the Lord. He will come after us and those who we study with along the way, Acts 13:6-12.
2. We will come up against challenges even as we study. Some people may truly be interested in the truth. Others will not. Not everyone is going to respond to the gospel message. What examples can you think of where people rejected the teaching of Jesus and/or His apostles? Write them below.

B. Understanding this is very important.

1. I think we all get this. Yet it can be difficult to accept when it happens to us. When we begin to invest a lot of time in someone, and then they suddenly decide to stop studying, or decide not to obey, it can be very discouraging.
2. But we must make sure we don't lose heart. So how do we do it? How can we overcome discouragement along the way?

II. Overcoming Discouragement

- A. We must always trust in the Lord.
 - 1. As we go out into the world, we will have to remain close with God, James 4:7.
 - 2. We will have to constantly wear our armor, Ephesians 6:10-20.
 - 3. We must remember we are teaching the word of God. When we are attacked, ridiculed, etc. we need to remember what our mission is.
 - 4. When we are faced with objections or discouragement, we always need to respond with the word of God, Matthew 4:4.
 - 5. We will experience moments when people deny the truth. But that doesn't negate the truth. Truth is still truth.
- B. Recognize that the work we are doing is a big deal and therefore we can't stop.
 - 1. Elijah was ready to quit in 1 Kings 19. He thought he was all alone. He hit a low point. But God reminded him that he had purpose. He needed to continue. He had work to do. The same is true for us.
 - 2. We will have to be patient as we seek to save the lost. This is easy to say and yet hard to do. God is patient, 2 Peter 3:9. We must be patient as well. Let's also remember:
 - a. Our work is not in vain, 1 Corinthians 15:58.
 - b. We can't give up and be pleasing to God, 2 Timothy 2:3, Galatians 6:9-10.
 - c. We will need to encourage one another, Hebrews 10:24.

III. Overcoming Objections

- A. There are some common objections we will face along the way.
 - 1. "If I obey the gospel that means my mother or father is going to hell because she never obeyed the gospel."
 - a. This is a common objection.
 - b. Answer: We don't determine the fate of another by whether or not we obey or not. We can only affect our own spiritual condition by our obedience. Whether you are baptized into Christ or not, this will have no impact on your mother's soul one way or the other. The rich man wanted his family to know the truth, Luke 16:27-28. Don't you think your mother would want the same for you?
 - 2. "Are you telling me I don't have a right to be married?"

- a. This will come up more and more as more and more people view divorce as not being a big deal. Tell them you would like to do an additional study with them after a foundation has been laid down.
- b. Study how to establish Bible Authority first before studying the topic.
- 3. "I don't know if I'm willing to give up a particular sin."
 - a. Continue to study as long as the person is willing to.
 - b. Be sure they understand the cost of following Jesus.
 - c. Compare the temporary pleasures and consequences of the sins versus the eternal reward and lack of consequences while here on earth.
- 4. What other objections have you experienced while studying with others?

IV. Developing Courage

- A. God desires His people to bold and courageous, Joshua 1:1-9.
 - 1. Courage is the confidence to do what God has required in spite of opposition, persecution, or struggles. Read Matthew 10. What did the apostles need to remember with respect to fear and courage as they went out?

- 2. As we go about teaching others, we will have to be courageous. We can develop the courage to do the will of God by:
 - a. Praying for courage, Acts 4:23-31. The apostles did it. We must do the same.
 - b. Continue to grow spiritually, Hebrews 10:35-39. We must remain faithful to God. If we're not growing spiritually, we will not have the courage we need. Courage doesn't come just because we're old. We must work at it by continually feeding ourselves from the word of God
 - c. Understand our role, Acts 8:1-4. We truly are on a mission. The saints believed they were. The apostles believed they were. We must believe the

same. Think about the awesome responsibility we have. God has given us the job to go and spread the word. He's not going to do it through angels, but rather through His people who will have the courage to share His word with others. The message is enough. It still has the power to convict souls. We must believe it and share it.

- d. Rely upon one another, Matthew 10:1-5. I need you and you need me. When we study with one another, when we hear of success others are having, when we push each other in love, we will be successful.
- e. Always remember that God always wins, Acts 5:26-42. That's why we obey Him over men. That's why it doesn't matter if we're the minority. God is with us.

B. We have great work to do. We will be successful, Joshua 1:1-9.

C. Go back and read John 4:34-38. Let's remember that there are souls who are need of salvation. Let's be sowers and reapers. We have work to do. There are no excuses.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The HOW

Presenting the Gospel Part #4

Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see" John 1:45-46.

What can we learn from this interaction Philip had with Nathanael? Write your thoughts below.

We will be continuing our study on simple things we can do to be successful when it comes to evangelism. Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Invite others to seek the truth

- A. The most effective way for us to grow is by inviting others to come and see, John 1:46.
 - 1. People need to come and see and learn about a man named Jesus. Churches will either grow or die. While numbers are not everything, a church that is growing spiritually should also be growing numerically, Acts 2:41, Acts 4:1-4, Acts 6:7.

2. We've already spent time talking about inviting people, what to say, how to follow up, and even how to begin a Bible study. We can't emphasize the importance of all of these things enough. As we do these things let's be sure we don't forget:
 - a. Jesus and the apostles have given us an example to follow. Believe what you see in the scriptures. It will work.
 - b. We can't let fear or excuses get in our way. There will be a cost all of us will have to pay. Are you prepared to pay the cost, Luke 14:26-27?
 - c. Don't become discouraged when people don't show up after an invitation. That's okay. Not everyone responded to Jesus or the apostles. We are no different.

B. We need to do our part. God will do His part. We will be successful.

II. Capitalize on the easy opportunities around you.

- A. West Main has numerous visitors every Wednesday and Sunday.
 1. We need to capitalize on these opportunities. Whether they are Christians or unbelievers, let's be sure we welcome them. Remember the 5-minute rule.
 2. Family members and friends who have already expressed interest, we need to follow up with them. We need to be courageous.
 3. Be sure we are planting seeds with our children and grandchildren on a regular basis. The sowing we do now with them will bear much fruit. What we do as parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc. is a big deal.
- B. Don't look down on these kinds of opportunities.

III. Prepare and Practice what we have learned so far.

- A. We have learned a lot in the last few weeks.
 1. You will need to go back and review the information we've covered.
 2. You will need to practice things you should say to people to get a conversation started. You should be diligent about this to help drive out fear or uncertainty when those opportunities make themselves available.
- B. Some of this may sound a little silly, but practicing will help you to become really confident.

IV. Work the Plan

- A. Jesus taught the disciples for a few years. Eventually, they had to take action.
 - 1. I'm sure the apostles were nervous when Jesus told them to go, Matthew 28:19-20.
 - 2. But they did. They worked the plan He laid out for them. I suppose Jesus could have stayed on earth for 10 more years to teach His disciples more. They didn't need 10 more years. Jesus had given them enough. We know enough when it comes to what to do.
- B. Now is the time to work the plan.

V. Additional Suggestions: Gospel Meetings

- A. Make a personal commitment that you will be present at every service and give your full support to this effort by inviting your friends.
- B. Invite at least 10 people. It typically takes 10 invitations to get one response.
- C. Don't look past weak and struggling members. Evangelism is not limited to our friends who are not Christians. Even within our spiritual families there are people who are drifting away from Jesus. A gospel meeting is a great time to encourage them to come and experience revival.
- D. Make full use of our work on the web.
 - 1. Use email/Facebook referral to invite friends.
 - 2. Encourage distant friends to join us through live streaming.
 - 3. Post this event in your status at least twice each week.
 - 4. Invite all of your Facebook friends to our event.
- E. Seize the value to be found in multiple touches. People will become interested in an event when they hear about it from two or more sources.
 - 1. Invite a friend through Facebook and personally.
 - 2. If more than one member knows someone, both of you invite them.
 - 3. Refer other disciples to clerks/waiters you have invited and encourage them to do the same.

- F. Include dinner in your invitation to come. Asking them to meet with before-hand ensures that they will make it to the meeting.
- G. Talk enthusiastically with other disciples about the meeting.

VI. Calling the Unfaithful

- A. What makes calls like this difficult?
- B. What to say depends on who you might be calling? There are several categories of people you may encounter.
 - 1. People you do not know.
 - a. Introduce yourself and let them know you are part of the West Main Church.
 - b. Make sure it's a good time to talk. (I just need a minute; is this a good time to talk?)
 - c. Express concern without accusing. (I was just checking in with you. I've been missing you at services and wanted to make sure everything was okay.
 - d. Offer to help. (I like to think of West Main as one big family. I want to be here for you. So, if there is anything I can do, please call on me. Do you have my number?)
 - 2. People you know well.
 - a. Follow the tips above.
 - b. When necessary, be more direct with people you know well. (It's been several weeks since I've seen you, are you sure everything is okay? I need you to be straight with me about this.)
 - 3. People you expect to be hostile.
 - a. Follow the tips above.
 - b. Balance concern with expression of love and concern (I just wanted you to know that we love and care about you and want to help you get to heaven.) This is important to do in every case, but ESPECIALLY with someone you fear will be hostile.
- C. **What do I say when I call a visitor?**
 - Step 1:** Review the information on the visitor's card. Make sure you can pronounce their name. Take special note of any requests they made (just moved to the area or interested in Bible study).
 - Step 2:** Make sure you have the right person.

Step 3: Identify yourself (“My name is _____. I’m with the West Main Church of Christ. You visited us last Sunday.”)

Step 4: Make sure the time is right for this call (“Is this a good time or am I interrupting something?”)

Step 5: Thank them for visiting. (“I was just calling to let you know how happy we were that you chose to join us for our worship service.”)

Step 6: Offer follow up assistance with any requests they had (“I noticed that you were looking for a congregation in our area. Is there any way I could help you with this? Did you have any questions about West Main?”)

Step 7: Read their tone. You can often pick up on someone’s level of interest by how much they say and the way they say it. If you get a sense that your call is not being received well or they are eager to get off the phone, then let them go quickly.

Step 8: Close with an invitation of some kind.

- (“Well again, thank you for coming. We have Bible study tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. We would love to have you join us again.”)
- (“Would you like to set up a Bible study this week?” What day and time will work best for you?”)

VII. Concluding Thoughts

No matter who we may be speaking to, let’s remember a couple of things.

- A. Don’t fear. We are doing the work of the Lord and fighting Satan. It is their conduct that’s the problem, not a phone call. Don’t be intimidated.
- B. Don’t allow yourself to be treated badly. When someone speaks unkindly, discontinue the conversation.
- C. Don’t allow yourself to become involved in conversations about the behaviors of others. Deflect those comments by suggesting they talk with that person.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The HOW

Talking and Studying with Family

After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near. Therefore, His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. "For no one does anything in secret when He himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." For not even His brothers were believing in Him. So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune." John 7:1-6.

What stands out to you about this interaction Jesus had with His family?

When it comes to evangelism, talking and studying with family members may be the most challenging and intimidating. Why do you think that is the case? _____

Jesus spoke about family quite a bit in the gospels and challenges that would come as a result of the gospel. Read Matthew 10:21-39. What can we learn from these verses?

While we will face challenges at times sharing the gospel with family members, we still have reason to be encouraged. The Samaritan woman went back to her hometown and spoke to them about Jesus, John 4:39-42. We read of families being converted in the first century. Read

Acts 10:30-33. Cornelius had the whole household ready to hear words from the apostle Peter. Philip the evangelist made a positive influence on his family, Acts 21:8-9. We can positively impact family members. Let's consider some more thoughts about interacting with family. Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. F.A.M.I.L.Y: We will use this acronym as we consider talking to family.

A. Focus on the FAITH.

1. It's the gospel that has the power to save, Romans 1:16-17. Our responsibility therefore is to teach the gospel.
2. Therefore, we will need to continue to look for opportunities. It will be critical that we don't compromise the faith for our families. We will need to shine our lights around our family members, Matthew 5:13-16. Consider the great impact this will have on our family members.
 - a. *A brother in Christ obeyed the gospel a number of years ago. His family and others began to see a notable change in his lifestyle. He stopped drinking. He stopped having sex. He stopped cursing. He stopped going to bars and parties. He started going to worship services. He started reading his Bible more. He started talking more about God. He started spending more time with his brethren. In the process of time he began to study with a woman (who eventually become his wife). He would help two of his boys become Christians. He trusted in God and focused on growing in the faith. He shined his light, Colossians 4:2-6. As a result, doors were open and he was able to share God's word with them.*

- b. *Has something like this happened to you or someone else you know?*
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- 3. Focus on growing in your faith and in the faith. People will notice.

B. NEVER BE ASHAMED

- 1. A person can experience a lot of pressure from family after becoming a Christian. I often think about the saints on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:40-47. They needed one another as they made the decision to follow Jesus. Yet they weren't ashamed. The church would continue to grow.
 - a. Has your family made you feel ashamed for obeying Jesus?
 - b. If so, how?
-

- 2. Never be ashamed of your faith especially around your family.
 - a. Don't be ashamed if or when your family says you're a part of a cult. What exactly is a cult? That's a great question to ask them.
 - b. Don't be ashamed when they ridicule you for suddenly changing your behavior, 1 Peter 4:1-4. Instead, use that as an opportunity to speak to them about Jesus.

C. MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE

- 1. When we look at the book of Acts, we find men like Peter and Paul talking to people from different starting places.
 - a. Peter didn't have to prove to the Jews on Pentecost that there is one true God. Yet Paul would have to do that in Lystra and also in Athens, Acts 2:22, Acts 14:8-18.
 - b. The same will be true for us.
- 2. Some of us have come out of denominations. Many of our family members may already believe that God is real, that Jesus is God's Son, and the Bible is the word of God. Those are all good places to begin and/or launch into a further study. If this is the case, start there with them. Start where there is common ground and then begin to move into the subjects where there are differences. I sat in a study with a brother who was studying with some women from the community. They described themselves as Christians, although they had not obeyed the gospel.

They studied from 1 Peter and discussed the grace of God. That's a great place to begin as Peter discusses God's grace, how one receives it, and lives in it.

3. One could go home or to a family members house and say, "You're going to hell because you haven't obeyed the gospel." That may not be too effective. It's probably more powerful to follow the approach of Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos, Acts 18:24:26. Take them aside. Don't embarrass them. Don't be ashamed of the truth. Share the truth with them and see what happens. It's not a failure if they don't obey. Remember John 4:34-38? We are to be sowers and reapers. Maybe you are just to be the sower. Sow the seed, which is the word of God. Good things will come.

D. INVITE AND INITIATE

1. I love the story in Mark 5. I wonder if the man who was healed by Jesus first spoke to his family members when he went back into the city. I don't know, Mark 5:19-20.
2. What we do know is that he was told to go and to report to his people what Jesus had done for him. He would have to take that first step. So will we.
3. We've discussed this in previous lessons to some degree, but it's good to be reminded. Be bold and aggressive. Don't be rude or mean, but bold. Give them as many opportunities to respond to an opportunity where they will be exposed to the truth.
4. Some will say yes and some will say no. Years ago, a family member of mine graciously told me to stop talking to them about Jesus and the church. I obliged. I still care for them and love them. We have to at least try.

E. LOVE THEM

1. Jesus says in Matthew 7:12, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets."
2. The way we treat our family members will go a long way. Do they see that we truly love them? The more we can demonstrate how much we love them, the better our chances will be to have an opportunity to sit and study with them.
 - a. Let them know you and others are praying for them, 1 Timothy 2:1-4.
 - b. Look for opportunities to serve them.
 - c. Practice what you preach. Family just like everyone else will spot a fraud. It's hard to persuade someone about the love of God when we lack demonstrating love ourselves.

F. ALWAYS SAY YES TO JESUS

1. Jesus must always come first. Jesus says, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple" Luke 14:26.
 2. There was a brother in Christ whose wife committed adultery on him. He wanted to save the marriage. They worked on reconciling but in the process of time she departed from the faith. Desperate to save his marriage he chose to do the same thing. He went after her while leaving Jesus. She is now with another man. He put her first and it didn't work. We will have trust God and seek to please Him over any other relationship.
 3. We will have to say YES to Him. Here are some other practical ways for us to do this as we seek to influence family.
 - a. While planning or on vacation let your family know of your plans of worship in advance and then be sure to follow through with those plans.
 - b. When family is visiting from out of town and they aren't interested in worshipping, be sure they know where you will be on Sundays.
 - c. Set parameters for different family functions. When family stays with us, there is no drinking in our house.
 4. What are some other things we may be able to say or do to have an impact on our loved ones? Write them out below.
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II. One Final Thought

- A. Jesus' brothers didn't initially believe in Him.
 1. Is there any evidence that they eventually did?
 2. If so, where? _____
- B. It could be that prayer and patience will be the two biggest things we can do for family.
 1. People often want some special phrase or answer to a question that will suddenly help family members and others suddenly become Christians.
 2. Yet we have to remember that we are dealing with hearts. Therefore, we must be patient. We must trust in the process of sowing and reaping.

3. We must constantly pray and look for opportunities.
4. I want to conclude with this story from Gabe Chaves.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The HOW

Sharing the Gospel at Work

Jesus said in Matthew 10:16, “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.” Who was Jesus speaking to in this verse? What do you think it means to be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves? Write your answer below.

If it's nerve racking to talk to our families about Jesus, then it's probably really scary for us to talk to our colleagues, bosses, etc. at the workplace. While I've been preaching for almost a decade now, prior to being a full-time preacher I worked at Walgreens, Gold's Gym, and at Pfizer Pharmaceuticals. These jobs helped me to learn a lot about the world. These jobs, particularly with Pfizer helped me to see the impact of being a Christian in the workforce. While there are certainly a lot of challenges, there were a lot of opportunities.

One of the biggest lessons I learned working with Pfizer was the importance of shining my light, Matthew 5:13-16. I certainly was not perfect. I lost opportunities to positively impact others because of my sinful behavior at times. But when I look back, I see that it is possible to have impact on others. I worked with Pfizer from 2001–2009. In 2009, shortly after beginning a preacher training program in Beaumont, Texas, I received an email from someone I used to work with. This woman shared with me how I had given her a sheet a paper with some scriptures on it concerning salvation in Christ (I don't remember doing this). Evidently, she wasn't the only one I had given a sheet of paper to. That piece of paper helped her on her religious journey. Years later she eventually became a Christian. She married one of her nurse's sons who was a Christian. Receiving that letter was powerful. God was at work and I didn't even know it. Others were at work and I didn't even know it. The point? We are to be sowers and reapers. We may not always see the final result. That's okay. We just need to continue to work.

I'm thankful I had other opportunities to share with other employees my faith in Christ. My office was basically my car. I had four District Managers in my eight years with the company. Being in the car with them on a monthly basis gave me a lot of opportunities to talk to them about Jesus. Some of them asked questions. So did I (My biggest question was "Am I going to get fired if I share some things with you?"). Many of them were the ones who began the spiritual conversations. They learned that I was a Christian and the fact that I didn't drink at any of the social functions was also a way for me to stand out. Some of my colleagues came and listened to my first sermon in Rockford (I now wish it was any other sermon than that one). The point? It's possible to have an impact even in the work place. I want to share with you some simple tactics we all can do. But before we dive into that, let's catch up with how things are going.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Questions Are Always Our Friends

A. Jesus often asked questions when interacting with others.

1. There's a lot of fear of talking about God, Jesus, faith, etc. in the workplace. Yet there are some simple things we can do to shine in a dark world. Jesus will help us.

a. Read Luke 20:1-8. What's going on in the text and how did Jesus respond?

b. Read Luke 20:20-24. What's going on in the text and how did Jesus respond?

c. Read Mark 2:1-12. What's going on in the text and how did Jesus respond?

2. What was the benefit of Jesus asking questions? In Gregory Koukl's book *Tactics*, he calls asking questions the "queen mother of all tactics because it's so flexible and adaptable. It's the simplest tactic imaginable to stop a challenger in her tracks, turn the tables, and get her thinking, a virtually effortlessly way of putting you in the

driver's seat of the conversation." The author would go on to mention his two favorite questions.

- a. *"What do you mean by that?"* This question helps us to see WHAT another person thinks.
 - b. *"How did you come to that conclusion?"* This question helps us to see WHY he things that way. This can be stated in other ways...
 - (1) "Why do you say that?"
 - (2) "What are your reasons for holding that view?"
 - (3) "What makes you think that's the right way to see it?"
 - (4) "I'm curious. Why would that idea seem compelling to you?"
3. As we find ourselves talking to people at work or anywhere else for that matter, these two questions will go a long way. Here's what Gregory Koukl said on some of the benefit of asking questions.
- a. *"It will help us to gather information on a person."* Part of the reason why so many religious conversations don't go far is because people are often not on the same page. Asking a simple question like, "What do you mean by that" will go a long way for us to truly see where a person is spiritually and what they actually believe. So imagine for a moment you're having a conversation with someone and they say...
 - (1) "I'm spiritual but not religious." Instead of throwing a verse out simply ask them, "What do you mean by that?" Then sit back and listen.
 - (2) "I'm agnostic..." What do you mean by that? How did you come to that conclusion?
 - (3) "I don't think it really matters to God if we have instruments in worship." That's interesting, how did you come to that conclusion?
 - (4) "All religions are the same." What do you mean by that?
 - b. *"We can use questions to reverse the burden of proof."* By asking questions you force the person you're talking to really think about their beliefs, views, etc. without them accusing us of saying they believe something that they really don't believe. Whoever makes the claim bears the burden. As we talk to others, it can be really easy for us to go into a defensive mode, after someone makes a claim. But it's not our duty to prove them wrong. As the author states,

“It’s his duty to prove his view.” Make them prove what they believe and don’t let them off the hook.

- c. “We can use it to lead the conversation in a specific direction.” It can be easy to want the conversation to go in a direction where we feel most comfortable. But let’s first identify where the person is, and then we can figure out the best option moving forward.

- B. Can you think of any challenging conversations or opportunities at work where these tactics may have proved to be helpful? Please share.

II. Tell Them Something They Know

- A. Author Gregory Kousser states that the most powerful questions and the most persuasive are the ones that help people recall what they already know.

- 1. Imagine this scenario and how you might respond.
 - a. “Shannon was raised in a Christian home. She’d been educated at a Christian college and had what she described as a strong relationship with the Lord. But she was troubled with the idea that others were lost apart from believing in Jesus. She begins to ask questions like, ‘What about the person who is sincerely following his own religion and trying to be the best person he can be?’”
 - b. If you had an opportunity to talk to Shannon, how would you begin? What questions might help her with what was troubling her?

- 2. What other scenarios might you find yourself in at work or in other places where this tactic would prove to be helpful?

B. The Have You Considered Approach

1. As we use questions, we will have to eventually begin to share some things with our peers. Another tactic we can use is the Have You Considered approach.
2. This approach will allow us to share some thoughts from the scriptures in a way where they may be more receptive.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



It's Not Rocket Science: The RESULT

Rejoice When One Repents

When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:39

And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household. Acts 16:33-34

A typical response in the first century when one was saved from their sins was that of rejoicing. Those who were saved recognized that the blood of Jesus now redeemed them. But they are not the only one who are rejoicing. Jesus said in [Luke 15:8-10](#):

Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? "When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!' In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

WOW! How amazing is that to consider? When one person repents, the angels in heaven rejoice. When it comes to evangelism, we should rejoice as well when a soul is converted to Jesus Christ. Remember our passage from [John 4:34-38](#). As Jesus spoke about sowing and reaping, He said, "Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together..." There's great joy when it comes to evangelism. We are doing God's work.

In this lesson, we will discuss the results that will come as a result of our hard work and how we should respond.

Before we do, let's quickly go through our action items.

PRAYER: What opportunities did you pray about last week?

INVITE: Who did you give a card to? What was the response when you gave them the card?

READ: What stood out to you in your reading?

I. Take time to rejoice when one is saved by the blood of Jesus.

A. Let's be sure that we recognize the significance of one becoming a Christian.

1. It can be easy to see someone baptized and not be really moved by it. Many of us have seen many people become Christians. But we must be sure that we never allow these moments and experiences to become mundane and routine.
2. Read the story found in Luke 15:11-32. What was the response of the father whose son returned? Do you think that was too much?

B. I'm not saying that we throw a big party when one becomes a Christian, but truly appreciating what has taken place is necessary.

1. Read Colossians 2:11-13. What happens when one submits to Jesus and is baptized for the forgiveness of sins?

2. When one repents and is saved, let's be sure we recognize the significance of what has taken place. Let's also be sure that we encourage our new brother or sister in their walk with Christ.

II. Let's be sure we continue to encourage our new brethren.

- A. It's great to see a person become a Christian. Indeed, we are to rejoice. But there is someone who is not happy, 1 Peter 5:8.
 1. Satan will do his best to discourage that person.
 2. Discouragement may come through family, friends, and sadly even through brethren.
- B. One of the great blessings of being in Christ is the spiritual family one has.
 1. Having spiritual brothers and sisters who are there to help is a really big deal. New converts will need this.
 2. Read Acts 9:26-28. Who encouraged Paul after he became a Christian? Do you think Paul needed some encouragement?

-
3. Take a few minutes and think about some specific things we can do to encourage those who have recently become Christians.

-
4. Read Acts 14:21-22. What did Paul and Barnabas do? Why?

-
5. We're family. Let's always be thinking about how we can help one another.

III. We rejoice, but the work of God continues.

- A. The Eunuch went away rejoicing, Acts 8:39.
 1. The story of the Eunuch is interesting. One of the intriguing parts of it is how quickly Philip left after this man was converted, Acts 8:39.

2. I'm sure Philip rejoiced at what had taken place with the Eunuch. But there was more work for him to do. He couldn't be content with that one soul. He couldn't be content with the souls he helped convert in Samaria. There was more work to do.
 3. The same was true for the apostle Paul. In Romans 15:20 Paul said, "*And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation...*"
 4. Paul would go places to teach the gospel. Souls would be saved. Then he would move to another place.
- B. As we think about evangelism, let's remember that the work is never done.
1. There are more people we need to sow the seed to. There are people who are willing to listen, if we give them an opportunity.
 2. Therefore, we must continue to press forward. We must continue to stay focused on God's great work. God is with us. He too is involved in this great work, 1 Corinthians 3: 5-9.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:



BENJAMIN LEE

GETTING TO KNOW JESUS

**A STUDY
THROUGH THE
GOSPELS**



Getting to Know Jesus

The Certainty of These Things

As we begin our study concerning the life of Jesus, it's important to know that we can trust what we read in the Bible. The Bible claims to be "inspired by God," 2 Timothy 3:16-17. That means that the Scriptures are "God-breathed." God is the author of Scripture. It was God who gave direction in giving the Scripture. What's written in the scriptures are from God Himself. These are the very words of God!

In fact, as we begin our study, you will see the great confidence Luke wanted his readers to have the details concerning the life of Jesus. Listen to what he wrote in Luke 1:1-4:

"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who **from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word**, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so **that you may know the exact truth** about the things you have been taught." What can we learn about the certainty of the things recorded for us in the book of Luke concerning Jesus?

I. What Is Recorded about Jesus Is True

A. Luke carefully recorded the events detailing the life of Jesus for a man named Theophilus.

1. Luke received information from those who were eyewitnesses of Jesus, Luke 1:2. Those eyewitnesses were the apostles who were with Jesus in the first century, Luke 24:33-48. Luke's account of the life of Jesus was written around 60–62 A.D.
2. Eyewitness testimony is the most powerful kind of testimony. While Luke was not one of the apostles, he was able to learn about Jesus from them. As a result, he could with great confidence write out in consecutive order the details concerning the life of Jesus. He was also guided by the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 3:3-5. Therefore, we can trust his words. This is the exact truth concerning Jesus.
3. What should we conclude from this point? **That we can trust what is written for us in scripture.**

B. The gospel of Luke shows the life of Jesus intertwined in history.

1. Jesus really did live. There are some who may deny this, but to do so goes against history. Virtually all scholars agree that Jesus lived. What's written about Him is not fiction. A careful reading of Luke will help you to see that Luke recorded numerous leaders and politicians that lived in the days of Jesus. For example:
 - a. Read Luke 2:1-2. Who is mentioned here? _____
 - b. Read Luke 3:1-2. Who is mentioned here? _____
 - c. Read Luke 23:1-13,21,24. Who is mentioned here? _____

2. It could be easy for us to see if Luke was making these names up. We can fact check these places and these people to see if they really did live. What's the point? The point is that the life of Jesus is a part of history. He walked and lived on earth.

C. A Jewish historian named Flavius Josephus wrote about Jesus in the first century.

1. Josephus lived from 37–100; he became the greatest Jewish historian of his time and wrote about Jesus. In one of his works called *Antiquities of the Jews*, which he finished around 93 A.D., book 18, chapter 3, and section 3 said this about Jesus: *At this time (the time of Pilate) there was a wise man who was called Jesus. His conduct was good and (he) was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion, and that he was alive; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.* **Why do we need to know this information?**
 - a. Others spoke of Jesus outside of the Bible.
 - b. Josephus was not a Christian, yet he wouldn't deny that Jesus really did live.
 - c. Just as Josephus spoke of Pilate so did Luke, Luke 23:1-13, 20, 24.
2. What Luke recorded about Jesus was written in the first century. What Josephus wrote about Jesus was in the first century. Including Josephus and his writings according to Frank Turek in his book, *"I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist."*, there are 10 known non-Christian writers who mention Jesus within 150 years of His life. By contrast, over the same 150 years, there are 9 non-Christian sources who mention Tiberius Caesar, the Roman emperor at the time of Jesus. So, discounting all the Christian sources, Jesus is actually mentioned by one more source than the Roman emperor. We can learn from these sources that:
 - a. Jesus lived during time of Tiberius Caesar.
 - b. He lived a virtuous life.
 - c. He was a wonder-worker.
 - d. He had a brother named James.
 - e. He was acclaimed to be the Messiah.
 - f. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
 - g. He was crucified on the eve of the Jewish Passover.
 - h. Darkness and an earthquake occurred when he died.
 - i. His disciples believed He rose from the dead.
 - j. His disciples were willing to die for their belief.
 - k. Christianity spread rapidly as far as Rome.
 - l. His disciples denied the Roman gods and worshiped Jesus as God.

D. We have accurate copies of what men like Luke and the apostles wrote concerning Jesus.

1. When we speak of the New Testament documents, we are referring to 27 books. These were written by the end of the first century.
 - a. In 2 Peter 3:14-16, the apostle Peter referenced Paul's writing as scripture (divine writings).
 - b. In 1 Timothy 5:18, the apostle Paul referred to Luke's writing as scripture (divine writings).
2. It is true that none of the original documents remain. We have only copies of the original writings called manuscripts. Yet there are thousands of copies written in Greek (5,800 complete or fragmented), (10,000 in Latin), and (9,000 in various languages like Syriac, Coptic, Latin, Arabic).
 - a. The earliest manuscript is the John Ryland's fragment (called this because it is housed in the John Ryland's Library in Manchester, England). It's dated between 117–138 A.D.
 - b. It was found in Egypt—across the Mediterranean from its probable place of composition in Asia Minor—demonstrating that John's gospel was copied and had spread quite some distance by the early second century.

E. Five reasons we know the New Testament writers told the truth.

1. The New Testament writers included embarrassing details about themselves.
 - a. The tendency of most authors is to leave out embarrassing details. The apostles didn't.
 - b. Read John 12:16, Mark 14:32-41, and Matthew 16:23. What embarrassing details do you see?

2. The New Testament writers included embarrassing details and difficult sayings of Jesus.
 - a. They wrote things about Jesus that seem to place him in a bad light.
 - b. Read Mark 3:21; John 7:5, 12, and 6:66. What details are included in these verses?

3. The New Testament writers left in demanding sayings of Jesus.
 - a. If these stories were all made up, the writers didn't make life easier for themselves.
 - b. Read Matthew 5:28, 32, 44-45. What did Jesus teach in these verses?

4. The New Testament writers carefully distinguished Jesus' words from their own.
 - a. Even though there were not quotation marks in the first-century Greek, the New Testament writers were careful to distinguish the words of Jesus.
 - b. Read 1 Corinthians 7:10-12. Do you see how Paul distinguished his words from Jesus?
5. The New Testament writers include events related to the resurrection that they would not have invented. Write out your thoughts after point c.
 - a. Read Luke 23:50; Matthew 27:57-61. Who did the writers include in the burial of Jesus?
 - b. Read John 20:1. Who was first to the tomb of Jesus? What's the significance of this?
 - c. Read Acts 6:7. Who do we find converted in this verse? What's the significance of this?
6. There is much more that we could discuss with respect to the certainty of the things that we have recorded for us in the New Testament regarding Jesus. The evidence is clear. We can trust what we have, Luke 1:1-4.



Getting to Know Jesus

Basic Facts about the Gospels

We can trust the information that we have in the New Testament about the life of Jesus. For one to know who Jesus is, they must turn to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, commonly referred to as the four gospels. Sometimes people want to know the answer to the following question: “Why are there four books that speak of the life of Jesus?” Have you ever heard that question before? If so, how would you answer it? Write out your answer in the space below.

This may be one of many questions people have about the gospels. In this lesson, we will consider this question along with discussing other details about the four gospels.

I. Some Basic Facts about the Gospels

A. Let's first begin with some basic facts about Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

1. These four books provide us with details of the life of Jesus. For example, read [Matthew 1:1](#). Who does Matthew say this book is about?
2. Four different men wrote these four books. Two of them, Matthew and John, were apostles, [Matthew 10:1-2](#). Luke and Mark could be described as prophets. Like the apostles, they were guided by the Holy Spirit with what they would write, [Ephesians 3:3-5](#).
 - a. Luke was a close companion of the apostle Paul. It was Luke who penned the book of Acts. Read [Acts 21](#). Circle the word “we” whenever you see it. How many times do you see it? This helps us to see that Luke was with Paul throughout his ministry.
 - b. Mark was also a close companion of the apostles, [Acts 12:12, 15:36-41; 1 Peter 5:13](#).
3. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are often referred to as the **Synoptic Gospels**. Their accounts of Jesus are similar or parallel with one another. The book of John does not contradict the other three, but it does present the life of Jesus from a different perspective. All four books were written before the end of the first century. Paul in the first century referenced the writings of Luke, [1 Timothy 5:18](#).

B. The ultimate purpose of the gospels is to help people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

1. Read [John 20:30-31](#). Why did John write these things about Jesus? _____
2. They provide us with some of the details of His life and ministry. Not every single fact about His life is given. For example, read the account from Luke regarding the birth of Jesus and His early years.
 - a. Read [Luke 2:1-7](#). How old is Jesus according to these verses?
 - b. Read [Luke 2:21](#). How old is Jesus according to these verses?
 - c. Read [Luke 2:41-42](#). How old is Jesus according to these verses?
 - d. Read [Luke 3:23](#). How old is Jesus according to these verses?

C. Read the first chapter of each of the gospels. Where does each book begin?

- a. Matthew:
- b. Mark:

- c. Luke:
- d. John:
- e. What is the benefit of having these four unique accounts of the life of Jesus?

D. While there are differences in the gospels, there are no contradictions. The scriptures are inspired by God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17. A good rule to remember is when reading an event in one gospel, check the other gospels for more information. For example, read Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46; and Luke 18:35-43. Some may argue that there is a contradiction between these passages. That's not true. Additional information is found in some of the passages that is not in the other. Mark and Luke's account said that there were two blind men. Matthew said that there was one. This is not a contradiction. The scriptures are inspired by God. Therefore, there are no contradictions.

II. The Contents and Purposes of the Four Gospels

A. As we consider these biographies, we can begin to see why they were written.

1. **The gospel of Matthew** begins with the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew 1:1. What kind of audience would this be essential to? Explain below.

2. Do a quick read of the first four chapters in Matthew. How many Old Testament prophecies do you find mentioned in these chapters?
3. **The gospel of Mark** is faster paced than the other gospels. Read Mark 1 and note how many times you see the word *immediately* used. It is the shortest of the gospels.
4. The audience of this book seemed to be geared toward Gentile readers.
 - a. Mark had to explain Jewish customs, unfamiliar to Gentiles, Mark 7:3-4, 11.
 - b. He emphasized Jesus as a powerful miracle worker, Mark 1:31, 42.
 - c. He concluded with the gospel message being confirmed by miracles as it went beyond the Jews, Mark 16:20. Gentiles who witnessed these miracles could testify to the truth of this statement. The gospel would be for all men.
5. **The gospel of Luke** as we discussed in our last lesson tells us the purpose of why it was written, Luke 1:1-4. It's been said that this gospel focuses on the humanity of Jesus. Luke's genealogy of Jesus goes all the way back to Adam, Luke 3:32-38. Luke was a Gentile, and this book would also benefit Gentile readers to learn about the Christ.
6. **The gospel of John** also provides us with the purpose of the book, John 20:30-31.
 - a. Jesus is described as being eternal and the Creator of all things, John 1:1-4, 14, 29.
 - b. John makes an appeal to the miracles of Jesus to demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of God.

III. Why Are the Gospels in Story Form?

- A. The Holy Spirit inspired the apostles and prophets as they wrote about the life of Jesus, John 16:12-13.
 1. Story form is a great way for people to remember things. This is how Jesus often taught. Having merely some facts about Jesus would seem to be not enough. In fact, the entire Bible is written in story form to help us to see God's plan for saving man.
 2. What benefits do we receive from the fact that the gospels were written in story form?



Getting to Know Jesus

The Names of Jesus

In Acts 3, we find the apostles Peter and John. They healed a man at the temple, Acts 3:1-11. The people were amazed after witnessing the miracle. It was then that the apostle Peter began to teach them about Jesus. What is interesting are the titles that he used as he spoke about Jesus. Read Acts 3:12-18. What titles or names did Peter use to refer to Jesus? Write them out below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Names are important. Understanding the different names or titles that the Holy Spirit used as He spoke of Jesus will help us as we learn more about our great Savior. In this lesson, we will look into the different names of Jesus that are found in the four gospels.

I. In the Book of Matthew

A. The apostle Matthew began his letter by speaking of Jesus as the Christ, Matthew 1:1.

1. As we just saw earlier, the Son of God is referred to as Jesus and Christ.
 - a. Read Matthew 1:21. What does the name *Jesus* mean? _____
 - b. The fact that the name *Jesus* was not a name given to Him by His fleshly parents demonstrates the importance of this name. This name is found 970 times in the New Testament.
2. The name or title of Christ is the same as Messiah. The term means "Anointed One." In the Old Testament, God anointed kings and priests for special roles. God chose them, 1 Samuel 24:6.

B. Also in Matthew 1, the apostle referred to Jesus as Emmanuel, Matthew 1:23.

1. Emmanuel means "God with us." Matthew referenced what the prophet Isaiah stated in Isaiah 7:14.
2. We shouldn't take the names used to refer to Jesus lightly. What can we conclude so far about Jesus? Write out your thoughts below.

II. In the Book of Mark

A. The prophet Mark began his letter by referring to Jesus as the Son of God, Mark 1:1.

1. We see this name or title used often, but what does it exactly mean?
2. The phrase “Son of...” is used throughout the scriptures. It refers to the nature of someone, or to their offspring. Below are a couple of examples to demonstrate this point.
 - a. This phrase was used to express the nature of someone. For example, in Psalm 89:22, we see the name *son of wickedness*. The psalmist used this phrase to describe a wicked man.
 - b. In Luke 20:34, Jesus used the phrase “The sons of this age.” He was referring to people who were devoted to this world.
 - c. The genealogies of Jesus use the phrase “son of...” to refer to one’s offspring, Matthew 1:1-14.
 - d. What then can we learn about Jesus with the name *Son of God*? Write your answer below.
3. Do a quick read of Mark 1:21-23, 5:1-7. How did the demons refer to Jesus? What did they recognize about who He was? Write out your thoughts below.

B. What do these passages concerning Jesus as the Son of God help us to understand about Him?

III. In the Book of Luke

A. In Luke 1:32, Jesus is referred by the angel Gabriel as the Son of the Most High.

1. Son of the Most High is the same as referring to Jesus as the Son of God.
2. The phrase Son of God is used numerous times throughout the gospels.

B. The main title Jesus used to refer to Himself was *Son of Man*.

1. The phrase *Son of Man* is found throughout all four gospels.
2. What do you think the name Son of Man demonstrated about Jesus? Read the verses below and see what you can learn from them.
 - a. Luke 5:17-26:
 - b. Luke 6:1-5:

IV. In the Book of John

A. The beginning of John’s gospel uses a name referring to Jesus that the other gospels didn’t use.

1. What is that name according to John 1:1,14? _____
2. Later in John 1:29, we hear from John the Baptist. What did he call Jesus? _____

B. Take a few moments to consider some other names that we find in the scriptures that refer to Jesus.

1. What other names/titles come to mind? _____
2. How will having a better understanding of these names help us as we consider Jesus?

Getting to Know Jesus

His Teaching

As we continue to investigate and learn about Jesus, we have to spend some time on His teaching. Indeed, Jesus was a teacher. He was a good teacher. In fact, we could describe Him as the Master Teacher. Throughout the gospels, Jesus was referred to as a teacher.

- John 3:2: "...Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher..."
- Matthew 19:16: And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"
- Matthew 22:16: And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any."
- Matthew 22:23-24: On that day some Sadducees...came to Jesus and questioned Him, asking, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother as next of kin shall marry his wife, and raise up children for his brother...'"

The way that Jesus taught always had an impact on His listeners. He taught with reason, authority, and divine power to confirm His words. How much do you know about the teaching of Jesus? Many are surprised when they see what Jesus taught. Many are also surprised when they really get to know the teaching of Jesus on controversial topics like heaven and hell, salvation, worship, homosexuality, etc. When Jesus taught He often drove away many of His listeners. He wouldn't be popular in our society today. What about us? How will we respond as we consider the teaching of Jesus?

I. Jesus Taught with Authority from God

A. Throughout His ministry, Jesus spoke of the authority behind His teaching.

1. Read Matthew 7:28-29. After the crowd heard Jesus speak, they recognized He taught as one having authority. What do you think means?
2. Where did Jesus say that His teaching came from, John 12:48-49, 8:26? Why would this be significant?

B. The fact that the teaching of Jesus was authoritative has consequences for us today.

1. Read John 12:48-49. What is the standard by which all men will be judged?
2. How authoritative then should the teaching of Jesus be in our lives, homes, and church?

II. Jesus Taught in Ways People Would Remember

A. Throughout the gospels, we see various ways in which Jesus taught.

1. Jesus often taught through regular conversations. Read John 4:1-29.
 - a. Where was Jesus?
 - b. Who did He meet?
 - c. What did He begin to discuss with that person?
2. Jesus often used parables to teach. Read Matthew 13:1-23. What is a parable?

Note: Parables served a couple of functions.

- These stories revealed important truths to the listeners.
- They were also used to hide truth from those who had rejected the truth.

B. When Jesus had an opportunity to teach, He took advantage of it.

1. Jesus did most of His teaching through every day conversations.
2. What is it that we can learn from our Savior when it comes to talking to people about Him?

III. The Teaching of Jesus Always Produced a Response from His Audience

A. Christ's teaching often brought about either amazement or anger from His listeners.

1. Read Mark 1:23-28. How did the people respond after hearing Jesus?
2. Read Luke 4:16-22. How did the people respond after Jesus spoke?
3. Read John 7:37-47. How did the people respond to the teaching of Jesus?

B. The teaching of Jesus often brought about conflict.

1. This is not to say that Jesus was looking for fights as He taught. He taught with conviction, with power, and with compassion. Yet His words pricked the hearts of His listeners.
2. A good example of this is found in John 8:12-59.
 - a. Who was Jesus talking to?
 - b. What did He say about Himself?
 - c. How did His audience respond after hearing what Jesus said?
 - d. How did Jesus respond to those He was speaking to?
3. It was often the case that the teaching of Jesus often drove away the crowds, John 6:60-69.
4. Are you surprised at how many responded to the teaching of Jesus? Explain.

5. Many religious people are concerned about not offending their audience. How does this differ with the way that Jesus taught? Read John 4 again as Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. What three controversial topics did He speak to her about at the well?



Getting to Know Jesus

The Miracles of Jesus

“When was the last time you were truly amazed by something?” By amazed, I mean something that maybe made you say, “Wow!” Some may say...

- a. “I was amazed to see the Cowboys actually win a playoff game.”
- b. “I was amazed to hear that a celebrity had died.”
- c. “I was amazed that I did so well on my exam.”

When was the last time you were amazed at the miracles of Jesus? I ask this question because amazement was the common response from people when they witnessed the miracles of Jesus, Mark 1:21-27, 2:8-12, 5:41-42. What about us? Are we still amazed when we read the miracles of Jesus? I will confess that there have been times where I have read the text, closed my Bible, and moved on. But may I suggest that as we read about Jesus and His miracles that we take the time to seriously consider them? After all, they were written for a reason. They should bring amazement and so much more. They should cause us to believe Jesus is the Son of God. This is why the miracles have been recorded for us, John 20:30-31. When you read the book of Acts, you will see how the disciples when they preached Jesus spoke about the miracle of the resurrection.

Before we go any further, how many of the miracles of Jesus can you list? Write them in the space below.

I. Some Facts about Miracles

A. People are often confused when it comes to miracles. Here are some basic things to know.

1. A *miracle* was a supernatural act from God. Miracles are unusual and unique, easily recognizable, events that came from the Lord. A miracle is “a special act of God that interrupts the normal course of events. Natural laws describe what happens regularly, by natural causes; miracles, describe what happens rarely, by supernatural causes.” (Quote From Frank Turek).
2. The miracles Jesus performed were not a magic trick (pulling a rabbit from a hat). Magic deals with a sleight of hand or misleading the mind. The miracles Jesus performed were real. Some other thoughts to consider when thinking about the miracles of Jesus.
 - a. They are not to be confused to something that is psychosomatic. There are studies of people who take a placebo drug in a clinical trial and they get better. How does that work? I read in a book of a preacher who went to preach at another congregation. The man thought he was allergic to blooming flowers. So, he began to take drugs to alleviate the symptoms. When he got to the church building he saw flowers near the pulpit. He began to sneeze and his eyes watered. He told one of the guys, “I won’t be able to preach with these flowers here because my allergy is

acting up. So, would you please move them?" The man then responded, "They're fake!" The allergies went away. This is not to be confused with the miracles of Jesus. While the mind is powerful, our minds can't cure a severed spinal cord or amputated limb. A true miracle would have to occur for those conditions to be cured.

- b. Not to be confused with something that is an anomaly. An anomaly is unexplained freak of nature. The miracles of Jesus are totally different. People saw them, tasted them, and heard the miracles of Jesus.
 1. When Jesus turned water into wine in [John 2:1-11](#). That wasn't a magic trick.
 2. The apostles saw Jesus walk on water, [Mark 6:45-51](#). That was not in their minds.
 3. Jesus fed thousands with only a little bit of fish, [John 6:9-14](#). This wasn't magic.
 4. Jesus healed a man who had been ill for 38 years, [John 5:1-11](#). This was not magic.
 5. Jesus brought the dead back to life multiple times, [Luke 7:11-17](#).
 6. Jesus rose from the dead, [John 20:1-6](#). That was not an anomaly. This was something that Jesus had predicted He would do.
 7. **The miracles of Jesus proved He is the Son of God.** The miracles of Jesus point us to His identity, [Acts 2:22](#). They demonstrate that Jesus was more than a carpenter. They prove that He had power on earth to forgive sins. The only one who has that power is God. They point to His identity as God in the flesh, [Mark 2:7-12](#). The miracles testified that Jesus is the Son of God, [John 5:30-39](#). John the Baptist spoke the truth and testified who Jesus was. The Father did the same. The Old Testament scriptures pointed to His identity and so did the miracles that He performed.
 8. **The miracles of Jesus demonstrated His power over all things.** Jesus never struggled when it came to performing a miracle. He didn't need any do overs. He never doubted whether He would be able to get the job done. Jesus had power over all things!
 9. He had power over the spiritual realm, [Mark 1:23-25](#).
 10. He had power over the elements, [John 2:1-11](#).
 11. He had power over sickness, [Mark 1:29-31](#).
 12. He had power over death, [Luke 7:11-17](#).

B. The miracles of Jesus are to read and consider very carefully.

II. What Will We Do with the Miracles of Jesus?

A. It's odd to consider that many quickly dismiss the miracles of Jesus.

1. But that's exactly what happened in the days of Jesus. Many rejected His power. Many refused to truly believe in Him. After healing a man who had been ill for 38 years, some of the Jews were more interested in catching Jesus, instead of really taking into consideration what they saw. They saw a man walking who could not walk for 38 years, [John 5:16](#).
2. Then there were others who instead of being filled with awe were filled with anger toward Jesus after a miracle and wanted to kill Him, [John 11:45-46, 53](#).
3. They didn't appreciate the miracles this man performed. They didn't carefully consider what those miracles meant. What about us?

B. What will we do with His miracles?

1. Jesus tells us what we should do with His miracles. How about we listen to Him?
 - a. **We should believe them**, [John 20:28-31](#). We have them recorded for us for that reason. We should believe in Him so that we will be blessed and have eternal life! While some might think it naïve to believe in the miracles of Jesus, my question would be why? They were seen by hundreds of people. They were recorded by eyewitnesses, [Luke 1:1-4](#). Even the enemies of Jesus knew He performed these signs, [John 11:41](#). What should you do with the miracles of Jesus? Read them. Believe in them and in the one who performed them.
 - b. **They should change us.** When Jesus healed the man at the pool of Bethesda, He told the man to "sin no more..." [John 5:14](#). His life was supposed to change because of what Jesus had done.

When the apostles knew Jesus had been raised from the dead, their lives changed, Acts 2:11. After Paul spoke to Jesus on the road to Damascus, his life was changed forever, Acts 9:1-9.

2. The miracles of Jesus certainly changed the lives upon whom they were directed toward. And they should change ours. But have they? Our lives should be changed forever! Is that where you are? If not, maybe you should go back and do some more reading on the miracles of Jesus. Maybe you should consider them more carefully, as you consider this man named Jesus.
3. After what you have learned so far, do you believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?



Getting to Know Jesus

The Death, Burial, and Resurrection

Hopefully so far you have learned a great deal about Jesus. This is the aim of this study. In this lesson, we will look at the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus spoke a lot about His death, burial, and resurrection. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus is what the apostles preached. In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, Paul said, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”

I. The Death of Jesus

A. Jesus spoke about the fact that He would one day die.

1. The Bible says in Matthew 16:21, “From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”
2. In John 3:16-17, Jesus said, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” We can see why Jesus would have to die. So that he could save the world from sin.
3. In John 1:29, when a prophet named John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Jesus came to take away the sin of the world.
4. In Matthew 1:21, it says, “She will bear a Son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

B. Jesus would die a horrific death.

1. All four of the gospels speak about his death. Read Matthew 27:50. Write below what Jesus experienced as he died on the cross.

2. Jesus died on the cross. Some allege that He didn't die but was merely unconscious. But all four gospels make it clear that He died.
 - a. Matthew 27:50: “And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.”
 - b. Mark 15:37: “And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last.”
 - c. Luke 23:46: “And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Having said this, He breathed His last.”
 - d. John 19:30: “Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”
3. Jesus died. He died for me. He died for you.
4. The death of Jesus demonstrates how much God truly loves us. We should have been the ones who were on the cross. Jesus lived a sinless life according to 1 Peter 2:22. A man who is described as a

centurion who saw Jesus die described Jesus as being an innocent man, Luke 23:47. Indeed he was. We have sinned, Romans 3:23. But Jesus would pay the price for our sins. God is love, 1 John 4:8. He was the only one who could truly pay the price.

5. Is this your first time actually reading about the death of Jesus? If so, has it caused you to think any differently about Jesus? _____
6. Even if this isn't your first-time learning about the death of Jesus, it should still have an impact on you. What kind of impact has it had on you? _____

II. The Burial of Jesus

A. After the death of Jesus, we see that He was buried. He died on a Friday the day before the Sabbath.

1. Matthew 27:57-62: "When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave. Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate."
2. Mark 15:40-47: Write out any additional details you see from this account.
3. Luke 23:50-56: Write out any additional details you see from this account.
4. John 19:38-42: Write out any additional details you see from this account.

B. Jesus was not in the grave for a literal 72 hours. He was in the grave for 3 days, however.

1. There's no contradiction here. The Jews counted a part of a day as a day. So if Jesus died on a Friday, was laid in the tomb, was in the tomb all day Saturday, and then rose from the grave early on the first day of the week, that is three days.
2. This is what we see concerning His burial.
 - a. John 2:19, 21 "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." But he was speaking of the temple of his body.
 - b. Mark 8:31: "And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."
 - c. Matthew 27:62-63: "Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day..."

III. The Resurrection of Jesus

A. Jesus rose from the grave on the first day of the week.

1. All four gospels give us the resurrection story. Take a few minutes and read each of them. Then write out what you learn concerning the resurrection, Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-10; John 20:1-8.
2. The resurrection of Jesus was a miracle. The tomb where He laid is now empty. The enemies of Jesus could not refute that the tomb was empty, Matthew 28:11-15. The enemies of Jesus made up a lie about what happened. Why do you think the apostle Matthew would include this in his gospel?

3. People saw Jesus alive after His death and burial. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-6.
 - a. Who did Paul say Jesus appeared to?
 - b. Why is it significant that Paul said some of those who Jesus appeared to were still alive?
4. Jesus spent a significant amount of time with His apostles, Acts 1:1-3. The gospels give some of these interactions. Read John 20:28-31. What can we learn from this passage about Jesus and His resurrection?
5. Jesus spoke and ate with His apostles, John 21:1-14. What can we learn from these verses about the resurrection of Jesus?

B. The resurrection of Jesus really happened.

1. The resurrection was the foundation of the teaching of the apostles in the first century. When the church that Jesus promised to build began, the apostle Peter spoke about the life of Jesus. He spoke about His miracles, death, burial, and resurrection, Acts 2:21-37. You find this theme throughout the book of Acts.
2. Read Romans 1:4. What can we learn about the significance of the resurrection?
3. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:12-13. What can we learn about the significance of the resurrection?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. What can we learn about the significance of the resurrection?
5. Read Romans 6:1-7. Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected from the grave. What is it that the Christians in the first century had also done?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19. Thankfully, Jesus rose from the grave on the first day of the week. But if Jesus had not been raised what would be the ramifications?
7. Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? YES/NO
8. Do you believe that Jesus rose from the grave on the first day of the week? YES/NO



Getting to Know Jesus

Salvation, Commitment, Church

Jesus came to save us from our sins. Sin is what separates us from God. Jesus taught that if we don't believe in Him, we will die in our sins, [John 8:23](#). The apostle Paul taught that the wages of sin is death, [Romans 6:23](#). Sin is our biggest problem. Yet we don't hear a lot about sin these days. Many preachers shy away from talking about sin. You certainly will not hear any news station talk about sin. But Jesus didn't shy away from sin. He spoke about sin, heaven, and hell. We need to continue to listen to Jesus. We need His saving grace. This is our last lesson in this particular study. As we come to a close, we will discuss salvation in Christ. If one is going to be saved, it will only be through Jesus, [John 14:6](#). Redemption from our sins is only found in Him, [Ephesians 1:7](#).

Jesus desires that all men be saved. This is what God desires, [1 Timothy 2:1-4](#). God doesn't want any person to perish and spend eternity separated from Him in hell, [2 Peter 3:9](#). No one has to go to hell. Jesus has paved the way so that we all men can be saved. But accepting the free gift of salvation from Jesus is a choice. He will not force anyone to follow Him. Following Jesus will come with a price, [Luke 9:23-24](#). It will require commitment on our part. Many want to be saved, but don't want to listen to what is that Jesus says. Jesus wants us to count the cost when it comes to following Him, [Luke 14:26-33](#). One can hear the good news about Jesus and still not be a Christian, [Acts 26:26-28](#). The apostle Paul spoke to a man named King Agrippa about Jesus. King Agrippa heard the truth concerning Jesus. It appeared he believed what he heard. Yet he didn't take action to receive God's saving grace. He almost became a Christian. Almost is not good enough. In [Acts 24:24-26](#), a man named Felix and his wife Drusilla heard the truth concerning Jesus from the apostle Paul. Yet they didn't become Christians. In fact, what they heard scared them. The truth can sometimes do that. Following the truth will come with a price. But the price is worth it. Jesus died for our sins. He loves you very much. He wants you to follow Him. This lesson will show you what you must do to be saved. Did you know a man described as the Philippian jailer asked that question to Paul in [Acts 16](#)? In [Acts 16:30](#), the jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" While salvation is the free gift of God (read [Romans 6:23](#)), we must understand how we access or receive this free gift.

I. Salvation Is in Christ

A. Jesus taught that one must believe in Him to be saved.

1. Jesus taught that He is the way to God the Father and heaven, John 14:6. This eliminates any other way. This may not be popular, but this is what Jesus taught. Jesus backed up what He taught with the miracles we have already discussed earlier.
2. Jesus taught that we must believe in Him or we will die in our sins, John 8:23-24.
3. The book of Acts shows us people in the first century being saved by Jesus. We see how they believed in Him and confessed that Jesus is the Son of God, Acts 8:35-37. Read Romans 10:9-10. Are you willing to do the same?

B. Jesus taught that one must repent to be saved.

1. This is what we find in Luke 13:1-5. Repentance is not doing a 360 with your life, but rather a 180. It's about change.
2. Repentance will come with a price. Read Acts 19:17-19. What was it that some Christians in the city called Ephesus gave up? _____.
3. If you decide to follow Jesus, there will be some changes you will have to make. Are you willing to repent even if the price is big?

C. Jesus taught that one must be baptized to be saved.

1. Jesus taught that one must be born again, John 3:3-5.
2. Jesus taught that one must believe and be baptized to be saved, Mark 16:16.
 - a. Baptism means to immerse. One must be immersed in water (baptized) to be saved.
 - b. If one doesn't believe, there's no reason for them to be baptized.
 - c. According to Jesus in Mark 16:16, does salvation occur prior or after baptism?
 - d. Can a baby obey what Jesus taught in Mark 16:16? Explain.
3. In the book of Acts, this is what we see people doing to be saved.
 - a. Read Acts 2:38. What did Peter instruct people to do?
 - b. Read Acts 8:12-13. What did people in Samaria do to be saved?
 - c. Read Acts 8:29-38. What did the eunuch believe and do to be saved?
 - d. Read Acts 22:16. Was Paul saved before or after he was baptized?
 - e. Read Acts 16:30-34. What did the Philippian jailer hear and learn prior to being baptized?
 - f. Read Colossians 2:12. According to this verse, who does the work in baptism?
 - g. Read 1 Peter 3:21. What does Peter say baptism does?
4. There's nothing special about the water. One can be baptized in a river, lake, pond (if there's enough water), a swimming pool, etc.
 - a. What's special is that God is working on the one who has faith in Him to be obedient.
 - b. What's special is that by faith one is reaching the blood of Jesus that will cleanse their sins, Ephesians 1:7.
 - c. What's special is that one will be united with Christ in baptism, Romans 6:4-5.
 - d. What's special is that one will be freed from sin, Romans 6:7.
5. Sometimes people have a misunderstanding about baptism.
 - a. Some have been taught that baptism isn't necessary. Is that true or false?
 - b. Some have been taught that baptism is a sprinkling. Based upon what we've read, is that true or false?
 - c. Some have been taught that you just say a prayer to receive Jesus. Did you see anyone do this in the passages we read, or anyone be instructed to do that?

- d. Some have been taught that one is saved prior to baptism. They can be baptized later to demonstrate their salvation. Is that true or false?
6. One can't be taught wrong and saved right. Read Acts 19:1-5. There were some disciples who had a misunderstanding when it came to salvation. What did they do once they learned the truth?

II. When One is Saved, They Are Added to the Church Jesus Built

A. Jesus promised in His ministry that He would build His church, Matthew 16:18.

1. According to Matthew 16:18, how many churches did Christ promise to build?
2. Read Ephesians 1:22-23. Who is head of the church?
3. Read Ephesians 4:4. How many bodies (or churches) are there?
4. When you think church, don't think about a building, but rather people. Read Acts 5:11. Fear came upon the church. Did fear come upon a building or people?
5. When people were saved, they were added to the body of Christ, Acts 2:47. It was God who added them. All the saved are in the church that belong to Jesus.
6. The church is a big deal in the eyes of God. Read Acts 20:28. What do we learn about it?
7. When one is saved, they are to align themselves with a local group of Christians. Read Acts 9:19. After Paul was baptized, what did he do? Read Acts 9:26-27. When Paul was in Jerusalem, what did he do? Some want Christ but not His church. That's not what the scriptures teach.

B. The church of Christ followed the teaching of the apostles, Acts 2:42.

1. The church in the first century was a family. Read Acts 2:42-46; Acts 4:32-37. What do we see the Christians doing?
2. The church in the first century worshiped a certain way. Read Acts 2:42; Acts 4:32-37; Acts 12:12; Acts 20:7; 2 Corinthians 8-9; and Ephesians 5:19.
3. The church encouraged one another and at times corrected one another, Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. Why would these things be important to do?
4. The church in the first century was simple in nature and yet very important. We are to follow the pattern that we find in the New Testament.
5. The church of your choice is NOT what the apostles taught. Rather, we find Christians following a simple pattern the apostles taught. God will expect you to do the same. Not every church follows what we see in the New Testament. Therefore, not every congregation is doing the will of God.

III. Are You Ready to Follow Christ?

A. Following Jesus will require a commitment on your part.

1. At the beginning of our study, you were asked if you've been saved. How did you answer?
2. Did your answer line up with what you have read in the Bible? If not, are you ready to be saved from your sins?

B. If you've never been saved, are you ready to become a disciple of Jesus? YES/NO

1. The gospel is called GOOD NEWS for a reason. Through Jesus there's hope, salvation, forgiveness, no condemnation, and so much more.
2. If yes, then praise God! People in the first century obeyed immediately. We should as well.
3. If you answered NO, there's no pressure. Simply consider some questions:
 - a. What may be holding you back from becoming saved?
 - b. What questions or doubts do you have that may be holding you back?
 - c. Are you afraid of water and that's why you don't want to be baptized?

- d. Are you afraid of what your family may think if you become a Christian?
 - e. Do you feel like you're too bad of a person to be saved?
4. Whatever it is, you are not the first one to have those questions or concerns. Just remember, life is short. The devil doesn't want you to become a Christian. Even if you obey, the devil will still come after you. Don't allow him to rob you of the joy you can have in Jesus.
 5. Whatever you decide, be sure that you count the cost, Luke 14:24-26. Are you willing to submit to the rule and reign of Jesus? Not every disciple in the first century continued to follow Jesus, John 6:66. Some left Him. There's a choice that must be made. What choice will you make?