“GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL CREATION.”
MARK 16:15, NIV

Matthew

Sharing the Good News
OF GOD’S LOVE WITH THE
PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE
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PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

**Billy Graham**
Evangelistic Association of Canada
*Always Good News.*
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Introduction

Who do you know that doesn’t have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ? Is it a family member? A friend? A colleague? A neighbor? As Christians, we are surrounded by people who have no lasting hope. Many have jobs, families, and friends, yet their foundation is built on things that will pass away. We have a loving command from God to share with them, the Gospel, the reason for the hope we have. My Hope with Billy Graham will give you an opportunity to clearly share with people around you your story of everlasting hope in Jesus Christ.

What is My Hope with Billy Graham?

My Hope with Billy Graham is a simple, biblical plan to help you share God’s love with the people in your life. It combines the reach and excitement of a nationwide media event with the power of personal relationships. Under the guidance of local pastors, Christians like you will open their homes—just as the Apostle Matthew did—to share the Gospel message with friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors. You can invite your guests into your home to learn about Jesus through television or video programs that feature Billy Graham, dynamic music, and testimonies—or gather them at a coffee shop or another favorite hangout to watch the programs on a tablet or smartphone. You choose the time and program format that’s best for you and your friends.

Key Elements

1. Local churches are the focus of My Hope with Billy Graham. This outreach exists to strengthen your church by preparing members like you to pray and share Christ with lost people around you. As your friends and neighbors come to Christ, they will build up your local church.

2. My Hope with Billy Graham video programs are developed to clearly and concisely share the Gospel through music, interviews, and a message from Billy Graham.
3. Relationships are a foundation of My Hope with Billy Graham. In the months leading up to the event, you and other Christians can be active in strengthening relationships with people you know who don’t follow Christ. As you reach out in love and service to close friends, family members, co-workers, fellow students, or neighbors, you earn the right to share your story with them.

4. Everyone can participate. Young people can invite their friends to watch the programs. Grandparents can invite grandchildren or younger people to come over for a meal and watch the program. Men’s and women’s ministries can use this as an evangelistic tool. Singles and couples can host meals in their homes. If you’re a Christian, you can do this!

5. The media will be used intensely during the first week of November 2013 to saturate the country with video programs using TV, DVDs, downloads, webstreaming, and mobile devices. Together with Christians across the country praying and building relationships, the project will open the door to an evangelistic movement that can sweep the nation. Participants can choose the format and time that is most convenient for them during the week. Information on specific program times will be available on the My Hope with Billy Graham website as we approach November 2013.

6. The personal testimony of each Christian is vital to the success of this outreach. As you live out the love of Jesus and then share your own story with lost friends, family, and neighbors, God will transform lives.

7. The follow-up of new Christians through small groups and local churches is essential to ensure that each person has the opportunity to become an active member of a local Christian fellowship.

Matthew—A Biblical Model

Matthew and Friends is the heart of this national evangelistic outreach. After accepting Jesus’ call to follow Him (Matthew 9:9–13 and Luke 5:27–31), Matthew invited friends into his house to meet the Person who changed his life.

Similarly, My Hope with Billy Graham will train Christians like you to be “Matthews” during My Hope Week in November 2013:

• to host your friends for the outreach and show the video program
• to briefly share your own story of how you met Jesus and invite your friends to pray to receive the Lord Jesus Christ
• to follow up with new believers and encourage them to become part of a local church

What do I do as a Matthew?

Just follow these five steps:

LOOK AROUND and identify friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow students, and family who do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Write their names on your Matthew list.

LOOK UP and pray every day for each person on your Matthew list. Ask God to open their hearts so they can see their need for Him. Pray that He will strengthen your relationship with them and that they will accept your invitation to watch the program.

LOOK OUT for opportunities to build your relationships with these people. Spend time with them. Be transparent about your relationship with Christ, so that your friends can see the difference He is making in your life. God’s Spirit will help you.

LOOK FORWARD to the event: Prepare for the outreach, invite every person on your list, watch the My Hope with Billy Graham programs together, share your story, and ask your guests if any of them would like the kind of hope that you have. Then you can help them receive Christ as their Lord and Savior.

This is a crucial step during your preparation. Carefully consider each of the instructions below as you look forward to My Hope Week in November 2013.

1. Prepare

    a. Prepare yourself spiritually

        i. Study the lessons in the section “How Do I Prepare?” in detail (pages 13–44 of this manual). For the last 60 years, these lessons were taught in preparation for every Billy Graham Crusade, and they are a crucial part of the preparation of a Matthew.
b. Prepare accountability
   i. Seek out other Matthews in your church or community and meet regularly with them to pray for each other’s friends, family members, and neighbors. If you are not aware of anyone else participating, spread the news! *My Hope with Billy Graham* is a great opportunity for all Christians to impact their communities.

2. Invite
   a. Invite the people on your Matthew list to your home or another comfortable place to watch the program.
   b. Remember that by this point you will have been praying intensely for this moment. God is faithful. Be honest. Tell your guests you’re inviting them to your home for a meal or dessert, and then you’d like to share with them what gives you hope every day. It changed your life, and you want to share it with them.

3. Watch
   a. Gather your guests to watch the *My Hope with Billy Graham* program. Before it begins, give a brief introduction, such as, “What we’ll see now is what changed my life, gives me hope, and makes me what I am now. Thank you for coming to watch it with me.”
   b. Watch the program together. Pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to each person.

4. Share
   a. After the program, turn off the television and briefly (in three minutes) tell your personal story of how you asked Jesus to come into your life, how He gave you hope, and what He is doing in your life today. A good way to start would be to say, “This program showed different people sharing how they found hope in Jesus Christ. That is my story too ...”

   “Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.”
   —Psalm 126:5-6

5. Ask
   Once you share your story, ask if any of your guests would like to have the kind of hope you have. Invite your listeners to do what you did and receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Tell them that they can ask Jesus to be the leader of their lives, simply by prayer. Prayer is just talking to God. Because He’s God, He hears everything we think and say.

   Those who want to make a decision can repeat after you as you read the following prayer:

   “Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from running my own life, and now I ask You to run it. I invite You to come into my heart and life. I trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. In Jesus’ Name, amen.”

   Remind your guests that God hears and answers prayer.

   LOOK AFTER those who give their lives to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith.
Immediately following the My Hope broadcasts, some people will want to accept Christ, while others will remain curious and want to know more before making a decision. You can help both by arranging to meet with them again. Fix a date to meet again within two to three days to discuss the things they have heard.

Some may not be willing to go to a church service right away. Continue to provide opportunities to meet together in a friendly small group setting. Use these meetings to introduce and discuss the Bible with those who come.

Help your pastor to organize Bible studies in small groups outside of the church facilities to encourage those who are not yet ready to join in church fellowship.

In the Bible we see multiple examples of experienced believers helping newer or younger believers:

- Moses and Joshua
- Elijah and Elisha
- Naomi and Ruth
- Paul and Timothy
- Jesus Christ called 12 disciples so they could be with Him, learn about God’s kingdom, and go out to preach.
- Paul was very concerned about new believers, and he wanted them to grow in Christ. (See 1 Thessalonians 2:8, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, and Colossians 1:28.)

When we care for new believers, they will grow stronger, and then they can help others grow in Christ. (See 2 Timothy 2:2.) As a Matthew, here are steps you can take to help new believers grow in their Christian faith:

1. **Look after your guests right away.** After praying together, be sure to explain the “My Decision” brochure to those who made decisions for Christ. Within two to three days after the event, call or meet with each one who prayed to receive Jesus and go over the “My Decision” brochure again. Help them memorize the Bible verses and pray with them.

2. **Start a weekly Bible study.** Give each person who makes a decision to follow Christ a copy of *Living in Christ*, a four-lesson Bible study for new believers. Then organize a weekly Bible study to go over each lesson together. Three copies of *Living in Christ* are included in your resource kit, but you can download more if you need them at MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca. Encourage the new believers to visit GoingFartherJesus.net, where they can learn more about the Christian life.

3. **Help the new believers learn to pray.** Your prayers should be simple and brief, so your friends do not feel overwhelmed by your prayers.
   - You may need to teach them phrase-by-phrase how to pray—you say a phrase, and then they repeat after you.
   - Teach them the Lord’s Prayer, how to give thanks for their food, how to pray when they wake up and when they go to sleep, and how to pray when they face a problem during the day.

4. **Teach them about the Bible.**
   - Help them find the books of the Old and New Testament.
   - Read with them in the gospels about Jesus’ life, miracles, and teachings.
   - Teach them how to read a portion of the Bible and apply it to their own life.

5. **Invite all your guests to join you in church the Sunday after My Hope Week.** Explain to them that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ meet together to worship Him, to lift their hearts in prayer and singing, and to encourage each other. Bring new believers to prayer groups or to Bible studies where they can meet Christian friends and receive strength by the Holy Spirit to continue following Christ. (See Hebrews 10:23–25.)

6. **Help them understand repentance and restoration.** Christians may fail or fall into some sin. New believers need to learn that when we fail or fall, we can come to the Lord Jesus in repentance, and He will help us recover so we can again walk in God’s pathway. Teach new believers that they can recover, even after a sin (1 John 1:9). Help

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.”

—Proverbs 11:30, NKJV
them get up again (Galatians 6:1).

7. **Tell them about the work of the Holy Spirit.** He draws us to Christ, He gives us faith to believe, He gives us the desire to live in purity and to know God, He gives us strength for each day, He gives us gifts for Christian service, and He intercedes for us when we do not know what to pray. Help the new believers become aware of God’s work in them through the Holy Spirit. (See John 14:15–27.)

8. **Introduce them to other Christians.** You will help the new believers in some things, while God will use other Christians to help them in other things. Through prayer, the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and Christian fellowship, new believers can go from strength to strength until they grow in Christian maturity—and then they can bring their family, friends, and neighbors to Christ. (See Colossians 1:28.)

9. **Study the lessons on pages 13–44.** This will give you more information on how to follow up with new believers.

Report what God did

1. After sharing your testimony and giving an invitation, fill out a decision form (included in your Matthew Resource Kit) with each of your guests who makes a decision for Jesus Christ. Indicate their decision in the corresponding boxes.

2. Report your results at [MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca](http://MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca) using the forms filled out by the new believers.

3. Give the decision forms to your pastor on Harvest Sunday, the Sunday immediately following My Hope Week, so these new believers can be brought into the life of the local church.

**Note:** A good summary of the previous points is found in the “Matthew Demonstration Video” on the DVD in your Matthew Resource Kit or online at [MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca](http://MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca).

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**How Do I Prepare?**

This section deals with the spiritual preparation that is necessary when you want your friends to see the hope you have in Christ. Millions of people have taken these lessons, applied them to their lives, and seen these biblical principles that they sowed reap great fruit in the salvation of their friends, family, and neighbors. Even if it seems like a review, please pay attention, because these are basic steps of the Christian life that you can use to disciple your friends, family members, or neighbors who come to your home for *My Hope with Billy Graham*.

Before you start these lessons, it will be helpful to answer a few basic questions.

**Who is this for?**

It is for every Christian who wants to know Jesus Christ better and wants to share Him with others. When you became a Christian, He gave you new life by the power of His Spirit in you. **It is the knowing and sharing of this new life that this course is designed to strengthen.** All followers of Jesus Christ can benefit from sharing together in this way.

**Why is it necessary?**

It is always a good thing for Christians to have this type of course for preparation and training. **In the Christian life there are always new lessons to learn.** As we participate in *My Hope with Billy Graham*, it is of special importance. This course will equip each of us to effectively share our faith.

**How can I get the best from these lessons?**

We realize that in a few short lessons it isn’t possible to help every person become a mature, fully equipped worker. Therefore, the course objective is to give each participant a solid foundation for faith and some good, practical, basic principles upon which to build an effective Christian life and witness. **Here are a few suggestions to make the learning experience more effective:**
First—Be faithful in completing your homework each lesson. This will involve a short Bible study, a project related to the lesson, and new Bible verses to memorize. According to educators, you forget a large percentage of what you hear. Therefore, if you are content to only listen to the lecture (or read the lesson) and not complete the home assignments, you may get very little of lasting value from the course.

Second—Think of how you might apply each lesson to your own life, and then pass on to others the truths, principles, suggestions, or materials which you receive. This way, you will learn to make practical use of them in your life first and then to invest your life in others.

Third—If you are reading through these lessons on your own, consider participating in our online training course to see these lessons taught by experienced Billy Graham Evangelistic Association trainers. Visit MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca.

LESSON 1
The Effective Christian Life

Every Christian is responsible to live a life that glorifies God (1 Corinthians 10:31) and to be a true ambassador (2 Corinthians 5:20) for Him. Most Christians want to be used of God. For them it is not enough just to know they are on the Christian pathway. They want to be faithful and effective. The question is, How? Where do we start? What is involved?

In this lesson we will explore some of the key principles to effective Christian service. Perhaps the first answer can be found by looking at the life of Philip, who introduced the Ethiopian official to Jesus Christ in Acts 8:26-38. In this passage we can see five important principles:

First, God SOVEREIGNLY worked out all the details involved in Philip’s effective witness to the Ethiopian. He will do the same for you.

Second, Philip’s LIFE witnessed to Jesus Christ. He was chosen as a worker in the early church because of his character (Acts 6:3-5). A good life not only glorifies God but is a powerful witness to the world. Our lives should demonstrate that we know Him.

Third, we find the HOLY SPIRIT vitally involved in Philip’s life and ministry. “The Spirit told Philip, ‘Go to that chariot and stay near it’” (Acts 8:29). The Holy Spirit is the One who makes our lives attractive (Galatians 5:22-23). He is our teacher and guide. He gives us boldness and courage to witness. Our responsibility is to be yielded fully to all the wonderful resources of the Holy Spirit. Philip was led to someone already prepared.

Fourth, you will note the important part the SCRIPTURES play in telling another person about Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian was reading Isaiah 53 and asked Philip to explain the passage. Philip took the same passage, which deals prophetically with the crucifixion, and “told him the good news about Jesus” (Acts 8:35). Philip knew the Scriptures and was prepared to explain the Gospel. If we are going to be effective Christians, we too must gain a working knowledge of the Scriptures to help others.

Fifth, the Bible is a record of God working mightily in and through the lives of ordinary people. Our responsibility is to step out in FAITH and trust God to use us.

Do you want to be used by God?
Romans 10:17—“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”

Deuteronomy 17:19—“It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees.”

Proverbs 2:1-6—“My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

Psalm 119:9–11—“How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”

Joshua 1:8—“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”
Jeremiah 1:6–9—“Alas, Sovereign Lord,’ I said, ‘I do not know how to speak; I am too young.’ But the Lord said to me, ‘Do not say, “I am too young.” You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,’ declares the Lord. Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, ‘I have put my words in your mouth.’”

Philippians 2:13—“For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”

Ephesians 5:15, 18—“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise. ... Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”

Ephesians 6:17—“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

Hebrews 11:1, 6—“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ... And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”
Take Time at Home—Lesson One

Someone once said, “The Bible was not written to increase our knowledge, but to make us more like Jesus Christ.” Therefore, take time each week to review the lesson with your Bible and consider how you might apply what you learned.

The Effective Christian Life—Bible Study

Please read the following questions carefully. Then open your Bible to the suggested passage. Study the passage and answer each question briefly in your own words.

Confidence in God’s Sovereignty

The word confidence is taken from two words meaning “with faith.” In other words, we put our confidence in God when we—by faith—trust Him to meet our needs and to use us in His service. It is thrilling to see how God uses individuals even though they are inadequate.

1. Your concept of God affects everything you do. Who is God, and what is your responsibility to Him?

2. In which areas do the following verses encourage you to have confidence in God?

   Exodus 4:10–12
   
   Judges 6:15–16

   Romans 5:5
   Love’s

   1 Peter 4:8
   Love

   Colossians 3:12–14
   Love

HOME WORK

• Complete “The Effective Christian Life” Bible study.
• Complete “The Effective Christian Life” project.
• Memorize Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23. The verses and helpful suggestions on how to memorize are at the back of the book, on pages 39–40.

Legalism or Love

Legalism, or living by the letter of the law, is the cause of much division and contention in the church and in families. Our selfish attitudes can drive people away from us and the Lord. Only a gracious, loving attitude can bring unity, healing, and forgiveness. The Holy Spirit is the source of God’s love, and He dwells in each believer.

“The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3:6

Two

1. _______________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________

Four D’s

1. _______________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________________
4. _______________________________________________________

Two

1. Don’t _______________________________________________
2. Don’t _______________________________________________

God’s

Romans 5:5   Love’s
1 Peter 4:8  Love
Colossians 3:12–14  Love
Using God’s Resources

3. Review the “Grasping God's Word” illustration on page 16. What lesson can you learn from this illustration?

4. Rewrite Joshua 1:8 in your own words.

5. Read Acts 8:26–38, review the “Grasping God’s Hand” illustration on page 18, and answer the following questions.
   a. How can you experience more of God’s power?
   b. What is the secret of walking in the Spirit (being filled with the Spirit)?
   c. Why is it important to be filled with the Spirit (controlled by the Spirit)?

The Effective Christian Life—Project

Love, the fruit of the Spirit, is clearly defined in the following passage. The effectiveness of our witness for Christ will be greatly determined by our love for others.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

1 Corinthians 13:4–7

1. Underline the different aspects of love found in the above passage and list them below.

   Aspects of Love

2. Meditate on the various aspects of love and list areas of your life where you are weak or fall short in your relationships with others.

   Areas Where I Fall Short

3. Write down what you can do to show more love to others.

   Steps I Can Take Today
LESSON TWO
The Christian’s Witness

So far, we have been stressing personal preparation for a close walk with God. Before we begin our second lesson, on a Christian’s witness, let’s ask some important questions:

Do you have faith in the power and sovereignty of God?

Do you believe that God can use you in spite of your own weakness and inadequacy?

Do you believe that the Holy Spirit will guide you, make you courageous, help you in your work, and also work effectively in the lives of those to whom you will speak?

Do you believe that “the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12)?

Do you believe that the Gospel of Christ is the “power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16)?

Did you answer the above questions positively? If yes, then witnessing for Jesus Christ is something you can do. Remember, “the battle is not yours, but God’s” (2 Chronicles 20:15). If we follow the example of the Apostle Peter, God will use us in the lives of others to introduce them to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

1 Peter 3:15
Following are some practical things about your witness to keep in mind:

First—Stress the __________ of God. We must admit that we are sinners and we all need the Savior for cleansing and forgiveness. But this does not mean we start there! It is best to present the love of God before the judgment of God.

Second—You are presenting the __________ of Jesus Christ. Jesus is alive! It is not a formula, outline, or theological system that you have a relationship with—it is the Person of Jesus as Lord and Savior. The Scriptures you have learned and memorized should give you confidence. However, do not make the mistake of thinking that you must always begin with your Bible, turning from passage to passage. Be sensitive to the individual and to the Lord’s prompting and use the Scriptures wisely.

Third—Keep it _________________. Don’t make the mistake of thinking that you have to “prove” the Gospel—or create an intellectual argument to impress people. The Apostle Paul stayed with the simplicity of the Gospel, and God blessed His Word tremendously. “When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:1–2).

Fourth—Your own __________ is a great part of your witness. The Apostle Paul wrote, “For it is God who works in you” (Philippians 2:13). If God is at work, then you have something good to share. You don’t need to be perfect before God can use you, but your life should reflect the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, the Holy Spirit works more effectively through a clean life (2 Corinthians 4:2).

Fifth—Earn the ________ to be heard by sincerely __________ to others. People are hurting today and searching for answers as never before. Perhaps their greatest need is to find someone who cares. Everybody needs a friend. Jesus was called a friend of sinners. People from every walk of life knew that Jesus sincerely cared for them. Very few people have the gift of evangelism—but every Christian can be a friend. We can all be involved in building bridges of friendship that may lead to natural opportunities to share the Good News about Jesus Christ. Start by:

- Winning the confidence of people by sharing genuine interest.
- Letting them share concerns, opinions, and hurts.
- Not feeling compelled to always do the talking! Listen!

It may mean that you must get more deeply involved in someone’s life. But in the long run you will develop trust and have a more sympathetic individual with whom you can discuss the claims of Jesus Christ.

Listening, Living, Sharing

For many believers, sharing the Gospel (the Good News) of Jesus Christ can be a rather intimidating experience. According to studies, only 1 percent of believers claim to have the gift of evangelism. Where does that leave the 99 percent who do not have the gift? Some think that because they don’t have the gift, they are relieved of the responsibility of sharing Christ with others. Every believer’s mission in life should be to actively share Christ with those people God places in his or her life.

Jesus gave us His personal mission statement:

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

Jesus is asking each of us to join Him in the rescuing of the lost and spiritually dying people we know.

The priority of Paul’s life was to share the Gospel with everyone he could. Every believer is appointed as an ambassador of Jesus Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:20). As Christ’s representative, our mission is to share the Gospel with a needy world. Paul requested prayer for his efforts in sharing the Gospel. This request for prayer expresses the challenges every believer faces in sharing the message of hope:

“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Colossians 4:3–6
1. Pray for open doors to share the message of Christ.

We need to become intentional in sharing the Good News. Praying daily for an opening to share Jesus is a good place to start. As we pray, we should focus on doors that are open. Doors are often revealed as we are sensitive to the needs of others around us. Each day we should pray the “3-open prayer”:

- “Lord, open a door.”
  A door is a natural opportunity to bring up your relationship with Jesus. Often that will be something going on in your life, their life, or the world.

- “Lord, open their heart.”
  Asking God to get a lost person ready to hear what He's getting you ready to share.

- “Lord, open my mouth.”
  Trusting God to give you the courage, the words, and the approach.

If you consistently pray this kind of prayer for someone close to you, God will answer it!

2. Listen to people: Open doors often come through needs.

People often do not see their need for Christ. They don’t understand that He is the answer to the emptiness they feel. They think their real need is something they can identify, such as:

- A. Broken and disappointing relationships;
- B. Guilt over the wrong things they’ve done;
- C. Loneliness;
- D. Stress;
- E. Life without meaning;
- F. Inability to overcome their dark side;
- G. Pain of the present or the past.

We know that a relationship with Jesus is the answer to the deepest needs that people have. Our greatest need is to find forgiveness by receiving Christ as Lord and Savior, but many today don’t know they need Christ or forgiveness of sin. They think their need may be to restore a troubled marriage, to get rid of loneliness, or to find meaning in life. These needs are symptoms of a greater problem—a missing relationship with God.

There needs to be a linking from the need the person is feeling because of sin to the real problem, and to the solution found only in a relationship with Jesus Christ. We begin with the symptom they can see (loneliness; guilt; disappointing relationships) ... then move to the disease they can’t see (sin) ... and finally to the cure Jesus brought through the cross. By listening as a friend, we see their needs, identify with their problems, and know how to share the difference Jesus can make where they are. Then we can share about the ultimate solution to our broken relationship with God.

3. Bridge to Jesus and the Good News.

God created us to have a relationship with Him. When Adam and Eve decided to disobey God and run their own lives, sin came into the world. Now each person is born without the relationship God made us to have with Him. Because of this missing relationship with God, we experience all sorts of symptoms in our life. These symptoms are a constant reminder that something—actually Someone—is missing. Augustine said: “You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.” The believer has the opportunity to bridge from the symptom the lost friend is feeling, to the real problem of sin, and on to the solution—a relationship with Jesus though His death on the cross. The following questions help us determine how to best share Christ with our friend:

a. What need is this person feeling?
b. What difference does Jesus make with that need?
c. How can I introduce the difference Jesus makes?
d. What faith story do I have that shows what Jesus can do with this need?

4. How to Share the Message ( L-I-S-T-E-N )

Listen to his or her story and understand the need.
Identify the difference Jesus can make with his or her need.
Share your story and the difference Jesus made in your life.
Take your friend to the cross and the empty tomb.
Encourage him or her to receive Christ.
Nurture your friend in this new relationship with Jesus.
Outline for Your Faith Story

1. Your life before Christ (related to your friend’s need).

2. How you began your relationship with Christ:
   - How did you hear about Jesus?
   - What did you hear about Jesus?
   - How did you respond to Jesus?

3. Your life after beginning your relationship with Christ (the difference He made). Answer this key question: “What difference does Jesus make in your life ... as a spouse, a parent, a friend, a worker, in your hard times, in your lonely times?”

Three Stories

Ultimately, you will want to draw from these stories that will help you communicate Christ to your friend:

1. Their Story — As you share, draw from their story, the felt needs, and the “open doors” that we’ve been discussing.

2. Your Story — Your personal “faith story” is a powerful tool. Nobody can discount how Jesus has transformed your life.

3. His Story — Tell what Jesus did for you and me on the cross by paying the death penalty that we deserve. Explain how His story changed your story—and can change their story.
Review the “Steps to Peace With God” booklet and the “Bridge to Life” illustration on page 32, and answer the following questions.

1. What is the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

2. What power does the Gospel possess? Romans 1:16

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________


   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

4. According to Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:8–9, what was God’s remedy for our problem? What did Jesus Christ do for sinners?

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________


   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

Remember:
• Share the facts of the Gospel.
• Illustrate it from your own experience (see previous page).
• Give opportunity for questions and discussion.
• Invite a response and have prayer.
• Give assurance from God’s Word.

HOME WORK
• Complete “The Christian’s Witness” Bible study.
• Memorize Revelation 3:20 and John 1:12.
6. According to John 3:1–16, what does it mean to be “born again”?

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

7. In His witness to the woman of Samaria and to Nicodemus, Jesus varied His approach. How was it different? John 3:1–8; John 4:1–15

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

Complete page 31 and outline your faith story.

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**Notes**

**LESSON THREE**

**Follow-Up and the Care of New Christians**

Today we need to see the importance of what we do before we share the Gospel and what we do after someone has received Christ.

**PREPARING FOR NEW BELIEVERS**

We’ve already discussed the five “Looks”—LOOK AROUND, LOOK UP, LOOK OUT, LOOK FORWARD, LOOK AFTER—which are essential as you reach out to those on your Matthew list. (Refer to page 7.) Through your personal ministry and the faithful presentation of the Gospel, many people will find new life in Christ. As we prepare to evangelize, several important questions remain:

- What will happen to those who respond to the preaching of the Gospel?
- Will they remain faithful to their commitment?
- Will they take their place in the church?
- Will they grow to become effective witnesses for Christ?

Jesus frequently spoke of sharing the Gospel as being like a farmer sowing seed. For example, in the parable of the sower in Mark 4, we learn that not everyone who hears the Good News will grow and mature; there are some disappointing results. However, we can also learn from this parable that many do respond and will grow and mature spiritually. Indeed, years of evangelistic experience has proven this over and over again.

As we think about a commitment to Christ, the initial decision to receive Christ is just the beginning. Continued spiritual growth and effectiveness will largely be determined by the amount of spiritual care and prayer given on their behalf. In fact, most of the books of the New Testament were letters of concern for young believers written by the Apostle Paul. In a real sense, they were “follow-up” letters to encourage the spiritual growth of churches and individuals.
The Apostle Paul was an energetic pacesetter in the area of spiritual pediatrics—that’s the caring for new believers. Consider the following verses from Paul’s letters and from Acts:

“**STRATEGY 1** Paul _______ _________ —1 Thessalonians 2:6–8

Though it was very costly in every way—emotionally, financially, in time, in travel, in study, in writing, in criticism from others—Paul was “delighted” to give it all to see men and women come to faith in Christ and go on with Him. Often the greatest obstacle to evangelism is our unwillingness to give ourselves and become involved with other people.

“**STRATEGY 2** Paul _______ ___ ____ —1 Thessalonians 3:10

His prayer was earnest and persistent. Again and again in Paul’s writing he tells the new believers how frequently he prayed. See also 1 Thessalonians 1:2–3; 2:13.

“**STRATEGY 3** Paul _______ __________ —1 Thessalonians 3:2

When he couldn’t do all he wanted to personally, he sent others he had trained to strengthen and encourage new believers.

“**STRATEGY 4** Paul _______ __________ —2 Corinthians 2:9

All of Paul’s writings in the New Testament are in the form of follow-up letters—answering questions, encouraging, instructing, correcting.

“**STRATEGY 5** Paul __________ __________ —Acts 15:36

When he wrote to the Thessalonians, Paul asked them to pray with him that he would have opportunity to return. Frequently on his missionary journeys Paul stopped not only to preach the Gospel to those who had never heard, but also to teach and encourage new Christians.

Paul’s primary concern overall was for the growth and spiritual development of new Christians. His goal was their maturity.

“**My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!**”

Galatians 4:19–20

“**He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.**”

Colossians 1:28

The precedent is clearly set. New Christians do need care, and every effort must be made to provide it. That care should be provided by someone—and that someone is logically the person who prayed for, befriended, invited, and brought the person to meet Jesus Christ. This is spiritual adoption—the “spiritual parent” needs to be available to offer
help, counsel, encourage, guide in the Scripture, teach how to pray, and help to provide for regular church attendance. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God do their work, and we must do ours.

**DEFINITION: Follow-up** is the process of giving continued attention to new Christians until they are at home in the local church, find out how they can serve, develop their full potential for Jesus Christ, and help to build Christ’s church.

### Needs of a New Christian

1. 1 Peter 2:2  
   
2. 1 Peter 5:8  
   
3. Colossians 2:6–7  

Remember ... new Christians need someone, not something! 
“Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you.”  
1 Thessalonians 2:7–8

### Memory Verse Cards

**Carry these cards with you**
**Memorize each verse**
**Review the verses**
**Share them with others**

**Why memorize?**

- To follow the example of Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). When tempted, He replied, “It is written,” and quoted from the book of Deuteronomy.
- To control the thought life. “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. ... I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:9, 11).
- To be equipped for service. “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

---

### Christ Is at the Door

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”  
Revelation 3:20, NIV

### We Must Receive Him

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”  
John 1:12, NIV

### Christ Paid the Penalty

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”  
Romans 5:8, NIV

### Salvation a Free Gift

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”  
Ephesians 2:8–9, NIV

### People Are Sinful

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”  
Romans 3:23, NIV

### Sin Has a Penalty

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”  
Romans 6:23, NIV
## How to Memorize

Memorize the Scriptures in the following order:

1. the topic
2. the verse
3. the reference

The reference is like the handle on a suitcase, enabling you to lift up from the Bible a complete portion whenever needed. As an aid, you will find the references printed on the cards to help you in reviewing your verses.

The real secret of Scripture memory is review, review, review. “Either use it or lose it.”

Quote the verse aloud. Pray over the verse, asking God to make the meaning clear and applicable to you. Memorize one phrase at a time, using the reference, adding phrase by phrase until the entire verse is committed to memory.

Cut out the verses here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th><strong>Christ Is at the Door</strong></th>
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<tbody>
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<td>“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.”</td>
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