

**SPREAD THE
GOOD NEWS OF**



JESUS

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SO WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS?

The gospel is called the “good news” because it addresses the most serious problem that you and I have as human beings, and that problem is simply this: God is holy and He is just, we are not.

Jesus lived a life of perfect righteousness, of perfect obedience to God, not for His own well being but for His people (us!). He has done for us what we couldn't possibly do for ourselves. But not only did He live that life of perfect obedience, He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy the justice and righteousness of God.

The good news is that we all have been given a second chance at uniting with God. Without this grace given through the sacrifice of Jesus, we are unacceptable to God and would never join Him in His eternal kingdom.

The Bible makes it clear that we are saved not by our works, not by our efforts, not by our deeds, but by faith—and by faith alone. The only way you can receive the benefit of Christ's life and death is by putting your trust in Him and in Him alone and accepting Him as Savior. You do that, you're declared just by God, you're adopted into His family, you're forgiven of all your sins, and eternal life is assured.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life .” John 3:16

WHY SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS?

Baked into the soul of every Christian is the burning desire to serve the Lord and obey His commands. However, that desire is often short circuited by our fleshly notion that we are inadequate and lack the confidence to engage in serious conversations of faith and salvation. When pressed, Christians will acknowledge the need to be more vocal in sharing the good news of Christ, but often won't bridge that great divide when situations arise for action.

That is why we have assembled these training resources for you. In a world that desperately needs to know about Jesus Christ, it is imperative that we as Christians unite in our affirmation that witnessing is an essential element in our daily walk with Christ.

It's clear, Christ commanded us to love God and love our neighbors. He also made it clear that we are supposed to tell others about Him. Each of the Gospels has a different compelling command that we go forward and spread the gospel.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..." Matthew 28:19-20

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:15-16

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things." Luke 24:46-48

So, Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." John 20:21

WHY SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS? (CONTINUED)

Furthermore, as Christians we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit living within each of us. Jesus said He would ask the Father to fill His believers with the Holy Spirit so He may abide in us. All through the book of Acts, you see how the Holy Spirit empowered Christ's believers to witness. The demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit was the main method Paul used to evangelize entire cities. (1 Corinthians 2:4)

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

It's clear that the way to salvation is open to everyone, but they must hear it from others.

"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Romans 10:13-14

If there is only one path (Jesus) and we know the path, then we must show others. Paul felt preaching the gospel was a life necessity.

"... Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" 1 Corinthians 9:16

Shouldn't we feel the same way?

HOW TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS?

Are you a frequent spreader of the Good News? How many times have you witnessed in the past week, month, or even year? If the answer is a small number, you have plenty of company. For a great number of Christians, this important piece of Christianity is just not happening.

The intent of this course is to address this shortcoming and make you a better witnesser. A good witnesser is not only one who tells the story of Jesus joyfully, clearly, and accurately, but one who also does it often. On a regular basis, you get to be God's messenger telling the glorious story and planting seeds that can take root and unite people with God therefore changing their eternal destinations.

With most people, repetition and practice breed confidence. As one becomes more confident with a specific skill set, he or she will naturally be more likely to act on opportunities as they arise. We seek to increase both the effectiveness and frequency of spreading the good news through familiarity and practice.

Does every Christian need training like this to be a great witnesser? Absolutely not! Rest assured the Holy Spirit will provide Christians with the words to say at the exact time they are to be shared with others. *"for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say."* Luke 12:12 It is not the witnesser that brings others to Christ, rather that is God's domain. Our commission is to be obedient and continue to share wherever and whenever possible.

Some Christians eagerly and often tell the story of Jesus Christ. They have done it many times, can spot opportunities well, and are super comfortable and confident. But if you are one of the many Christians who are not witnessing as often as you know you should, this course can be a great help to you.

WITNESSING CAN BE AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3

1-KNOWS 2-BELIEVES 3-ACCEPTS

To be a good witnesser it is necessary to know the frame of reference of the person to whom you are speaking. By asking a few questions, you can determine what the person currently knows and believes. That knowledge defines a good starting place for the conversation and makes it easy to provide and tailor the information.

First, ask if the person **KNOWS** the true story of Jesus. For a relative or close friend, you may already know the answer and there is no need to ask. For others, you may need to ask the question and make sure they know the true story of Christ. Be ready to tell the story of Jesus if the person does not already know it.

Once you are convinced the person knows the true story of Jesus, ask if the person **BELIEVES** the story. Was there a man named Jesus Christ who walked this earth performing miracles and died on the cross so every sinner may be forgiven and united with God?

When you know the person believes the story of Jesus, ask if the person has **ACCEPTED** the gift brought by Jesus. Has the person confessed their sins and accepted God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ? Do they seek a living relationship with Jesus? Have they exchanged their old life for a new one? Are they disciples of Christ living a life of obedience and helping others with the same?

Throughout the rest of the booklet we will further explore each of these categories. Hands-on practice labs will help you become proficient at identifying and providing appropriate information.

Section 1

DOESN'T KNOW THE STORY OF JESUS

HOW ARE THEY TO BELIEVE IN HIM OF WHOM THEY HAVE NEVER HEARD? AND HOW ARE THEY TO HEAR WITHOUT SOMEONE PREACHING?

ROMANS 10:14

AND HE SAID TO THEM, "GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL TO THE WHOLE CREATION."

MARK 16:15

SECTION 1 - DOESN'T KNOW THE STORY OF JESUS

TO INTRODUCE JESUS WE FIRST IDENTIFY GOD

Here are some key pieces of information that identify God:

- God is the creator of all.
- He has no beginning and no ending.
- God deeply loves every person and wants each of us to spend eternity with Him in heaven.
- Since God is perfect and absolute, He cannot accept or tolerate any sin. And since each human has sinned (except God's son Jesus Christ), our sin burden must be forgiven in order to receive eternal life.
- Because God's love for each of us is so intense, He sent his son Jesus Christ to earth to pay for the sins of all humankind. Therefore, every person may be forgiven forever. It does not matter what kind or how many sins have been committed by any person - with Jesus all is forgiven.
- While a person is still alive on earth, he/she will be forgiven for ALL their sins FOREVER simply by accepting the incredible gift of forgiveness made possible through God's son Jesus Christ. God will not forgive sins for doing good deeds or other human acts. God only forgives your sins through Jesus Christ.
- God is also a God of judgement. Those who have not had their sins forgiven through Jesus Christ will be judged, convicted, and sentenced to perish in hell.

SECTION 1 - DOESN'T KNOW THE STORY OF JESUS

JESUS CHRIST

Here are some key pieces of information that identify Jesus:

- Jesus Christ is God's only son.
- Jesus is fully God and fully man. Just like God, He has no beginning and no ending.
- Jesus came to the earth in the form of a human being. He experienced the same emotions, temptations and other daily struggles that each of us experience. He was sinless throughout his life.
- While on earth he performed many miracles. Through his actions and words, He showed how a Godly person should think and act.
- Although He was the only sinless person to ever walk the earth, Jesus was tortured and crucified. During this process, Jesus took all of our sins upon himself. This terrible burden was accepted by Jesus because of His deep love for each of us. While still on earth, He was resurrected from the dead, then ascended to heaven.
- The only path to forgiveness and eternal life is through Jesus Christ. If we have remorse for our sins and accept Jesus as our Savior and model, we will be forgiven from our sins and have eternal life.
- When you accept Christ as Savior, it's like trading death for life. It is often looked at as being reborn.

Section 2

KNOWS STORY BUT DOESN'T BELIEVE

FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE FREE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

ROMANS 6:23

WHOEVER BELIEVES IN THE SON HAS ETERNAL LIFE; WHOEVER DOES NOT OBEY THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, BUT THE WRATH OF GOD REMAINS ON HIM.

JOHN 3:36

SECTION 2 - KNOWS STORY BUT DOESN'T BELIEVE

VERIFY THEY KNOW THE TRUE STORY OF CHRIST

There may be many reasons for this scenario. After all, there has never been any person like Jesus in the history of the world. To believe Jesus is the son of God who came to earth from heaven to take the world's sins onto himself because of the Father and Son's intense love for humanity requires a lot of faith. Without knowing Jesus personally like all Christians do, it's difficult to relate and believe.

In addition, there are many people who may claim to be former Christians who no longer believe. This can result from events such as prayers that were not answered in the way they expected, personal tragedies, or simply being pulled away from Jesus by worldly influences.

The first step with someone who says they know the story of Jesus but do not believe He is the son of God and the only path to heaven, is to verify they really know the true story. There are many people that are basing their decision not to believe in Jesus on information that is either false or incomplete. A lack of complete and accurate information based on sources other than the Bible or another Christian telling the complete and true story of Jesus are reasons a person may not have this critical information.

It's wise to review what they THINK they know so you correct and complete the facts of Jesus Christ. Spreading the Good News is not only directed towards people who have never heard the story of Jesus, but also the vast number who have only attained incomplete and/or inaccurate information.

SECTION 2 - KNOWS STORY BUT DOESN'T BELIEVE

DOESN'T BELIEVE, BUT THERE IS HOPE

On the other hand, a person may know the true story of Jesus, but still reject it as being untrue. If your intention is to spread the word vs engage in apologetics, the questions listed below often are a good catalyst to get the person re-thinking the matter.

Ask the person if they are ready to take the decision not to believe to the grave. Let them know that as long as they are alive, they have the opportunity to change their opinion and end up saved.

Ask the person how they believe the world was created. If the answer is Big Bang or similar, let them know how much faith it takes to believe in those theories.

You can talk about the vastness of space, where the observable universe diameter is thought to be approximately 93 billion light-years and may be infinite beyond that, or the 100,000 ganglion cells of a tiny guinea pig retina that transmits roughly 875,000 bits of information per second (human retinas transmit 10,000,000 per second). Do some research and pick your favorite miracles, they are all around us!

In the end, one must choose to either believe the theories stating all creation was created by a series of astronomically unlikely random events, or that Jesus is indeed exactly who He claimed to be.

Let the person know that no matter what their life has been to this point, they can and will be saved simply by accepting Jesus's gift of life.

SECTION 2 - KNOWS STORY BUT DOESN'T BELIEVE

DOESN'T BELIEVE, BUT THERE IS HOPE

To explore further:

- Offer to pray for the person
- Invite the person to attend a Church
- Challenge the person to read the Bible or other books
- Give the person a coin with your favorite Bible verse on it
- Give the person a card with your or your Church's information on it

At this point, you have verified that this person knows the good news. That was the goal! Pray that this planted seed will grow under the Holy Spirit's love.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace and believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

"For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Section 3

BELIEVES BUT HASN'T ACTED

IF YOU DECLARE WITH YOUR MOUTH, "JESUS IS LORD," AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE SAVED. FOR IT IS WITH YOUR HEART THAT YOU BELIEVE AND ARE JUSTIFIED, AND IT IS WITH YOUR MOUTH THAT YOU PROFESS YOUR FAITH AND ARE SAVED.

ROMANS 10:9-10

THEN HE SAID TO THEM ALL, "WHOEVER WANTS TO BE MY DISCIPLE MUST DENY THEMSELVES AND TAKE UP THEIR CROSS DAILY AND FOLLOW ME."

LUKE 9:23

SECTION 3 - BELIEVES BUT HASN'T ACCEPTED

ACT IF YOU BELIEVE

The Bible tells us we must declare that Jesus is our one and only Savior and we must accept His incredible gift of grace to be saved.

If someone believes that Jesus is the Son of God and died so they may be forgiven for their sins and receive eternal life, they need to become His disciple by accepting Him as their one and only Savior.

This is the only way to get to heaven.

They can't get to heaven by being religious, doing good deeds, being a good person, going to church, being spiritual, etc., but only by accepting the gift of life from Jesus and becoming his disciple.

Ask the person why they have not accepted Jesus' incredible gift.

Ask if they are willing to pray now to accept Jesus as their Savior.

It's as simple as acknowledging that they are a sinner and asking Jesus to forgive them, and asking Jesus to come into their heart as their Lord and Savior.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME WILL ALSO DO THE WORKS THAT I DO.

JOHN 14:12A

FOR YOU WILL BE A WITNESS FOR HIM TO ALL MEN OF WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN AND HEARD.

ACTS 22:15

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

HELPFUL TIPS FOR WITNESSING

1. Pray daily for God to put you in situations where you can openly share your faith and testimony.
2. Smile, people will be more receptive to someone whose countenance is bright and cheery.
3. Be bold and confident and just start talking. God has promised us that He will supply the words we need at just the right time.
4. Mention God, Prayer, and the Bible in the conversation. Just talk about God as a natural part of your everyday life. Look for areas of common interest.
5. Ask questions with a genuine interest in mind. Don't fake it til you make it. Show compassion throughout the conversation and focus on their feelings. Most people love to talk about themselves.
6. Quote or paraphrase the Bible as the Holy Spirit leads you. Don't preach but rather share your story and testimony.
7. End the conversation well and on a positive note. See if there would be an opportunity to stay in touch with them. Don't smother them or make them feel that you want to bombard them with God. Rather delight them in wanting to hear more about why your relationship with God brings you so much joy.
8. Don't chicken out at the last minute. Missed opportunities will haunt you for a long time, especially when you felt the prompting of the Holy Spirit to engage.
9. Remember, this assignment is a privilege directly from Jesus. It should not feel rote or scripted. It should be an outward projection from an inward expansion of overflowing joy.
10. In the end, it's not about us, we are simply the mouthpiece. It is God that draws them to Jesus through the unction of the Holy Spirit.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Pick out something you like and complement the person to start a conversation such as clothing, car, hair, jewelry, tattoo, smile, kids, pets
- Ask questions about the person such as interests, sports, food, job, kids, health, school, where from, religion, how the day is going, weekend plans

Segue the conversation to Christ:

- Have you heard the good news?
- Many people believe we are in the end of times. Are you ready?
- Are you aware that our life mistakes and sins can be wiped clean?
- Can I pray for you? Will you pray with me?
- Thank Jesus for something, then ask if he/she is also a believer.
- Do you feel a void in your life, like there's something missing?
- Do you attend church? If not, invite them to your church.
- Are you lonely?
- How do you handle difficult times? Who do you seek for help?
- Where do you think your talent comes from?
- Wow, only a magnificent God could ... (e.g. create such a beautiful sunrise, a vast universe filled with an uncountable number of stars, human life, etc.)

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

SHARE STORIES AND EXPERIENCES

- Tell the story of how you came to know Jesus as your Savior.
- Describe the confidence you have in life after death.
- Give examples of what being saved by Christ has done in your life.
- Tell stories of how the strength of Christ has enabled you to deal with the many problems faced here on earth.
- Describe how God always comes through for you and how He keeps His promises.
- Tell the story of how other Christians have brought the good news and changed lives. This might include anyone from Billy Graham to a personal friend.
- Share some of your favorite Christian books and authors.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

PRACTICE LAB

As God puts you in situations that allow you to share your faith, the Holy Spirit will provide guidance as you witness. Be open to the Holy Spirit and absolutely go whatever direction you are feeling from the Holy Spirit.

To help prepare and build confidence, it is useful to practice witnessing and receive feedback from others. The more confidence you gain, the more likely your frequency of witnessing will increase. Jesus commands us to go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. This world desperately needs to hear and understand the message.

This tool has recommended various strategies and tips to help make you a better witnesser. "1, 2, 3" is easy to remember any time, especially when you might be a bit nervous and feel under pressure as you attempt to deliver the message of Jesus Christ. Simply ask a couple questions to determine where the person is currently with Jesus, and if they even know the name Jesus Christ and what he has done for us. Once you know this, you will know where to start and what facts the individual needs.

In the labs, you can practice witnessing to other Christians who can represent anyone from a family member, to a friend or coworker, or someone you just met. The more you practice various scenarios, the more confident you will become, and the more often you will "get in the game" and witness. You will see how working with other Christians will improve you and help bring the message to more people as Jesus orders.

Finally, Jesus tells us we are to bring the message to all people, not just ones we think may be interested. Without a doubt some will not be open to the Word, and some will let you know this rather rudely. It is not our job to convince, but rather to bring the message. When we do encounter people that shut us down, it is imperative that we don't slow down in any way. We need to move on to the next person who desperately needs to hear the message of Jesus and his love for us all.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

AFTER THE SEED IS PLANTED - DISCIPLESHIP

In the instances you were successful in having a conversation about the good news, what are the next steps?

Discipleship entails describing and showing by example the ways of Jesus. It is a critical part of the growth of the Christian and Non-Christian. Build a long term relationship with the person if you are able, and lead in the direction of Jesus.

When witnessing to someone without an established relationship, the following are good options to begin to grow together:

- Ask if you can pray for the person
- Invite the person to your church
- Exchange email addresses
- Carry a card with the contact information for your church
- Carry a coin with your favorite and/or most appropriate Bible verse and offer it to them
- Recommend a book and/or website that you feel is appropriate
- If the person lives or will be back to your area, invite them out for coffee or similar to continue the discussion

Of course there are many other options available to you, but be confident you have already planted a seed that the Holy Spirit will cultivate. Congratulations!