

CHRISTIAN LIFE & WITNESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE & WITNESS CLASS

BGEA

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**Billy
GRAHAM**
Evangelistic Association
Always Good News.

**CHRISTIAN
LIFE &
WITNESS**

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use of BGEA's trained counselors.**

**Please do not print or otherwise
distribute this resource.**

Christian Life and Witness was originally prepared by Charlie Riggs, director of Counseling and Follow-Up for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association from 1957 to 1989.

CHRISTIAN LIFE & WITNESS

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PREFACE

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has taught Christian Life and Witness all over the world in preparation for evangelistic outreaches. As a result, thousands of Christians have been renewed in their relationship with Jesus Christ and equipped to effectively share their faith with others both in daily life and as volunteers during the event.

CONTENTS

LESSON ONE:	
THE EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LIFE	9
Reflection and Application	19
LESSON TWO:	
THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS	27
Four Witnessing Methods	33
LESSON THREE:	
FOLLOW-UP	41
Needs of a New Christian	47
Reflection and Application	51

APPENDIX	57
Scriptural Resources to Use in Counseling	58
Objections and Excuses	62
My Commitment Witnessing Method	67
Reflection and Application	72
Memorizing Scripture	73
Important Verses for Witnessing	77

LESSON ONE



THE **EFFECTIVE**
CHRISTIAN LIFE



Every Christian is responsible for living a life that glorifies God and points others to Him. But how can believers do that? Where do we start? What is involved in being an ambassador for God? Perhaps the best answer is found in the life of Philip, who introduced an Ethiopian official to Jesus Christ (see Acts 8:26–38).

1

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

2

Second, the Holy Spirit was vitally involved in Philip's life and ministry—*“Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go near and overtake this [man’s] chariot’*” (Acts 8:29). The Holy Spirit is our Teacher, our Guide, and the One who makes our lives attractive (Galatians 5:22-23) and gives us the boldness and courage to witness. Our responsibility is to be yielded to all the wonderful resources He gives. When Philip was led to the Ethiopian official, the man had already been prepared by the Holy Spirit.

3

Third, notice the important part Scripture itself plays in this account. The official was in the middle of reading Isaiah 53 and asked Philip to explain the passage. Philip took the chapter, which prophesies Jesus' crucifixion, and "*preached Jesus to him*" (Acts 8:35).

4

Fourth, there is another factor in this story—God's sovereignty. God saw to it that the official had a copy of Isaiah 53 and that Philip was there at just the right time to explain the passage. Not only does God work out details like these, He enables ordinary people to do extraordinary things.



Finally, the Bible—from cover to cover—is a record of God working mightily in and through the lives of regular people. Our responsibility is to place our faith in Him and trust Him to use us.

Grasping God's Word

Read the following passages to learn how to **hear**, **read**, **study**, **memorize**, and **meditate** on Scripture—and share God's Word with others:

- HEAR, Romans 10:17
 - READ, Deuteronomy 17:19
 - STUDY, Proverbs 2:1–6
 - MEMORIZE, Psalm 119:9, 11
 - MEDITATE, Joshua 1:8



Grasping God's Hand

These verses demonstrate that it is God at work in us—and not our own power—that gives us the boldness to share Him with others.

- GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY, Jeremiah 1:6–9
 - LIFE, Philippians 2:13
 - HOLY SPIRIT, Ephesians 5:18
 - SCRIPTURES, Ephesians 6:17
 - FAITH, Hebrews 11:6



The Victorious Christian Life

When we receive Jesus Christ into our lives, all the promises of God are available to us—and we realize these promises as we live as God intends. Since we aren't perfect, God has provided help to walk along His pathway and to recover when we falter.



THE RESTORATION ROAD

(GAL. 6:1, TLB)

3. FORGIVENESS
Psalm 32:5

2. TURN BACK
Proverbs 28:13

1. CONFESSION
1 John 1:9

GOD'S WAY



- PEACE
- JOY
- FULLNESS OF LIFE

MAN'S WAY



- FRUSTRATION
- UNHAPPINESS
- DEPRESSION
- GUILT
- ALIENATION
- EMPTINESS OF LIFE

The Scriptures below explain how God graciously gives us a way back when we sin and restores us to fellowship with Christ.

CONFESS—Agree with God and acknowledge your sins. Believe Him for forgiveness. *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9).

FORSAKE—Turn back to God’s way and by His grace, walk in obedience strengthened by the Holy Spirit. *“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy”* (Proverbs 28:13).

COMPASSION—God demonstrates His compassion by forgiving us. *“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness”* (Lamentations 3:22-23).



REFLECTION AND **APPLICATION**

Trusting God

The word *confidence* is taken from two words meaning “with faith.” In other words, we put our confidence in God when we trust Him to meet our needs and use us in His service. It’s thrilling to see how God uses people—even though we’re inadequate—for His purposes!

- Your concept of God affects everything you do. In your mind, who is God and what is your responsibility to Him?

- In the space provided, briefly summarize the key thought in the following verses:

- Isaiah 41:10

- 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

› Philippians 4:13

- Review “Grasping God’s Word” on page 14. What lesson can you learn from these verses?

- Rewrite Joshua 1:8 in your own words.

- Review the “Grasping God’s Hand” illustration on page 15 and answer the following questions:

- How can you experience more of God’s power?

- What is the secret of walking in and being filled with the Holy Spirit?

- Why is it so important to be filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit?

Love in Action

Love, the fruit of the Spirit, is clearly defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. The effectiveness of our witness for Christ will be greatly determined by our love for others.

- List the different aspects of love found in the passage above.

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

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

LESSON TWO



THE **CHRISTIAN**
WITNESS



So far, we've stressed personal preparation for a close walk with God. Let's review some questions.

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

Do you believe that the Holy Spirit will guide you, making you courageous, helping you in your work, and moving in the lives of those you speak to?

Do you believe that *“the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* (Hebrews 4:12)?

Do you believe that *“the gospel of Christ ... is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”* (Romans 1:16)—in other words, *“the battle is not yours, but God’s”* (2 Chronicles 20:15)?

If you can respond positively to those questions, then witnessing can be relatively easy. Here are some things to keep in mind.

1

First, remember your own life is a great part of your witness. You don't need to be perfect or mature before God can use you, but our witness is more effective when we obey the leading of the Holy Spirit and our lives are pleasing to Him.

2

Second, earn the right to be heard by sincerely listening to others. Jesus was a friend of sinners and often sat with them. Simply being a good listener can open doors.

3

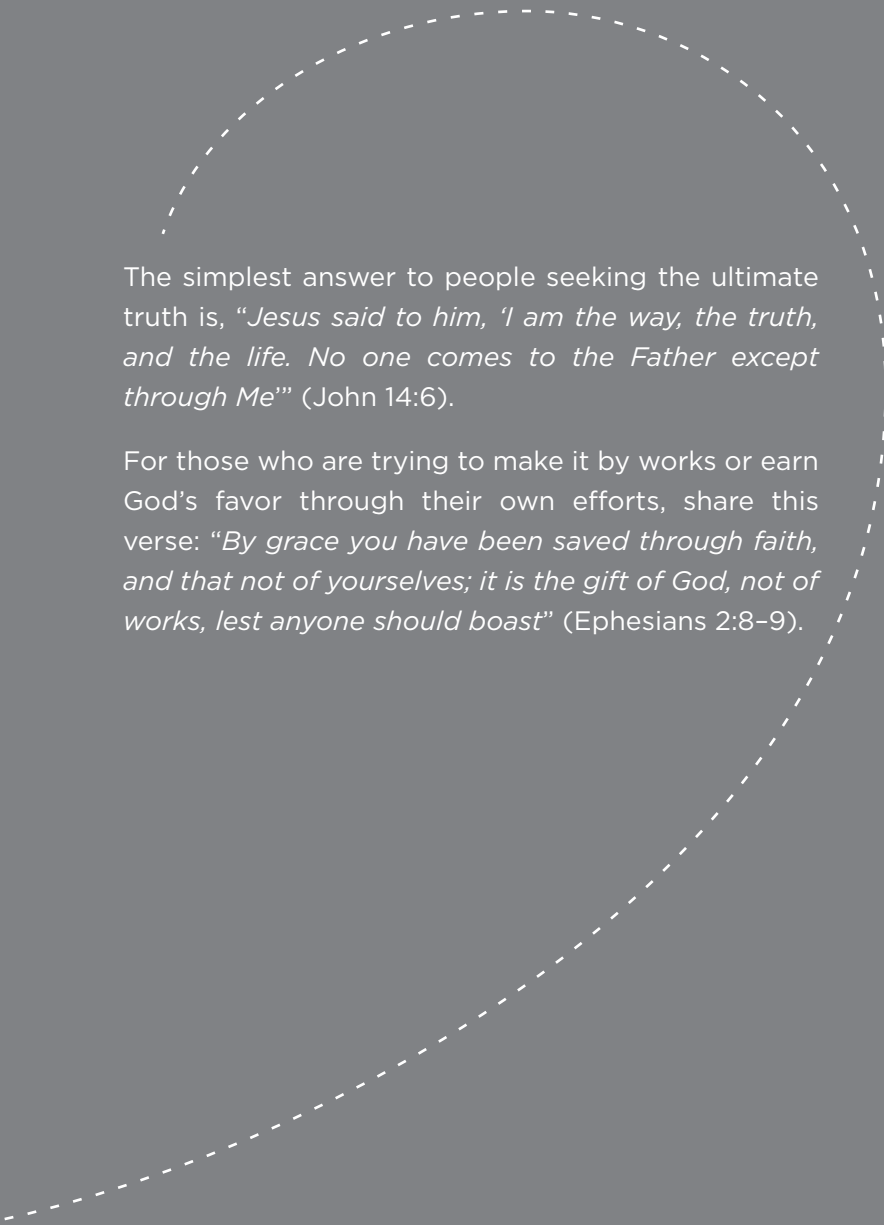
Third, remember that you aren't presenting a formula but a person, Jesus Christ. As you share Him, use Scripture thoughtfully and be sensitive to the needs of the individual person you're talking with.

4

Fourth, stress the love of God rather than the fact that we're sinners. Although we have to admit our sinfulness before we see our need for a Savior, the conversation doesn't have to start there.

5

Fifth, keep it simple. Don't make the mistake of thinking you need to offer an intellectual or philosophical argument in order to impress people. The Apostle Paul didn't let people get him off track—he stuck with the simplicity of the Gospel and saw results (1 Corinthians 1:22-24; 1 Corinthians 2:1-2).



The simplest answer to people seeking the ultimate truth is, *“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’”* (John 14:6).

For those who are trying to make it by works or earn God’s favor through their own efforts, share this verse: *“By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast”* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

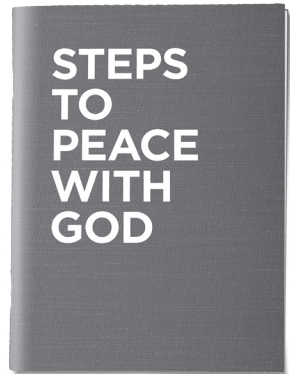


FOUR WITNESSING METHODS



Steps to Peace With God

You can easily share your faith in Christ using “Steps to Peace With God,” a tract that briefly outlines the Gospel. Tracts like this are effective because the content is provided for us, so they keep us on track—in other words, they help us efficiently share our faith without rambling. And the message lasts, because we can leave a printed copy of what we’ve just shared with the individual.



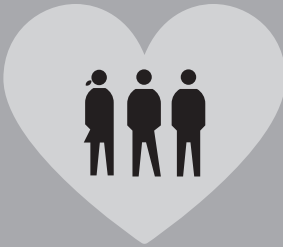


Bridge to Life

1

God's Plan: Peace and Life

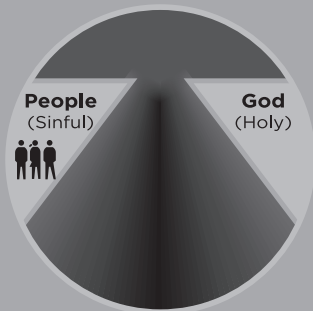
(John 3:16)



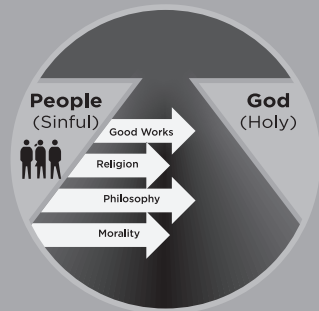
2

Our Problem: Sin Separates Us

(Romans 3:23; 6:23)



Separation from God

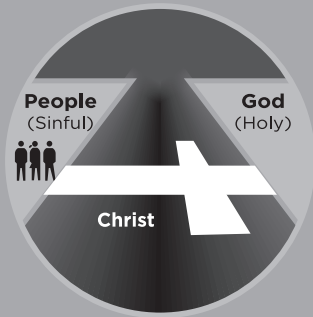


All our attempts
cannot reach God

3

God's Remedy: The Cross

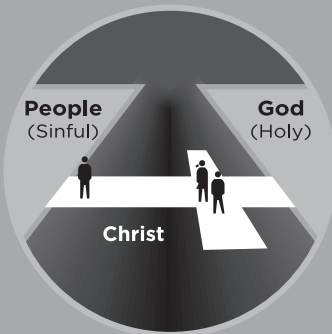
(Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:8-9)



4

Our Response: Receive Christ

(Revelation 3:20; John 1:12)





Three-Story Method

The three-story method is a simple, personal way to show others how your life is a product of the power of the Gospel. The first story is that of the person you're talking with. Listen to the individual's story to discover more about his or her life. Then, when appropriate, tell your story, beginning with a description of your life before Jesus Christ and following with an explanation of how you came to know Him. Finally, tell His story and how it changed your story.



THEIR STORY



YOUR STORY

HIS STORY



My Commitment

This method has been used by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for many years. It starts with a simple question to inquirers at events—“Have you come forward to personally accept Jesus as Lord and Savior?” Read about this method in detail in the appendix (see page 67).

My COMMITMENT

PLEASE CHECK ONE.

First-time decision
Have you made the *personal* decision to commit to Christ?
 I ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS MY LORD AND SAVIOR.
(Review pages 4 and 5.)

Recruitment or assurance
Accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior before, but
 I HAVE FAILED TO FOLLOW HIM AND WANT TO
REDEDICATE MY LIFE TO HIM. (Review pages 4 and 5.)
 I WASN'T SURE I HAD ETERNAL LIFE. NOW I KNOW
WITH CERTAINTY THAT JESUS CHRIST IS MY LORD
AND SAVIOR. (Review pages 4 and 5.)

Know more
 I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS
TO RECEIVE CHRIST. (Review pages 4 and 5.)

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____ Age _____
Email _____

Gender
 Male Female
Age
 0-12 13-17 18+
Did you or the person who invited you come with a church?
 Yes No

If yes, give church name and city.



LESSON THREE



FOLLOW-UP




Before we realize it, the opportunity to share the Gospel and pray with new believers will be upon us. We pray that through the faithful presentation of the Gospel, countless people will find new life in Jesus Christ—and we must consider what will happen to these men and women afterward. The Parable of the Sower in Mark 4 indicates that there will be some disappointing results but that we can also expect lasting commitments.

In other words, the decisions these people make are just the beginning. Follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as you pray and care for these new believers. God can use you as He equips them to be effective, mature Christians.

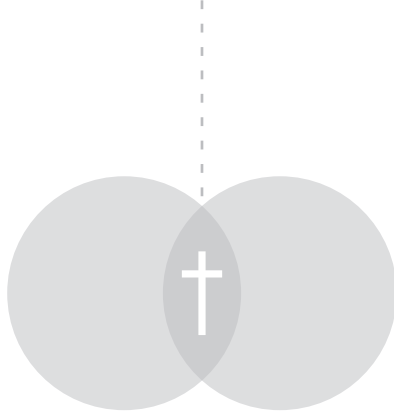
Follow-up has been defined as the process of giving continued attention to a new Christian until he or she is integrated into the church, discovers a place of service, develops his or her potential for Jesus, and helps build Christ's church. The Apostle Paul can be considered our pacesetter—his strategies were effective in his time and still work today.





Paul's love and concern for new Christians was extremely important. He was willing to become involved in their lives despite the cost (1 Thessalonians 2:8). One of the biggest obstacles to evangelism may be our unwillingness to give of ourselves and our time to new believers. Paul knew a great deal about the destructive powers of the devil (2 Corinthians 11:2-3), and his chief concern was for the growth and development of new Christians. His goal for them was spiritual maturity (Galatians 4:19; Colossians 1:28).

Through his letters, Paul kept in constant communication with churches and individuals, pouring out his love for them (1 Thessalonians 2:6-8) and instructing and correcting them (2 Corinthians 2:9). Paul's prayers revealed the desire of his heart and his longing to be with these believers, ministering to them and their needs. He prayed long and often for their growth (1 Thessalonians 3:10). When he couldn't be with them in person, he sent men he had trained and trusted.



The greatest secret of the growth Paul saw was that he returned personally to individuals and churches to meet with them and to teach them. His first mission with Barnabas launched from Antioch (Acts 13:2-3). Their second and third trips (Acts 15:36; 18:23) had the same purpose—to conduct meaningful, personal follow-up.

The precedent is clear—new Christians need care. That care should come from a fellow believer, preferably the one who shared Christ with him or her in the first place. The Holy Spirit ministers to new Christians, and the Bible provides food for growth, but it's vital that a believer is available to encourage good devotional habits and help provide for regular church attendance where the new Christian will be nurtured.

NEEDS OF A **NEW** CHRISTIAN



FEEDING—1 Peter 2:2

Living in Christ, based on the gospel of John, is designed for new believers. Those who have recently committed or recommitted their lives to Christ can read it on their own, but it's even better if they can first look through the book alongside a mature Christian. Take time to encourage the new believer by showing him or her how to use *Living in Christ*, and be prepared to answer questions. Make sure to set a time to meet in person or over the phone to discuss their progress.



PROTECTING—1 Peter 5:8



TRAINING—Colossians 2:6-7

One of the most important parts of discipling a new Christian is helping him or her learn to tell others about Christ. “Witnessing for Christ”—the fourth section in *Living in Christ*—guides new believers through witnessing and clearly explains how to help others understand the Gospel, whether with tracts or by sharing their personal testimonies.

Key to Effective Follow-Up

Consider the following questions and then read the provided verses.

Ability

or

Availability?

- Isaiah 6:8
- Acts 9:6

Christ

or

Self?

- Philippians 1:21
- Philippians 2:21

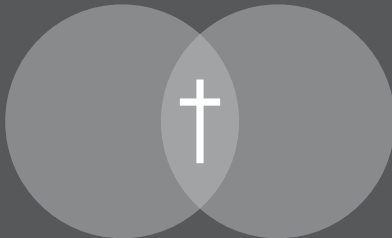
Multiplication

Multiply, Matthew 28:19

Offer your time and life to others,
Mark 3:14; 2 Timothy 2:2

Start with one, 1 Samuel 1:27

Team up, Colossians 1:28



REFLECTION AND **APPLICATION**

Follow-Up

- The Apostle Paul saw fruitful ministry in Thessalonica. Reference 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 and briefly summarize what took place.

- What was the secret to the growth of the church there?

- Why is follow-up so important?

Practical Principles in Follow-Up

Jesus Christ, our master Teacher, introduced a principle we can all practice. Although His ministry was largely a public one, He also set aside time to spend with just a few people—“*He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach*” (Mark 3:14). Throughout the gospels, there are accounts of Jesus and the twelve disciples, or some of the Twelve, meeting by themselves. Jesus used this time to share His life with them and to challenge them with the preaching of His Word.

Closely related to this principle is another—investing your life in another person. That was the challenge Paul left to Timothy: “*The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*” (2 Timothy 2:2). In other words, invest in others by passing on what you’ve learned.

- Briefly think through and list the principles that were used by Jesus and Paul.

- Using the multiplication principle on page 50, explain how you can maximize your impact for Christ.

You cannot take the place of a pastor, but with the enabling of the Holy Spirit and through faithful, consistent efforts, you can help individuals grow spiritually and become involved in church. Whenever possible, take the opportunity to invite the new believer in your life to Bible studies, conferences, church services, or get-togethers with fellow Christians. Consider teaching a class or leading a small group to share your life with others and invest in them.

- How can you be part of feeding, protecting, and training new believers? Think of three ways you plan to help.

Congratulations on completing the Christian Life and Witness training. We are grateful for you and your partnership, and we pray that God will use this training as He makes *“you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever”* (Hebrews 13:21). May the Lord bless your work for His kingdom!

APPENDIX



SCRIPTURAL **RESOURCES** TO USE IN COUNSELING

Afflictions

- › God can use in our lives. Psalm 119:67, 71, 75
- › God will deliver. Psalm 34:19

Anxiety

- › Is relieved through prayer. Philippians 4:6-7
- › Remember, God cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

Assurance

- › Eternal life is promised. John 3:16
- › You can be sure. 1 John 5:11-13

Comfort

- › Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Psalm 23
- › He will never forsake you. Hebrews 13:5-6

Discouragement

- › Don't give up. Galatians 6:9
- › God will help you and strengthen you. Isaiah 41:10

Emptiness

- › Christ can satisfy you. Psalm 107:8-9
- › He will fulfill you. Psalm 37:4-5

Forgiveness

- › Forgiveness and cleansing from sin is promised.
Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9

Guilt

- › There is no condemnation. Romans 8:1
- › No sin is too great to forgive. Isaiah 1:18

Judgment

- › Everyone is accountable. Romans 14:12; Hebrews 9:27

Loneliness

- › God's presence is promised. Hebrews 13:5-6
- › There is joy in God's presence. Psalm 16:11

Suffering

- › There is purpose in suffering. Hebrews 12:6-11
- › It can deepen our faith. 1 Peter 1:6-7
- › It is inevitable. 1 Peter 2:19-23
- › God's grace is sufficient. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Temptations

- › How to avoid them. Matthew 26:41
- › What causes failure. James 1:13-14

Victory

- › Our victory is in Christ. Philippians 4:13
- › Your inner resource. 1 John 4:4
- › Seek God's help. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Worry

- › God will provide for you. Philippians 4:19
- › Have faith in Him. Romans 4:20-21
- › Claim His promises. 1 John 5:14-15

OBJECTIONS AND EXCUSES

I'm too bad.

- › Hebrews 7:25
- › Isaiah 1:18

There's too much to give up.

- › Mark 8:36
- › 1 John 2:15-17

I'm afraid I wouldn't last.

- › 1 Peter 1:5
- › Philippians 1:6

I'm afraid of what others might think.

- › Matthew 10:32-33

Not now—some other time.

- › Proverbs 27:1
- › 2 Corinthians 6:2

I'm doing the best I can.

- › Ephesians 2:8-9
- › Isaiah 64:6

I'm not so bad.

- > James 2:10
- > Isaiah 53:6

God will not condemn anyone.

- > John 3:18, 36
- > Hebrews 9:27

How do I know that God will accept me?

- > John 6:37
- > 2 Peter 3:9

I can't understand the Bible.

- > 1 Corinthians 2:14
- > 2 Corinthians 5:7

Aren't there different paths to God?

- › John 14:6
- › Acts 4:12

I want to live the way I want.

- › Ecclesiastes 11:9
- › Proverbs 14:12

Following Christ costs too much.

- › Mark 8:36
- › Luke 18:29–30

Jesus wasn't really God.

- › Hebrews 1:3
- › John 10:30

It doesn't sound reasonable.

- › Isaiah 55:8-9
- › 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23

I'll take my chances.

- › Hebrews 10:31
- › Luke 12:16-21

I just don't believe in Jesus.

- › Romans 3:3
- › Acts 4:12

MY COMMITMENT **WITNESSING** METHOD

1. Introduce yourself and ask for the person's name.

2. Ask, “Have you personally accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior?”

- › If yes, review the “How to Receive Christ” information on page 4 of the *Living in Christ* book to make sure that the individual fully understands the commitment. Then encourage him or her to pray the prayer provided aloud with you.
- › Following the prayer, explain step-by-step the short lesson, First-time Decision, on page 5, holding the book so that the person can follow along.

- When you come to a question, be patient and allow time to answer. Let the individual write in the responses.
- Give the *Living in Christ* book to the person and suggest that he or she review the Scriptures later, especially when tempted or discouraged.

3. If the individual answers “no” to “Have you personally accepted Jesus Christ?” have him or her examine these other statements.

4. If the person checks “I have failed to follow Him and want to rededicate my life to Him,” then follow these steps:

- Review “How to Receive Christ,” and if he or she wants to personally accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, repeat the steps in statement 2.
- If he or she already knows Christ personally, turn to page 6 and review “Recommitment.” Help the individual understand the necessity of confessing his or her sins and how to be restored.

- › Explain step-by-step the lesson on rededication and make sure his or her commitment is confirmed by Scripture.

5. If he or she checks “I wasn’t sure I had eternal life. Now I know with certainty that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior,” then follow these steps:

- › Review “How to Receive Christ” and make sure he or she has a genuine understanding of the Gospel. If the individual wants to receive Christ, repeat the steps listed in statement 2.
- › If he or she already knows Christ personally, turn to “Assurance” on page 7. Many people lack assurance because they haven’t really understood the Gospel, they’ve trusted their feelings rather than in Christ, or they feel an area of failure has separated them from God.
- › Explain the lesson on page 7 step-by-step and make sure his or her assurance commitment is confirmed by Scripture.

6. If the person checks “I want to know more about what it means to receive Christ,” follow these steps:

- Review “How to Receive Christ,” on page 4, and if the individual wants to receive Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior, repeat the steps listed in statement 2.
- If he or she prays this prayer, turn to page 5 to review the lesson “First-time Decision.”
- If he or she does not pray to receive Christ, turn to page 8 and review “Know More.”

7. As you close out the counseling session, be sure that you have done the following:

- Completed the “My Commitment” card at the front of *Living in Christ*.
- Reviewed the memory verse cards inside *Living in Christ*.
- Encouraged further reading of the gospel of John.
- Emphasized the importance of attending church and sharing his or her faith in Christ with others.

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REFLECTION AND **APPLICATION**

Take time at home to prepare for the outreach:

- › Complete and review the questions found in this booklet.
- › Memorize important verses. Read more about memorization in the next section.
- › Practice using “Steps to Peace With God.”



MEMORIZING **SCRIPTURE**

1. Repeat the verse in this order: the topic, the reference, the verse itself, and then the reference again. The reference is often more difficult to remember than the verse, so it's important to repeat it twice. The reference is like a handle on a suitcase, enabling you to lift a complete portion from the Bible whenever needed.
2. The real secret of Scripture memory is review, review, review—use it or lose it.
3. Quote the verse aloud and pray over it, asking God to make the meaning clear and applicable to you. Memorize one phrase at a time, adding phrase by phrase until the entire passage—with reference—is committed to memory.

See “Memorizing Scripture” on page 73.

IMPORTANT VERSES FOR **WITNESSING**

1

MAN IS SINFUL

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23, NKJV

2

SIN HAS A PENALTY

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 6:23, NKJV

3

CHRIST PAID THE PENALTY

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8, NKJV

4

CHRIST IS OUR SALVATION

“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

John 10:9, NKJV

5

WE MUST RECEIVE HIM

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

John 1:12, NKJV

6

SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Ephesians 2:8–9, NKJV



2

SIN HAS A PENALTY

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 6:23, ESV

1

MAN IS SINFUL

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23, ESV

4

CHRIST IS OUR SALVATION

“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.”

John 10:9, ESV

3

CHRIST PAID THE PENALTY

“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8, ESV

6

SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV

5

WE MUST RECEIVE HIM

“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

John 1:12, ESV

