“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”
Mark 16:15, NIV
HELPING YOUR CONGREGATION SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD’S LOVE

Billy Graham
Evangelistic Association of Canada
Always Good News.
Table of Contents

What is My Hope with Billy Graham? ........................................... Page 5

What is the pastor’s role in My Hope with Billy Graham? ........................................... Page 12

Appendix
Matthew and Friends Sermon Outline ........................................... Page 17
What is MY HOPE with BILLY GRAHAM?

My Hope with Billy Graham is a massive effort to reach people across the United States and Canada with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Following a simple biblical model, My Hope with Billy Graham combines the reach and excitement of a nationwide media event with the power of personal relationships. Under the guidance of their local pastors, Christians across these two countries will share the Gospel message with friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors using different media programs featuring Billy Graham, dynamic music, and testimonies. Like the Apostle Matthew, some will invite guests into their homes, while others will gather at a coffee shop or their favorite hangout. Whether they use a television, tablet, or smartphone, participants will choose a program format and time that suits them, show the programs, and share their personal testimony.

Key Elements

1. Local churches are the focus of My Hope with Billy Graham. This outreach exists to strengthen the local church by preparing pastors across the country to train their members to pray for and share Christ with lost people around them. Thousands of trained Christians then use the media programs to share the Gospel with people in their local communities and build the 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 one of the foundations of My Hope with Billy Graham. In the months leading up to the event, Christians will be active in strengthening their relationships with people they know who don’t follow Christ. As close friends, family members, co-workers, fellow students, or neighbors, they will earn the right through relationships and loving service to share their story.
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. Together with Matthews across the country praying and building relationships, the project will open the door to an evangelistic movement that can sweep across the nation. Various media platforms will be used, including TV, DVDs, downloads, webstreaming, and mobile devices. 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. After watching the My Hope program with their guests, Matthews will briefly share how they found hope in Jesus and then lead their guests in a prayer to receive Christ. As Christians live out the love of Jesus and then share their own story with lost friends, family, and neighbors, God will transform lives.

7. The follow-up of new Christians through the 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 nationwide 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* seeks to train Christians to be “Matthews.” During one week in November 2013, My Hope Week, Christians across the United States and Canada will invite their friends, family members, neighbors, colleagues, or fellow students to their homes, or another familiar location, to watch television or video programs that clearly share the Gospel. They will then share their own story of how they met Jesus and invite their friends to pray to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Each host will follow up with new believers and encourage them to become part of a local church.

*For a good explanation of the Matthew strategy, watch the “Matthew Demonstration Video” on the DVD included in your resource kit or at MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca.*

The Matthew and Friends strategy encourages the members of your church to take the following 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 church’s preparation. Carefully teach the Matthews in your church each of the instructions below as you look forward to My Hope Week in November 2013.

1. **Prepare**
   a. Prepare yourself spiritually: Each Matthew should study
the Matthew manual, especially the three lessons under the heading “How do I prepare?” For the last 60 years, these lessons were taught in preparation for every Billy Graham Crusade, and they are a crucial step in the preparation of a Matthew.

b. Prepare accountability: 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 …”

b. Here’s a three-minute plan for telling your story:

30 seconds: Tell what your life was like before you received Jesus.

30 seconds: Explain what caused you to turn to God.

60 seconds: Share the circumstances of how you received Him into your life.

30 seconds: Repeat the prayer you prayed to receive Jesus Christ.

30 seconds: Explain how your life has changed since Jesus became your Lord and Savior.

Completing the lessons on pages 13–44 in your Matthew manual will help you to feel more comfortable sharing your story and then transitioning to the next step—asking if your guests want to make a decision to follow Christ.

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.”

—Psalm 126:5–6, NIV
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 and time to meet again within two or 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 organize Bible studies in small groups in neutral places to encourage those who are not yet ready to join in church fellowship.

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.

3. **Consult your Matthew manual.** The manual in each Matthew Resource Kit contains more in-depth instructions for how to follow up with new believers.

4. **Report what God did.**

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

   b. Report your results at MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca using the forms filled out by the new believers.

   c. 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.

**What is the calendar for *My Hope***?

- **Training (January–March 2013)**—Through meetings with project coordinators or through the *My Hope* website, pastors learn how to prepare their church to participate in *My Hope with Billy Graham*. After this training, you will be prepared to mobilize and train Matthews in your congregations.

- **Mobilization (April–November 2013)**—Pastors recruit Matthews in their congregations and train them in the *My Hope with Billy Graham* materials or point them to MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca for more information about our online training.

- **My Hope Week (November 3–9, 2013)**—Matthews invite their non-Christian friends, family members, colleagues, fellow students, and neighbors to their home or another comfortable location to watch one of the *My Hope with Billy Graham* media programs.

- **Follow-Up**—Matthews invite the new believers to church on Harvest Sunday, the Sunday following *My Hope* Week, or help them grow in Christ in small groups until they are ready to come to a church. Matthews and pastors begin to disciple the new believers.

*“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.” —Proverbs 11:30, NKJV*
As a pastor, what must I do to participate in My Hope with Billy Graham?

• Learn about My Hope with Billy Graham and register your church (January–April 2013): Attend a local My Hope meeting or register to go through the online training on our website.

• Commit to be a Matthew yourself and set the example for your congregation. The sheep will follow their shepherd!

• Teach the principles of relationship evangelism by showing your congregation the importance of reaching out in friendship to the people around them. We have recommended resources for pastors at MyHopeWithBillyGraham.ca.

• Mobilize prayer: Mobilize prayer for My Hope with Billy Graham in the congregation and participate in special days of prayer as announced:
  a. Pray that many churches in your community and across the country will participate in My Hope with Billy Graham.
  b. Pray that many Christians will be Matthews and invite guests to view the programs in their homes.
  c. Pray that many thousands will put their faith in Christ.
  d. Pray for revival and spiritual awakening in our nation.

• Participate in Matthew Sunday (April 14, 2013—or as soon as possible after joining this outreach): Join other pastors across the U.S. and Canada in encouraging your congregation to be Matthews. Below are some suggestions for possible portions of that special service.
  a. Give a Matthew brochure to each person in the congregation.
  b. Explain My Hope with Billy Graham to the congregation through a presentation and/or

the DVD provided in the Matthew Resource Kit.

c. Preach a sermon about Matthew. There’s an outline with suggested points in this manual (see pages 17–19).

d. Very important: Take a moment in the service to ask congregation members to follow Matthew’s example by writing down the names of friends, family members, neighbors, colleagues, or fellow students they know who may not have a personal relationship with Christ. (This makes the project personal, showing the church that each of us knows someone who doesn’t have a relationship with God.)

  i. Names can be written on spaces provided on the Matthew brochure.
  ii. Take a moment to pray for the names on the lists as a church; then pray publicly for Matthews and the people on their lists each Sunday until November.

e. Keep a record of those who commit to be Matthews.

f. We recommend you appoint a member who loves reaching out to others to lead My Hope in your church.

• Train your Matthews by using the Matthew manual and the DVD enclosed in the Matthew Resource Kit—or by encouraging Matthews to register and be trained online by experienced Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) trainers.

  It’s very important that each Matthew in your church receives training either from the church leadership or online. Previous experience in countries around the world shows that simply asking Matthews to read the material themselves is not enough to prepare them.

• Consider supporting My Hope with Billy Graham financially

My Hope with Billy Graham exists to encourage the evangelistic ministries of local churches. BGEA has embarked by faith on this outreach, yet it will not be possible without the financial support of local churches like yours.

We ask that each church participate in supporting the My Hope
project by collecting two offerings on key Sundays during the project:

a. **November/December 2012**, or another date if you recently joined this project.

b. Matthew Action Sunday, **September 22, 2013**.

Each church congregation turns its focus to prayer for the lost as Matthews head into the final weeks before *My Hope* Week. The church can take up an offering to support the costs for the distribution of the television programs.

These offerings will go entirely toward the cost of *My Hope*, and we are grateful to local churches for their generous offering for nationwide evangelism.

- **Encourage Matthews (September–November 2013):** Through prayer, personal visits, and reassuring sermons, encourage your Matthews to follow through on their commitment to reach out with Christ’s love and hope to those around them—this is especially critical during the week of the outreach.

- **Hold a Harvest Sunday (November 10, 2013):** Organize a special service on the Sunday after *My Hope* Week to celebrate what God has done, welcome new believers into your church, and collect reports from your Matthews. Pastors who have previously held Harvest Sunday services offered the following suggestions for the service:
  
a. Make sure there is room for new Christians to attend the service.
  
b. Encourage the church to warmly welcome those who attend for the first time.
  
c. Have Bibles available for new people in the service.
  
d. Preach a sermon that clearly explains the Gospel and how to receive salvation. There may be people in the service who have not yet made a decision to give their lives to Christ. Giving an invitation to pray to receive Christ would encourage these people to respond.
  
e. Announce the next opportunity for discipleship activities and be sure to encourage the visitors to attend.

- **Report what God did:** It is important for every Matthew to report the results of their meeting to you, so that you can help in the discipleship of each new believer.
  
a. We also request that each church reports what God did in their church to the *My Hope* team. This allows BGEA to track the effectiveness of the project. *My Hope* reports will be a great stimulus to ongoing evangelism across the country.
  
b. The Matthew manual instructs each Matthew to place completed decision cards into their Matthew envelope and then bring it to church on Harvest Sunday.
  
c. The decision cards have a carbon copy. The top copy of each card should be given to the pastor to aid in follow-up, and the bottom copy can then be grouped with the others and mailed to the national office.
  
d. BGEA will tabulate the results across the nation and send an update to all participating churches of what God did in our country. God alone will receive the glory for His grace shown throughout the whole nation!

- **Follow up with new believers:** You will lead your Matthews in helping the new believers grow in their faith and become fruitful members of your congregation. The following are important suggestions that can be implemented in your church:
  
a. Organize a weekly Bible study for new believers. This can occur in the home of each Matthew in the church.
  
b. Review and teach the discipleship materials provided in each Matthew Resource Kit:
      i. “My Decision” brochure
      ii. *Living in Christ* booklet
      iii. Matthew manual, pages 9–44
  
c. Encourage the new believers to visit *GoingFarther.Jesus.net*, where they can learn more about living the Christian life.
  
d. Teach them to pray, and keep praying for them.
  
e. Encourage them to share their new faith with others.

- **Repeat the *My Hope* strategy:** Your church can continue to use the Matthew strategy—along with the program DVDs or downloads—to share God’s love with your community.
Appendix

You can use this sermon, or your own adaptation of a similar message, on Matthew Sunday, April 14, 2013 (or another date you select).

Matthew and Friends Sermon Outline

Read Matthew 9:9–13

This story is the very heart of My Hope with Billy Graham. Matthew invited family, friends, and neighbors to his house for a meal and to learn about Jesus. We can do the same thing today to introduce people to Jesus.

1. Barriers to telling people about Jesus that Matthew overcame.

   Sometimes Christians fearfully think:
   - Some people are too sinful for God to forgive.
   - People are not interested in the Gospel of Christ and will not respond.
   - I am not trained to tell people about Jesus. It is too hard for me.
   - I will be criticized by others or embarrassed if people do not respond.

2. The story of Matthew answers your questions about these barriers:

   Some people are too sinful for God to forgive. (Matthew was a traitor, a tax collector for Rome!)
   - Matthew betrayed his people by becoming a tax collector. He cheated people by collecting too much tax.
   - He led a sinful lifestyle.
   - Jesus loved Matthew in spite of his sinful lifestyle.
   - God loves this world and does not want them to perish in their sins (John 3:16).
   - Jesus came to save sinners (Matthew 9:13).

   People are not interested in the Gospel of Christ and will not respond.
   Read Matthew 9:9:
   - Jesus looked deep into Matthew’s lonely life and spoke to him.
   - Matthew followed Jesus immediately and invited others: the poor, the tax collectors, and sinners.
   - People try to hide their needs, so others do not see them. But Jesus sees, and He knows how to help those who are hurting.

I am not trained to tell people about Jesus. It is too hard for me to do.

Read Matthew 9:10:
   - Matthew used what he had to introduce others to Jesus Christ: his home, his food, and his relationships.
   - He did not forget his old associates (tax collectors, sinners, family, friends, neighbors).
   - He shared what he found in Jesus, and it was a powerful witness for Jesus Christ.

I will be criticized by others or embarrassed if people do not respond.

Read Matthew 9:11:
   - Matthew was so happy about being a follower of Jesus that he had a party and invited everyone, especially those who needed Jesus.
   - Matthew was criticized, but there were great results:
     a. Jesus was the focus of the meeting.
     b. Sinners confessed their sins and received forgiveness from Jesus.
     c. New believers met other followers of Jesus and were established in their new faith.
     d. Matthew grew spiritually.
     e. The critics were silenced.

You can do this! You do not have to be a great pastor or teacher. Use the Matthew and Friends plan to get them to come. Invite people to your home or meeting place. Give them refreshments. Watch the program together. Tell your testimony in three minutes. Invite them to accept Jesus.
Briefly Review the Matthew Strategy

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

**LOOK UP** and pray every day for each person you have listed.

**LOOK OUT** for opportunities to build your relationship with these people.

**LOOK FORWARD** to the event: Invite every person on your list, prepare your three-minute story, and pray for God’s help as you ask your friends if they want the kind of hope that you have—then lead them to Jesus.

**LOOK AFTER** those who gave their lives to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith.

**Distribute the Matthew brochure to everyone in the church meeting.**

- Point out the steps in the brochure.
- Ask them to write the names of at least two people who need Jesus Christ.
- Encourage them to pray every day for each person on their list.

Challenge the people in your church to open their homes and become a Matthew host.

Keep a record of those who commit to be Matthews.

Announce opportunities for Matthew Training.