



YouthMETRO Trainee & Trainer Resource Manual

The purpose of YouthMETRO is to glorify the one true God who has revealed Himself in His Son Jesus Christ by training others to make Him known, who then train others to do the same.

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THE METRO VISION

The purpose of METRO is to glorify the one true God who has revealed himself in his Son Jesus Christ by training others to make him known, who then train others to do the same.

Ministry

- METRO is about ministry training, specifically geared for the local church context.
- METRO promotes an evangelistic ministry model as standard for local church ministry.
- METRO recognises that developing evangelistic ministries is not the primary task of theological colleges, and so needs to be developed prior to college.
- METRO therefore, is training that aims to engender a philosophy of evangelistic ministry within a potential ministry candidate.

Equipping

- METRO is geared not simply towards developing evangelistic ministers but developing evangelistic ministries and evangelistic churches.
- METRO focuses therefore, on the key role of ministers as equippers (see Eph 4:11-12), preparing the whole church for works of ministry.
- METRO recognises that, fundamentally, healthy churches are evangelising churches: the bigger picture of evangelistic training is training across the entire life and ministries of the church.

Training

- METRO recognises that this evangelistic, equipping model of ministry is best learnt through the apprenticeship of one-to-one training (see 2 Timothy 2:2) in the context of one-to-one training, the whole person is trained – this can be thought of as three strands:
 - Being like Jesus: Personal Godliness
 - Thinking like Jesus: Theological Reflection
 - Serving like Jesus: Ministry Skills
- METRO benefits not only the trainee, but strengthens the training culture for:
 - The trainer, through an intensive training experience
 - The local church, as the trainee becomes a focal point for developing a training culture
 - The Presbytery, as neighbouring churches are spurred on to be involved in METRO and its benefits
 - The denomination, through the calibre and experience of ministry candidates.

Recruiting

- METRO provides a pathway for people considering theological training to take steps in that direction by profiling and building such training into the local church context, METRO trainees, in turn, become examples for (and trainers of) others heading down such a training pathway.

Organisation

- METRO recognises the need for one-to-one training to be facilitated through resources such as funding and a training curriculum.
- METRO recognises the need for one-to-one training to be networked with other trainers and trainees, and supported through coaching provided by experienced trainers.

INTRODUCING YOUTHMETRO

YouthMETRO is a one-year traineeship focused on preparing and growing youth leaders in local churches. Like METRO, YouthMETRO aims to prepare trainees to be, think and serve like Jesus, with a specific focus on doing this with and to youth.

Key Principles

Preparing for YouthMETRO

The YouthMETRO traineeship launches with the METRO graduation/orientation lunch in November, but actual traineeship begins in December and concludes in December the following year.

YouthMETRO makes extensive use of the Ministry Papers training resource. Working through the introductory paper, 'The Ministry Training Church' will help fill out the idea of the program outlined (this article can be found in Appendix A).

To get the most out of the program, however, it is necessary to prepare in a number of ways, especially with regard to the key relationships involved.

Trainee AND Trainer

In keeping with the 2 Timothy 2:2 model, the program is designed such that the trainee is always simultaneously a trainee and a trainer.

This 'trainee and trainer' shape is reflected through the trainee meeting not only one-to-one with their trainer, but also with key others they are training—passing on their training.

*Note: Ideally, each trainee will meet with their trainer **weekly** for between **60-90 minutes** (excluding school holidays). An ideal one-to-one meeting will spend time on each of the three strands below (e.g. a 90 minute meeting will spend 30 minutes on each of the strands).*

The Three Strands

Being like Jesus: (growing in godliness) YouthMETRO emphasises daily Bible reading and prayer as the key to godliness, and discussion/accountability in the training relationship in relation to this. There is also specific attention given to personal evangelism and family life.

Thinking like Jesus: (Theological reflection) YouthMETRO sets essential reading that both prepares the trainee for future training and stimulates the trainer/trainee's thinking in relation to life and ministry.

Serving like Jesus: (ministry skills) YouthMETRO is designed to develop thinking and skills in certain core areas of ministry. The main training resources used are the Ministry Papers, alongside other key reading.

THE PROGRAM

YouthMETRO is designed to assist local church youth ministry. Therefore, the structure of the program allows the trainee and trainer to work through specific areas relevant to their local church context. A suggested timeline for completing the varying components of YouthMETRO is included in this training manual.

Being like Jesus - Personal Godliness

Being Like Jesus aims to assist you in growing in your personal godliness. The main focus here is daily personal Bible reading and prayer and working through issues relating to your faith. Trainees will utilise the 5x5x5 bible reading plan to go through the whole New Testament in the year. Trainees and trainers will spend time in their catch-ups discussing issues arising from this crucial daily time with God, and documenting prayer points as they go.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix B - 5x5x5 Bible Reading Plan
- Appendix C - Daily Time with God

Thinking like Jesus - Theological Reflection

To be able to teach the Bible, first trainees must understand its history and content. This Theological Reflection begins with an intensive unit which is offered at PYV's Summer Camp, where trainees examine Christian Doctrine by working through Wayne Grudem's book 'Christian Beliefs'.

The YouthMETRO traineeship then utilizes Vaughan Roberts' book 'God's Big Picture'. This book and accompanying studies provide trainees with an overview of the Bible's one story about the one salvation in Jesus. This book is to be studied by the trainee and trainer together throughout the traineeship.

Note: you may choose to pre-read the chapter (or half a chapter) separately and then discuss what's been read together and then complete the Bible study together; or you may wish to spend 30 minutes reading and discuss a chapter together and then setting whatever is left of the chapter as homework.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix D- Theology Matters
- Vaughan Roberts, God's Big Picture (separate book)

Serving like Jesus - Ministry Skills

Trainees will develop their ministry skills over the year. Training papers are included in this manual for a trainee and trainer to work through and discuss. There are many other ministry papers which can be found in the resources page of the METRO website (metro.pcv.org.au).

Fundamental to the progress made, will be the transition of the trainee into a trainer role. A basic pattern in each of the areas might be for the trainee to pass on what they have learnt with another person - learning through teaching others.

YouthMETRO trainees will cover the following components in the year:

- **Evangelism**

This section aims to prepare you to share your faith in all situations. Once you are prepared, and even if you are not feeling so, you will then go out and share your faith with people you don't know.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix E - Youth EE Quick Start Student Notebook
- Appendix F - Personal Evangelism - Ministry Papers
- Appendix G - Giving Your Testimony - Ministry Papers

- **One-to-One Discipleship (Term 3&4)**

It is a privilege to sit down with a fellow believer and be encouraged in your faith. 1 + 1 Discipleship sees trainees learn what it means to disciple others, and then be encouraged to actually go out and disciple someone else.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix H- One To One Prayer And Bible Reading - MTS Discussion Paper
- Appendix I- Two Simple Frameworks For Bible Reading- David Helm

- **Short Talk Preparation**

Not dissimilar to a mini-sermon, a short talk is a great way to share the Gospel. With time constraints and the shorter attention span of youth to consider, preparing a short talk needs careful planning and execution.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix J - Giving a Short Talk - Ministry Papers

- **Taking a Bible Study**

This section looks at developing bible studies for youth in the context of a growth group. Trainees will look at the characteristics of a growth group, and the role of prayer in a small group.

Refer to the following:

- Appendix K - Engage Bible Teaching Model
- Appendix K - Engage Bible Teaching Model
- Leading A Growth Group- Ministry Papers
- Appendix M - Growth Group Prayer - Ministry Papers

- **Faith in all situations.** Once you are prepared, and even if you are not feeling so, you will then go out and share your faith with people you don't know.

Note: You may spend 30 minutes of your catch up reading through part of a ministry training paper, some other useful reading, or discussing preparation for some upcoming ministry.

EVENTS

YouthMETRO trainees and trainers are required to attend the following events in the course of the traineeship:

- METRO Orientation Lunch & Afternoon - Late November
- PYV Summer Camp - December 27th to January 1st (trainees only; no cost)
- Engage Leaders' Conference - Australia Day Weekend in January (trainees only; no cost)
- MTS Challenge - Late July/Early August (no cost)
- METRO Graduation Lunch - Late November

Trainees can also lead on PYV's camps throughout the year. METRO encourages trainees to lead on at least one camp as part of their local youth ministry, but this is not a requirement of the traineeship.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

The timeline below is a guide only, and should be tailored to the needs of your local church.

Term 1

Component	Weeks	
	1 to 5	6 to 10
Being like Jesus	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B)	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B) Intentional Individual Prayer
Thinking like Jesus	God's Big Picture (Introduction - Chapter 2)	God's Big Picture (Chapters 3 - 4) Other Useful Reading ¹
Serving like Jesus	Training Papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily Time with God (Appendix C) Personal Evangelism (Appendix F) Review Evangelism training from Summer Camp	Training Papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading a Growth (Appendix K) Bible Study Preparation & Delivery (remember to review and use the model you learned at Engage) Walk up Evangelism
Possible Events	PYV Summer Camp (compulsory for trainees) Engage Conference (compulsory for trainees)	PYV West Camp (optional for trainees)

Term 2

Component	Weeks	
	1 to 5	6 to 10
Being like Jesus	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B)	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B) Intentional Individual Prayer
Thinking like Jesus	God's Big Picture (Chapters 5-6)	God's Big Picture (Chapters 7-8) Other useful Reading ²
Serving like Jesus	Training Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving Your Testimony (Appendix G) Growth Group Prayer (Appendix M) Prepare & Share Testimony	Training Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving a Short Talk (Appendix J) Short Talk Preparation & Delivery
Possible Events		Trainee Catch-up Dinner (optional)

¹ Trainers may wish to choose any useful training materials that will be useful for their trainee (i.e. Commentaries to help with Bible Study Preparation and Short Talks or additional training papers which can be found at metro.pcv.org.au)

² Books like 'One to One Bible Reading' by David Helm, or 'Just for Starters' by Philip Jensen may help trainees prepare for discipling someone else one to one next term

Term 3

Component	Weeks	
	1 to 5	6 to 10
Being like Jesus	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B)	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B) Intentional Individual Prayer
Thinking like Jesus	Other Useful Reading ³	Other Useful Reading ³
Serving like Jesus	Training Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one prayer and Bible Reading (Appendix H) Two simple frameworks for Bible reading (Appendix I) Start meeting with someone one to one to disciple them (60mins each week: 20mins talking, 20mins reading & discussing the Bible, 20mins praying)	One to one Discipleship Bible Study Preparation & Delivery
Possible Events	MTS Challenge - Late July/Early August (compulsory for trainees & trainers)	PYV East & North Camp (optional for trainees)

Term 4

Component	Weeks	
	1 to 5	6 to 10
Being like Jesus	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B)	5x5x5 Reading Plan (Appendix B) Intentional Individual Prayer
Thinking like Jesus	Other Useful Reading ⁴	Other Useful Reading ⁴
Serving like Jesus	One to One Discipleship Short Talk Preparation & Delivery	One to One Discipleship Evangelism Walk up/personal/short talk (review Evangelism training from Summer Camp before doing this)
Possible Events	Graduation Dinner (compulsory for trainees & trainers)	PYV Summer Camp (optional)

³ Disciples who will last' by Tim Hawkins will help trainees consider what is most important to consider when discipling others.

⁴ No Guts No Glory' edited by Alan Stewart may help trainees consider more about how to think strategically about programming for youth ministry.

APPENDIX A. THE MINISTRY TRAINING CHURCH - MINISTRY PAPERS



*the ministry training church

the MINISTRY PAPERS

negative models

for many of us, the real problem when it comes to being a trainer is that **we were never a trainee!** We are trying hard to do unto others what wasn't done to us!

The ministry training culture that is increasingly part of the landscape in evangelical churches today has really only become so in recent years. It is not yet a second generation movement. This means many of those being asked to cut it as trainers never quite had the trainee stage. That makes it hard.

At this point, however, there are a number of things that can help. Peer relationships with others in the same ministry context are critical (a bit more on this later). Hopefully papers like this can prompt ideas. There are a variety of training networks around that are worth plugging into. And in any case, there's something to be said for the power of **negative modeling**.

It is possible to work backwards from negative models and learn so much from them!

Imagine the opposite of a good training model. Words like *unintentional* come to mind. And *maintenance*. And *non-reflective*. *Isolated*, *detached* and *remote* could be thrown into the mix as well. How about *piecemeal*, *haphazard*, *random*, *disorganised* ... and *passive*, *inert*, *reactionary*...

All of a sudden you've got so much material to work with! Fuelled with a strong sense of the direction you *don't* want to be going, you can now take up the Bible and listen with intent to what it's got to say about ministry! ... and to start picking new models that are headed in the right direction...intentional ministry, equipping ministry, training ministry...

This ministry paper '**the ministry training church**' introduces the big picture of the training model adopted in these MINISTRY PAPERS. It focuses especially on the role of pastor-teachers. It is essential to work through this introductory paper before using any others. The other introductory paper, '**meeting one to one**', fills out the relational aspects of the model, and broadens the focus to the role of other key leaders. It is also vital background.



investigate

read Ephesians 4:11-12

1. What are *pastor/teachers* meant to be doing?

2. As a result, what are *God's people* meant to be doing?

3. As a result, what should be happening in a church?

4. What are the implications for you and your ministry?



think & apply



ideas for discussion

In your church context, what will "maturity" typically **look like**? What will be some **concrete expressions** of the abstract idea? If your role is to equip/train people to be mature, what *is* this 'maturity'? Think hard about this before moving on. The overall goal might be 'Christ-likeness'. But try to break that down to a few more tangible points. This maturity will be evident through...

- ★
- ★
- ★
- ★

intentional ministry

Maturity in Christ isn't easily measured. It's about character not just activities. That said, it's helpful to identify a shape of what maturity will actually look like in your context. Maturity shows itself in certain key ways. And there are also some key ways people grow to further maturity. So it's good to have a plan. It's good to have a sense of where you're taking people...



two key goals

These MINISTRY PAPERS have been developed with a certain 'shape' of Christian maturity in mind. The mature Christian in our church will live out and grow in their Christlikeness through...

1. being actively involved in a **small group**
2. being actively involved in a **ministry team**

The aim is simple: just two major goals! And yet, the table below shows how many objectives are addressed through this simple approach. It also shows how crucial the first major goal is: involvement in a small group. An intentional small group ministry addresses a number of objectives. A healthy small group provides accountability for all relationships in the believer's life. Indeed, it is even through small groups that the other major goal—involvement in a ministry team—is addressed.

small group goal	ministry team goal
<p>✦ a growing relationship with God, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> personal bible reading and prayer</p>	<p>✦ according to the needs of the church according to the gifts of the individual believer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY TEAMS PAPERS (e.g.):</i> crèche ministry kids church ministry kids club ministry primary school scripture youth ministry high school lunchtime groups university ministry pre-school mums outreach child protection support ministries</p>
<p>✦ growing relationships with other believers, especially through the small group</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> leading a small group; joining a small group encouragement; hospitality</p>	<p><i>MAIN MEETING MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> welcoming ministry music ministry audio ministry preaching that connects leading church kids talks drama/set-up pieces bible readings & prayers</p>
<p>✦ growing relationships with those in their family/household, as servants</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> marriage preparation Christian households raising kids to follow Jesus</p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> personal evangelism personal apologetics; cults</p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> joining a ministry team see next column...</p>	

pathways

The core business of pastors is this: equipping God's people for works of service. Not simply ministering *to* others. But enabling the ministry *of* others. Training, therefore, is not an optional extra for the pastor/teacher but *central* to our role. And training is not an optional extra for God's people, but must be provided for all of them.

Unless this training is *intentional*, however, it probably won't happen. That means identifying *goals*, as already discussed. It also means identifying the tangible steps needed for people to travel towards these goals.

Everyone's pathway to maturity will be different. But it's worth trying to identify what a standard pathway will look like. What steps are involved? What strategies might help people move from one stage to another?

Identifying a standard pathway enables you to identify roughly where someone is at. It also helps identify what their next step might need to be. It's not always neat, of course. But it's a starting point for intentional ministry.

Referring to the list of MINISTRY PAPERS on the left, hopefully it might be apparent how the various papers are designed to help facilitate the pathway below. The next page will expand on how this can work...

stage	strategy
Christian?	personal evangelism
initial church contact	welcoming team
maintaining contact	hospitality
getting acquainted	newcomers group
getting involved	joining/linked to a small group
getting equipped	active in small group
trained for ministry	taken through ministry paper
training others	take others through paper
leading small group	apprentice leader



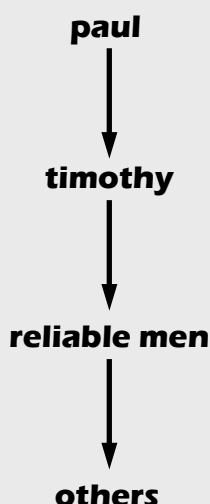
relational ministry

You have worked out some tangible goals of what Christian maturity might look like in your church context. You have worked out what some of the key steps look like on the pathway to these goals. Now it's time to train. So here's the key question: what will this training look like? When we think training, it's time to think BEYOND THE EVENT, to relationships!

teach a man to fish?

we have long ago taken hold of the idea that we need to do more than give a man a fish... we need to teach him to fish. But there's another step needed when it comes to ministry ... we need to teach others to teach others to fish. In 2 Timothy 2 we see Paul teaching Timothy to teach others to teach others...

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

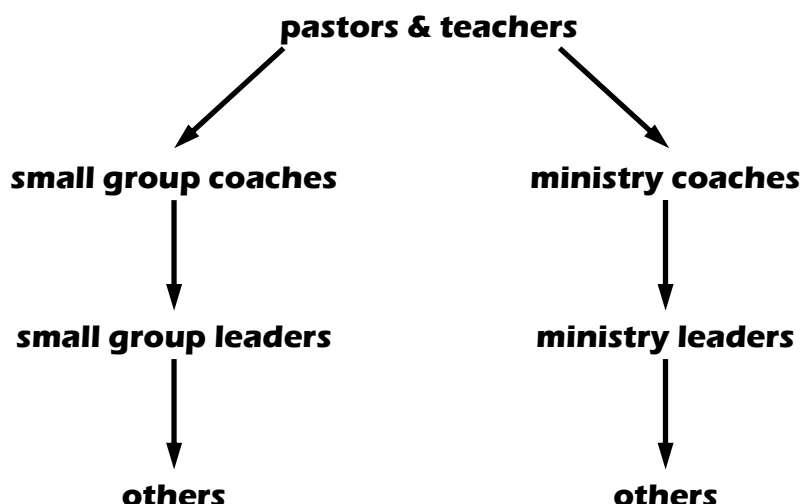


An important underlying principle of these papers is the notion of 'span of care'. This concerns how many people one person can care for. It's an especially important concept in the context of the 'small groups' ministry papers. It's also extremely relevant to becoming a ministry training church. We might call this 'span of training' - how many people can you train?

If Ephesians 4 challenges pastors to train everyone, 2 Timothy 2 reminds us that this will mean starting with a few key people, through whom everyone can be trained.

When we think about training we need to think **culture** not just events, **relationships**, not just activities.

Too much of our approach to training is **event**-focussed. We hope that if we can drag enough people along to the training event – it will be an instant fix all, with everyone who attends changed forever! The reality is, however, that while training events have their place, on their own they tend to produce very little lasting impact. The event can act as a useful catalyst. But unless there is an ongoing training relationship for feedback, discussion and prayer, not much will result. Unless there is a genuine sharing of struggles, training is **not training!** Worse, outside of a relational context, ministry skills are abstracted from personal godliness and theological development... so we're not training the person.



all these coaches & leaders all must be trained in the two foundational ministry papers: ✦ the ministry training church & ✦ leading one-to-one... as well as the relevant leadership paper (e.g. ✦ leading a small group or ✦ youth ministry). They must be equipped by pastors (over time) to, in turn, take people they lead through relevant papers...

Remember, the role of the MINISTRY PAPERS is not simply to transfer *content*, but to establish these trainer/trainee relationships. In this way, the *process* is as important as the content. The paper forms a 'contract' of agreed approach to the ministry, a basis for ongoing reflection, and a springboard to further reading and discussion. It's the starting point for an ongoing training relationship. This is why the 'meeting one-to-one' paper is also vital for all coaches & leaders.

notes:

- ✦ training is geared through two main arms: the small groups arm and the ministries arm.
- ✦ the intervening stage of 'coaches' is needed if the total number of small group leaders/ ministry leaders is, say, in double figures (span of training).
- ✦ pastors train small group coaches (who then train small group leaders e.g. 'leading as small group') and ministry coaches (who then train ministry leaders e.g. 'youth ministry').
- ✦ small group leaders not only orientate people to being part of a group ('joining a small group'), but have responsibility for training/equipping in the 3rd & 4th areas listed on page 2. They will, therefore, take their group members through the household/family papers & personal evangelism papers (assistant/apprentice leaders will be also be needed!).



fellow workers

You need a plan. And to make it happen, you need a team! New Testament ministry was always a team thing. Our ministry should be no different. The kind of ministry shown on the previous page will not happen through someone working one-out. You're going to need to develop a team of key leaders who share your ministry...and life...

ministry papers & fellow workers...

Peter is a gifted musician. A great person to have involved in music ministry. But even better than his ability on the guitar, is Peter's ability to understand gospel ministry. Peter is a fellow worker.

After being involved in music ministry at church for a year or so, Peter was appointed leader of night church music. All the training he'd received through meeting one-to-one throughout that time, would now be passed on.

Whenever a new person is potentially joining the night music team, Peter makes a time to sit down and meet with them. Whether musician, singer or sound person, he meets with them to go through the music ministry paper.

This 'up-front' meeting is invaluable. Lots of questions are answered, and issues clarified. From theology through to pragmatics, a lot of ground is covered. For Peter, his leadership is seen to not be arbitrary, but based on a thought out gospel-centred approach to the ministry. And for the new team member, they understand what it is they are joining.

Of course, it's not that just this one meeting sorts out everything. But a key foundation for the relationship in team ministry together is put in place. Many later questions/issues can be clarified by reference back to key points covered in the paper.

It's great to have a fellow worker like Peter looking after music at night church. It's not just music, it's ministry.

read to the end...

Unfortunately, the end of Paul's letters are at best skated over or at worst ignored altogether. Preached on them lately? They are often dressed up with inspiring Bible sub-headings like "concluding remarks". Better would be "fellow workers", "passing the baton" or "thoughts on team ministry". Where ever Paul did ministry, there were always plenty of these fellow workers alongside him....

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my **fellow workers** in Christ Jesus (Romans 16:3)

Greet Urbanus, our **fellow worker** in Christ... (Romans 16:9)

Timothy, my **fellow worker**, sends his greetings to you... (Romans 16:21)

We are God's **fellow workers**; you are God's field, God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9)

As for Titus, he is my partner and **fellow worker** among you... (2 Corinthians 8:23)

But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, **fellow worker** and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger... (Philippians 2:25)

Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my **fellow workers** for the kingdom of God... (Colossians 4:11)

To Philemon our dear friend and **fellow worker** (Philemon 1)

it takes time...

Developing a training culture means investing time in a few people who share your vision for the church & who'll share it with others, who'll share it with others... it needs to be the next biggest slab of time in your week, after preparing the Bible Talk. In fact, on a regular basis, when you're not preaching, it's also a good idea to devote a whole week just to team development.

Being fellow workers means sharing life and ministry together. Weekly one-to-one meetings are crucial, as well as staff or team meetings. But these need to be merely the platform for team ministry not the sum total of your communication or interaction. As with all relationships quality time happens within quantity time. You can't always pick the minute in your team when a good idea will blossom, or a good conversation spark. So you need to really give yourself to the team. Out of the quality of these gospel partnerships grows the whole culture of the church. Feed it!

office of ministry...

Synergy. Communication. Accessibility. Teamwork. Ministry focus. Training culture. All sound worth having?

A church-based shared-office environment, where possible, can really help get it happening.

who are your fellow workers?

what are you doing to train them?

what are you doing to train them to train others?

how might a planned approach to training help?

APPENDIX B. 5×5×5 BIBLE READING PLAN

January

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		Mark
2		1
3		2
4		3
5		4
6		5
7		Reflection
8		6
9		7
10		8
11		9
12		10
13		Reflection
14		Reflection
15		11
16		12
17		13
18		14
19		15
20		Reflection
21		Reflection
22		16
23		Acts
24		1
25		2
26		3
27		4
28		Reflection
29		5
30		6
31		7

(February, continued)

19		Acts
20		20
21		21
22		22
23		23
24		24
25		Reflection
26		25
27		26
28		27
29		
30		
31		

March

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		28
2		Hebrews
3		1
4		Reflection
5		Reflection
6		2
7		3
8		4
9		5
10		6
11		Reflection
12		Reflection
13		7
14		8
15		9
16		10
17		11
18		Reflection
19		12
20		13
21		Galatians
22		1
23		2
24		3
25		Reflection
26		Reflection
27		4
28		5
29		6
30		James
31		1

April

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		James
2		Reflection
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		Matthew
7		1
8		2
9		Reflection
10		Reflection
11		3
12		4
13		5
14		6
15		7
16		Reflection
17		8
18		9
19		10
20		11
21		12
22		Reflection
23		Reflection
24		13
25		14
26		15
27		16
28		17
29		Reflection
30		Reflection
31		18

(May, continued)

20		Romans
21		Reflection
22		5
23		6
24		7
25		8
26		9
27		Reflection
28		10
29		11
30		12
31		13

June

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		14
2		Reflection
3		Reflection
4		15
5		16
6		Ephesians
7		1
8		2
9		3
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		4
13		5
14		6
15		Philippians
16		1
17		2
18		Reflection
19		Reflection
20		3
21		Colossians
22		1
23		2
24		3
25		Reflection
26		Reflection
27		4
28		Philemon
29		1
30		2
31		3

July

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		Luke
2		Reflection
3		4
4		5
5		6
6		7
7		8
8		Reflection
9		9
10		10
11		11
12		12
13		13
14		Reflection
15		Reflection
16		14
17		15
18		16
19		17
20		18
21		Reflection
22		Reflection
23		19
24		20
25		21
26		22
27		23
28		Reflection
29		Reflection
30		24
31		1 Corinthians

(August, continued)

20		1 Corinthians
21		15
22		16
23		2 Corinthians
24		1
25		2
26		3
27		Reflection
28		4
29		5
30		6
31		7

September

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		Reflection
2		Reflection
3		9
4		10
5		11
6		12
7		13
8		Reflection
9		Reflection
10		1 Timothy
11		1
12		2
13		3
14		4
15		5
16		Reflection
17		Reflection
18		2 Timothy
19		1
20		2
21		3
22		4
23		Reflection
24		Titus
25		1
26		2
27		3
28		1 John
29		1
30		2
31		Reflection

February

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		8
2		9
3		Reflection
4		Reflection
5		10
6		11
7		12
8		13
9		14
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		15
13		16
14		17
15		18
16		19
17		Reflection
18		Reflection

May

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		19
2		20
3		21
4		22
5		Reflection
6		Reflection
7		23
8		24
9		25
10		26
11		27
12		Reflection
13		Reflection
14		28
15		Romans
16		1
17		2
18		3
19		4

June

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		14
2		Reflection
3		Reflection
4		15
5		16
6		Ephesians
7		1
8		2
9		3
10		Reflection
11		Reflection
12		4
13		5
14		6
15		Philippians
16		1
17		2
18		Reflection
19		Reflection
20		3
21		Colossians
22		1
23		2
24		3
25		Reflection
26		Reflection
27		4
28		Philemon
29		1
30		2
31		3

August

DATE	✓	CHAPTER
1		2
2		3
3		4
4		Reflection
5		Reflection
6		5
7		6
8		7
9		8
10		9
11		Reflection
12		Reflection
13		10
14		11
15		12
16		13
17		14
18		Reflection
19		Reflection

October

DATE ✓ CHAPTER

1	1 John	3
2		4
3	2 John	5
4	3 John	1
5	Reflection	1
6	Reflection	
7	1 Peter	1
8		2
9		3
10		4
11		5
12	Reflection	
13	Reflection	
14	John	1
15		2
16		3
17		4
18		5
19	Reflection	
20	Reflection	
21		6
22		7
23		8
24		9
25		10
26	Reflection	
27	Reflection	
28		11
29		12
30		13
31		

November

DATE ✓ CHAPTER

1	John	14
2		15
3	Reflection	
4	Reflection	
5		16
6		17
7		18
8		19
9		20
10	Reflection	
11	Reflection	
12		21
13	1 Thessalonians	1
14		2
15		3
16		4
17	Reflection	
18	Reflection	
19		5
20	2 Thessalonians	1
21		2
22		3
23	2 Peter	1
24	Reflection	
25	Reflection	
26		2
27		3
28	Jude	1
29	Revelation	1
30		2

December

DATE ✓ CHAPTER

1	Revelation	
2	Reflection	
3	Reflection	
4		3
5		4
6		5
7		6
8	Reflection	
9	Reflection	
10		8
11		9
12		10
13		11
14		12
15	Reflection	
16	Reflection	
17		13
18		14
19		15
20		16
21		17
22	Reflection	
23	Reflection	
24		18
25		19
26		20
27		21
28		22
29	Reflection	
30	Reflection	
31	Rejoice!	

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Discipleship Journal's

mission is to help believers develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and to provide practical help in understanding the Scriptures and applying them to daily life and ministry.

5x5

Bible Reading Plan

Through the New Testament in 5 days a week, 5 minutes a day

DJ Discipleship Journal®

5 minutes a day If you're not currently reading the Bible, start with 5 minutes a day. This reading plan will take you through all 260 chapters of the New Testament, one chapter per day. The gospels are read throughout the year to keep the story of Jesus fresh.

5 days a week Determine a time and location to spend 5 minutes a day for 5 days a week. It is best to have a consistent time and a quiet place where you can regularly meet with the Lord.

5 ways to dig deeper We must pause in our reading to dig into the Bible. Below are 5 different ways to dig deeper each day. We recommend trying a single idea for a week to find what works best for you. Remember to keep a pen and paper ready to capture God's insights.

1. Underline or highlight key words or phrases in the Bible passage. Use a pen or highlighter to mark new discoveries from the text. Periodically review your markings to see what God is teaching you.

2. Put it into your own words. Read the passage or verse slowly, then rewrite each phrase or sentence using your own words.

3. Ask and answer some questions. Questions unlock new discoveries and meanings. Ask questions about the passage using these words: who, what, why, when, where, or how. Jot down some thoughts on how you would answer these questions.

4. Capture the big idea. God's Word communicates big ideas. Periodically ask, *What's the big idea in this sentence, paragraph, or chapter?*

5. Personalize the meaning. When God speaks to us through the Scriptures, we must respond. A helpful habit is personalizing the Bible through application. Ask: *How can my life be different today as I respond to what I'm reading?*

APPENDIX C. DAILY TIME WITH GOD - MINISTRY PAPERS



daily time with God

the MINISTRY PAPERS

"bible facts..."

How are you on your Bible facts? You know, interesting facts about the Bible...

Did you know the Bible was the first book ever printed? In 1454 it was the first thing off Gutenberg's press. Did you know the first ever voice radio broadcast on December 24, 1906 was a reading from the Bible? Luke 2 on Christmas Eve was a nice choice.

You may know that the Bible's the best selling book of all time. But did you know that it's also the most stolen? You might know it's been translated into lots of languages but did you know the count's now over 1200? You might know that the Bible's divided into chapters but did you know that was only first done in 1228, and the verse divisions in 1551?

You might know it takes a while to read through the whole Bible, but did you know that about seventy hours does it? You might know that the Bible's got some long names in it, but did you know the longest is Maher-shalal-hashbaz?

There's all sorts of Bible facts you can reel off, and I reckon it's pretty interesting stuff. But the Bible fact I find most interesting of all, is this: lots of people believe the Bible is the Word of God, but don't actually read it all that much. You can throw alongside that a 'prayer' fact: lots of people believe prayer is powerful but rarely pray.

The reality is, lots of us struggle to spend a daily time with God in the Bible and prayer. The key thing isn't to wallow in guilt about it. This paper is about a fresh look at why a daily time with God is important. It also offers some practical ideas to get you started. Better still, it throws in some ideas about accountability to keep you going and keep you growing.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team.

This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your growth group leader encourage you to spend a daily time with God in Bible reading and prayer.



key verse

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

Colossians 2:6-7



investigate

Stop and think. Read the verses again. What do they mean?

read **Colossians 1:28-2:15**

look at the verses in their context...

and answer the questions below:

1. What is Paul's goal for every Christian? (1:28)

2. What is a real danger for every Christian? (2:4)?

3. What will be the key to facing this danger? (2:6-7)

4. Why is Christ the key to knowing God? (2:9)

5. How does the cross mock any other way of knowing God? (2:15)

6. Paul's main concern for us is that we continue as we started: with a simple, total focus on Christ. Why are we tempted to make it more complicated?



think & apply

the bible: listening to God

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. **2 Timothy 3:15-17**



1. What is able to make us wise for salvation?

2. Where does Scripture come from?

3. What is Scripture useful for?

4. Does the Bible only *partially* equip us to live out our salvation? Why/why not?

5. Does the Bible only equip us for *some* good works? Why/why not?



6. What part, then, should the Bible play in our lives?

7. Given all that God promises here about his Word, the Bible, why do people go looking for other ways of listening to God?

8. What practical constraints are there to you reading the Bible each day? How can you overcome these?



family/household time with God...

Paul talks about Timothy's 'infancy' in the verses above. We gain insight into his infancy earlier in ch1 vs5. What a great thing when children grow up with the Scriptures! While the main focus of this paper is our own personal daily time with God, we should remember also the importance also of reading the Bible together at home. In your family/household situation, consider how the Bible can play more of a part in your life together.

communication is the key

Often when you hear people talking about a relationship problem, the real issue is a communication problem. We know it well: a healthy relationship grows through healthy communication. We probably don't think about this enough, but the same applies in our relationship with God. A healthy relationship with God means healthy communication. Growing in our relationship with him means growing in our communication with him.

Our relationship with God actually started with good communication. First, we heard the word of God, the gospel. God spoke to us: "I'm offering you forgiveness through my Son's death...". We listened to God speak in his Word (perhaps spoken through a friend or a preacher). Then we responded with our words, we prayed: "sorry, please forgive me, thank you, help me to now live with Jesus as Lord".

Problem is, if there hasn't been a lot of communication since then, there won't be much growing either. We were called in Col 2:6-7 to grow in Christ 'just as you received' him as Lord. That applies strongly to the idea of a daily time with God. It really calls for a regular pattern of reading the Bible and praying. It's not just some religiousy idea. It's a relationship. It's keeping the conversation going that we started when we first became a Christian.

But there's another important thing to remember. Since we received Christ Jesus 'as Lord', this is no mere chat. It's not a conversation between equals. He sets the agenda for our communication. That's why reading the Bible comes first. Listen to him. Listen expecting to be challenged: Jesus is Lord! Listen, then pray in response. Pray knowing that you're talking about the things God says matter most, rather than us dominating the conversation. He will listen to us, but first we should listen to him.



prayer: talking to God

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:4-7**

getting started

time and place

Morning might be best. It shows the priority of meeting with God, committing the day to him. Your mind is probably less cluttered. If morning is difficult (e.g. getting the kids off to school), try mid-morning or your lunchbreak. You might have to experiment, but find the time that works best and stick to it.

how long?

Be realistic: start with 15 minutes and let it grow. Be focused: don't watch the clock! Be expectant: you're meeting with God! Aim for quality not just quantity.

the right resources

A Bible: with good size print, and in an easy translation (e.g. NIV). A notebook: for insights and prayer points. A Bible reading plan: (see some suggestions over page).

a model to begin with:

Relax: slow down and focus on what you're doing & pray. Ask God to help you understand his Word and that his Spirit would help you respond in obedience and faith. Remember, this is unlike any other reading—you're listening to God! Read: read the Bible passage. Often it helps to re-read it, so don't aim to cover too much.

Reflect: think about what it means. Look for a key verse. What's the flow of thought? What's the main idea, encouragement, challenge? What does it tell you about Christ and living with him as Lord?

Record: write notes about what you've learnt & how it applies to you. Don't rush this part of it. The more you think here, the more meaningful your prayer will be...

Request (pray): praise, confess, thank. Bring your requests to God.

praying Scripture

We need to pray the Bible. Turn what you've read in the Bible today and noted down as you read into a prayer. Now you're having a conversation with God! You can be confident you're praying about what matters.



1. What are we to be anxious about?

2. What are we to pray about?

3. As we pray about everything, what attitude should we have?

4. What is (and isn't) promised as the answer to our prayers?

5. Why are prayer and anxiety opposites?

6. How might this help us understand why we often don't turn to God in prayer?

7. We are told to pray with thanksgiving. Outside of the worries of the day, what timeless truths can keep us thankful?

8. How might this thankfulness for Christ (and an eternal perspective on life) be the key to the peace that is promised?



pray for others, pray your day...

When we pray, it's easy to be dominated by our own concerns that flood our head. And Paul certainly encourages us to bring those things to God. However, what strikes you about Paul's own prayers in his letters is how he's always looking beyond himself, praying for others (e.g. Phil 1:9-11). That's a challenge for us. Try 'praying your day'. Think about the people you'll see today and watch for how you can be used by God in their lives through what you do and say.

useful resources

There are lots of useful resources around to help get you started and keep you going with your daily time with God. What's best for you can depend on your circumstances so it's worth trying some different approaches. Most importantly, as we'll see, one of the best resources God has given us is each other.



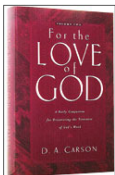
getting started

'Short steps for long gains' from Matthias Media is a great way to get started in a daily time with God. It consists of 26 short Bible studies (starting with A for Assurance and finishing with Z for zeal), each one based on a Bible verse, with half a dozen questions to stimulate encouraging conversation and prayer. It's designed to do with a friend but is excellent also for personal use. That said, if you're struggling to get going with a daily time with God, doing something simple like this with a friend (perhaps someone from your growth group), might be just the thing to help you get started. There's a family edition too.



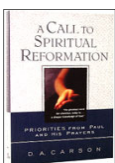
keeping going

The booklet mentioned above and other resources like it are great to get started. But there's a time to go a bit deeper. The problem with lots of daily bible notes commonly available is that they jump around the Bible a lot. They're helpful to a point, but to really get into the Bible it's best to work through whole books over time. Topical notes won't stretch you the way working through a book of the Bible does—both in knowing Christ better, and in the sustained personal challenge that also brings. The Briefing, also from Matthias Media, has a useful section called 'Bible Briefs' which gives you a few simple questions each day to help you work through a book of the Bible. The Briefing also has lots of useful articles to help you grow in thinking biblically about the issues going on in the world, our churches, and our lives.



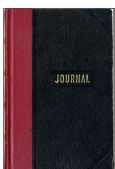
digging deeper

When you're established in daily Bible reading patterns, it's worth taking on the challenge of reading through the whole Bible. Or if you've done that before, doing it again! In 'For the Love of God' Don Carson has reworked the classic Robert Murray McCheyne Bible reading system for easier use, guiding you through the New Testament and Psalms twice, and the Old Testament once in the course of 365 days. This excellent resource includes one-page expositions and devotional comments for each day.



praying the Bible

This paper has focused on the idea of 'praying the Bible' - striking up a conversation with God by listening to him in the Bible and praying in response to what you read. Taking this idea further, we can learn how to pray through studying the prayers we find in the Bible. That's what this book, also by Don Carson, 'A Call to Spiritual Reformation: priorities from Paul and his prayers' is all about. It's a call to a deeper prayer experience based on Scripture. From Paul's "school of prayer", he especially focuses on how Paul prays for others to know Christ better.



a prayer diary

for all the great resources out there... it's worth putting in some effort to bring together some resources of your own. Especially when it comes to prayer, and the people you want to pray for. Sometimes there are so many people to pray for we end up not praying regularly for any of them. A prayer diary can be a great help here:

1. make separate lists of prayer points under some major headings: Personal, Family, Church, Friends, Evangelistic Contacts, Missionary Work.
2. spread the points from each list across your prayer spots for the week. This will bring variety to each prayer time and consistency to your overall prayer life.
3. have a space on the page where you can add current points.
4. review the list every month.



through the Bible in a year

see the 'one year bible reading plan' ministry paper resource.

growth groups and accountability

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching" Hebrews 10:24-25

The table below shows a number of key goals that our growth groups are aiming for as we seek to encourage each other. It's all about relationships. The growth group is a context in which we can be accountable for all the important relationships in our lives.

Of course, the one relationship that's key to all other relationships is our relationship with God. Yet in turn, it's our relationships in our growth group that encourage us in our relationship with God. Specifically, it's where we can keep each other accountable about growing a daily time with God. It should be an essential part of what we pray for and encourage each other in. This accountability might just make the difference to keep us going...



a growing relationship with God, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with other believers, especially through the growth group

growing relationships with those in their family/household, as servants

growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism

growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team

APPENDIX D. THEOLOGY MATTERS

THEOLOGY MATTERS



YouthMETRO
³⁰
Summer Camp

Word!

The Apocalypse!

Task

Your statement for all of Christendom what the Bible is and how it is to be viewed:

<i>Singles</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Quads</i>

Why is our understanding of the Bible important?

Read 2 Peter 1:19-21

How is the prophetic word confirmed? (vs 16)

What are we to do with the prophetic word?

Why should we do this?

- 1.
- 2.

What does this mean for you as someone who considers Christ seriously?

Read Hebrews 4:12-13

What are the four ways the word of God is described in these verses?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

From these descriptions how is the word of God useful for your church and your life?

From these verses is there anything that you think we should add or alter on the doctrinal statement for people after the apocalypse?

The Apocalyptic Doctrinal Statement

The One

We are covering much of the major stuff of Christianity, where would you begin?

Genesis 1:1; Pro 9:10; Rom 1:1; 1 John 4:10; Heb 11:6

WHAT GOD IS

Write down 4 words to describe what God is:

1. S_____ *John 4:24*

2 Chron 16:9 What?

John 1:14

2. L_____ *1 John 1:5*

Ps 119:105, John 8:12

3. L_____ *1 John 4:8, 16*

4. F_____ *Deut 4:24, Heb 12:29*

WHAT GOD DOES

Write down 4 words to describe what God does:

1. C_____ & P_____

Ps 8:3, Jer 32:17, Ps 33:6

Nature: ie. *Ps 104* History: ie. *Dan 4:25, 32*

2. R_____ How?

Is 55:8-11

I. II. III.

Ps. 19:1, Rom 1:18-20;

1 Cor 2:9-10, Heb 1:1-2;

Matt 16:17, 1 Cor 12:3

3. R_____

OT Examples? *Deut 7:7-8*

NT? *Eph 1:7, Rom 3:24*

4. D_____ *Lk 12:4-5*

Work Alongside *2 Cor 6:1*

From the Creator to the Creature

On a scale of 1 to 10 how do you see humanity when telling them of Jesus: 1 being 'beyond redemption' and 10 being 'no need for redemption'.

If you were to give a biblical description of humanity what would you say?

THE D_____ OF HUMANITY

Psalm 8:3-4, 5-8

What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

A capacity for:

R_____ T_____ *Mark 12:30; Psalm 32:9; Is 1:18*

to t_____

S_____ R_____ *Gen 1:26*

to l_____

M_____ C_____

to c_____

S_____ E_____

to know his C_____

THE D_____ OF MAN (the other end of the see-saw)

HISTORICAL

What is the problem with mankind's nature and list 4 words to describe it.

1. O_____ *Ps 51:5*
2. I_____ *Jer 17:9; Mk 7:21-28*
3. U_____ *Ecc 7:20; Is 53:6, Rom 3:10*
4. T_____ *1 Cor 2:14*

Packer, 'Total depravity does not mean that at every point, man is as bad as he could be, but that at no point is man as good as he should be.'

The Heart of Christianity

'There is no Christianity without Christ'

How does the New Testament present Jesus?

1. H_____ Person

Gospel Truth

2. H_____ Person

Jn 4:6; - Mk 3:5; 10:21 – Phil 2:7; James 1:12 – Mk 13:32

3. D_____ Person

Jn 10:30; 14:9 – Mt 7:29 – Jn 21:16 – Lk 5:20, 21 – Mt 25:31-33 –

Bodily Resurrection – D_____, R_____, E_____

4. U_____ Person

Divine-Human

Saving Initiative

Living Presence - *Gal 2:20; 1 Pet 1:8*

Tacitus ~ "He fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations called Christians by the populus. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius, at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out, not only in Judea the first source of the evil but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular."

2 Peter 3:18 ~ 'OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST'

The Mission

What was Christ's sole mission? Lk 2:11; 1 Tim 1:15; 1 Jn 4:14

How?

1. C_____ of his _____

Unpopular - 1 Cor 1:23

What makes it central?

Jesus - Jn 12:27; 1 Cor 11:23-26

Apostles – 1 Cor 15:3

Last Book – Rev 5:6, 12; 7:14

Gospel Authors - ___/___ of the chapters are devoted the last week of the life of Christ.

The Church – the symbol of Christendom

2. N_____ of his _____

Mk 8:31; Mt 26:51-54

3. P_____ of his _____

Four points to describe the p_____:

R_____ of God - Rom 5:8

E_____ to believers - Eph 5:2; 1 Jn 3:16-17; 1 Pet 2:18

C_____ of the devil – Col 2:15; Heb 2:14

S_____ for sin – Lev 5:1; Is 53:4; Jn 1:29; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24

4. A_____ of his _____

Come up with a short sentence summary for each of these words:

Propitiation:

1 Jn 4:10

Justification:

Rom 3:24

Redemption:

1 Cor 6:19-20

Reconciliation:

Col 1:19-22

‘Charles Simeon, whether as the ground of his own hopes, or as the subject of all his ministrations, determined to know nothing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.’



The Holy Spirit

On a scale relative to the other two persons of the Trinity how much do you consider the Holy Spirit?



THE PERSON (WHO HE IS)

His P _____

'He' (as you've read in John);

Rom 8:26-27; 1 Cor 2:6-17; Eph 4:30; 1 Cor 12:11

His D _____

Mt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Acts 5:3-4;

THE WORK (WHAT HE DOES)

What are the four chief works of the Holy Spirit?

In relation to Christ: G _____

1 Pet 1:10-12; Jn 16:12-15

In relation to the Church: E _____

Eph 4:1-4

In relation to the Christian: S _____

2 Cor 3:18; Gal 5:16-25

In relation to the World: E _____

Jn 16:8-10, 15:26, 3:5; Rom 8:9



A People

Do you believe that to be a Christian you must go to church?

Gen 12:1-3; Titus 2:14

1. The N_____ of the Church

Universal & Local

Mt 16:18; 18:17; Gal 1:2, 13, 22

Visible & Invisible – *1 Cor 10:1-5; 1 Jn 2:19*

How to enter the visible and invisible? – *1 Pet 2:4; Acts 2:47*

2. The U_____ of the Church

Irrefragable yet Maintainable – *Eph 4:4-6, 13, 15*

3. The P_____ of the Church

Draw the pictures the Bible provides of the church.

1 Jn 3:1

Eph 2:19-22; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19

2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19-21

1 Cor 12:12ff.

4. The F_____ of the Church

What is the Church for?

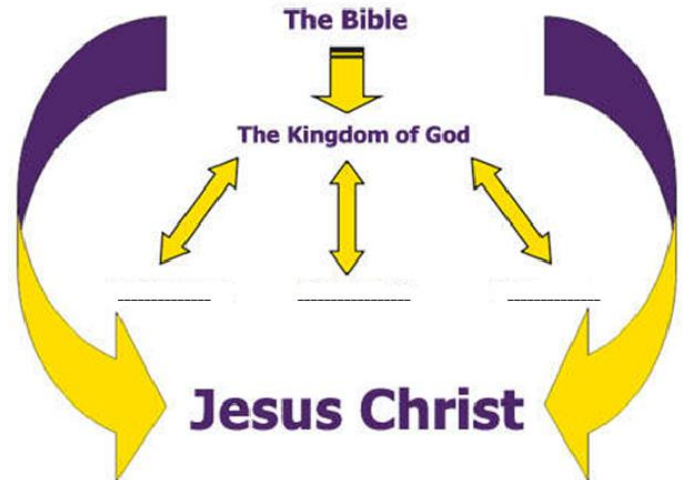
1 Pet 2:9

1 Pet 2:5; Heb 10:24-25

1 Pet 2:9-10; Ex 19:4-6

Konsidering the Kingdom Koming

The Present Future



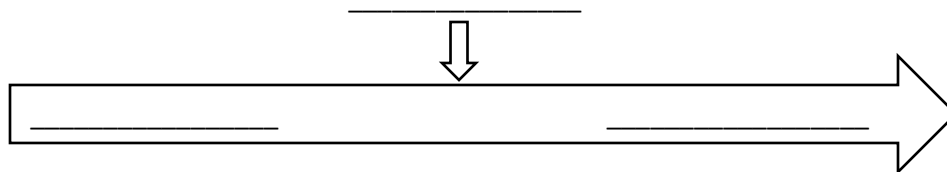
Matt 3:2
Mark 1:15
Mark 9:1
Luke 11:20
Luke 17:20-21
Luke 19:11-12 (parable)

PRESENT
FUTURE

1 Corinthians 6:9
Colossians 1:13
2 Timothy 4:18
Hebrews 12:28
2 Peter 1:11
Revelation 5:10

The Mystery of the Kingdom of God in Parables!

(mindset of 1st century Jews) Matthew 13:11, 16-17

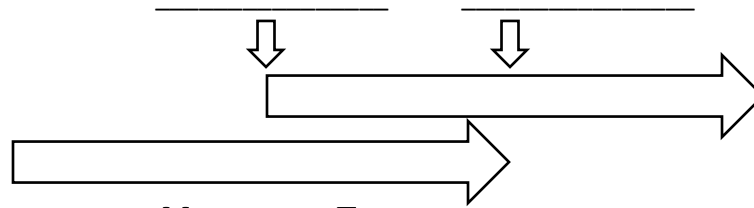


The Mystery in the Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The Mystery in the Parable of the Weeds

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43



<i>Daniel 7:18</i>		<i>Matt 21:31-32</i>		<i>John 3:5</i>		<i>James 2:5</i>	
<i>Matt 5:3</i>		<i>Matt 25:31-34</i>		<i>Acts 14:21-22</i>		<i>Rev 1:5-6</i>	
<i>Matt 5:20</i>		<i>Mark 1:15</i>		<i>1 Cor 15:50</i>			
<i>Matt 7:21</i>		<i>Mark 10:14-15</i>		<i>Ephesians 5:5</i>			
<i>Mt 19:23-26</i>		<i>Luke 9:62</i>		<i>Col 1:12-14</i>			

SUMMARY: _____

Implications

Beware...

Be Encouraged...

Be Motivated... Matthew 6:10, 6:33

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Getting Orientated

For starters: Spend ten minutes getting to know each other in the group. This will be the smallest group you will be involved in throughout Summit and the first port of call for any pastoral matters. Pray together.

(20 min) Read through John 14,15,16 out loud.

Write down:

- ☐ Your thoughts on first reading
- ☐ Words, ideas or themes that stuck out to you
- ☐ Any questions that you would like answered. (these don't need to be answered today, we will look back at these later in the week). Possible questions may be about:
 - ⇒ The meaning of particular words.
 - ⇒ How this section fits together.
 - ⇒ How this section applies to us.

(20 min) Look back over John 14,15,16 and other relevant chapters.

- ☐ Who is doing the talking during most of this section?
- ☐ Who is the author? (John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7,20,24)
- ☐ What is similar/different about this Gospel to the Synoptic Gospels (Matt, Mark, Luke)?
- ☐ Why did he write this letter? (John 20:31)
- ☐ Does this letter contain everything there is to know about Jesus or everything we need to know?

Finish this time with prayer.

- ☐ Pray for greater understanding of this text and the wonders it contains
- ☐ Pray for the upcoming Bible by Fives sessions and ask for wisdom and growth
- ☐ Pray for one another



Themes and Structure

Pray together.

(20 min) Read through John 14,15,16 together. This time marking your manuscript as you go:

- ☐ Underline or highlight any words that are repeated throughout the passage.
- ☐ Circle key conjunctions in the section (eg. Because, since, for, therefore, so, etc).
- ☐ Jot down the main themes and key words which will need further investigation this week.
- ☐ Highlight or underline any words that describe Jesus, the Holy Spirit or God.

(20 min) Look over the passage again:

Divide this passage into sections that reflect the author's (or Jesus' in this case) flow of thoughts and teaching.

Give each section a 2-4 word heading.

(5min) So then, what are the principle ideas or key themes of this part of the Gospel of John?

(5min) In 25 words or less write a summary of this section of John as you understand it thus far.

Pray together.



Jesus' Discourse and Personal Application

Pray together.

(25 min) Read through John 14, 15, 16. This time highlight any references to God. You may like to use a different colour for each person of the Trinity.

- ☐ What does this passage say about Jesus?
- ☐ What does this passage say about the Holy Spirit?
- ☐ What does this passage say about the Father?
- ☐ How do these three persons of the Trinity interrelate?
- ☐ How does each member of the Trinity work towards our salvation?
- ☐ How can we emulate the relationships we see in the Trinity in our own lives?

Try to summarize the teaching about God in John 14, 15, 16 in a short paragraph (if that's possible!).

Relating John 14, 15, 16 to us personally (25 min):

- ☐ Who are the initial recipients of this dialogue?
- ☐ Why did John record this dialogue?
- ☐ Is this teaching from Jesus to the apostles relevant to us today?
- ☐ Are there any parts written in this passage that are for the apostles only?
- ☐ Which parts can we read and directly apply to our lives?
- ☐ How can we apply this teaching from Jesus to everyday life?

What might Jesus' teaching recorded in John 14, 15, 16 look like in this century?



Summary

Pray together. Read through John 14,15,16. Give this section an appropriate title.

Make a list of 10 key verses:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

What does John 14,15,16 teach us about:

God the Father

God the Son

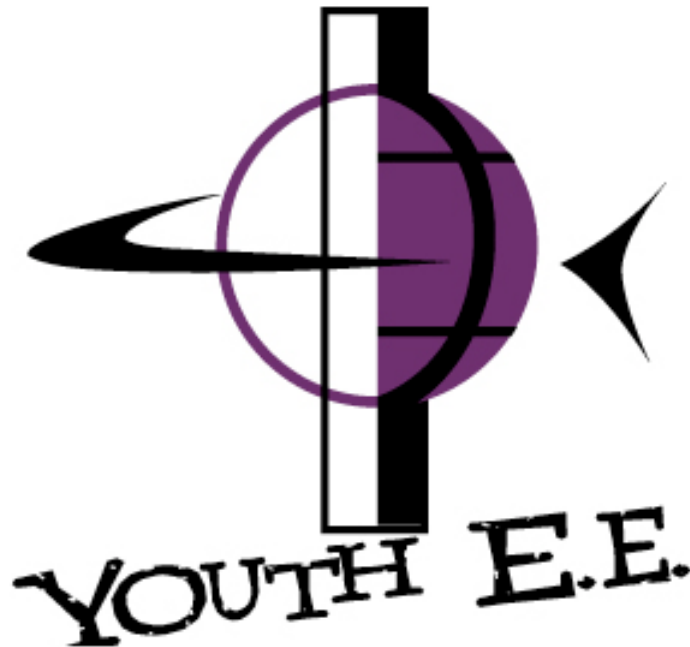
God the Spirit

- ☐ In what way has this passage shaped your thinking about God?
- ☐ What change has this section brought about in your understanding of the trinity?
- ☐ How has this passage challenged you?



Notes:

APPENDIX E. YOUTH EE QUICK START STUDENT NOTEBOOK



YOUTH EE QUICK START

Student Notebook

Evangelism Explosion International
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Copyright 2006
www.eeinternational.org
www.youthee.org

rev. 20

**That which is learned in pleasure-
Is never forgotten**
Alfred Mercier 1816-1894

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Session 1 - Introduction

WELCOME & OPEN IN PRAYER

INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREETING:

WHY DON'T MORE CHRISTIANS WITNESS?

- Fear of failure, of offending others, of embarrassing self
- Don't know how
- Not sure of their own salvation
- Unresolved sin in their lives
- Suspicious of "canned" approaches

Therefore, these fears may lead you to avoid witnessing.

Any personal stories to share?

WHY A FORMAL MINISTRY?

- It creates accountability by going out regularly.
- It gives a platform for training others.
- It provides a transferable technique.

THREE GOALS OF YOUTH EE...to equip you to:

1. Effectively share the Gospel in a natural and non-threatening way with a non-Christian.
2. Train other students to be Trainers. 2 Timothy 2:2
3. "Make disciples" of new believers

BENEFITS OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM

- Assurance of salvation and understanding deepens.
- Increases confidence.

"Always be prepared to give an answer..." I Peter 3:15.

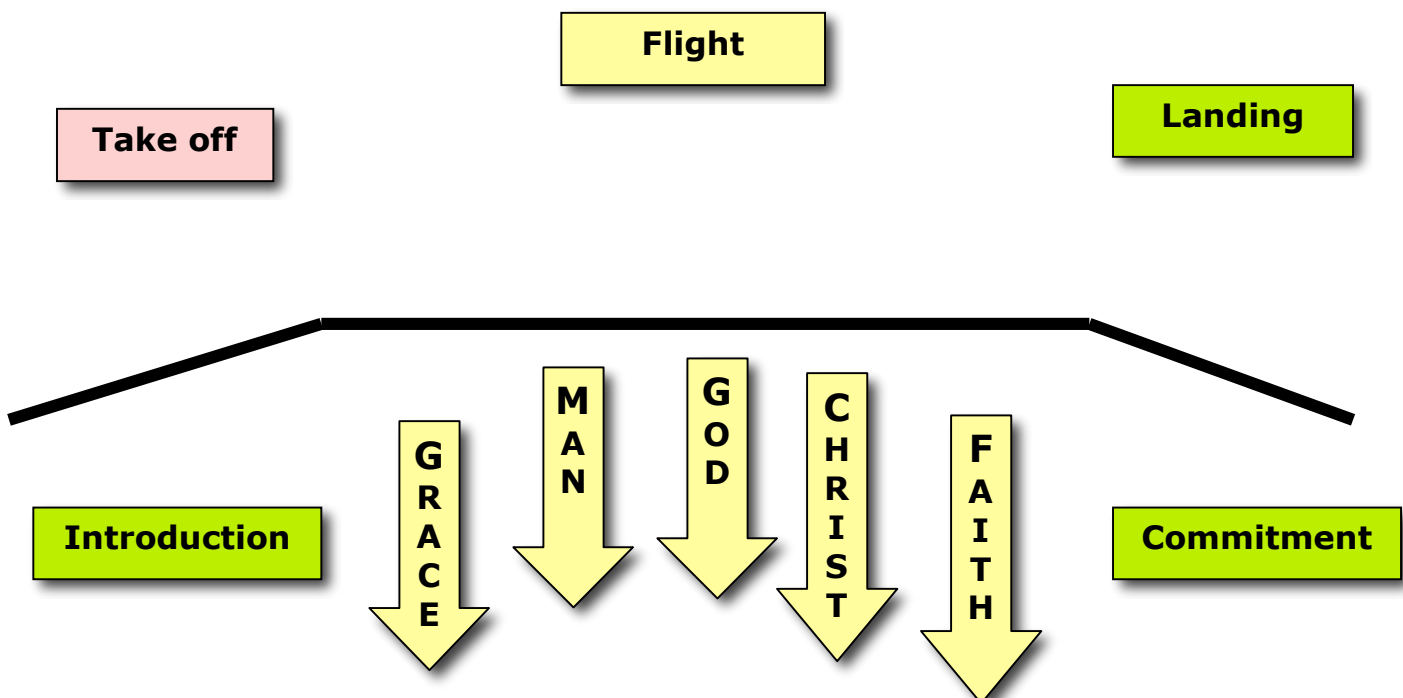
When you take risks for Christ, He builds your faith (Like Peter, walking on the water).

- Increases gratitude for what God has done.
- Increases faith.
- Builds a sense of urgency to share the Gospel.
- Gain a sense of fulfillment, knowing that it has eternal significance
- Great experiences that produce lasting memories.

PRAYER PARTNERS IN YOUTH EE

- Everyone involved in the training should ask two people to be their prayer partners. Pray together during camp.

SHARING THE GOSPEL IS LIKE FLYING A PLANE



Session 1 - THE FLIGHT

HAND ILLUSTRATION: A technique to remember basic points of the Gospel.

Thumb: Represents Grace, getting something that we don't deserve, like a free ride when a hitchhiker holds up his/her thumb.

First finger: The Index Finger represents Man. We use this finger to point. People sometimes point out the sins in others. This reminds us that we have a worldwide problem. It's called sin.

The Great finger: The Middle Finger represents God. It is designated as the "Great" finger because it is the biggest. This finger reminds us of the Greatest Being in the Universe.

Ring Finger: This represents Christ. We are reminded of the Scripture that says Christians are the bride of Christ.

Little finger: Faith. We say that we only need a little faith in a great God.

NEXT STEP: add two sub-points of the Gospel for each finger. Like this.

Hand Presentation of the Gospel (note: you don't actually say "Grace" and "Man")

Eternal Life is a _____.

We can't _____ it.



GRACE

There's a worldwide _____ (called sin)

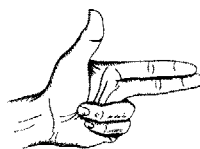
We can't _____ it.



MAN

God is _____ .

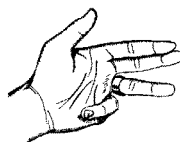
God is _____ .



GOD

Christ is both _____ and _____ .

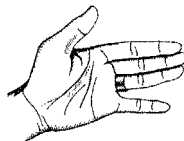
He _____, He _____ He _____ .



CHRIST

Faith is not just a _____ .

Faith is _____ in Christ alone.



FAITH

Grace: (Thumb)

1. Eternal life is a free gift
2. We can't earn it

Man: (First finger)

1. There's a worldwide problem
2. We can't solve it

God: (Middle finger)

1. God is loving
2. God is just

Christ: (Ring finger)

1. Christ is both God and man
2. He died, He rose, He paid

Faith: (Little finger)

1. Faith is not just a head belief
2. Faith is trusting in Christ alone

Visual: Use your **bare hands**, or, use rubber **surgical gloves**, or just draw a hand on a **piece of paper**. Use pens and write each section of the Gospel on the appropriate fingernail of the glove. G M G C F. Next, write the two sub-points of each section, using the first two joints of each finger. For brevity, use the words that are underlined in each section on the previous page.

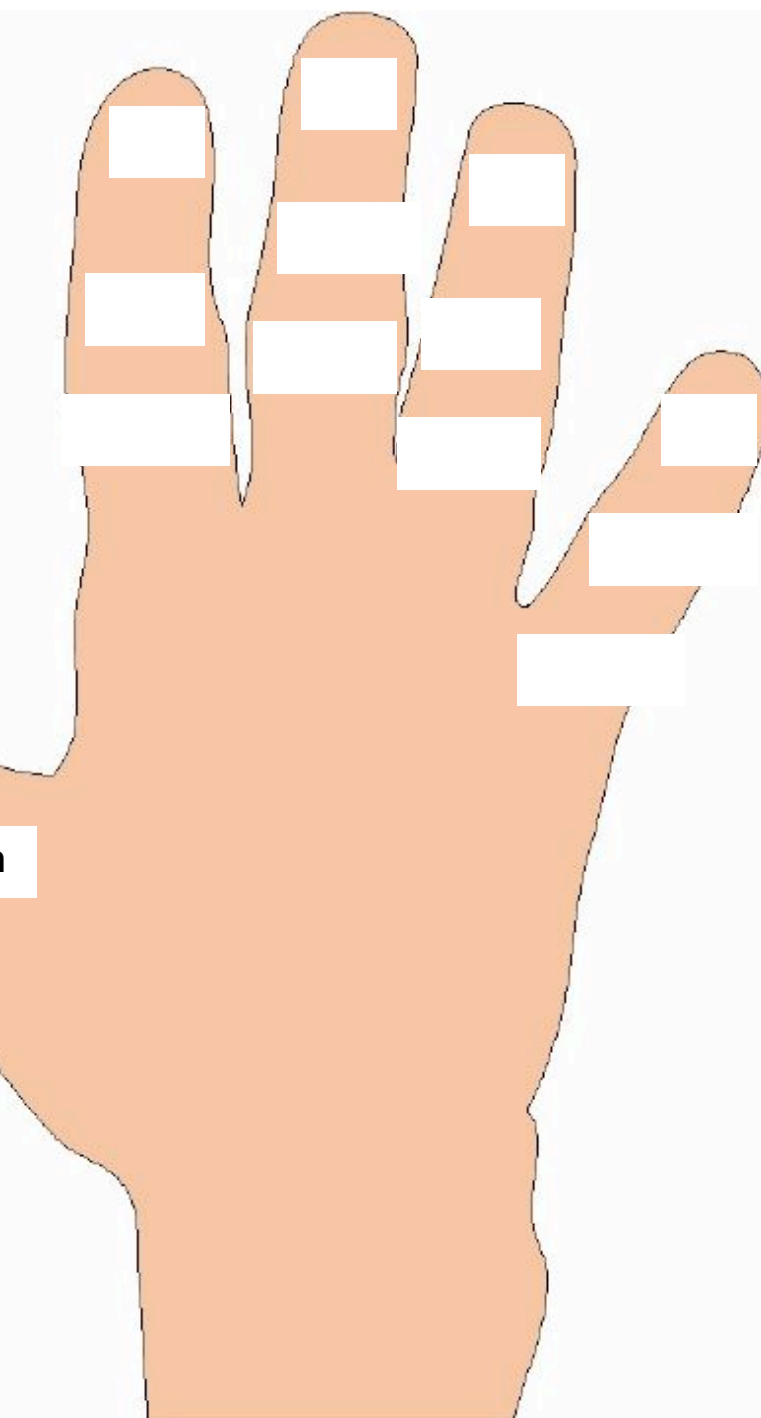
What are memory pegs?

They are one-word reminders of each point you are learning. As we add new Gospel points we will have memory pegs for each new point. We'll refer back to the hand and show you how you can add these. It's just a tool to help you learn.

Example



HAND DIAGRAM



NOTES

Session 1 - Adding Stories

Someone have a joke to tell?

What if we could share the Gospel through a series of stories or illustrations that convey the Gospel message? A story for each Gospel point. The principle is that we remember stories.

GRACE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Eternal life is a <u>free</u> gift:2. We can't <u>earn</u> it: Friends <u>Gift</u> Story
MAN	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There's a worldwide <u>problem</u>:2. We can't <u>solve</u> it: <u>Egg</u> Story
GOD	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God is <u>loving</u>:1. God is <u>just</u>: <u>Garcia</u> Story
CHRIST	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Christ is both <u>God</u> and <u>man</u>:2. He <u>died</u>, <u>rose</u>, <u>paid</u>: Record <u>Book</u> Of Sin Story
FAITH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Faith is not just a <u>head</u> belief2. Faith is <u>trusting</u> in Christ alone The <u>Boat</u> Story

- To save time, have person A share "Friend's Gift" while person B listens. Then person B shares the "Egg" story and person A listens. Keep switching roles of listener and speaker for each story.
- The Transitions are taught in Session 4. But they are already placed at the end of each story. Try to learn them as you learn each story.
- Now you can share the entire Gospel presentation, remembering each section through a story. **NOTE: Emphasize practicing "and in the same way" at the end of each story.**

RETURN TO THE HAND and add the underlined words in the five stories, (on the previous page) on the third joint of each finger. Ok, there are only two joints on the thumb! Just use the space below the second thumb joint. (**See page 37**) These words are the **memory pegs**.

SAYING IT ALTOGETHER

For each part of the Gospel, simply say the sub-points, followed by the story. It is not necessary to say "Grace, Man, God, Christ, and Faith."

"Eternal life is a free gift. We can't earn it. Then tell the Friends Gift story.

"There's a worldwide problem. We can't solve it." Then tell the Egg story.

"God is loving. God is just." Then tell the Garcia story.

"Christ is both God and man. He died on the cross, rose from the dead and paid the penalty for our sins" Then tell the Record Book story.

"Faith is not just a head belief. Faith is trusting in Christ alone." Then tell the Boat story.

HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK - Memorize The Bible Verses
- **Line up your prayer partners**
- **Practice the hand and stories**

On **Page 11** you will find the Bible verses that we use in Quick Start. If you remember the key one-word reminders, on the same page, it helps to learn each verse. **Before next week, memorize these verses and transitions.**

Session 2 - Scriptures, Transitions, And Putting It All Together

(45 minutes, then OJT)

ADDING SCRIPTURES:

There are five points of the Gospel, two sub-points and one story for each point. Now add the Scriptures and transitions.

Grace:	Ephesians 2:9	"It isn't something you have earned, so there is nothing you can brag about" (CEV).
Man:	Matthew 5:48	" Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
God:	Exodus 34:7b	God says, " He does not leave the guilty unpunished."
Christ:	Isaiah 53:6	" We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the sin of us all."
Faith:	John 14:6	" I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Place the Scriptures on the hand diagram on the next page. Here are the **memory pegs**: use the **bolded** words, above right, from each verse.

TRANSITIONAL SENTENCES not only make the Gospel presentation flow smoothly, but also helps us go from one section to the next.

GRACE TO MAN "**So**, why can't we earn eternal life?"

MAN TO GOD "**There** must be a different way...God's way."

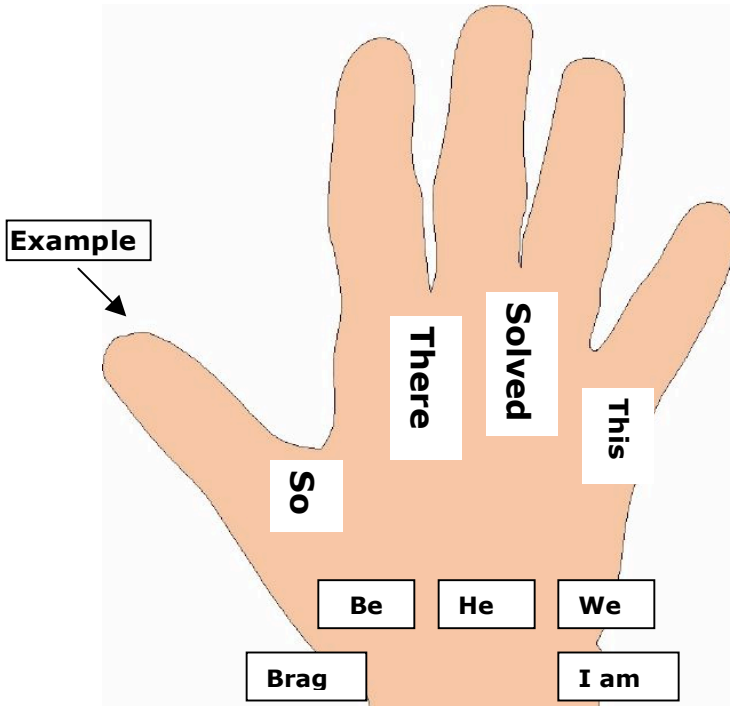
GOD TO CHRIST

"God solved our problem in the person of Jesus Christ."

CHRIST TO FAITH

"This gift is received by faith."

Add to the hand: Write the **bolded** words above, in the spaces between each finger, your **memory pegs**.



Transitions the EASY WAY!

Until you learn these transitions, don't let that stop you from sharing more than one section of the Gospel. Just say this:

"What I wanted to share has five points. The first point is, Eternal life is a free gift" (go through 'Grace'), "the second point is, (go through 'Man') and so on, all the way through the Gospel.

Turn to page 29 ff. Notice the sections that are **shaded in**. Read through the scriptures and transitions together. When you start to feel comfortable sharing the Gospel, you can begin to add these to your presentation.

Presentation of the Gospel

Practice and Review

Session 2 -TAKE OFF

Leading into the Gospel

(45 minutes, OJT)

Review flight diagram

Have you had experiences of getting a discussion into sharing the Gospel? Why is that hard to do?

Remember the flight on an airplane is a good illustration for witnessing. The **"take off"** is what you say to lead into sharing the Gospel. (Introduction) The **"flight"** is the 5 Gospel points, and the **"landing"** is how you finish. (Commitment)

Tools for the "take off"

SCOTT is an acronym that represents a simple but effective way to lead a conversation from casual chat into a discussion about spiritual matters. Each letter represents a topic of conversation.

- S. Secular Life.** By this we mean talking about everyday things of a secular nature. Use your imagination. Ask questions that show an interest in a person, and that opens discussions about their interests. (Examples?)
- C. Church Background.** Here we begin to move casually towards spiritual matters. Most people have some sort of church experience. Even if it isn't particularly positive, getting them to talk about it is less threatening than just starting off with the two diagnostic questions.
- O. Our Youth Ministry.** This is simply sharing a little bit about your own church experience and/or youth group experience. (Examples?) Maybe you could say something like, "Being involved in my Youth group has been a great experience. It's helped me understand a lot about knowing God."
- T. Testimony.** After talking about church experiences, it's more natural at this time to share an example of how God has made a difference in your life. You can see the progression here.
- T. Two Questions.** After sharing your story, say, "May I ask you a couple of questions?"

The rest of this session will concentrate on the 2 "T"s

TELLING YOUR STORY (TESTIMONY)

- "Testimony" defined- An example of something God has done in your life. This is your story. You may have hundreds of them.

- List some of the things you have seen God do in your life, like a change He has brought about, or an answered prayer, or a restored relationship, etc. ...
- List here:

- Choose one experience from this list and tell that story to your partner...
- End your story with something about having a relationship with God and knowing for sure you have eternal life.
- Now ask your friend, "May I ask you a couple of questions? (Wait for response) Have you come to the place in your thinking"...ask the 2 diagnostic questions below.

USING THE TWO DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS

- The two Diagnostic Questions are quite remarkable. They are worded so that it is difficult for a genuine believer to give the wrong answer, and equally as difficult for a non-believer to answer correctly.
- The medical field is a good analogy. A doctor interprets information and makes a diagnosis by understanding, interpreting, and confirming. With a person's answers to EE's Diagnostic Questions, we can "diagnose" their spiritual condition.

DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION #1

"Have you come to the place in your thinking where you know for sure if you died today in an accident, (and we sure hope that doesn't happen), that you have eternal life?"

DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION #2

"If you stood before God and He said to you, (use the contact's name here) 'Why should I let you into My Heaven?' What would you say?"

The answer to the second question tells you the basis of their belief, so their exact words are important.

REPEAT AND CONFIRM THEIR ANSWER TO QUESTION #2

- Sometimes their answer will be unclear; therefore make sure you understand what they are saying:
- Repeat their exact answer back to them to confirm that you heard and understand them: "You would say, `God, you should let me into your Heaven because . . .'" and then gently ask, "Is this what you would say?"
- If you're not sure what they mean, ask them to explain it.
- The answers must be **understood, interpreted and confirmed.**

INTERPRETING THE ANSWERS TO THE DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS

- By interpreting their answer it helps fit the Gospel to their needs.
- There are only four possible responses to the two Diagnostic Questions:

QUESTION 1	QUESTION 2	DIAGNOSIS
1. Yes	Trust Christ	Probe: Be sure it is not a head belief. Present Gospel if they are interested
2. No	Trust Self	Present Gospel
3. No	Trust Christ	Lacks assurance Present Gospel Pray for assurance
4. Yes	Trust Self	Trusting works Emphasize we can't save ourselves. Present Gospel

- Like a doctor, we don't want to get the diagnosis wrong...

ASK FOR PERMISSION TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

"May I share with you how I know for sure I have eternal life?"

TWO THINGS WE NEVER DO OR SAY:

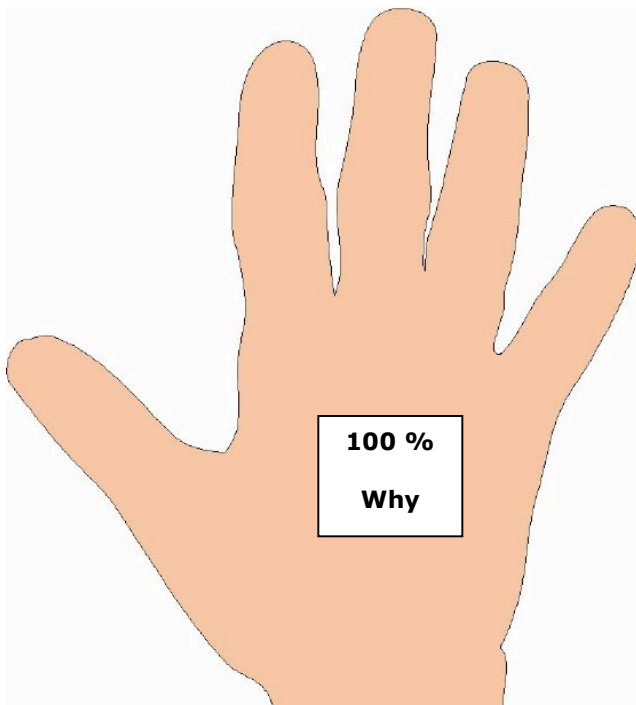
- Never start sharing the Gospel until you are given permission.
- Never say: "Would you like for me to TELL YOU how you can know this?"

MAKING A SMOOTH TRANSITION FROM THE INTRODUCTION INTO THE GOSPEL

TRANSITION: *"Great! I'm so glad I learned that....."*

- Memorize the transitional statement from the Introduction to the Gospel, but keep in mind that it should ultimately be said in a way that feels natural for you.
- Practice in teams of two, asking the diagnostic questions and asking permission to share the Gospel.

Add the memory pegs to the back of your hand.



1st Question: 100 %

2nd Question: Why

In pairs, practice sharing the 2 Diagnostic Questions and asking permission to share the Gospel, with each other.

Session 3 - LANDING

Commitment

(45 minutes, then OJT)

Review Flight Diagram

Remember the analogy about taking an airplane flight? (Page 36) If the “take off” is the introduction to the Gospel, then the “landing” is the conclusion to it, or the Commitment. This section goes FROM THE FACTS OF THE GOSPEL (Grace, Man, God, Christ, Faith) TO ACTUALLY LEADING A PERSON TO CHRIST.

Like landing a plane, it’s important to get it right! - What does it look like when we get it wrong?

Why are some witnesses afraid to ask for a commitment after the Gospel has been presented?

- Because they are not well prepared to do so.
- Because they don’t know if the Contact understands the Gospel, or if they have lost him/her somewhere along the way.
- Because they fear rejection.

THE COMMITMENT IN 5 EASY POINTS:

1. “Does this make sense to you?”

This is a key question because:

- You will know if the person understands the Gospel by their answer.
- Makes it easy to start into the commitment section.
- If the person answers “yes” you have the green light to proceed with the rest of the commitment.
- If “no,” pause. Be patient! Carefully go back through the Gospel, asking questions at each point.

Example:

Does it make sense that eternal life is a free gift?

Does it make sense that we have a worldwide problem called sin?

Is it clear that God is both loving and just?

Does it make sense that Christ is both God and man? (etc.)

Is it clear that faith is not just a head belief?

In this way, you will be able to pinpoint where it does not make sense to the person, and deal with it.

Never ask: "What does not make sense to you?" This may open doors for irrelevant discussion that will not benefit your contact's understanding or response. Also, it's likely that people will not be able to articulate exactly what they don't understand.

2. "Would you like to receive the gift of eternal life now?"

At this point, before asking a person to pray for eternal life, they need to say "yes," to this question.

Use these specific words because:

- You are coming out of the Gospel explanation on the same theme where you entered it — the theme of eternal life. The diagnostic question uses the term "eternal life."
- In the Introduction you asked, "May I share with you how I know for sure I have eternal life?"
- You don't want to cause confusion with unclear terms like, "Would you like to become a Christian?" Various definitions of the word "Christian" may bring disagreement.

Use these specific words

3. "If this is what you really want I can lead us in prayer and we can tell God what you just told me."

This is the invitation to receive Christ and eternal life.

- Memorize these specific words
- Many have declined an invitation to pray because of the way they were invited to pray.
- Your friend needs to know that you will help him/her pray.
- The person should understand that this needs to be the sincere desire of his/her heart. Remind them that God is more interested in the attitude of their hearts than just the words they say.

EXPLAIN HOW YOU WILL PRAY: Say something like, "Great, here's what we'll do. I will start and pray for you. After that I'll give you some words that you can repeat after me. Then I'll pray again, ok?" This leads to...

4. The Prayer Of Commitment

Three important parts of this prayer are:

Pray for them.

To understand, repent, and believe.

Pray with them. (Stop and say, "Ok, repeat after me")

- Pray short phrases with them, allowing them to repeat after you.
- Personalize bits of the Gospel outline: "Thank you for eternal life. I confess that I am sinful. I admit that I have been trusting in myself. But now I place my trust in you. . ."
- Pause and let them repeat aloud each phrase after you.

Pray for them. (For assurance)

- The first line of this part of the prayer should be longer than the phrases repeated by the Contact.
- The Contact is not expected to continue to pray aloud with you, and would be embarrassed by praying for himself/herself in the third person.

5. Two Diagnostic Questions Again: This time for assurance

"I would be interested to know, Bill, if you died today in an accident, do you believe NOW that you would have eternal life?"

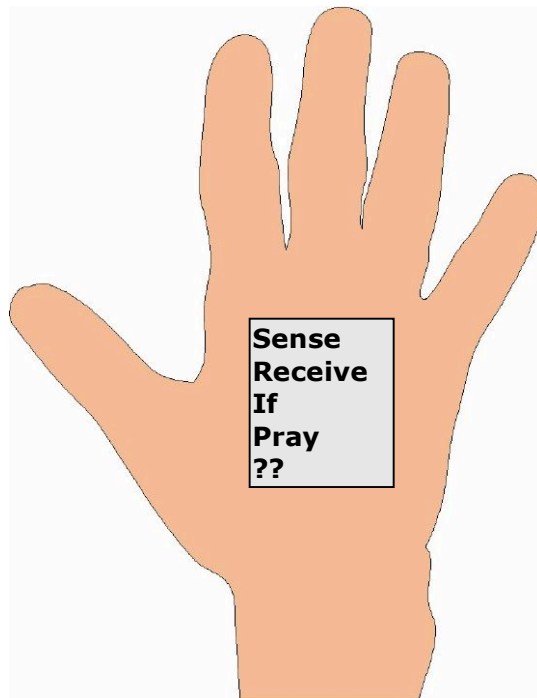
"And if God said to you 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' What would you say to Him NOW?"

- Don't be discouraged if they give the wrong answer. Sometimes it takes time and repetition for everything they have heard to register.
- If someone prays with you to receive Christ, make sure you get their contact information for follow-up with them.

Use the remaining time in groups of two practicing just the commitment section.

Place these memory pegs on the palm of your hand

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Does this make <u>sense</u> ? | Sense |
| 2. Would you like to <u>receive</u> ? | Receive |
| 3. <u>If</u> this is what you really want | If |
| 4. <u>Pray</u> for, with, for them | Pray |
| 5. Ask the 2 questions again | ?? |



Session 3 - Using the Shaded Sections

(45 minutes, then OJT)

At first you learned the fastest way of sharing the Gospel, like this:

May I share with you how I know for sure I have eternal life?

"What I wanted to share has five points. The first point is, eternal life is a free gift and we can't earn it, (then tell the Friend's Gift story.) The second point is, there's a worldwide problem, and we can't solve it (and so on, all the way through the Gospel)"

Then you started to learn one Scripture per Gospel section, and transitions to get you from one Gospel point to the other.

Now, to make your presentation flow, turn to the Gospel Presentation on page 29.

- Read through the "Grace" shaded section together. Then pair in two's and practice just that section together.
- Now read the shaded section on "Man" and again pair in two's and practice.
- Work through all five sections of the Gospel in this way.
- Once you've practiced all five sections separately, try practicing in pairs, the entire Gospel. Say the two sub-points and the shaded sections, leaving the stories out at this time. This will give you more time to practice the shaded sections.

Pay special attention to:

- Here is where you'll see exactly how the Scriptures fit.
- Here's also where you will ask dialogue questions for each section of the Gospel (not "Grace", since you will have just asked the 2 diagnostic questions.

Finally, read page 35 together, "Creating Multiple Entry Points When Sharing the Gospel"

Session 4 - Oral Check-Up

Normally we allow about 45 minutes for class session. Except for the first week, we never want to run longer than that, so we won't miss out on OJT time.

Get in pairs, and listen to each other recite the entire Gospel presentation. This should be given conversationally. Just give SCOTT in outline form. Then begin conversationally with the two diagnostic questions. End with the Commitment section. Include all points of the outline, including all Scriptures, stories and transitions.

Xerox copies of page **40** to use for the Check-Up.

Grading the Oral Presentation

- ✓ If they say the part of the presentation correctly and without hesitation
 - X If they pause a long time, or if they say it, but not in the correct order
- If they omit the point altogether, leave the box empty

✓ equals 1 point
X ½ point

To pass, you must get at least 30 points. Notice that the lighter shaded sections are the Transitions and Scriptures and the darker shaded sections are additional points, dialogue questions, etc.

When you're finished, add up the "checks" and the "X"s (½ point) and write that total at the top of the test.

For more reading:

On the Youth EE web site (www.youthee.org) there is a section called "Training Resources". To get to that part of the web site, you will need a User Name and Password. Your Youth Leader will supply this. You will find a whole list of good articles. Feel free to access any of them.

Gospel Stories (Transitions Are Underlined)

Important Tip when using stories: Stories from everyday life make the truths of the Gospel clearer. But sharing a story without an explanation of its spiritual meaning can be confusing or even boring. Therefore you must explain the meaning of the story. Here's a surefire way of remembering to explain the story. At the end of each story say, **"And in the same way."** As long as you say that, you'll never forget to explain the meaning of the story.

Friend's Gift: (In the Grace section)

Suppose my best friend surprised me with an expensive car. If I immediately dug into my pocket for a couple of dollars to help pay for it, what an insult that would be! Gifts are free. If even a dollar is paid, it's no longer a gift. *AND IN THE SAME WAY, WE CAN'T EARN ETERNAL LIFE BY PAYING FOR IT BECAUSE GOD GIVES IT TO US FOR FREE. So, why can't we earn eternal life?*

Egg: (In the Man section)

What if I were to make you an omelet? I take out six eggs. I break open the first five and they are fine. But when I open the sixth egg, ugh! It's smelly, green and very rotten. Would you want to eat the omelet, even though five of the six eggs are fine? *AND IN THE SAME WAY, ALTHOUGH MUCH OF OUR LIVES ARE FINE, EVEN A LITTLE BIT OF SIN MAKES OUR LIVES UNACCEPTABLE TO GOD. There has to be a different way...God's way.*

Garcia: (In the God section)

Suppose there was a man named Garcia who lived in a communist country. He was the leader of a group of people who were trying to overthrow the dictator. They kept their families with them. One night Garcia's lieutenant came and told him that someone had broken into the supply tent and had stolen some food. Garcia was outraged because food was in short supply and had to be rationed. He told all the families that from then on, anyone caught stealing food would be publicly whipped.

Not long after that, Garcia's lieutenant told him that more food had been stolen. Not only had the thief been caught, but it was also his own mother! Talk about a predicament! If Garcia

whipped his elderly mother, she would probably die. But if he did not punish her, he would lose the authority and respect of everyone as their leader.

As everyone assembled in the main tent, word passed quickly about Garcia's mother, and everyone wondered what he would do. Garcia pronounced the crime and the punishment. Then he did something that shocked everyone. He removed the shirt from his own back and ordered his lieutenant to whip him instead of his mother! You see, only in this way was **Garcia's justice upheld**. At the same time, **his love for his mother was proven**. The penalty was paid, but it was paid by Garcia himself.

AND IN THE SAME WAY, WE ARE LIKE GARCIA'S MOTHER AND GARCIA IS LIKE GOD. IN A SIMILAR ACT GOD SHOWED HIS LOVE FOR US, AND UPHELD HIS OWN STANDARD OF JUSTICE. How did He do this? God solved our problem in the person of Jesus Christ.

Record Book of Sin: (In the Christ section)

Let's imagine that this book contains every sin I've ever committed. Each page details the sin of a particular day: every bad word I have spoken, every dirty thought that ever crossed my mind, every wrong deed I've ever done. Here then (hold up the book) is the problem: my sin. (Place the book on the left hand, which represents me) Let this hand represent God. (Hold right hand up high) God loves me, (point to the hand under the book) but He hates my sin. (point to the book on top of the hand) He doesn't want to punish me, (point to the hand under the book) but He must punish my sin. (point to the book) (Go back to holding right hand up high) My sin has made a separation between God and me. There were times I tried to take care of this problem. I would try and turn my life around. (with other hand, turn book around) Sometimes I might try and turn over a new leaf. (Turn book over) But the problem is still there. No matter what I do I'll never be good enough to earn eternal life. In fact, if anything, it only seems like I get farther away from Him. (Each time you finish with your right hand, go back to holding it up high.)

In the person of Christ, God did what I couldn't do. He sent His Son into the world. (Bring down right hand and place parallel to the one holding the book. Look at the book and say) The Bible says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the sin of us all." (**Isaiah 53:6**) (As the words "laid on him" are spoken,

transfer the book from the left hand to the right and leave it there, making sure you are looking at the book you are transferring) All my sin has been placed on His Son. When Christ had paid for the last sin, He said, "It is finished." (At this point place the book down or on your lap)

After dying on the cross, He was buried and remained in the grave for three days. Then He rose from the dead and went to Heaven to prepare a place for you and me. Now He offers Heaven and eternal life to you and me as a gift, and now I am free to have a personal relationship with God. (At this point take the right hand representing God and clasp it with the left hand representing you) Does everyone receive this gift? No. This gift is received by faith.

The Boat Story: (In the Faith section)

Tip: Try telling the story with you having made the boat.

Suppose I went out into the ocean in a small boat. It's a beautiful day and I drift miles out to sea. Somehow my boat springs a leak and sinks! All of a sudden I find myself miles from shore, keeping afloat only with the help of a piece of wood from the boat. No matter how hard I try, the distance to shore is too far for me to swim. I tread water as long as I can, but by my own efforts I can't get to shore. Suddenly, a boat appears alongside of me. The captain of the boat sees my problem and throws me a life preserver. I have to make a decision. Do I let go of the piece of wood and grab the life preserver, or do I just continue holding on to the piece of wood and keep trying to swim to shore by my own efforts? What's the only reasonable thing for me to do? (Response) That's right! I let go of the wood and grab the life preserver.

AND IN THE SAME WAY, I WAS DOING THE BEST I COULD, HOLDING ON TO THINGS I THOUGHT WOULD GET ME TO ETERNAL LIFE. I WASN'T HURTING ANYONE, BUT I COULDN'T MAKE IT BY MY OWN EFFORTS ANY MORE THAN I COULD HOPE TO SWIM TO SHORE. GOD (THE CAPTAIN) HAS THROWN US HIS "LIFE PRESERVER", (JESUS CHRIST), AND GRABBING ONTO HIM IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE. WE MUST TRUST IN HIM. JESUS SAID, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME" (John 14:6)

The following three pages are designed to be hand outs, for the purpose of learning the Take Off, The Flight, and The Landing.

The Take Off

SCOTT

Sharing your story

Asking the two Diagnostic Questions

Asking permission.."May I share with you how I know for sure I have eternal life?"

Transition: Great! I'm so glad I learned that (eternal life is a free gift)

The Flight

THE GOSPEL

GRACE

1. Eternal life is a free gift
2. We can't earn it Friend's Gift Eph. 2:9

Transition: So, why can't we earn eternal life?

MAN

1. There's a worldwide problem
2. We can't solve it Egg Matt. 5:48

Transition: There must be a different way...God's way.

GOD

1. God is loving
2. God is Just Garcia Exodus 34:7b

Transition: God solved our problem in the person of Jesus Christ

CHRIST

1. Christ is both God and man
2. He died, rose, paid Record Book Isa. 53:6

Transition: This gift is received by faith

FAITH

1. Faith is not just a head belief
2. Faith is trusting in Christ alone Boat John 14:6

The Landing

COMMITMENT in 5 Easy Steps

1

Does this make sense to you?

2

Would you like to receive the gift of eternal life now?

3

If this is what you really want, I can lead us in prayer and we can tell God what you just told me.

4

Pray for them to understand, repent and believe, pray with them, short bits of the Gospel, pray for them again, for assurance.

5

Ask the 2 diagnostic questions again

Quick Start Conversational Presentation

Bold indicates points of the Gospel presentation. You do not say the heading itself, but it's there to remind you where you are in the presentation. Scripture references are in **bold**. The shaded areas represent additional statements you can make as you get comfortable with the presentation. This will make these points clearer.

INTRODUCTION

We will begin with a brief testimony. Here, just tell a brief "God Story", i.e., something the Lord has been doing in your life recently. End with... "The greatest thing about all of this is that I know for sure I have eternal life."

May I ask you a couple of questions? (Response)

Two Diagnostic Questions

Question 1:

Have you come to the place in your thinking where you know for sure if you died today in an accident, (and we sure hope that doesn't happen) that you have eternal life? (Response)

Question 2:

If you stood before God and He said to you, (be sure to use the contact's name here) "Why should I let you into My Heaven?" What would you say? (Response)

Repeat and confirm answer

Thanks for your answer. Let me be sure I understand what you would say to God. You would say . . . (Sum up and repeat just as nearly as possible his/her exact response to Question 2, and gently ask) Is that what you would say?

May I share with you how I know for sure I have eternal life?

Transition

Great! I'm so glad I learned that . . .

GRACE

1. Eternal life is a free gift. It's hard to understand how something can be totally free with no strings attached. Eternal life is like that. It's free.
2. We can't earn it. God says, "It isn't something you have earned, so there's nothing you can brag about." **(Eph 2:9)**

Friend's Gift story

Suppose my best friend surprised me with an expensive car. If I immediately dug into my pocket for a couple of dollars to help pay for it, what an insult that would be! Gifts are free. If even a dollar is paid, it's no longer a gift. *And in the same way*, we can't earn eternal life by paying for it because God gives it to us for free.

Transition

So, why can't we earn eternal life?

MAN

1. There's a worldwide problem. If we were to take a look around us, we would see that there are some major problems in the world and even in us. ("Funnel effect" here, i.e. start with examples from the world, move towards our country/city, and then more personal) "What do you think sin is?"
2. We can't solve it. Have you ever wondered how good you would have to be to "make it" to Heaven? I was amazed when someone told me that Jesus said, "Be perfect, even as your heavenly father is perfect." **(Matthew 5:48)** I don't know about you, but there's no way I can make it if I have to be perfect.

Egg Story:

What if I were to make you an omelet? I take out six eggs. I break open the first five and they are fine. But when I open the sixth egg, ugh! It's smelly, green and very rotten. Would you want to eat the omelet, even though five of the six eggs are fine? *And in the same way*, although much of our lives are fine, even a little bit of sin makes our lives unacceptable to God.

Transition

There must be a different way . . . God's way

GOD (If God exists) What do you think He's like?

1. God is Loving. One of the things we hope is true is that if there's a God, He is loving. In fact, the Bible says, "God is Love". He is loving and doesn't want to punish us, but...

2. God is Just. The same Bible also tells us that God is just and must punish sin. God says, "He will not leave the guilty unpunished" **(Exodus 34:7b)** Can God be both loving and just at the same time? Sounds impossible, but...

Garcia story

Suppose there was a man named Garcia who lived in a communist country. He was the leader of a group of people who were trying to overthrow the dictator. They kept their families with them. One night Garcia's lieutenant came and told him that someone had broken into the supply tent and had stolen some food. Garcia was outraged because food was in short supply and had to be rationed. He told all the families that from then on, anyone caught stealing food would be publicly whipped.

Not long after that, Garcia's lieutenant told him that more food had been stolen. Not only had the thief been caught, but it was also his own mother! Talk about a predicament! If Garcia whipped his elderly mother, she would probably die. But if he did not punish her, he would lose the authority and respect of everyone as their leader.

As everyone assembled in the main tent, word passed quickly about Garcia's mother, and everyone wondered what he would do. Garcia pronounced the crime and the punishment. Then he did something that shocked everyone. He removed the shirt from his own back and ordered his lieutenant to whip him instead of his mother! You see, only in this way was Garcia's justice upheld. At the same time, his love for his mother was proven. The penalty was paid, but it was paid by Garcia himself.

And in the same way, we are like Garcia's mother and Garcia is like God. In a similar act God showed His love for us, and upheld His own standard of justice. How did He do this?

Transition

God solved our problem in the person of Jesus Christ.

Dialogue: Who would you say Jesus is?"

CHRIST

1. Christ is both God and man. Anyone who wants to know what God is like should check out the life of Jesus Christ.
2. He died on the cross, rose from the dead, and paid the penalty for our sins.

Record Book of Sin story

Let's imagine that this book contains every sin I've ever committed. Each page details the sin of a particular day: every bad word I have spoken, every dirty thought that ever crossed my mind, every wrong deed I've ever done. Here then (hold up the book) is the problem: my sin. (Place the book on the left hand, which represents me) Let this hand represent God. (Hold right hand up high) God loves me, (point to the hand under the book) but He hates my sin. (point to the book on top of the hand) He doesn't want to punish me, (point to the hand under the book) but He must punish my sin. (point to the book) (Go back to holding right hand up high) My sin has made a separation between God and me. There were times I tried to take care of this problem. I would try and turn my life around. (with other hand, turn book around) Sometimes I might try and turn over a new leaf. (turn book over) But the problem is still there. No matter what I do I'll never be good enough to earn eternal life. In fact, if anything, it only seems like I get farther away from Him. (Each time you finish with your right hand, go back to holding it up high.)

In the person of Christ, God did what I couldn't do. He sent His Son into the world. (bring down right hand and place parallel to the one holding the book. Look at the book and say) The Bible says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the sin of us all." (**Isaiah 53:6**) (As the words "laid on him" are spoken, transfer the book from the left hand to the right and leave it there, making sure you are looking at the book you are transferring) All my sin has been placed on His Son. When Christ had paid for the last sin, He said, "It is finished." (At this point place the book down or on your lap) After dying on the cross, He

was buried and remained in the grave for three days. Then He rose from the dead and went to Heaven to prepare a place for you and me. Now He offers Heaven and eternal life to you and me as a gift, and now I am free to have a personal relationship with God. (At this point take the right hand representing God and clasp it with the left hand representing you) Does everyone receive this gift? No.

Transition

This gift is received by faith!

FAITH Do you think Faith is important? (Why?)

1. Faith is not just a head belief. We'll never get to Heaven simply because we know about Jesus Christ, or because we agree with what the Bible says about Him.
2. Faith is trusting in Christ alone

Boat Story

Suppose I went out into the ocean in a small boat. It's a beautiful day and I drift miles out to sea. Somehow my boat springs a leak and sinks! All of a sudden I find myself miles from shore, keeping afloat only with the help of a piece of wood from the boat. No matter how hard I try, the distance to shore is too far for me to swim. I tread water as long as I can, but by my own efforts I can't get to shore. Suddenly, a boat appears alongside of me. The captain of the boat sees my problem and throws me a life preserver. I have to make a decision. Do I let go of the piece of wood and grab the life preserver, or do I just continue holding on to the piece of wood and keep trying to swim to shore by my own efforts? What's the only reasonable thing for me to do? (Response) That's right! I let go of the wood and grab the life preserver.

And in the same way, I was doing the best I could, holding on to things I thought would get me to eternal life. I wasn't hurting anyone, but I couldn't make it by my own efforts any more than I could hope to swim to shore. God (the Captain) has thrown us His "Life Preserver," (Jesus Christ) and grabbing onto Him is the only way we can receive eternal life. We must trust in Him. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me" (John 14:6)

COMMITMENT

First Question

Does this make sense to you?

Second Question

Would you like to receive the gift of eternal life now? (Response)

Prayer of Commitment

If this is what you really want, I can lead us in prayer, and we can tell God what you just told me. (Response)

Pray for them. "Father, I ask you to give Bill understanding, and faith to believe in Your Son, Jesus Christ. Enable him to receive Christ as his Savior, to repent of his sins, and to give You control of his life.

Pray with them, bits of the Gospel personalized. Now, Bill, repeat this part of the prayer after me: "Dear God/Thank you that eternal life is a free gift/I know I've sinned and can't earn it/Thank you that you're a loving God/I know you are just and must punish sin/but I thank you for Christ who died for me/by faith I now transfer my trust to You/and receive the gift of eternal life."

Pray for them, for assurance. Father, thank You for hearing Bill's prayer. I also thank You for giving him eternal life and I ask You to give him assurance that he has eternal life, and that his sins are forgiven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Ask two diagnostic questions again

I would be interested to know, Bill, if you died today in an accident, do you believe NOW that you would have eternal life? (Response) That's great! And if God were to ask you, "Why should I let you into My Heaven?" what would you say to Him NOW?

Creating Multiple Entry Points When Sharing The Gospel

Once you have learned the Youth EE Gospel presentation, the whole point is to be able to use it at anytime and in any situation. OJT is actually “a means to an end,” the “end” being that you may “Give a reason for the hope that you have.” (I Peter 3:15)

When learning Youth EE the opportunities to share are generally limited to OJT. We can get into the Gospel with tools like **SCOTT, Testimony** and the **Diagnostic Questions**. But in a discussion with a friend there are other ways to get into the Gospel. You can look for ways by keeping in mind that **you can have...**

Multiple Entry Points

What do we mean by that? Simple. Just think in terms of the five points of the Gospel. **Grace, Man, God, Christ and Faith.** You may find that a discussion will have elements of one of these topics. For example, maybe you're talking with a friend about some current topic, like a movie you've seen recently. In that movie there was a scene about how messed up someone's life had been. As the discussion moves along, begin thinking about where in the Gospel does a “messed up life” fit in? **Man!**

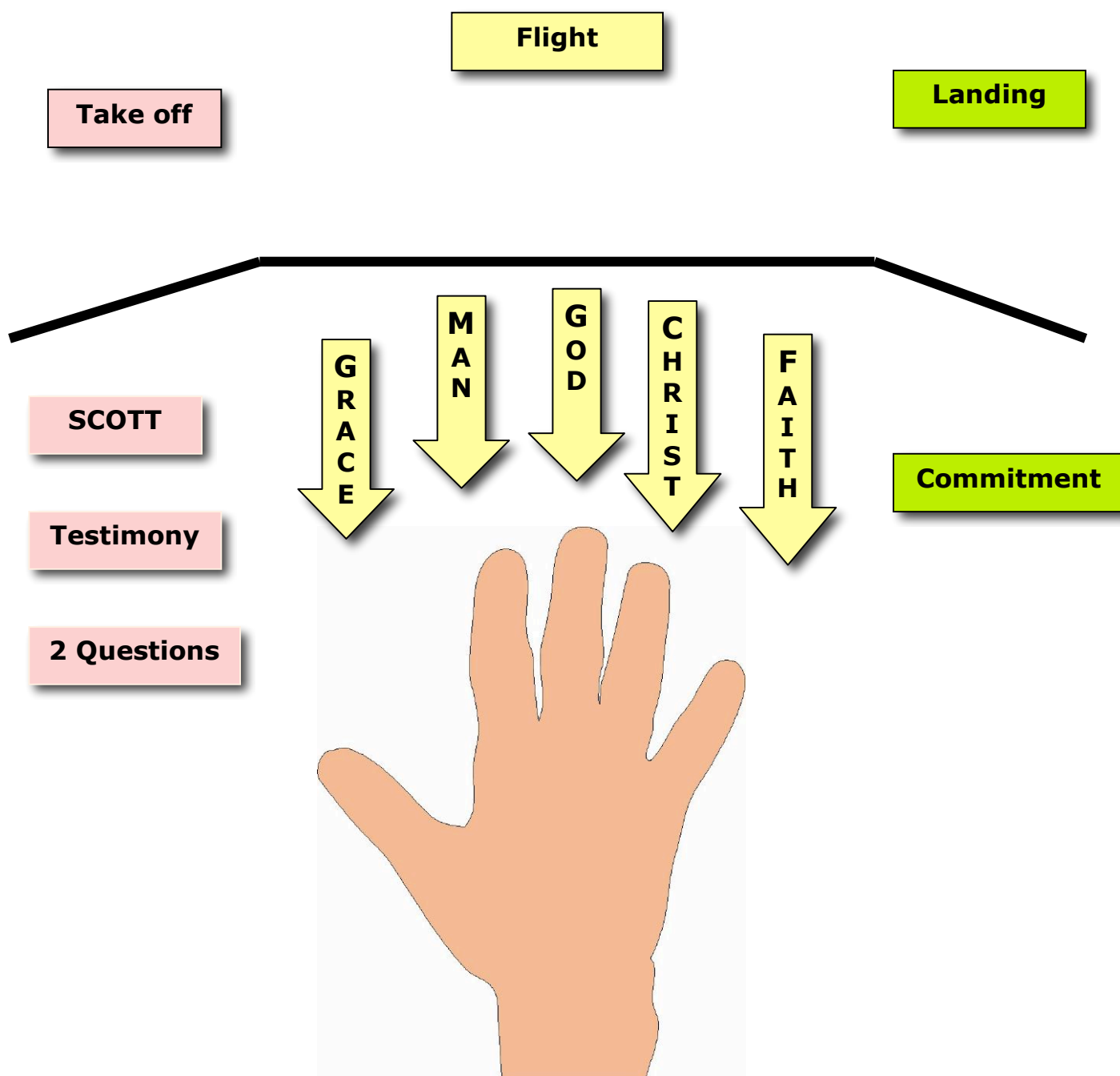
Instead of thinking in terms of the diagnostic questions, think about how you can begin sharing the idea of sin in the world. You may not even use the word “sin” right away. But if you get into some good discussion about it, try to start sharing some of the “Man” section of the Gospel.

If you find that you have a friend's attention at this point, then you can work back to the introduction of the Gospel with the two diagnostic questions, or even simply say something like, “May I share with you what I've learned about this?” and start with Grace.

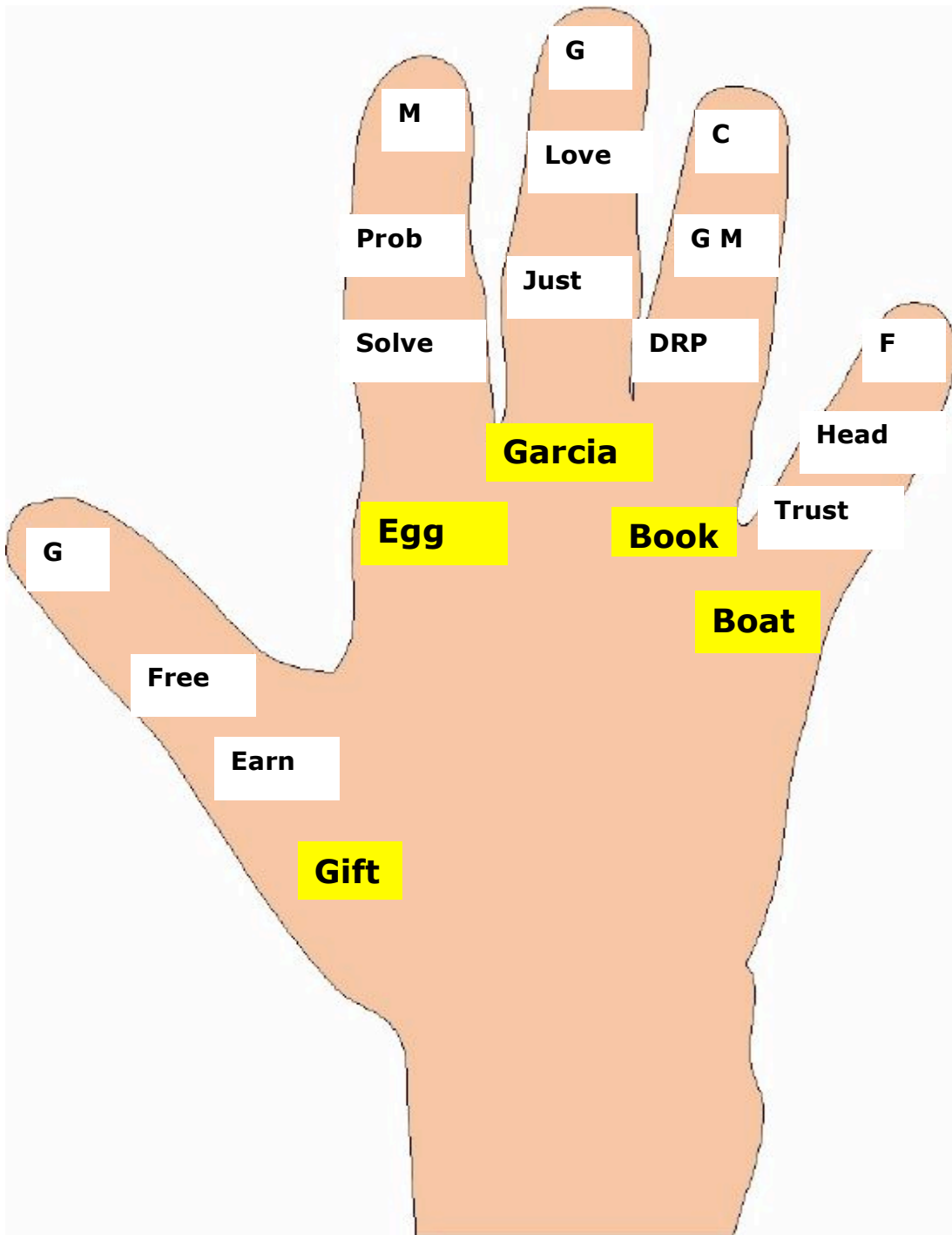
The sequence of the Gospel presentation is important, for sure. Once you've begun to share the Gospel, always try to share in that sequence, but don't let the sequence “tie your hands” when it comes to looking for an entrance. Think in terms of what the discussion is about at the moment, and where it might fit into any part of the outline.

This is another way of adapting what you've learned into real life situations.

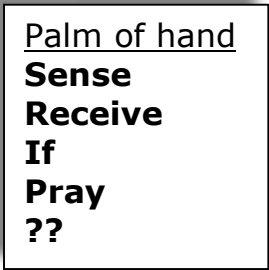
GOSPEL...LIKE AN AIRPLANE FLIGHT



ADDING STORIES TO THE HAND



THE HAND WITH EVERYTHING ADDED



S. C. O. T. T.

GRACE

1. Eternal life is a free gift
2. We can't earn it

Friend's Gift

Eph. 2:9

C O M M I T M E N T

Transition: So, why can't we earn eternal life?

1. There's a worldwide problem
2. We can't solve it

MAN

Egg

Matt. 5:48

Transition: There must be a completely different way...God's way.

1. God is loving
2. God is just

GOD

Garcia

Ex. 34:7b

Transition: God solved this problem in the person of Jesus Christ

1. Christ is both God and man
2. He died, rose, paid

CHRIST

Record Book

Isa. 53:6

Transition: This gift is received by faith

1. Faith is not just a head belief
2. Faith is trusting in Christ alone

FAITH

Boat

John 14:6

T E S T I M O N Y

2 Q U E S T I O N S

QUICK START ORAL PRESENTATION CHECK-UP

TAKE OFF

- ☐ **S** Secular Life
- ☐ **C** Church Background
- ☐ **O** Our Youth Ministry
- ☐ **T** Testimony: May I ask...?
- ☐ **T** Two Questions
- ☐ Question 1
- ☐ Question 2
- ☐ May I share with you...?

- ☐ Transition: Great! I'm so glad I learned that... (or, "There are 5 parts")

FLIGHT (THE GOSPEL)

(GRACE)

- ☐ 1. Eternal life is a free gift
- ☐ Hard to imagine something with no strings attached
- ☐ 2. We can't earn it

- ☐ "It isn't something you have earned ..." Ephesians 2: 9
- ☐ Friend's Gift Story

- ☐ Transition: So, why can't we earn eternal life? (or, "Part 2 is...")

(MAN)

- ☐ 1. There's a worldwide problem
- ☐ Funnel effect
- ☐ What do you think sin is?

- ☐ 2. We can't solve it

- ☐ Have you ever wondered...?
- ☐ "Be perfect therefore..."
Matt 5:48

- ☐ Egg Story
- ☐ Transition: There must be a completely different way... God's way, (or, "Part 3 is...")

(GOD)

- ☐ (If God exists) what..think...like?
- ☐ 1. God is loving
- ☐ Bible says "God is love" and doesn't want to punish us

- ☐ 2. God is just

- ☐ God is also just and must punish sin. God says, "He does not leave the guilty unpunished."
Exodus 34:7b

- ☐ Garcia Story

- ☐ Transition: God solved this problem in the Person of Jesus Christ, (or, "Part 4 is...")

(CHRIST)

- ☐ Who would you say Jesus is?
(Anyone who wants to know what God is like...)

- ☐ 1. Christ is both God and Man

- ☐ 2. He...died...rose...paid...

- ☐ Record Book Story
- ☐ "We all like sheep have gone astray.." Isaiah 53:6

- ☐ Transition: This gift is received by faith., (or, "Part 5 is...")

(FAITH)

- ☐ Do you think faith is...? (Why?)
- ☐ 1. Faith is not just a head belief
- ☐ Never get to Heaven by just knowing about Him

- ☐ 2. Faith is trusting in Christ alone

- ☐ The Boat Story

- ☐ "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life..." John 14:6

LANDING

COMMITMENT in 5 Easy Steps

- ☐ 1. Does this make sense to you?
- ☐ 2. Would you like to receive the gift of eternal life now?
- ☐ 3. If this is what you really want, I can lead us in prayer and we can tell God what you just told me
- ☐ 4. Pray for them, with them, for them again
- ☐ 5. Ask the 2 diagnostic questions again, for assurance

DIRECTIONS: The Trainee #1 checks off the list as the Trainee #2 shares the presentation. To get a "C", you must get at least 30 of the 34 points that are not shaded. To get a "B" you must additionally get the lighter shaded parts (Transitions and Scriptures) and to get an "A" you must get all of the above, plus the darker shaded sections. "S.C. and O." under S.C.O.T.T. can just be said in outline form. From there, speak conversationally until the end.

APPENDIX F. PERSONAL EVANGELISM - MINISTRY PAPERS



personal evangelism

the MINISTRY PAPERS

on a mission...

Jesus commanded his disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” [Matthew 28:19-20].

This ‘Great Commission’ sets out two goals for a church: to REACH people for Christ; and to TEACH them to follow him. These are the two key important goals of ‘evangelism’ (proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers) and ‘edification’ (teaching believers to live the gospel). Many church mission statements capture these two key goals, for example, “know Christ and make him known” or “present Christ to everyone, present everyone mature in Christ”.

on a pathway...

Mission statements can be very useful in stating goals but on their own can be a bit *static*. The notion of a pathway that people step along can be a more *dynamic* way of thinking to fill out the picture. It’s worth considering the pathway that people generally take as they move from not knowing Christ to being a mature follower of Christ.

The three simple words ‘connect’, ‘grow’, ‘serve’ can be very helpful for this pathway way of thinking. People need to **connect** to God through trusting in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to connect to a Christ-focussed church family. A key way to **grow** is through a bible study growth group. A key way to **serve** is through a ministry team. There’s a lot more that can be said than that, of course, but it’s a useful summary of the pathway to maturity in Christ.

One key focus of our growth groups is personal evangelism. Through growth groups we can get equipped, encourage each other, pray for each other and keep each other accountable in the area of personal evangelism.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: ‘the ministry training church’ and ‘meeting one to one’.

Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team.

This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your growth group leader encourage you to make the most of every opportunity to proclaim Christ.



read **Luke 24:13-27; 44-49**

1. What events have just taken place in Jerusalem?

2. What events does Jesus say the entire Old Testament pointed to (verses 26-27, 44-47)?

3. What events are the apostles witnesses to?

4. As a result, what message were they to preach?



5. Why is it important to see that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the focus of the whole Bible?

6. Why is proclaiming Jesus’ death and resurrection at the heart of following Jesus?



In your context, what opportunities are there to proclaim Christ?

-
-
-

know the gospel

The great event of his death and resurrection is the focus of the whole Bible. Everything that came before this event, pointed forward to it. And we who live after this event, are to proclaim it. Everyone's real problem is their rejection of God. The only solution is God's forgiveness through the death and resurrection of his Son. As Christians, this message demands not only our belief... it demands our witness! As 1 Peter 3:15 says, we need to "always be ready to speak of the hope we have in Christ".



Try working through the 'Two Ways to Live Bible Study'. When you're finished, use the boxes below to put into your own words each of the six points covered in the gospel outline. Go over it a few times until you can do it from memory.

1 God the loving ruler and creator Revelation 4:11

2 Humanity in rebellion Romans 3:10-12

3 God won't let people keep on rebelling forever Hebrews 9:27

4 Jesus, the man who dies for rebels 1 Peter 3:18

5 Jesus, the risen ruler Philippians 2:9-11

6 The Two Ways to Live John 3:36

"I don't know what to say..."

Knowing what to say comes down to being prepared: knowing the gospel. But even when we're clear in our heads what the gospel is – it's not always easy to put it into words when the opportunity arrives!...

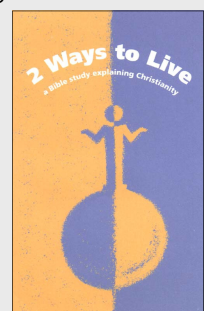
That's where gospel outlines like 'Two Ways to Live' are useful tools. It summarises the whole Bible message really well. It captures the Bible's focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus. It also leads to a clear statement of the choice people have to make in response to the gospel.

It's really worth your while getting to know an outline like this. You can put it into your own words and adapt the way you use it from person to person or situation to situation. But the great benefit it gives you is a few clear steps in your head that you can work through – and know that you've covered the essential points of the gospel.

The Bible Study format of 'Two Ways to Live' (pictured below – available from Matthias Media) is great to take people through. It has a few basic questions and takes only about half an hour to work through with someone.

Of course, there are some other good gospel outlines around you might prefer to use. In the end, these things are

only tools. But choose your tools well – make sure any outline you use has its focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus.





tell the gospel

I hate aerobics. There's a big difference between aerobics and soccer training, for example. The difference is this: Thursday night soccer training is put into practice on Saturday when you play the game. Aerobics, on the other hand, only leads to more aerobics... never ending practice! Learning gospel outlines must never be like aerobics: all sweat but no outworking. Evangelistic training must be preparation for the *real game*. As Christians, we must not only know the gospel, but tell the gospel. The passages below will help remind us why...

"I don't know when to say it ..."

Knowing when to share the gospel with someone is something many of us struggle with. We can be worried about rejection, or about seeming too pushy. However, while a few of us may err on the side of being too 'in your face', most of us err in the other direction! There are a few important things that can help us here:

- remember that sharing the gospel isn't doing something terrible to someone! Rather, it's doing them a favour, like giving them a gift – the greatest gift!
- try not to focus on your own fears but on the other person's needs – this is a message they need to hear.
- realise that most people are actually more willing to hear about Christ than we've guessed they might be.
- when you're getting to know someone, don't leave it too long to bring up your Christian faith. It can get harder to broach the subject the longer you leave it.
- often our conversations with friends about Jesus are very 'bits and pieces'. Ask them if they'd mind getting the 'big picture' - doing a short study like the Two Ways to Live Bible Study.
- remember that it's ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change someone's heart towards God. So speak with confidence knowing that their response doesn't rest on your cleverness.
- especially in the light of the previous point, above all PRAY. It's our job to speak, but God's job to save people!



read **Romans 10:10-15**

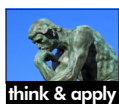
1. How is someone saved (verse 10)?

2. Who is this salvation for (verses 11-13)?

3. What is needed for people to have the opportunity to be saved (verses 14-15)?

4. Who played a key part in your salvation? How?

5. Could God use you in this way? Why/why not?



read **Colossians 4:2-6**

1. What does Paul want the Colossians to pray for (verses 2-3)?

2. Why is he concerned that his preaching be clear (verse 4)?

3. What does he mean by 'making the most of every opportunity' (verse 5)?

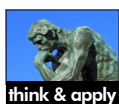
4. Why does he want our conversation to be dominated by grace (verse 6)?

5. What should fill our prayers in relation to non-Christians?

6. How can we make our message as clear as possible?

7. How can we make the most of every opportunity we have?

8. How can our conversation be dominated by God's grace?





keeping the main thing the main thing...

In this study we've seen how vital it is to share the gospel with others. This is something that needs to be part of every aspect of our lives. We need to think about making sure evangelism is a top priority in everything we do as a church family: our Sunday meetings, our growth groups, and our lives through the week. The main thing, the gospel message of the death and resurrection of Jesus, must always be the main thing!

idiot-proof church

In 1 Corinthians 14:23-25 Apostle Paul makes it clear that church meetings aren't just for Christians. He talks about the "unbeliever who does not understand" - who may come along to one of our meetings. In the Greek the word is 'idiotes', meaning unskilled, a layman. Paul is very concerned that the meeting be clear to this outsider: idiot-proof, so they may understand the gospel, turn and be saved. The gospel must always be clear and central to our meetings. But what else would we focus on anyway? After all, it's being reminded of the great gospel of Christ that encourages Christians as well - so everyone benefits from keeping the main thing, the main thing! We all grow in the same soil - gospel soil. We need to work hard at making sure our church meetings are user-friendly welcoming to outsiders: (clearly explaining things, avoiding jargon, etc). Our hard work in personal evangelism can be undone if church isn't inviting.

invest and invite

Speaking of inviting, remember that simply inviting people to outreach events or church any Sunday is a great way to put people in a situation where they'll hear the gospel. Although we should all be prepared to share the gospel ourselves, evangelism is also a team thing. If there's a gifted evangelist speaking at an event, invite your friend along. But remember, the likelihood of them accepting your invitation is often connected to how much you've invested in them: time, energy, genuine friendship. That means building relationships so you can "invest & invite". Have a look at the hospitality ministry paper for more thoughts on this.

words or actions?

Some people think that living a good Christian life is the same as telling someone the gospel. This is not true. But the two things are connected. We need to avoid two errors:

- 1. living but not speaking:** this won't save anyone. People will just think you're a nice person.
- 2. speaking but not living:** people might be saved but it will be despite you! More often than not you will do harm to their understanding of the gospel.

We need to do both things: live a good Christian life so that our life doesn't detract from the message; and also *tell* the Christian message. Think of your life as like a signpost: your ACTIONS are the signpost, pointing to Jesus and the fact that he is Lord of your life; your WORDS add writing on to the signpost. This means people can now actually see where your life is pointing - and why. Rather than leaving it to people to guess why your life is different, you need to tell them. So, words AND actions are needed - working together to point to Christ.

all of life

We need to make it our goal to be making friends for life. This means that in all our relationships, we allow *the greatest* relationship - the one we have with God through Christ - to have its influence. We want our friends to have this great relationship with God too! Most Christians know lots of non-Christians, but for a variety of reasons we've stopped seeing them as such. What we need to do is stop and think and pray - and try to make them more than just friends or acquaintances - we need to make them "Friends for Life"! We need to share with them the message of forgiveness through Jesus as clearly as possible. If we don't stop and think and pray like this ... it tends not to happen at all. Why not finish this study by talking and praying about who you can share the life-giving gospel of Christ with?

plan to share the gospel with someone this week... pray about it... do it...share with your growth group how you went...pray some more... do it...

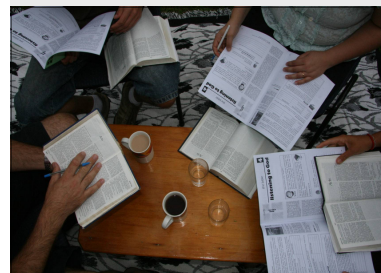
growth groups and accountability

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." **Heb 10:24-25**

The table below shows a number of key goals that our growth groups are aiming for as we seek to encourage each other. It's all about relationships. The growth group is a context in which we can be accountable for all the important relationships in our lives.

Evangelism is about the vital importance of our relationships with unbelievers. This needs to be kept on the top of the agenda in our growth groups. We need to regularly talk together about how we're going sharing the gospel. We need others to keep us accountable about how we're going at taking gospel opportunities. Most of all, we need to pray for each other in standing up for Jesus. Growth groups provide the opportunity to pray specifically in this way.

Our growth group meetings are not usually the best place for direct evangelism. But it's a good idea for your group to do social activities together that you can ask non-Christian friends along to. It's about relationships building other relationships... for the ultimate: a relationship with God.



a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the growth group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with **unbelievers**, especially through personal evangelism

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team

APPENDIX G. GIVING YOUR TESTIMONY - MINISTRY PAPERS



giving your testimony

the MINISTRY PAPERS

over a coffee... over the fence... over to you

You know the situation. It's a friend at work. It's the next door neighbour. It's any one of a number of people in your life. The opportunity comes. But often when you least expect it...

"So this whole Christianity and church thing... how did you end up being a Christian anyway?"

Gulp. "Er..."

What comes next? It's a great opportunity. In fact, you might have even prayed for an opportunity like this. But are you prepared for it?

The great news, of course, is that God uses us in our weakness. God delights in using weak vessels to serve his purposes. The God who used a weak and despised cross to bring salvation can certainly use even our stumbling efforts to spread that message of salvation. Before we go any further let's be sure to lock that in. Salvation is God's work, through us.

As we will see in 1 Peter 3, however, that doesn't mean we shouldn't *prepare* ourselves to take such opportunities. We are called to be prepared to explain why our hope is in Christ. We are called to be prepared to give testimony to the hope that is found in Christ alone. There are many good reasons to prepare the story of how God worked in your life to bring you to a saving knowledge of Jesus as your Saviour and Lord.

That's what this ministry paper is all about. We'll discuss what a testimony is, types of testimony, use of testimonies and walk through the process of putting one together. You might still gulp. But hopefully you'll be more prepared for what to say next...

LEADERS: before taking someone through this paper, review the 2 key intro MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team.

This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your growth group leader encourage you to make the most of every opportunity to give the reason for your hope in Christ by sharing your testimony.



read **1 Peter 3:13-18a**

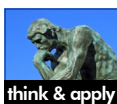
1. What/who are we tempted to fear (verse 14)?

2. How does remembering "Christ as Lord" (verse 15) change who we fear and whose opinion we're concerned about?

3. What sort of question does Peter expect Christians who live with Jesus as Lord to be asked regularly (verse 15)?

4. What should be a significant part of our answer (verse 18a)?

5. Do you consider yourself prepared to "give an answer"?



Before we go any further into the detail of what a testimony is and how to put one together, the assumption is that you have a testimony to tell—that you are a Christian. Is that the case? Write down in a sentence what you think it means to be a Christian.

not just for **unbelievers**

We have seen the importance of preparing a testimony for sharing with unbelievers about the hope found in Christ. But testimonies aren't just for sharing with unbelievers. They play just as important a role in spurring on other believers. It's always encouraging to hear God has worked in the lives of others. Testimonies remind us that God delights in using ordinary people like you and me to save others, and that he uses the one saving message in hundreds of different ways. Testimonies are great for encouraging each other to keep on with the gospel.



read **Hebrews 10:19-25**

1. What does verse 24 call us to consider?

2. What does verse 25 call us to do for each other?

3. What are all the things mentioned in the previous verses (19-23) that should form the basis of this spurring and encouraging?



4. How might preparing your testimony play a part in this ministry of encouragement to your brothers and sisters in Christ?

5. What does this passage remind us should be the focus of how Christians encourage each other?



what is a testimony?

At a "testimonial dinner", honour is given to the life and work of a significant person. A testimony is about giving honour to God pointing to the life and work of his Son as we tell the story of how we became a Christian.

Look at your answer in the previous 'ideas for discussion' on page 1. Did it point to Jesus and his death on the cross as both 1 Peter 3 and Hebrews 10 did?

EVERY testimony is spectacular...

When we run newcomers courses at church we invite any Christians attending to share their testimonies. It's always an encouraging time to hear how God has worked in different ways in different people's lives.

But sometimes we find that someone might reply, "oh, my testimony's pretty boring really... I just grew up in a Christian family ... learnt the Bible at church ... in fact I can't ever remember a time when I didn't know Jesus. I know my trust is in Jesus for salvation, but it's something that I just sort of grew up into".

Let's be clear: that's a GREAT testimony! That is a great work of God! Far from boring, it's a wonderful encouragement to Christian parents... and to Kids Church teachers and to all of us. It's a fantastic reminder that one of the ways God loves to bring people into his Kingdom is through families.

When Peter preached at Pentecost and invited people to turn to God "in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:28), he went on to say that "the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). Clearly, as we respond to the message of Christ, a huge part of this response is to share it with our children.

Of course, our children will have to accept or reject this message for themselves. But as Christian parents, we are given the great privilege and great responsibility to raise our children to know Jesus. And the least boring thing – the most exciting thing imaginable – would be to hear them say one day, "oh ... I grew up in a Christian family...".

Every testimony is spectacular!



it's all about Jesus

This page walks you through some principles for preparing a testimony. But let the most important one be stated up front: it's all about Jesus. While a testimony is your story, it's ultimately his story, especially of how he died to bring you forgiveness. You don't have to give a full gospel exposition but it's tragic to hear testimonies that fail to focus on Jesus and his death. Let's not forget that it's all about Jesus.

a sample testimony

BEFORE: I grew up in a church-going family & I went along to Sunday School until I was about 10 when my parents gave us the choice whether we wanted to go to church. It was a simple choice because church was boring and so that was it for me and church. But it wasn't quite it for me and God. Although my behaviour was getting further from his ways I couldn't shake a sneaking suspicion that he was *there*. Problem was, the God I thought was there was one that I thought was against me. If I could sum up my life before belonging to Jesus it'd be in the word "guilt".

AFTER: If I could describe my life now that I belong to Jesus it would be "free". I live with a sense of being set free from that guilt. I live with the knowledge that God is for me not against me. I live my life thankful for what he has done for me in Jesus.

That brings me to **WHAT BROUGHT THIS TURN AROUND:** It's definitely not that my behaviour has suddenly become perfect, far from it. No, the difference didn't come from *my* behaviour or something I managed to do. It came from hearing about the behaviour of someone else. I'm talking about Jesus. When I was about fifteen I was invited on a youth camp where I heard some talks on the "I am" statements of Jesus: I am the way the truth and the life; I am the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep; I am the resurrection and the life. It was amazing to be confronted with Jesus and his claims about himself and his claims on me. I learnt that God was angry with me, and yet that Jesus took that anger on himself at the cross, providing the way back to God—to be forgiven for running from God. It wasn't through my behaviour but Jesus' perfect life given in my place. That's an offer I couldn't refuse. And that's what changed my life.

how to give a testimony

A basic model for a testimony is like the 'Before and After' ads on TV. Paul talks this way in Ephesians 2:1-10: "*You were... but God... and now*". Paul tells their 'before' and 'after' story describing their lives before and after knowing Christ. And he keeps the focus on the thing that has made the difference: the gospel. It's a great 3-point pattern for a testimony:

1. Describe what life was like **before** you became a Christian.
2. Describe what life is like **now** you are a Christian.
3. Describe how the change came about: tell the **gospel**.

Notice that this model means you finish with the gospel. That's the real strength of it. The last thing you talk about, and therefore what you'll leave people thinking about, is the gospel of Jesus.

Maybe you can come up with a theme from your life that you can hang the gospel on e.g. the woman who was a citizen of two countries, had two weddings one in a Presbyterian church and one in a Greek Orthodox church, and who had two births: the physical one and the spiritual one.

don't

...be too long aim to get your testimony down to 3 minutes (that means 300 words for the average person—the example in the sidebar is 350)

...use jargon (have a go at the testimony jargon cart below)

...make yourself the main focus—it's a testimony to Jesus

do

...begin with a bang...and end with a bang

...keep it personal—remember it's a story not a sermon

testimony jargon chart			
try to think of another way of describing each of the following			
Sin		Christian	
Faith		Grace	
Justification		Saved	



making opportunities

We started this paper thinking about making the most of opportunities to talk about the hope found in Jesus. The problem is that often we don't see the opportunities right in front of us. All the things that make up our everyday conversations over a coffee or over the fence can be easily turned into gospel conversations. Below is an example to get you started...

video testimonies

We have seen that we all need to be prepared to give an answer for our hope in Christ, not fearing people but remembering that Jesus alone is our Lord and it's him we obey. We have also seen that testimonies can be a great encouragement to the church and we should be regularly spurring one another on with the stories of God's work in our lives, bringing us to forgiveness through Jesus.

Testimonies in our Sunday gatherings can be especially encouraging to the whole body. Problem is, if some of us are tempted to be fearful about the thought of sharing our testimony one-to-one, the thought of sharing it to a large group of people can be overwhelming.

This is where video testimonies can be so useful. At first the thought of being on camera might sound just as intimidating. But most people find that it's a different story once you give it a go. The opportunity to be able to have a few goes at it or do the testimony one section at a time takes a lot of pressure off.

We all have a testimony to tell but we don't all feel equally gifted at telling it. Editing video material enables a flowing and clear story to be told. It can have greater impact than something that's too drawn out, and the fear of freezing in front of the crowd is now only there for the tech guy! It's not that the goal is to be slick, but it helps everyone rejoice in the work of God when a clear flowing story is given. Give it a go!

Testimony Interview

Another option for a testimony in church is through an interview:

1. What were you like before you came to know Jesus?
2. What is life like now that you are a Christian?
3. What made the difference? Tell us how you came to know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?

"How about the price of petrol?"

Sorry to mention that. Or am I the only one sick of hearing about the price of petrol? And sick of *talking* about the price of petrol? And sick of endless speculation about the *future* price of petrol? "Not as sick as I am of paying for the stuff!", you might say. True. As an average tank approaches the \$100 mark, that hurts. And the shopping voucher hardly dents it at all.

We're funny creatures though. A lot of wealth has come into this country through the 'world resources boom'. No complaints there, right? But when that same boom (as I understand it, anyway) is a significant part of pushing up the blow at the bowser, the complaints gush forth. There's a strange part of us that somehow expects the world to become a better place, despite the evidence! Don't get me wrong. I'd love the prices to drop, not rise. Bring back the 43 cents per litre I paid when I was on my Ps in 1986! And I know for some families at SCPC, especially where work is tightly connected to fuel prices, the costs are far greater than just the tank for the family car. These events are very much hurting some financially.

But it is a vivid reminder about the fickle nature of this world. Indeed, the majority of people in this world are facing far greater hardship than fuel price hikes. And whoever we are on this planet, rich or poor, we all live in a world that is passing away. In 1 Corinthians in coming weeks, we'll hear Apostle Paul urging "those who use the things of this world", to live "as if not engrossed in them, for this world in its present form is passing away" (1 Corinthians 7:31). I wouldn't know if we're about to start exhausting the world's oil resources or if it's just political games. But I do know for certain that they won't last forever. This world IS passing away. And this whole world will then face something far more drastic than a nasty fuel bill - giving account to God for their response to his precious Son's death for us (Hebrews 9:27). You wouldn't want to have your trust in anything in this world, would you? But trust rather in the one who, by his death and resurrection, carries you to the new creation.

So, as much as it hurts to see that climbing price on the servo signage, perhaps direct that frustration into something useful: the desire to tell people about eternal salvation through Jesus beyond this groaning world.



now try writing an outline for your testimony...

Grab a piece of paper and start writing under these 3 headings:

1. Describe what life was like **before** you became a Christian.
2. Describe what life is like **now** you are a Christian.
3. Describe how the change came about: tell the **gospel**.

APPENDIX H. ONE TO ONE PRAYER AND BIBLE READING - MTS DISCUSSION PAPER

One-to-one Prayer and Bible Reading

By Colin Marshall

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The following is a true story. Last Friday, two friends met to read the Bible, pray and drink coffee, like they do every week for about an hour. They go to the same church and decided they needed some accountability in their lives as Christians. Last week they were up to Philippians chapter 2 in their reading programme. They read the chapter out loud, and then talked about its implications for their thinking and prayers. They are doing detailed Bible study in small groups so the focus of their time was on application and encouragement. From Philippians 2, they talked for a while about Jesus' priority of service over status and their struggles to help others when there is no recognition involved. They confessed their tendency to complain and argue, and the conversation moved to wider issues of status-seeking in the church. This gave them plenty to pray about and they concluded their prayers by remembering two missionary families. Next week they will read chapter 3.

So what?!

This doesn't exactly grab you as one of the great stand-out events of last Friday. Even within the Christian world, on a scale of 1 to 100, it doesn't rank more than a 0.01 in importance.

But think about the long term effects of meeting like this. The two friends will know the Bible better, pray regularly and deepen their friendship. They will encourage each other to deal with God and his Word with integrity. As they open their lives to each other before God's Word, they will spur one another on towards love and good deeds. (Heb 10:24-25). They will strengthen each other to resist sin and remain faithful to Christ. Factotum is designed to equip us as slaves of our Lord Jesus Christ. Each edition provides a new piece of equipment for ministry to others. This time we look at One-to-One Bible Reading and Prayer.

Why Do It?

At the core of all Christian ministry is Bible reading and prayer. We are united with Christ by hearing His Word and responding in faith and that is how we remain in Christ. We can never progress beyond these basics teaching each other the Word of God, calling upon each other to believe and repent, bringing our lives, our churches and the world before God in prayer.

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But we can do all this in three broad contexts: large groups, small groups and one-to-one. We choose different contexts on totally pragmatic grounds. There is a certain efficiency of gathering people together and various educational advantages in each context. However, all ministry is ultimately to individuals even when we are dealing with groups. Our concern is for the salvation and growth of each one.

So what are the benefits of reading the Bible and praying one-to-one? It is:

- Convenient- arranging to meet one Christian for one hour weekly is realistic even in the busiest lives. It's easy to get started with minimal organisation required.
- Personal- the discussion and prayers can address particular individual concerns. In groups it is impossible to deal with everyone's issues and questions.
- Accountable- meeting one-to-one is an ideal way of holding each other accountable to read and obey the Bible. It is hard to meet each week and pretend to be serious about submitting to Christ whilst playing around with secret sin. In our perversity this is not impossible, but it's hard to sustain the performance.
- Strategic- this is a basic ministry to master and will be useful in many contexts. Wherever we go in church life, we can find a Christian with whom we can read and pray. Sometimes at work we will find a Christian who would love to meet with us. In some ministry contexts, such as the military and educational institutions, it is almost impossible to gather Christians into groups and personal ministry is the only option. For some Christians, the only opportunity for fellowship is with individuals, due to family restrictions and persecution.

Why we Don't

If I had to hazard a guess as to how many Christians engage in one-to-one Bible reading and prayer, I would say less than 1%. I have no data on this, just a hunch. This seems strange if it is such a simple and convenient way of spurring each other on in the faith. Why don't we do it?

1. We are too busy in Christian Service

The old cliché is true: "the good is the enemy of the best. One reason we don't read and pray with each other is our devotion to other Christian activities.

There are limitless opportunities to serve Christ and his people and Christ has given a diversity of gifts to edify his church. However certain ministries, such as prophecy, have priority over others, because they are more useful for edifying the church. Whatever else Paul means by prophecy, fundamentally it is speaking the Word of God and we are to excel in gifts that build up the church (1 Cor 14:12). Speaking the Word of God to each other is the way

we are strengthened, encouraged and comforted and the church is built. One-to-one Bible reading and prayer is therefore a very high ministry priority.

Most of us have little discretionary time, where we are free to choose how we use it. We have fixed priorities which absorb most of the 168 hours in the week. Sleeping, eating, travelling, working, family responsibilities, chores and personal things take around 140 hours, if you have anything like a normal life. The 28 hours remaining is your discretionary time which you can divide between leisure, study, socialising, hobbies and so on. Christians will devote some of these 28 hours to specifically Christian activity. This will include private Bible reading, prayer and study of Christian literature as well as service to others. When we look at it realistically, there are only around 5-10 hours per week available for Christian activity with others, and most of this time is taken up with church meetings, a Bible study group or committees. And, as the years roll on, there is even less time at our discretion, with increased family and work responsibilities.

Maybe we need to rethink our ministry responsibilities and withdraw from some tasks in church life in order to read and pray with others.

2. We put structures before people

If we are asked about the ministries of our church, we usually answer in terms of structures and programmes: men's fellowship, Sunday School, Youth Club, women's Bible study and so on. If our pastors ask us to be involved in ministry, they usually mean taking on a particular task to keep the programme running. These kinds of programmes are often good – some may be essential – but our thinking is back to front. The reason we run ministry activities is for people – their salvation and maturity in Christ. After a while, the programme attains a validity in itself the means becomes the end. We run a drop-in centre because we have always run a drop-in centre.

If, instead, we start with people and ask how we can win them for Christ and establish them in the faith, we might end up spending our ministry time differently. We might cancel some programmes and start meeting with individuals for Bible reading and prayer. Or we might build this one-to-one ministry into our existing programmes.

3. We seek Recognition for our Ministry

There is no kudos or notoriety in private meetings with individuals reading the Bible and praying. There is a type of career path in churches: from pew sitter to welcomer to assistant Bible study leader to Bible study leader to board of elders to chair of the board. Just adjust the titles for your particular church. One-to-one ministry doesn't advance our career at all.

4. *We don't feel qualified*

This is one of the advantages of one-to-one Bible reading and prayer. It is simple; everyone can do it. We are not taking over the minister's job to teach the Bible and we don't have to have all the answers. We can wrestle together with understanding God's Word and changing our lives. We are not setting ourselves up as the fount of all knowledge and virtue. All we need is the heart to know God better and to encourage one another.

5. *We never thought of it*

Now you have!

How to Do It?

Here are some tips to get you started. You will develop your own patterns along the way.

- Decide to meet for a specified period of time, say six months, so it is easy to stop if you need to.
- Give priority to reading the Bible rather than Christian books.
- Try a variety of methods for Bible reading:
 - Verse by Verse- read the text verse by verse and work out what it is saying. Using a Bible with marginal notes and cross references will deepen the discussion.
 - QUIT- look for Questions that need to be resolved, Implications for life and major Themes in the passage. Interactive Bible Studies- prepared studies, such as those published by St Matthias Press. You can do some preparation before meeting or just work through the material together.
- Leave plenty of time for prayer. Pray about the implications of your Bible reading and the current concerns in your lives. But also pray beyond your own horizons for unbelievers, your church and gospel ministries around the world. If you can't work out who to pray for, ask your pastor or get some newsletters from evangelists and church planters in Australia and overseas.

Who to Meet With

The possibilities are only limited by your imagination.

- Christian friends for mutual encouragement at church, work, school, college, university or in the neighbourhood – anyone who is 'spiritually hungry'.
- Young Christians to build foundations in the faith.
- Potential leaders who need nurturing and training in Bible reading and prayer.
- Christians who want to do some deeper Bible study.
- Your pastor who would love to read and pray with someone.
- A friend going through a crisis.
- Christians who are struggling with faith.

- Non-Christians who want to work out systematically what the Bible is saying.
- Christians who are restricted in some way from attending church or groups.

Some Warnings!

The priority of God's Word, not our Problems

Have you ever noticed how people with problems absorb your time and energy? You can feel the energy drain out of you as they enter the room. In groups, they dominate the discussion. We all have problems, but some people become problem-centred because of the severity of their needs. One mistake in personal ministry is to be dominated by such people. They are so needy that, in our compassion, we feel guilty if we don't give them all the energy they demand. We end up visiting them again and again, or meeting them regularly at the expense of others.

It sounds harsh at first, but there is a better way. Firstly, if you do meet with such a person, set a different agenda. Instead of starting with his or her problems, start with Bible reading and prayer. He or she will then start to see how God views their life and problems, and thus they will make some progress in dealing with life under God's Word. Secondly, give priority to training others in ministry. Meet with a spiritually hungry, 'problem free' person who will mature and begin to serve others. Then you can give better care to those with problems, because there are more carers. Investing time in training others in service multiplies the workforce in the church.

The Spiritual Guru Syndrome

We don't want to become spiritual guides for people and make them dependent on us rather than God. Meeting regularly with someone and drawing them into close relationship can be highly manipulative. Some have never had such close attention from anyone and they will agree to anything to protect the relationship. You can reduce such dependency by deciding to meet for a specified time period and by ensuring they relate to other Christians in church and small groups.

The cults have deliberately exploited the power of personal discipleship to control their members and movements. We need to ensure our personal ministries are characterised by freedom and flexibility. Some people should never be invited to regular personal meetings because of their insecurities.

Gender Issues

One-to-one ministry tends to suit women better than men. Women enjoy the intimacy and are more articulate, which is a boon to conversation.

In general, men find it difficult to start these one-to-one meetings. They are more comfortable doing something together like sport, fixing things or watching TV. Men don't just sit down and bare their souls to each other. Some men will find it easier to meet in threes or fours to reduce the intensity and feel less threatened and exposed. Meeting in a familiar context, like a club or McDonalds, may work better. For many men, they will learn more by having a healthy argument over the Scriptures, and they will let down their guard once they get drawn into the fight! You may not like these cultural stereotypes, but men do need to work out their way of meeting one-to-one.

Pepper the Earth

If you meet with a Christian for Bible reading and prayer for the next 12 months, what will happen? You don't know exactly, but you can have certain hopes and prayers. Both of you will grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Perhaps you will encourage others to start meeting one-to-one. Perhaps you will both continue to meet with different Christians for the next forty years. Just imagine what could happen if it was common place for Christians to meet for one-to-one Bible reading and prayer? What would happen if our society was peppered with thousands of such meetings? What growth in godliness might we see?

Questions

Use these questions as starters for group discussion or personal reflection

1. What are the unique advantages of one-to-one ministry?
2. Is there anything which makes you hesitant about doing it?
3. What changes might you have to make to your Christian program to do one-to-one Bible reading and prayer?
4. Think of someone with whom you could do this.

APPENDIX I. TWO SIMPLE FRAMEWORKS FOR BIBLE READING- DAVID HELM



one to one

BIBLE READING

a simple guide for every Christian

DAVID HELM

8 Two simple frameworks for Bible reading

MANY PEOPLE HAVE FOUND the following two methods or frameworks for reading the Bible very helpful, especially in getting started. When you're new to one-to-one Bible reading, using one of these frameworks often just helps you to get into the text and start mining its riches.

1. The Swedish method

This is a very simple, baby-steps framework for people who feel insecure about their ability to start doing one-to-one Bible reading. You could start out with this approach (perhaps for a while) and then move on to the more substantial COMA method (see below) when you have a bit of confidence going.

This simple way of reading the Bible was apparently popularized by Ada Lum, a staff worker with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. She named it after the Swedish student group where she first saw it used. It goes like this:

1. Read the passage aloud.
2. Each person then reads back over the passage on their own, and looks for three things:



A light bulb: anything that shines out in the passage and draws attention; it can be something important, or something that particularly strikes the reader.



A question mark: anything that is hard to understand; something that the reader would like to be able to ask the author about.



An arrow: anything that applies personally to the reader's life.

3. Each person should write down at least one thing and no more than three under each category. If you are preparing for your one-to-one meeting in advance, then this constitutes the preparation. Each person should come to the meeting with at least one light bulb, one question mark, and one arrow from the passage.

If you are not preparing, you will need to allow some time for each of you to read back through the passage and write down your light bulb, question mark and arrow. You will need to allow 5-10 minutes for this, depending on the length of the passage.

4. You each share your light bulb/s, and discuss.
5. You each share your question mark/s, and then do your best to work out answers together from the passage (although it doesn't matter if you can't find an answer).
6. You each share your arrow/s, and discuss.
7. You pray together about what you have learned.

As you gain confidence and grow in your familiarity with the Bible, you could expand the range of things you look for or consider as you read the passage. For example, you could look for the central idea of the passage (using a heart symbol); or you could write down the names of people who might benefit if you shared with them what you've learnt (using a speech bubble symbol), with the aim of talking with those people before your next meeting. It's really up to you as to how much you vary and expand the basic method.

The great strength of the Swedish method is its simplicity. It's a very effective way to get started in reading the Bible together, particularly with people who are new to the Bible or who lack confidence in their ability to read the Bible for themselves.

2. The COMA method

As you get more experienced in Bible reading, or if you are meeting with someone who is already a reasonably solid Christian, you will no doubt find that you want to push a little further in understanding the passage. The COMA method is a superb tool for one-to-one Bible reading, both because of its flexibility and because it helps people to integrate their personal Bible reading with the bigger picture of the Bible—the unfolding story of Jesus Christ’s saving rulership. As a result, this method helps people to avoid common pitfalls in understanding the Bible. And while it is much more substantial than the Swedish method, the COMA method can still be used easily by people who are not used to looking at a Bible text in any depth.

COMA stands for:

Context

Observation

Meaning

Application

This is really a summary of how we read anything. Even when we pick up a newspaper article, we notice what sort of thing we are reading and how it fits with other things around it (context); we read the words and sentences and paragraphs, taking note of the main events, people and content (observation); we integrate what we’ve observed in our heads and form a conclusion about what the author is trying to say (meaning); and we reflect on whether the author’s message has any relevance for our lives (application).

It can be very useful to follow the COMA process consciously when we read the Bible, because it encourages us to ask good questions of the text and to understand it clearly and thoroughly. When we're reading one-to-one, it also very helpfully directs the conversation. You can work through the four steps together and come to some conclusions, rather than bouncing around with lots of different random thoughts or observations.

A one-to-one Bible reading meeting using the COMA method would go like this:

1. Read the passage aloud.
2. You ask some **context** questions of the text:
 - What sort of writing is this? (A letter, a narrative, a poem?)
 - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
 - What has happened so far?
3. You ask some **observation** questions of the text:
 - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text?
 - What is the main point or points?
 - What surprises are there?
 - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
4. You ask some **meaning** questions of the text:
 - How does this text relate to other parts of the book?
 - How does the passage relate to Jesus?

- What does this teach us about God?
 - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
5. You ask some **application** questions of the text:
 - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding?
 - Is there some attitude I need to change?
 - How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?
 6. You pray together about what you have learned.

If you are preparing for your one-to-one meetings, these four sets of questions establish the framework for your preparation. Each person would aim to come to the meeting with something jotted down under each category: context, observation, meaning and application.

One of the real strengths of the COMA approach to Bible reading is that it is so easily applicable to the many different genres of literature that we find in the Bible—Gospels, letters, narratives, poetry, prophecy, proverbs, and so on. For help with adapting the COMA questions for each of the major literary genres we find in the Bible, see chapter 10: ‘Help with reading different Bible genres’.

APPENDIX J. GIVING A SHORT TALK - MINISTRY PAPERS



giving a short talk

the MINISTRY PAPERS

'it's only a short talk'

You've been asked to "do the devotion" on Friday night at Youth Group. Or you're a mentor to the young mums group and you've been asked to "share some of your wisdom with us". Or you're a growth group leader and you've been encouraged that it'd be good to "give a fireside yarn" at the group's weekend away. They come in all shapes and sizes. They're the occasions where you're asked to step up and "give a short talk".

Leaders often find it hard to recruit people for this challenge. Speaking in front of others is up there with snakes and spiders for some. Most of us just don't feel equipped for it. For this reason the invitation to speak often comes with efforts at downplaying the challenge. The encouragement is given that "it's only a short talk". Perhaps we're being told: "the pain really won't last that long"! Hopefully what we're not being told is: "shorter talks don't really take any preparation... just wing it like I do".

Ask an experienced public speaker and they'll tell you that shorter talks often require more preparation. If you have to say it clearly in a few minutes or so, you have to be even clearer what the it is that you're saying. You have to be prepared.

For some of us the temptation is to over-prepare. We lack direction. We charge in and start writing only to find ourselves continually writing and re-writing. This paper is for you, helping you to think through how to prepare a talk. For others of us the temptation is to under-prepare. We leave it far too late. Or we just hope something will "come to me" when we get up to speak. This paper is for you, helping you to think through how to prepare a talk. Short or long, every occasion where God's Word is spoken is a precious opportunity to honour Jesus and connect people to him. It's definitely worth preparing for.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

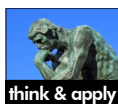
Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team. This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your ministry leader train you for giving a short talk as a part of the ministry of that team. For full length sermons refer to the '**preaching that connects**' paper. '**Giving a short talk**' draws on that paper applying many of the same principles to shorter talks.



read **1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5**

1. What is the centre of all Paul's preaching?

2. Paul clearly covers a lot of subjects in this letter. What does he mean, then, that he only preaches "Christ and him crucified"?



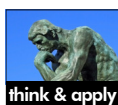
3. Why is it important that you proclaim "Christ and him crucified", whatever the topic or passage your talk is covering?



read **1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

4. What is *flexible* in Paul's approach to ministry?

5. What is *fixed* in Paul's approach to ministry?



6. What must be *fixed* about your talk, whatever the context?

7. What must be *flexible* about your talk, according to the context?

connecting the talk

We have discussed that every talk from God's Word, short or long, is a precious opportunity to honour Jesus and connect people to him. Before we dive in to the how-to of talk preparation let's focus on the who-to. It's possible to communicate very clearly without having communicated Christ very clearly. There's a number of connections we'll think about here. But by far the most important connection is this: that your talk connects to Jesus.



1. connect to CHRIST... the gospel centre

We have seen from 1 Corinthians that the Apostle Paul was determined to always proclaim Christ crucified—whatever the topic, whatever the situation. That's the first and most crucial connection you need to think about in your talk: does it connect to Jesus? Does it, most especially, connect to Jesus' death on the cross? Whatever the topic I've been given or chosen, whatever the passage I've been given or chosen: does my talk connect to "Christ crucified". Have a look at Luke 24:44-47. Jesus is giving a walk-along Bible Study on the whole Old Testament (Law, Prophets & Psalms, vs44) and says that it's all—all of it—about his death and resurrection, and the need for people to turn back to God for forgiveness through him. Paul did it. Jesus did it. Make sure you do it. Connect to Jesus.

2. connecting the TALK itself ... the big idea

The next aspect of connection you need to think through is how the talk connects to itself—how it flows, how it "hangs together". Listening is hard work. The fact is, no matter how short your talk is, people won't remember much of the detail of what you have said! And if your material isn't well organised, they might not remember *anything* you said! This is where communicators recommend a unifying BIG IDEA for any communication. "Big idea" really just means that you've actually got something to say. And that you say it clearly. This means making tough choices about what to leave out. Sometimes less is more! If you try to say too many things, people hear nothing. Being profound doesn't mean being complicated! A talk may cover a few different points but unless they're connected by a unifying theme they'll be lost. With a short talk, you'll need that focus all the more.

3. connecting to LIVES ... application

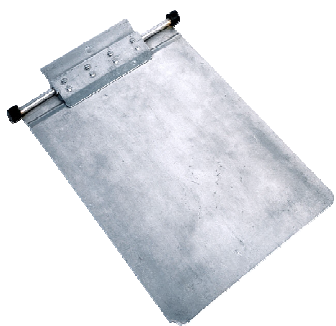
You've locked in the need to connect to Christ—being faithful. You've locked in the need to connect the talk itself—being clear. You also need to think about connecting to the lives of the people in front of you. Who are they? What are their lives like? What's "on their minds"? Whether consciously or not, many people have a question running through their minds as they listen to you speak. It's the question, "so what?... what difference does what you're saying make to my life?" This step is crucial. The talk needs to be Christ-centred and clear, but it also must be *applied* to the listener. It needs to answer the "so what?". Of course, we don't want to pander to this question completely. After all, Christ is at the centre of all things, not us. But we do need to show how Christ being at the centre of all things has real implications for everyone. It has implications for all the questions we ask and issues we feel. The gospel is always relevant and life-changing. It's your job to show it! What we're talking about here is often called 'application'. Unfortunately, this is often thought of as just the last bit of the talk. Sometimes it's a token minute at the end if you're lucky! In fact, the whole talk should be spoken directly into the lives of our listeners. That means we need to not only study the Word but study people too!



4. connecting to LISTENERS...

The last aspect of connection is about connecting people's ears. It's their hearts we want God's Word to reach. But it's heard via the ears! Here's a few principles to consider:

- listening's hard work. It's easy to drift off
- SO WHAT? is the question in people's heads – give them reasons to listen
- talks don't need to be complicated. Focus on a single key idea.
- read the passage. Re-read it. Write it out by hand. Re-read it.
- if you can't summarise your talk in a single sentence, who could?
- don't start writing until you have this big idea
- the idea needs to be broken down into a clear structure
- the more you say, the LESS people will remember
- give yourself plenty of time to think through application
- repetition is very important
- people like to hear about PEOPLE not abstract ideas
- even the most brilliant people prefer SIMPLE communication
- simple communication uses simple words, short sentences and repetition
- repetition is very important
- learn to write how you speak not how you write
- never use a long word when a short word will do the job
- use down to earth language – without being offensive
- never use more words than you need
- aim for an average sentence length of 15-20 words. Or less
- repeat the first sentence of a new point two or three times
- illustrate and use stories ... to explain points and to give a break
- almost always abbreviate: can't, don't, it's, aren't, etc
- start sentences with AND and BUT. Ignore your old English teacher!
- strong conclusions are crucial – don't fizzle out.
- repetition is very important
- treat the previous point seriously – it'll revolutionise your communication.



planning the talk

With these four aspects of 'connection' in mind it's time to write the talk. But don't just dive in. Plan first. Remember the need for a big idea? It's essential that you don't start detailed writing until you're clear what it is that you want to say! Don't start writing until you have wrestled with the passage and arrived at a clearly stated (written out) big idea. This next section is about how to plan out a talk.

listen to yourself

This sounds a bit weird, but listen to yourself. When you're talking at morning tea or supper, listen to yourself. When you're talking at work or at a party, listen to yourself. Get used to how you normally sound, and try to make sure that's how you sound when you speak. With the exception of projecting your voice a bit more, your speaking voice for giving a talk should be your normal voice. Your tone should be the same, rather than preachy or sermonic. And your language should be the same, rather than formal or contrived. Try to be as 'over the fence' as possible. To do all this, you need to become a student of how you talk ... listen to yourself!

telling stories

Most especially, listen to yourself (and others) as you tell stories. Telling stories is something that we all can do very naturally when chatting but can be difficult to do in a talk. The key is to try to keep it natural. Tell it the way you would when just sitting around the dinner table. For example, something we do quite subconsciously, but is great in story-telling, is dropping into the present tense "so he looks at me and he says...". It gives a greater sense of being there. This is also useful when speaking from narrative parts of Scripture .e.g. "so Peter stands up and says...". Story-telling is a big part of communicating so it's worth becoming a student of. Study the way people tell stories. And always be on the look out for a good one to use as an illustration!

gather illustrations

always be on the look out (newspapers, other media, personal stories, etc) for illustrative material. If there's something happening in the world that your talk connects to, that can help get the point across. The further ahead you plan your talk, the more time you'll have to gather relevant illustrations.

pray

We need to ask God to help us to be faithful and clear in handling his Word. We need also to recognise that it is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit that applies God's Word to people's hearts. Proclaiming the gospel is definitely an activity where we need not only to pray first, but pray at all times.

select a unit of text

For the sake of this exercise we'll assume you already have a unit of text to speak on. But it's often the case with short talks that you're given a 'topic' rather than a passage, or no direction at all. Whether a topic has been given to you or not, it's important to find a verse or passage that will be "home turf" for the talk. This will help you to get a clear big idea and, more importantly, to be faithful to the Bible.

let the Word speak to you

Ideally it's good to look at the passage you are speaking on well ahead of when your actual preparation needs to start. This gives you space to respond to this part of God's Word yourself before you step into calling others to do so.

read & re-read the text

This stage shouldn't be hurried. Spend plenty of time just soaking in what the passage is saying. This will include looking at it's context in the book, and chasing up any links to other parts of the Bible, etc. Try to work out the flow of the passage. Write out a summary in your own words.

big idea

At this stage you should be ready to put a big idea together. This is most easily done by identifying a subject and a complement: the subject is the broad 'topic' the passage is about, in a word or two: e.g. *God's love*. The complement is what the passage is saying about the subject. So in the above example, what is the passage saying about God's love? It's saying that God's love is *unconditional*. Subject + complement = the big idea: "God's love is unconditional".

a big question

It can be useful to put the big idea into question form: e.g. "*can anyone be beyond God's love?*". This might be useful to state early (and often) in the talk.

application

Don't wait till the end of the writing process to work out where it's going! Jot down some key application ideas first. That way they won't just be tacked on.

structure

With your big idea in front of you, and your work on the flow of the passage, work out a structure for the talk that will establish the big idea. e.g. point 1: God is loving; point 2: God's love is unconditional. Even short talks need structure

key verse

If there is one verse that most captures the big idea it's worth identifying it – and perhaps going to it first in your talk before then working through the passage. Depending on how short your talk is it might in fact only be on one verse. If that's the case, however, make sure you understand (and give) the context.

key language

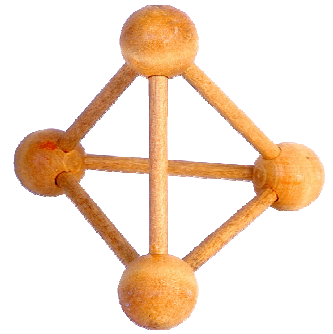
Write down some 'picture' words that will help carry the big idea (i.e. before you think about bigger illustrations, think about illustrative language & word pictures)

gospel check

How does the big idea relate to the centre of the Bible message: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Don't move on until you are clear about this.

a model talk

The danger of presenting a 'model talk' shape is that a model can easily become a mantra. With that qualification stated, however, it is good to have a basic model as a starting point for talk-writing. This is especially the case when you are starting out. Learn the model first, and then you'll be able to adapt it and develop it intentionally to your own style.



introduction

people make up their minds in the first minute or two whether they are going to listen to you! So the introduction needs to be interesting. This might take the form of a story, whether personal or from current events. But being interesting is only half the job. It also needs to *introduce the big idea* and the key language associated with it. Getting people's attention is great. Getting them thinking in the right ball park is even better.

key question

before moving to the text, it is useful to state the big idea in question form and somehow connect with the listener. If the introduction is where you introduce the big idea to the listener, the key question *introduces the listener* to the big idea. It needs to be personal and direct. It's about helping people anticipate that God's Word is going to speak to them today. This may also be a good point to go to the key verse.

1st point

Within each of your subpoints a few steps are normally involved:

STATE the point – say in clear terms what this point is

SHOW where in the text this point has come from (verse reference, etc)

EXPLAIN the point – expand on the point in plain language

ILLUSTRATE the point – some sort of story, etc to help your explanation

APPLY the point – this may only be brief at this stage but should happen

TRANSITION to next point – “we have seen that... next we see that” (these are critical as ‘get back on board’ points for people who may be struggling)

2nd, 3rd, etc points

...steps as above. If the talk is only 5-10 minutes it may be a single point talk.

biblical theology

depending on where you are in the Bible, you may need an intervening step before drawing conclusions and making application. In Old Testament passages, for example, you need to be careful. You need to bring the ideas/themes *through* the death and resurrection of Christ and the pouring out of the Spirit before applying to us. Otherwise you'll misapply it. Ask yourself: “what difference does Jesus make?”

conclusions & application

- what does the passage tell us about God?
- what does it tell us about us?
- what change in thinking/acting might be needed... David Cook suggests 3 categories of application:

NECESSARY – how the text applies to all people at all times...

e.g. “God's Word is the absolute authority in what is true”

POSSIBLE – some helpful suggestions on how to practically apply the truth...

“why not start each day with reading God's Word for 15 minutes?”

IMPOSSIBLE – what you cannot do or think if you are responding to this passage ... “you cannot walk away from this passage thinking tradition matters as much as the Bible...”.

the critique

there is nothing radical in the idea that feedback is important. But here's something more radical: get feedback from others *before* you give the talk rather than after!

Getting feedback after a talk has the obvious problem that it's, well, too late! The fact is, people will tend to be a bit too 'soft' with you fearing that you'll feel that you did a bad job. Or you might be a bit defensive, fearing that you have done a bad job.

Contrast that to the prospect of a 'critique' - a feedback session *before* you give the talk. Sure it's still a bit confronting. But it's an opportunity to hear feedback with your defences down. Enjoy the chance to get some help improving the talk before you give it.

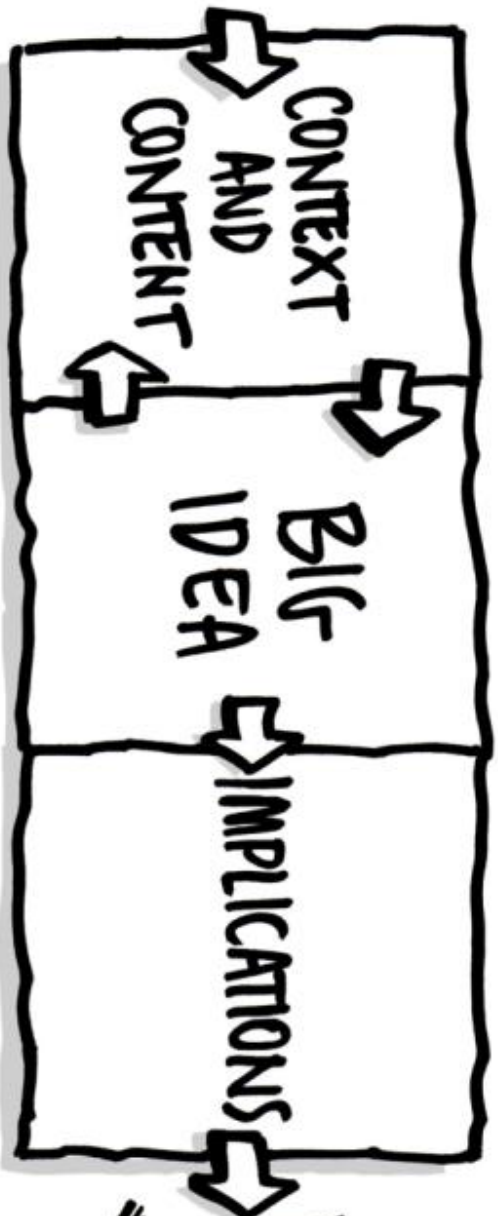
A few days ahead, get a couple of other leaders from your ministry together, including at least one person more experienced in giving talks.

- pray together
- distribute feedback sheets
- speak your final draft to them
- use the feedback sheet to talk through changes you might make
- while it's good to discuss a range of issues, try to come away with just one or two key improvements
- pray together again, responding to God's Word (critiques are great but we never want to become 'experts' over God's Word but always sit under it.

Apart from *this* talk being improved, you'll learn and develop greatly for *next* time. You will learn a great deal through having to make changes as you respond to thoughtful feedback.

APPENDIX K. ENGAGE BIBLE TEACHING MODEL

PRAY, READ
AND RE-READ



APPENDIX L. LEADING A GROWTH GROUP- MINISTRY PAPERS



leading a growth

on a mission...

Jesus commanded his disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” [Matthew 28:19-20]. This ‘Great Commission’ sets out two goals for a church: to REACH people for Christ; and to TEACH them to follow him. These are the two key important goals of ‘evangelism’ (proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers) and ‘edification’ (teaching believers to live the gospel). Many church mission statements capture these two key goals, for example, “know Christ and make him known” or “present Christ to everyone, present everyone mature in Christ”.

on a pathway...

Mission statements can be very useful in stating goals but on their own can be a bit *static*. The notion of a pathway that people step along can be a more *dynamic* way of thinking to fill out the picture. It’s worth considering the pathway that people generally take as they move from not knowing Christ to being a mature follower of Christ.

The three simple words ‘connect’, ‘grow’, ‘serve’ can be very helpful for this pathway way of thinking. People need to **connect** to God through trusting in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to connect to a Christ-focussed church family. A key way to **grow** is through a bible study growth group. A key way to **serve** is through a ministry team. There’s a lot more that can be said than that, of course, but it’s a useful summary of the pathway to maturity in Christ.

This ministry paper seeks to explain why these groups are so vital to growing as a Christian and why we are not simply just a church that has growth groups, but are rather, a church OF growth groups...

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: ‘the ministry training church’ and ‘meeting one to one’.

Connect. Grow. Serve. After **connecting** to God through trusting in Christ, a vital way we can **grow** is through a growth group and a vital way we can **serve** is through a ministry team. This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to help your growth groups pastor/coach introduce you to what it means to lead one of our growth groups. As outlined in ‘the ministry training church’, growth group leaders play a crucial role in our church. This paper is longer than others and may need a couple of sessions. It starts with the material everyone looks at in ‘**joining a growth group**’, and then builds in extra material for leaders.



read **Acts 2:42-47**

1. What did the early church do when they met together?

2. How often did they meet?



3. Why do you think meeting with other Christians was such a priority for the early church?

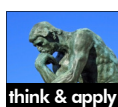
4. Was it just a priority for them, or should it be for us as well? Why/why not?



read **Hebrews 10:24-25**

1. What are we to consider?

2. What should we not give up doing? why?



3. Why do you think we are told to encourage each other?

4. In what ways might this encouragement be limited if we only see each other in larger once-a-week Sunday meetings?

sunday church

Clearly, whatever we do in our large weekly meeting on Sunday, it is not the all-in-all of church life. It's important, but doesn't stand alone. Indeed, the idea of a church meeting just once a week isn't a biblical one. We don't stop being a church family when Monday comes! Rather, what we do in our large weekly meeting should help us live out our identity as a church on Monday, Tuesday ... right through the week. We need to see our sunday meeting not as the sum total of church life, but as a kind of 'platform' for our ongoing life together as a church family.



read **Ephesians 4:1-16**

1. What picture is given here of life as a church family?

2. What is the reason we are to be like this (verse 1)?

3. What is our goal as a church family (verse 13)?

4. What is the role of pastors/teachers (verse 11-12)?

5. What is the role of everyone (verse 12-16)?



6. In what way does this passage help us to see the importance of Bible teaching in our church life?

7. This Bible teaching is to equip all God's people for 'works of service'. What does this mean for church life?

who ministers?

There is an important lesson from Ephesians 4 for us to learn...

we are ALL ministers!

So, we need to be clear about the role of pastors/teachers in our church family. Their role is not to *replace* the ministry of the people of God, but to *enable* it. The role of full-time ministers is to bring out the ministry of everyone else. Through bible teaching, training and modeling, all God's people must be equipped to serve.

So, we also need to be clear about the role of all God's people in our church family. We all have 'works of service' to do. We all have 'truth in love' to speak. We all have a part to play. We all have a ministry. The Bible teaching we receive is not an end in itself, but is to equip us for service of others.

Unfortunately, an unbiblical idea emerged in the history of the church. It is the idea of 'clergy' and 'laity'. In this model of church there are clergy (who do ministry) and laity (who receive ministry). But it's not the model we see in Ephesians 4 is it?



which model of church?

which of the following models of church is most biblical? which should we follow?

model	mindset	role of minister(s)	role of congregation	impact
MAINTENANCE	'keep things going'	change nothing	receive ministry	things do change! (they decline)
MINISTRY	'we need to grow'	ministers to everyone they can	passive – watching ministry	sometimes some growth
MULTIPLICATION	"we have a mission together"	teaching, training, equipping, modelling	all involved in ministry	true growth (Eph 4:16)



a church of **growth groups**

If the Sunday meeting is the foundation of our life as a church family, our growth groups are the building blocks. The Sunday meeting plays an essential foundational role as we learn together from God's Word. But it provides limited opportunity for the kind of prayer, fellowship and sharing of meals together pictured in Acts 2. And in terms of what we've seen in Ephesians 4, something more is needed for us to all carry out our ministry of 'speaking the truth in love' together (verse 15). Let's look at Ephesians 4 again and think about how being a church of growth groups might answer its call...

how many people can you care for?...

Two people? Three? As many as five? Definitely not more than six!...

This Ephesians 4 picture of a church body is clear: everyone is to be supported. However, something else is also clear: while every part is to be supported, no single part can do this alone. There is a limit to how many people one person can truly care for.

What we are learning here are the principles of 'SPAN OF CARE' It's the idea that:

- everyone is cared for
- no-one cares for too many people

Of course, lots of care happens through relationships in our church family outside of growth groups. Indeed, as we learn to speak the truth in love in our groups, this kind of godly relating should 'spill over' into all sorts of relationships in the church.

A structure of growth groups, gives us great opportunities to develop these attitudes and skills. Not only that, without this structure, some people are inevitably 'lost' in the big group. This is especially true of newcomers and those who don't form relationships easily. Being a church of growth groups helps ensure meeting the 1st principle: everyone is cared for.

Being a church of growth groups also acknowledges the 2nd principle: that no one person can care for too many people. This means that groups must not grow too large (but seed new groups as they grow). It also means that group leaders must be supported/assisted in their role.

The back page discusses what it will mean to be a church of growth groups, a church where no-one stands alone.



look again at **Ephesians 4:11-16**

1. What danger is always around us (verse 14)?

2. How can we avoid this danger (verse 15)?

3. What positive things will then result instead (verses 15-16)?



4. *Doing bible studies together is only the beginning of group life. How can we build on this?*

5. *What will it mean for us to 'speak the truth in love' to each other in our group?*

6. *The whole body is built up in love 'as each part does its work' . What part do you (will you) play in your group?*



which model of growth group?

which is the biblical model for a growth group? why?

truth without love	Know the answers to the questions Be right Focus on information alone
love without truth	Know the answers to personal problems Be real Focus on feelings alone
truth in love	Know the truth about God and me Be honest with God and each other Focus on transformation – becoming like Christ

being a church of growth groups...



a church where no-one stands alone

There's a big difference between just being a church *with* growth groups and a church *of* growth groups. Being just a church *with* growth groups is an approach that says: 'growth groups are there if you want it – just for the keen ones'. Being a church *of* growth groups is an approach that says: 'everyone needs to be cared for, and everyone has a role to play in caring for others'. Being a church of growth groups is not always the easy way. Relationships are hard work. We are called to love each other, not because of how lovable we all are, but because of Christ's love shown to us in his death on the cross. But it's worth it! Being a church of growth groups benefits everyone. It's a great way to fulfil the biblical picture of a connected church family, speaking the truth in love, with every part supported.

newcomers... will be asked to a newcomers group but are also linked to a growth group after their first couple of visits. While we'll all want to welcome every newcomer, it's best if we each know who we're especially responsible for. And it means, hopefully, no-one is overlooked. Your growth group leader might encourage you to ask a newcomer over for a meal, etc. They may not actually attend your group for some time, or may end up in a different group, but the process helps ensure they're welcomed.

links... while attendance at Bible Study may not be possible for some, they're still 'linked' to a group so that they can be part of the care of the group. Without such linking, people who don't attend groups will be overlooked in the care of the church. The group prays for such 'links', seeks to encourage them, offers practical help such as meals, invites them to social activities... generally looks out for them.

growth group members... commit themselves to their group in a number of ways: being there each week; coming with the study prepared; being ready to share honestly; focusing on other's needs, not just our own; extending ministry to others in the group through the week in terms of prayer, hospitality & encouragement; supporting the leader in caring for the group, including 'links'.

group leaders... have overall responsibility for seeing that each member (including links) is being cared for. This does not mean *doing* all the care (which the whole group shares in) but *overseeing* that it happens. They should lead by example. They should also identify and train apprentice leaders. Leaders do much more than simply 'read out the questions'. They will always have in mind all the relationships in the table (below right). They will ensure the group has time not just to 'do the study' but share genuinely and pray about all these relationships. This ministry to the members of their group will obviously also extend beyond the meeting. There are a range of ministry papers (like this one) that they can draw on to equip group members for growing in all these relationships.

apprentice leaders... offer special assistance to the growth group leader in carrying out their role, and so also are at the same time being trained for leading a new group when needed. As groups multiply, there is always the need for more leaders.

coaches... support growth group leaders in their role (talking and praying about how the group is going; sharing how to develop as a leader; offering useful resources for the group, etc). It is vital that leaders are supported well in their important role – so each coach should support only 3 or 4 leaders.

ministers (the Pastor/Teacher kind!)...support growth group leaders through a special focus on coaches. e.g. rather than doing a poor job of trying to support 10 or 20 leaders, they aim to do a great job of supporting a few coaches who each support a few leaders. It all comes back to *span of care*: everyone is cared for; no-one tries to care for too many!

advantages of growth groups

thinking about the picture of church life from Acts 2 we started with, as well as what we've learnt from Eph 4, consider some of the important ways that growth groups can build on our weekly Sunday meeting...

bible study

more opportunity for asking questions, clarifying meaning, and sharing insights

prayer

more opportunity for sharing personal prayer points and praying meaningfully for others. Also provides opportunities for praying for ministries in our church, world mission, etc

accountability

greatly increased as you share struggles with each other and follow-up on these in an ongoing way

support

growth groups act as great support networks - helping each other through difficult times, and sharing each others joys

ministry

great opportunities to serve others - through prayer, encouragement, leadership, etc

training

developing patterns of godly relating. Apprentice leaders trained up.

evangelism

great opportunities for introducing non-Christian friends to a smaller group of people from church (not so much through the Bible study itself, but other activities)

social activities

groups can organise social activities together, providing opportunities for fellowship, relationship-building and evangelism.

through the ministry of our growth groups, all of our relationships can grow...

a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer

growing relationships with **other believers**, especially through the growth group

growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants

growing relationships with **unbelievers**, especially through personal evangelism

growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team



pastoring a growth

To be a church of growth groups, group leaders need to see themselves as growth group **pastors**, and be trained and supported by pastors/coaches as such.

knowing your sheep by name...

Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of the sheep, knows his sheep: "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me" (John 10:14). Of course, there are some ways in which we are not like Jesus. He is the one who says "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15) and goes to the cross for the redemption of all who believe in him.

And yet, as 'under-shepherds' of the Chief Shepherd, we are very much to be like Jesus. We also should lay down our lives in service of those in our care. We also should know our sheep. We should get to know them, care for them, be able to account for every one of them.

At a practical level this means knowing who your sheep are. In a church that adopts the linking approach outlined on the opposite page, the 'list' of people in your care might change on a regular basis. This, of course, needs to be managed in a way that isn't disruptive to the group. The point for now, however, is that when changes happen, you need to be on top of it. It's essential to your care that you know who you're caring for!

You and your pastor/coach need to be clear what the process is when changes are made. How and when does this happen? Later in the paper we'll talk a bit more about getting a clear plan for regular communication with your pastor/coach. This is going to be essential if you're going to keep on track with who you're responsible for.

Make sure you carry the list of who's in your care along with contact details, prayer points, etc at all times. It's all part of being an around the clock pastor to your people, rather than just a 'study leader'.

Pastors know their sheep by name. They are shepherds of God's flock under their care.



read **1 Peter 5:1-4**

1. What images does Peter give us for the leader and for those being led (verse 2)?

2. What are the right motives for leadership?

3. Who is the Chief Shepherd? Why does Peter remind us of this?



4. Peter seems to use the word 'elder' here in the general sense of leader (he refers to himself as an elder). How might the passage apply to growth group leaders?

5. Peter speaks of the people 'under your care'. How does this take our role as leaders beyond 'reading out the questions' at bible study?

6. The people in your group are ultimately under the care of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. What difference should this make to how you go about your ministry?



leader or pastor?

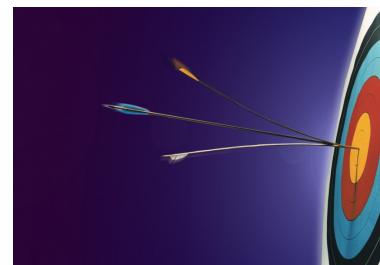
The title doesn't matter but the role sure does. Discuss how the growth group leader role we're learning about here is different to some narrower notions of the 'bible study leader'.

staying on **target**

The table on the bottom corner of page 4 set out important goals for growth in every believer. Having looked at your role as a pastor in relation to those in your group, it's a good idea to come back and look at the goals again. Work through these goals (below) with your coach, one by one, brainstorming ideas. Think through how you can minister to those in your care, and how group life can be nurtured, so that all of these goals are addressed. Remember, through the ministry of our growth groups, we are aiming for all the important relationships in every believer's life to grow...



- a growing relationship with **God**, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer
- growing relationships with **other believers**, especially in the growth group
- growing relationships with those in their **family/household**, as servants
- growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through **personal evangelism**
- growing relationships with the **whole church** in mission, serving in a ministry team



meeting one-to-one and ministry papers

A key part of extending your role from bible study leader to pastor is to aim to regularly meet one-to-one with those in your group. People tend to open up even more in the one-to-one context, and there's more opportunity to go deeper into things, and to pray specifically.

Time constraints, of course, may mean you will struggle to do this yourself with every member of your group. That's where assistant/apprentice leaders can help. It might even be that you focus on meeting one-to-one with two or three people who are potential leaders, and they in turn meet with two or three people each. That way everyone has the opportunity to meet one-to-one, and future leaders are being developed in the process.

The 'meeting one-to-one' ministry paper will give you more ideas about this aspect of your ministry. In particular, it outlines the importance of ministering to the whole person—developing the three strands of theological reflection, personal godliness and ministry skills.

There are other ministry papers that can be a great help to you in trying to address the five goals for all believers discussed on this page

*RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
daily time with God

*RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS
joining a growth group
leading a growth group
hospitality

*RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY/
HOUSEHOLD
christian households
marriage preparation
raising kids to follow Jesus

*RELATIONSHIP WITH UNBELIEVERS
personal evangelism
personal apologetics

*RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCH MISSION
joining a ministry team*



leading the study

So far we have placed great emphasis upon the need to go 'beyond the study' in terms of the life of a group. We have emphasized the need for leaders to go beyond 'reading out the questions', to see themselves as pastors of a small flock. With all that in mind, however, the actual weekly meeting of the group is obviously important. Just as Sunday church is a platform for the growth groups, the weekly meeting of the growth group is the platform for the relationships within the group. We hope group life will be more than once a week, but that's the foundation it's built upon.

stages of groups

It is important to understand the stages that a group goes through. There's a common pattern that many groups follow, going through these stages:

- forming
- storming
- norming
- performing

In the *forming* stage, people are politely getting to know each other and things generally go along pretty smoothly.

In the *storming* stage, people are feeling comfortable enough to express opinions more freely and there may be a degree of conflict.

In the *norming* stage, people are getting to know each other more deeply and so there are fewer surprises in people's reactions. A group's 'personality' is starting to emerge.

In the *performing* stage, the group has got to know each other well enough to be able to express views openly and honestly without fear of rejection.

Clearly a group needs nurturing to negotiate these stages of development. But it's encouraging for us as leaders to know that groups generally go through such stages. It means we shouldn't despair when the 'storming' is happening—it's really a necessary part of group development. Indeed, every time a new member is added, or someone leaves, this stage may be revisited (which also means we need to be careful about such changes when a group has only recently started to perform).



the leader as a model

always remember that one of the most important aspects of leadership is example. This applies to your whole life 'outside' of the group context, but also what happens in the group meeting. Your preparation (or lack of it) will be evident to the group and will set the pace for others. The way you use the Bible, listen, follow up on prayer points will all be important. Of course, all this will flow from a leader who truly has a heart to serve their group.

prepare well

we mentioned preparation above. There are many steps behind good preparation. Before the series starts read through the book of the Bible being studied. Take notes and write down questions. Allow God's Word to challenge/encourage you. Each week in the series, read the set passage and have a preliminary look at the study before the Bible Talk on Sunday to get the most out of it. Then work through the study in detail before the group meets. Pray that the study will be fruitful. Give thought to how you will adapt the study best to your group. Think through how the prayer time might unfold and any practical considerations.

generating discussion

often the set questions in a study need follow up questions to generate discussion. Remember to use open-ended questions (questions that can't be answered yes or no). This will be easier if you have prepared well. Try to avoid commenting after every contribution, as this sets up ping-pong back and forth to you as the leader. The goal is open discussion amongst members. On the other hand, however, there is a place for silence as people gather thoughts—don't feel you have to fill it.

back to the bible

one of the best things you can do for your group is to encourage them to look deeper at God's Word. Especially when in 'investigate' questions, ask people where they found their answer in the passage.

time considerations

it's best to have a set start and finish time for the meeting. It may be, for example that an evening group meets 7-9pm. Those who can stay on for a cuppa are welcome to, but those that need to go can get away. People who start work early, for example, may be discouraged from attending if they're concerned the night will run late. Be especially considerate if your group has crèche carers. Within your allocated meeting time, be sure to allow good time for prayer and sharing: have a set goal for when the study itself will be completed.



seeding new groups

Ideally as a group grows in membership there will come a time where an apprentice leader can take a couple of members and, along with a couple of newcomers start a new group. This is done best when a group owns this vision for multiplication and has a timeframe in mind when it might happen.

Have you talked and prayed about this with your group?

you need **support**

this paper has discussed extensively your role as leader/pastor. It has called you to love and support the members of your group. But who is going to do that for you? That's where pastors/coaches come into the picture. Use the space below to develop a plan with your coach...



how will you keep in touch?

when and how often will this happen?

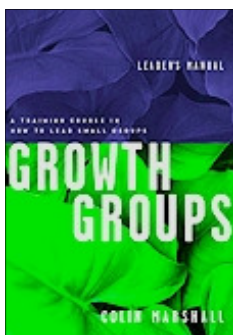
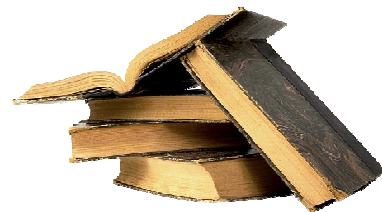
how can prayer be part of your time?

what resources can you look at together?

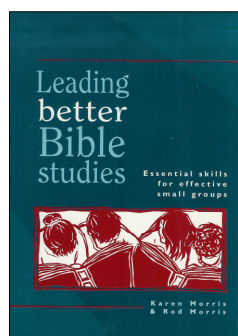
what other needs for support do you have?

useful **resources**

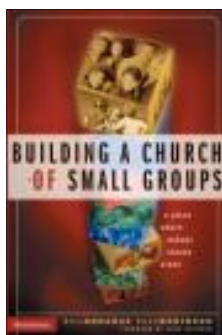
there are lots of books available on growth groups. A couple of the better ones are shown below. In addition to them, it's a good idea for growth group leaders to develop a basic library of general reference type books such as bible commentaries and dictionaries...



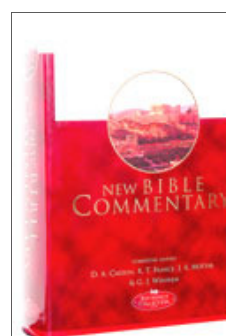
Growth Groups by Colin Marshall is an excellent introduction to the goals of growth groups with a strong emphasis upon the foundational role of God's Word in group life.



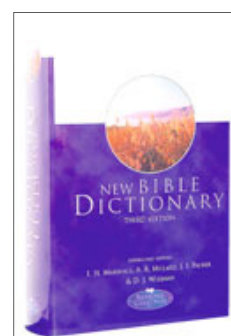
Leading Better Bible Studies by Rod & Karen Morris gives a comprehensive treatment of all aspects of group leadership. It is strong on the mechanics of group life and will stretch you as a leader.



Building a Church of Small Groups by Donahue & Robinson is worth a read for its treatment of the issues of 'span of care' and the need for everyone (including leaders) to be supported.



The New Bible Commentary is a one-volume commentary on the whole Bible. It provides intro material and is an easy point of reference whatever book you're studying.



The New Bible Dictionary is an accessible, comprehensive A - Z of Bible terms, place names, books, people and doctrines. It's a great resource for all leaders.

APPENDIX M. GROWTH GROUP PRAYER - MINISTRY PAPERS



growth group prayer

the MINISTRY PAPERS

group prayer gone wrong

Picture the scene:

Leader: "OK, it's been a great study—I think we've delved deep into God's word and covered some pretty serious personal ground, now it's time to pray—who wants to start us off with a prayer point?"

What happens next will vary greatly depending on who's in your group. If it's a men's group there'll be an awkward silence and very little eye contact; if it's a women's group the next half hour will be spent recapping the trials and tribulations of the past week and, oops! running out of time to actually pray; and if it's a mixed group, everyone will be quickly mentally editing their prayer points so that the guys don't sound too much like guys and the girls don't sound too much like girls.

I know, they're stereotypes, but most of the time they're pretty close to the mark. Why is it so? Why is group prayer so difficult to do well? What is it about us that causes us to take something so good and simple as praying together and make such a meal of it?

The bottom line is that we make some unhealthy assumptions about groups and about prayer that have a massive impact on the way we pray in groups. In this ministry paper we'll be aiming to lay some of those assumptions out on the table and dissect them in order to find a better way. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to growth group prayer but there are some fundamentals that we've got to get right if we're going to improve our group prayer life so that we grow together and honour God in the process.

LEADERS:...before taking someone through this paper, review the two key introductory MINISTRY PAPERS: 'the ministry training church' and 'meeting one to one'.

Our church has two main 'arms': growth groups & ministry teams. This 'growth group prayer' paper relates to the **growth groups** arm. It's designed to help your growth group leader introduce you to a vital aspect of what it means to be part of one of our growth groups.



read **Ephesians 6:17-20**

1. What should always accompany prayer (verse 17-18)? What do these two activities have in common?

2. Who should we "always keep praying for" (verse 18)?

3. Who else should we be praying for? What should we pray for them (verses 19-20)?

4. Why is prayer such an important part of Christian fellowship?

5. Does your growth group value prayer highly enough?



What different kinds of "prayers and requests" can you think of?

-
-
-
-
-

Is your group better at some of these than others? Why is that so?

group prayer

There are really only 3 basic contexts for prayer: public prayer such as happens up-front in church, private prayer such as happens behind closed doors, and lying somewhere in-between is group prayer such as might happen in a family or in a growth group. Each one of these contexts has its own unique features that are worth considering if we are to tailor our prayers appropriately for our own good and for the good of others. Let's think about group prayer...



praying together

Whole books have been written on the subject of prayer in general but our focus in this paper is on prayer in the growth group context. To help us think through some of the issues let's look at the **who, when & how** of growth group prayer (for discussion on **what** we should pray together, see page 4).

who

In some groups only the leader prays, in other groups everyone prays. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to group prayer, an important principle is that no-one should be **forced** to pray but everyone should be **encouraged** to pray. Many groups have at least one reluctant pray-er and such people need to be lovingly accommodated. There may be many reasons that cause someone to shy away from praying out loud in the group context and in time these reasons should be lovingly explored in the hope that they might be overcome. In the meantime, it is important to remember that in the group, as one member prays, all are able to join in prayer and signify their agreement at the end.

when

How can we possibly need to talk about **when** we should pray in the group? Surely everyone knows: you pray at the beginning and you pray at the end. That's it! End of story! Well, yeah, maybe that's the way it is, but why? Who decided it had to be done that way? Here are some tips about when to pray in your group:

- any group member should feel the freedom to suggest prayer at any point in the meeting. This can be particularly helpful for resolving or moving on from a difficult issue
- prayer requires considerable concentration which can be lacking at the end of a meeting. Consider praying for each other first thing when minds are relatively fresh
- on the other hand, prayer should be our natural Christian response to hearing God speak to us in his Word. Time should be made after studying the Bible to converse together with our heavenly Father about the things he has been saying to us

In short, prayer is good at the beginning, during and at the end of our time together. No wonder the Bible writers so often talk about prayer as a constant, all day, every day sort of thing!

how

They say that variety is the spice of life and that a change is as good as a holiday, well both sayings apply to **how** we go about growth group prayer. Sometimes it will be appropriate for one member to lead the group in prayer while other times it will be important for every member of the group to have the opportunity to pray. If time is short, a group might break up into twos or threes to allow everyone to pray. If a significant issue facing one member has been the focus of the meeting then it may be appropriate to also focus prayer on that one person. The bottom line is that prayer should be tailored to the needs of the group and those needs will change from one meeting to the next.

prayer points

One reason that groups run out of time to pray is that so much of the time carefully allocated to prayer gets soaked up with sharing prayer points. Instead of being a quick exercise, going "around the circle" becomes the opportunity to unload about some trial from the week just gone. In fact at the end of such stories, it's often the case that no specific prayer request has been stated. At its worst, sharing prayer points is really just a spiritual-sounding euphemism for gossip! A few things can be done to make sure this doesn't happen.

Group members should:

- prepare prayer points in advance. Giving prior thought to the study questions AND prayer is a great way to serve the group. Think of your preparation as a gift that you bring with you to the group.
- aim to keep the length of prayer points to a minimum so that time for prayer can be maximized. In particular, it's worth considering "what am I actually asking/thanking/praising God for?"
- be encouraged to look for opportunities to share life outside the designated meeting time.

Believe it or not, it's even possible to pray together without sharing prayer points! In the group setting, as one prays we all pray, which means it's entirely appropriate for each member to pray for themselves, and overcome the need to share prayer points at all!

I know! What will they think of next!?



the real test

They say the real test of our character is who we are when no-one is looking. And it's true isn't it? We can all play to the crowd, or to the group as the case may be, but it's what we think and say and do when there's no-one "keeping us honest" that reveals the most about us. Time spent praying in the group is good but time spent praying for the group, outside of the sacred two hour timeslot, that's even better!

growth group profile

Faced with a mid-year growth group exodus, Jasmine was forced to think creatively about how to keep the girls in her growth group in touch while they were apart. Here's what she did...

Jasmine, how many people make up your growth group?

We have 12 in our group, 6 girls and 6 guys.

What proportion of the group would be regular email & internet users?

All but one, so over 90%!

So tell us, how have you sought to make use of technology to strengthen your group?

Well, The girls have started a Facebook group to keep in contact over the LONG semester break when we all go our separate ways. This group aims to discuss questions from the studies, share prayer points and give updates on what is happening in our lives, particularly on how we are living out the gospel. I'm hoping we'll continue using our Facebook group even after the break as a way of supplementing our face-to-face meetings.

Do you see any negative potential associated with this idea?

My big concern as I was setting this up was that we'd fall into the trap of foregoing REAL contact with each other—of exchanging care for convenience. It's much more convenient to just "shoot" off a quick email rather than taking the time to write and call a person. But my hope and prayer is that doing this will help our group to demonstrate more care and support for one another in our journey with Jesus.

praying apart

The biggest reason (humanly speaking) that we don't pray for each other as often as we should is that we simply forget to do it. Out of sight, out of mind, as the saying goes! So the best way to get better at praying for each other during the week is to invent ways of reminding ourselves and each other that we exist and that we need each other's prayers. Starting from the obvious and moving to the more creative, here is a long but far from exhaustive list of ways to jog your memory:

- use e-mail. E-mail is a terrible master but a great slave and we can put it to use for the gospel and to get each other praying. One group member can gather prayer points shared in the meeting and email them around to the rest of the group. Members can then "reply all" to add further prayer requests or to update the group on developments and answered prayer. If you choose to do this, make sure that you find ways to include any group members who don't have email access.
- use calendar software like Microsoft Outlook to schedule prayer into each day. Allocate each group member to a day and set up recurring appointments or reminders to pray for them. For the less technologically-reliant, just do the same thing using a wall calendar. You just have to be more disciplined because wall calendars don't beep annoyingly when you forget things!
- pray on your way to and from work. I know a guy who prays at red lights. Each set of lights is associated with a different person and if he has to stop, he prays for that person. It might even change your attitude to red lights! You could do the same thing with train stations or bus stops, allocating each station or stop to a different member of your group.
- carry a bunch of small stones in your pocket, each with a name written on it and pray for growth group members as you pull their stone out at random.
- It might feel weird at first, but you can even pray for each other over the phone or via email (just type out your prayer and hit send to the person you've prayed for)!

What other ideas can you think of?

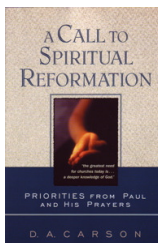
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Finally, when you pray for another group member, tell them about it—and not just **that** you prayed for them, but **what** you prayed for them too.



follow my example

Because we usually think of prayer as a “spiritual” and “personal” activity—something between us and God—we often make the mistake of thinking that there’s no such thing as a bad prayer. Not true! People can and do pray bad prayers all the time. So what then is a good prayer and how do we learn to pray good prayers? Let’s take a look at some of the ways that we can learn from God and from each other about how to pray good prayers...



Paul’s school of prayer

The Bible has so much to teach us about prayer. How can we learn its

lessons?

A great place to start is with Don Carson’s very helpful book, ‘A Call to Spiritual Reformation—Priorities from Paul and his Prayers’. This is a book that changes both the way we pray and what we pray. Too often our prayers are limping, fragile things that fail to be caught up in the great plans and purposes of God. Because of this, we lack motivation, passion and direction.

Don Carson’s solution is that we should pattern our prayers on the prayers of Paul. Chapter by chapter, he discusses the content and character of the Apostle’s prayers. Showing clearly the gospel priorities of Paul’s prayers, he calls us to make those priorities our own.

Against the backdrop of so many books on prayer that have a pre-occupation simply with technique, this book reminds us that the main issue of prayer isn’t *how* -to but *who* -to. When we engage with the God of the gospel of Jesus, we are given motivation and direction for our prayer from God himself.

prayer for our relationship with **God**

prayer for our relationships with **other believers**, especially those in our growth group

prayer for relationships within our **family/household**

prayer for our relationships with **unbelievers**

prayer for our relationships with the **whole church** in mission

what to pray for...

As we’ve already seen in the study on page 1, the Bible gives us some great guidance on the sort of things that should fill our prayers. First we need to appreciate that prayer is no more and no less than one half of an ongoing conversation between us and God. As God speaks to us in his Word, he is shaping us by it and filling our hearts and minds with his thoughts and concerns. Our prayers should reflect this. How rude it would be to pretend to have a conversation with someone but to interact with nothing they said! In the growth group context, this means that our prayers should show that we’ve been listening to God as we’ve studied the Bible together. And because of the activity of God’s Spirit among us and within us, we will be able to make connections between what God has said to us and what is going on in our lives. God’s Word is always relevant!



We also saw from Ephesians 6 that our prayers should be for each other and also for the spread of the gospel. In short, prayer should be about life and life is about relationships. The table in the sidebar outlines the five main relational spheres that make up the life of a Christian. In our growth groups we should use these five spheres as a template for what we pray about together. Any given meeting may focus on one or more of these spheres, but over time we should be covering all of them so that our prayers don’t become lopsided. Praying together is a great way of keeping each other accountable for our growth in each of these relational spheres.

...and what NOT to pray for

We all know that the Bible says we can pray about anything. But we also know that God wants us to pray according to his will. How often do we do the former at the expense of the latter!



One way that we’ve already seen to make sure we don’t pray outside of God’s will is to let his Word shape us and shape our prayers. Another thing that we can do is listen to the prayers of godly men and women we know and model our prayers on them. The important thing to listen for is not *how* they pray, their style and intonation and how round their vowels are, but the *content* of their prayers. In every area of the Christian life we should always be humbly searching for godly mentors who can lead us, even unknowingly, by their example.