

evangelism

→ go, therefore

book one
1



→ Youth For Christ - Journey Series

Publishing information

This 'Journey Series' produced by Youth For Christ, is discipleship material equipping the next generation to take up leadership responsibilities now. Currently the series includes:

- **Kingdom Journey** → Booklets 1 to 6
- **Evangelism** → Booklets 1 to 2
- **Leadership** → Booklets 1 to 3
- **Social Involvement** → Booklets 1 to 2
- **Spiritual Warfare** → Booklets 1 to 3

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Strategic Focus →

YFC reaches young people everywhere, working together with the local church and other like-minded partners, to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus who lead by their godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the Word of God and prayer, passion for sharing the love of Christ, and commitment to social involvement.

A Child of God

"O Sovereign LORD," I said, "I can't speak for you! I'm too young!"

"Don't say that," the LORD replied, "for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you"

Jeremiah 1:6-7

Have you ever wondered why some people seem to have all the words in the world to talk about their encounter with God? Maybe when we see someone preaching, we find it easier to conclude that they have a special gift from the Lord.

Many new followers of Jesus think that evangelism is a special duty reserved for those who have been following Jesus for years. More often than not, we can find ourselves thinking that we need experience to be an effective preacher.

The most important qualification for telling others about Jesus is that we know him intimately ourselves and we are his followers and friend. We need to get to know Jesus before we can help others know him. We have to experience our own life with him and share how he has changed us.

Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called the ones he wanted to go with him. And they came to him. Then he selected twelve of them to be his regular companions, calling them apostles. He sent them out to preach,...

Mark 3:13, 14

As you see from the passage from Mark 3:13, 14, Jesus

**Called, appointed and then sent
those who were his followers to tell
their stories of Jesus.**

First and most importantly, our Lord Jesus desires to have a relationship with us. If we don't consider we are followers of Jesus and have never given our selves over to him but would like to do so now, what we need to do is pray. Here's an example of such a prayer:

*Our Father in Heaven,
I know I haven't believed or
had faith in you before
but I need your forgiveness and your peace.
I now believe that your Son Jesus
died on a cross, to pay the penalty
for my faithlessness, and came back to life.
I am so grateful that, because of this, I can be saved.
I want to serve you Jesus,
to join my story with your story forever,
so I ask you to come into my life,
to direct and take charge of me forever.
In Jesus' name I pray, Amen*

The Bible says, "If anyone acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will openly acknowledge that person before my Father in heaven." Matt 10:32. So as we tell others of our faith, Jesus will tell his Father about us.

Now if we have all made a commitment to follow Jesus and obey him, we can be ready to share his message to others. If we are open and available to Jesus, he can use us to help our friends and family know Jesus also. We don't need a lot of experience, or to be great speakers or debaters, we just need to be open to share our limited experience, listening to Jesus and being available for him to use.

**Your greatest ability is
your availability.**

Go, Therefore

Evangelism is a process of showing God's love to everyone by letting them know about Jesus. As a follower of Jesus, we are to love the people around us just like he does and want them to experience his great kindness to them. Matthew 28:18-20 is one of the most well known passages in Scripture that commissions us to make followers (disciples) of Jesus.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

2 Timothy 4:5 tells us to do the work of an evangelist and we get our understanding of what this involves most clearly from the New Testament. However, God has been showing himself to people since he made us. He has done this through creation, specially appointed people called prophets, his Son Jesus, his Spirit the Bible and even us.

Our privilege, as a Jesus follower, is to be a channel of God's love to the rest of the world so that they may get to know Jesus and have him live in them. This is evangelism.

Evangelism is sharing the good news! The good news of Jesus Christ is such good news because we don't have to be good for it to be available to us. Good things are supposed to happen if you are good, but with Jesus, even when we are as bad as we think we could ever get, he still loves us. We can all receive his forgiveness and life forever if we believe and obey him. The good news is that Jesus provides the entire solution to our problems of separation from God.

Reasons to Share

Because we love family and friends

There are always people in our lives that we love deeply and hope that we can be together with them forever. This can be true if these people also know and follow Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

But if these friends and family do not follow Jesus, or share his saving grace, it's possible they will never experience the joy of knowing him and be eternally separated from us when we die. This is very sad, it's like the devil has blinded their eyes and wants to keep them from God's goodness.

For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard...

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 3:23, 6:23

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Love must be our main motivation. It is a reflection of the Father's motivation. Love moved God to save us and, in response, we worship him through our loving service; through mission to those around us.

Which of the following phrases best describes your motivation for service through mission?

- Those around me are not experiencing God's love, they seem to lack an inner peace and certainty.
- Those around me are missing God's help and they could bring glory to God if they believed.
- I love my family and friends so much I would die for them if it meant they could know the Lord Jesus and bring glory to God through my sacrifice.
- There is so much need in the world and my family and friends could help bring peace and hope to our community through Jesus if they knew and followed him.

1. Write the names of three people you know whom you would like to introduce to Jesus.
2. Share some of the ways our world and the devil blinds us and our friends to the love of Jesus.

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him?
And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him?
And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?
Romans 10:14

**Because we love God...
We value the gospel over everything.**

We recognize the great value of the gospel, its depth and richness. It's more precious than gold.

Jesus is this gospel; his story, his life and his death. More precious than gold is a friend who would lay down their life for us when we didn't even seem to care.

Read: John 21:15-17

3. What did Jesus ask of Peter?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

4. What were Peter's responses?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

5. What did Jesus tell him to do?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

6. What did you learn from this passage?



Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

“Sometimes, we find it hard to share our faith and lots of obstacles come in the way. We don't share our faith with others sometimes because....”

- Our friends aren't interested.
- Our friends already believe in God.
- We don't know how.
- We are embarrassed to talk about Jesus
- Faith is a personal issue.
- We're too busy.
- Our life is messed up and we couldn't be real.
- We're worried we might lose our friends.
- Satan won't let us.
- We're afraid our friends will laugh at us.
- Maybe I'm...



God has provided **resources** to help us overcome these obstacles:

- **The Holy Spirit** → Matthew 10:20
- **Prayer** → Colossians 4:2-6
- **The Bible** → 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- **Fellowship of Believers** → Matthew 18:19-20
- **Love** → Colossians 3:12-15



Note: When we think of resources, we may think of money, materials, personal belongings, etc. However, resources are not only material possessions. The Lord provides spiritual resources for believers to overcome obstacles.

**Therefore, I consider it a privilege to
share the good news.**

We loved you so much that we gave you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too. 1 Thessalonians 2:8

7. How can we begin to share with our friends about Jesus? What do we have that we can share?

8. Think about and write down some personal stories where lives have been touched by Jesus.

Have a look at these stories, they may be more dramatic than ours, but our God still uses us in the same way to help others know him.

a. Acts 9:26-38

b. Philemon

c. Acts 16:25-34

Can we pray this prayer now?

Dear God,

After thinking and talking about sharing, I believe you want me to share your wonderful news with others. Like Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, you have given me the privilege of being your ambassador to share with others my journey with your wonderful message! Thank you that your Spirit will show me the right time and give me loving actions, courage and the right words.

I understand my responsibility is to let you use me in the life of my friends,
.....(fill in the names of our friends).

I will trust you for what ever happens and the results are yours.

Your ambassador,

Assignment

When sharing our faith, it is important that we understand what we truly believe and what we know to be true. Take some time to write down:

→ What do I believe about God?

→ What do I know to be true?

→ What am I not so sure about?

→ Who can I share with to help me understand the things I don't know?

Prayer time

- Pray that the Lord will help us to understand what we truly believe and ask him to show us areas where we have a wrong understanding.
- Ask the Lord for appropriate times to share the Good News with our friends and family.
- Praise the Lord that we have Jesus in us who has all wisdom and Truth and has set us free.

Memory verse

My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9

Boldness in **Evangelism**

Being different and on our own is always a scary place to be. God has made us to live in communities and if the relationships around us break down, we become frightened and vulnerable. Sharing about Jesus can put us against those around us, so 'boldness' can be a very real need.

Read: Acts 16:16-24 and 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2

When we look up the word "*boldness*" in the Oxford Dictionary it says, "*courageous, enterprising, confident, and vigorous.*" Most of us think of bold people as unafraid, pushing forward, not embarrassed by anything, or outgoing. The type of person that might come to mind is a fighter, military leader, controversial speaker, common street thief, or a salesman that insists that you buy their product. We don't think of the quiet grandmother or the shy, thirteen-year-old girl as bold, but they can be.

Why do we require boldness?

People talk of boldness in evangelism; the following are some reasons why:

- We need boldness if we are to be different to those around us. Jesus said in Matthew 5:15 that no one lights a lamp and then hides it under a bowl, rather they put the lamp out where it can shine and show the way around the room. This means that we are to 'stand out' in our good works and actions, our love for the unlovely people, for justice and peace. This can be very hard.
- We need boldness so that we can identify with the Lord Jesus openly. Matthew 10:32-33 says, "*If anyone acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will openly acknowledge that person before my Father in heaven. But if anyone denies me here on earth, I will deny that person before my Father in heaven.*" It is a serious matter to deny the Lord before others, so at times we are called to be bold.

- We can also be called to be bold and confident (not arrogant) so that people around us will know that we serve a God who we believe is alive and at work in us. If we become timid and withdraw, the message we send may be that our God is not big enough to help us.
- With Jesus' boldness in us we can be confident because Jesus is the Truth. The Bible says in Proverbs 28:1, *"The wicked run away when no one is chasing them, but the godly are as bold as lions."* Many times we may be afraid of witnessing because we feel we are not good enough; we become afraid of people, rejection, ridicule, failure, etc. We need, at these times, to remember that Jesus is bold within us. His righteousness gives us the strength to stand.
- We need boldness because people are important and loved and were so precious that Jesus gave his life for them. We therefore must declare the truth about God's great kindness to a loved world.

The boldest person I have ever known is my grandmother. She has been a simple housewife for most of her life. She has held no great position of honor, or been asked to do any mighty task. Yet she has been a bold witness for Christ each and every day of her saved life. Most of us, including preachers and evangelists, go to the grocery store to buy food. When my grandmother goes to the store, the cashier and other customers get saved. Why? Because, she is not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When the plumber comes to my house, he fixes the pipes and then leaves. When he comes to her house, he fixes the pipes and then leaves as a *"new creature in Christ"*. Why? Because, she is not ashamed of whom she follows...Jesus Christ.

-Jack Wilson

Alexander the Great had a soldier in his army that bore his own name, but the man was a great coward. The Emperor, enraged at his conduct, justly said to him, *"Either change your name, or learn to honor it."* Such could be said to many Christians today.

How do we acquire boldness?

Truly we may want to be bold, but we find ourselves weak and afraid of sharing our faith, afraid of being rejected by being ridiculed, afraid that we might make mistakes and afraid that the person we are sharing with might reject us and our Lord Jesus. Many times we are afraid of failure. So the issue is *“How do we trust Jesus in our weakness?”*

We can look at examples of great bravery and courage where followers of Jesus were prepared to even die for their faith in Jesus. For example the story of Stephen and many examples of Paul.

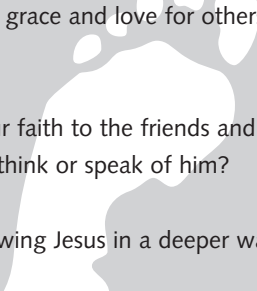
Read Acts 7:51-60 and 2 Corinthians 11:16-33.

They prayed for courage and God heard their prayers directly and they were able to speak the word of God with boldness. It was the Spirit of Jesus in them that gave them their strength. So when we feel inadequate, we can pray for God to give us his boldness and he will respond.



Are we 'on fire' for Christ?

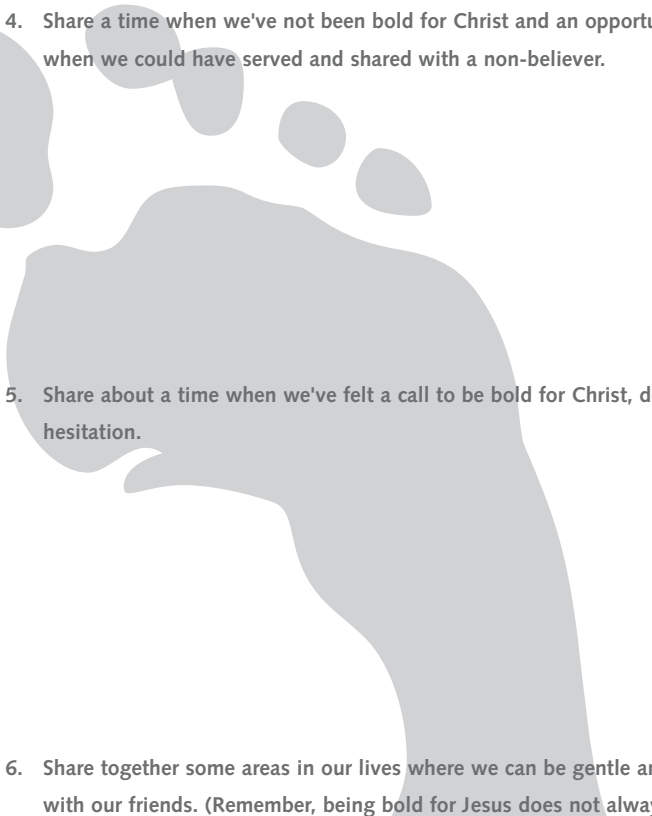
As followers of Jesus, we are called to be "on fire" for Christ. Not warm, but burning. In fact, if we are just "lukewarm", Jesus says in Revelations 3:16 that he will "*spit us out of his mouth.*" It's easy to get comfortable and safe but we are called to be followers - always on the move and available for Jesus.

- 
- Are we constantly growing in grace and love for others and experiencing peace in Jesus daily?
 - Do we openly share about our faith to the friends and community we live with on a daily basis, or do we rarely think or speak of him?
 - Are we passionate about knowing Jesus in a deeper way and sharing what we are discovering in our life?

Every day brings us a new challenge to follow Christ. We can fail at times and run from our allegiance however, as we grow 'in Christ' we begin to see our failures can become the building blocks for a much stronger and bolder life with Jesus; what will we do tomorrow when our challenge comes?

1. The next time our friends are making fun of someone, will we quietly laugh along with what they say, or will we boldly stand up for the victim of their cruelty?

2. In our conversations with friends, will we shy away from sharing Jesus when the Holy Spirit gives us the opportunity, or will we boldly speak of what he has done for us?

- 
3. We are with our friends at a movie and the film is not honouring Christ. Are we going to sit quietly and watch, take a risk and remove ourselves from that environment or debrief the film with our friends clearly stating our beliefs and values? (List 3 other situations like this one, where we can be bold about Jesus through using things that may come up in a normal day.)
 4. Share a time when we've not been bold for Christ and an opportunity has come and gone when we could have served and shared with a non-believer.
 5. Share about a time when we've felt a call to be bold for Christ, despite our nervous hesitation.
 6. Share together some areas in our lives where we can be gentle and bold in sharing Jesus with our friends. (Remember, being bold for Jesus does not always mean using words.)

Stories That Count

There are many ways of sharing the Good News with others. Over the next 3 lessons we will look at a helpful way to share our faith. It's about making 3 important God connections through 3 different stories.

1. **Between God's Story and My Story**

2. **Between My Story and Your Story**

3. **Between God's story and Your Story**



Please remember there are no particular formulas for witnessing. There is no perfect way to present the Gospel. Your best tools will always be listening, prayer and love.

The Holy Spirit is already working in the hearts of the people we want to share with. Remember the character of God our Father - he is PURSUING us. He is also pursuing the people we love, share and live with. He will answer our prayers for them, providing opportunities for us to serve and share Christ.

“The Holy Spirit does not make us witness, the Holy Spirit enables us to witness.”

We cannot make converts out of people. That is not our job. Our role is to help our friends become interested in finding out about Jesus and then present the Good News as appropriately and helpfully as we can, letting the Holy Spirit do the work of conversion. Trust God for this important job.

As we pray for wisdom and courage, we will be committing ourselves to the Holy Spirit so that the Spirit can work through us. We must ensure everything we do and say is out of love for the person to whom we are witnessing. Pride, judgment, exaggeration or thinking we know better than them, will all spoil our story. Any corrupting of our methods will corrupt the message. This is a time for us to act purely out of love for God's plan.

Between God's Story **and My Story**

The Bible is full of stories. Our Lord was a master-storyteller as the parables show. The word "parable" is the translation of two Greek terms that mean 'to throw along side of.' What is involved here is a story created to be thrown along side of a true-life situation to drive home the central point the storyteller is trying to make. As Jesus demonstrated, a good picture is worth a thousand words that slip by . . . (Frank H. Seilhamer)

My Story; the story I have experienced in my own life, is like a true-to-life parable that is "thrown along side of" God's Story, to drive home the central point the storyteller is trying to make. In other words, My Story is sharing a part of my journey in coming to know Christ and how he is changing me.

People are looking for honest relationships. They are not interested in just hearing about our successes, but want to hear about our failures too; not only our gains but our losses; not only our pleasures but our pains; not only our hopes but our disappointments. When we share all sides of our story, we become more real. It isn't selling something but sharing together.

People are looking for love and acceptance, not just words. It's not what we say that matters. It's what we do that counts!

People are looking to see our faith lived out in front of them.

People are looking for those who live the life; whose life reflects what they are saying. They want to see Jesus in us! The fruit of the Spirit.

People are looking for Jesus. They may not realize they are, but that's why the Good News is such good news. They find that Jesus' story is what they have been looking for all their life.

The first step then in seeking to reach out to others is to first step towards Jesus.

During Jesus' three-year ministry he called many to 'follow' him. But just hours before his passion, Jesus gave his disciples a new word to illustrate their relationship with him. This word went beyond the simple request to follow, Jesus said to his disciples "Abide in me" John 15:1-11

So, let's see 4 of the ways Jesus demonstrated a passionate longing for his Father and his Father's Story.

1. He demonstrated passionate urgency for God in his prayer life (Luke 5:16 reminds us that "Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer.")
2. He demonstrated passionate urgency for God in his ability to say no to ministry opportunities for the sake of time with his Father (Matthew 14:22 - 27 immediately after feeding the crowd of five thousand Jesus went up into the hills by himself to pray.)
3. He demonstrated passionate urgency for God in his surrender and suffering to the Father's good will. (Matthew 26:39 "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine.")
4. He demonstrated passionate urgency for God in his desire to please the Father and trust him above all else. (In Luke 23:46 Luke says that at the place called "the Skull", Jesus offered himself wholly to the Father for the Father's purposes and glory as well as for our healing and redemption.

Abiding in Christ:

Becomes our primary preoccupation through:

1. **Surrender** Proverbs 3:5 - 6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths."
2. **Scripture Study** 2 Tim. 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do."
3. **Silence/solitude** Luke 5:16 "But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer." At times he withdrew with his disciples and other times he withdrew alone.

The demands of our personal life and our ministry will inevitably distract us from our most important relationship. All the spiritual activity on the planet cannot make up for an intimate friendship with Jesus Christ. In fact, he says that any activity without a deep connection to him is worthless.

Assignment

→ Spend some time in quiet reflection looking at some of the passages we have looked at and write down thoughts and feelings that arise

→ Share together what might be some implications of surrendering to Jesus

→ Write down some examples in our lives where God's story has overlapped and been part of our story

Prayer **time**

- Ask the Lord to guide us as we honestly think through our stories.
- Pray for the Spirit to give us opportunities to grow 'in Christ'
- Praise Jesus for the rich life and experiences he is giving us and for saving us!

Memory **verse**

Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if you are asked about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But you must do this in a gentle and respectful way.¹ Peter 3:15

Between My Story **and Your Story**

We all share a desire to be heard. Because so much of life is busy and noisy, we often live in a world of isolation and secrets. Most of us want someone to listen in a safe, non-judgmental way. Most people are looking for friends who have enough time and patience to hear their story, friends who won't change their mind or lessen their acceptance based on stories or confessions.

It is important in our relationships with people that they do not perceive themselves as the object of some kind of evangelistic goal, but see themselves in a relationship that is built on the value of the relationship itself i.e. respect, mutual trust, shared experiences and equal status.



There are two helpful skills for making the second important story connection: My Story to Their Story.

Skill 1 - Disclosing My Story

Disclosing My Story involves two parts

A) First, Being Real

B) Second, Depending on Jesus

1. God may not want us to tell the whole story at one time. He may want us to share it over a period of days or even weeks. This is why a continued relationship is so important. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide us through our conversations.
2. Does our lifestyle honour God and attract others to him? Share together about this, using Hebrews 12:1-3 to help our discussion.

How we live our life is a testimony to those who observe us. Live a life worthy of the calling of Christ.

Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Ephesians 4:1

Skill 2 - Discovering Their Story

Discovering Their Story can be boiled down to one word: AVAILABILITY and this also has two parts

A) First, Love people

B) Second, Listening well (in order to hear and understand)

To become a better listener there are four helpful principles we can use:

1. THE ONION PRINCIPLE.

Create a safe and trusting environment by opening up My Story one layer at a time, like an onion. People don't share their story when it is unsafe.

2. THE QUESTION PRINCIPLE.

- Ask questions without question marks, for example:

Tell me about your family

I'd like to hear more about that

Tell me how that's working out for you.

Ask tough questions gently. Some secrets are too scary to tell right away.

3. THE AIRTIME PRINCIPLE.

Some people listen only long enough to think of something to say. Put two such people together and you've got major competition for airtime: Always give people time to speak and be heard

4. THE EMPATHY PRINCIPLE.

Listen with empathy by: Maintaining eye contact. Leaning toward the person.

Using touch when appropriate. Being in a state of prayer and Learning to unwrap the gifts in others, i.e. identify and express specific value in others.

Place all our confidence in God and let our Christian practice strengthen and encourage us. The confidence others detect in us will be a testimony of what the lord is doing in our lives.

Assignment

Spend some time sharing about the various ways we might be able to listen to our friends and hear their stories.

→ List some possible ways we might be able to care for and serve our friends.

→ List the likely outcomes of our friends getting to know us better.

Use the space on the following pages to write out our stories. Our stories are not just talking about how we came to know Jesus - but what it's like walking each day through the circumstances of our lives with him. We can talk about answered prayer, strength or struggles in our trials, guidance in decisions etc. We can share about today's journey with Jesus. If more room is required, use the following pages for notes and write the stories in a different notebook. A few things to remember as you write:

- Could another person get to know the real me from these stories - are they true and real?
- Is there a connection between these stories and our relationship with Jesus?
- Do the stories show that God is doing something in our lives continually?

Prayer time

- Spend some time thanking the Lord for unexpected opportunities to share the Gospel with those around us.
- Pray that the Lord will help us identify opportunities to share the Good News with those who cross our paths.

Memory verse

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

1 Corinthians 15:58



Between God's Story **and Your Story**

Discerning 'God's Story in Your Story' is another way of saying we are introducing our friends to the possibility that God is already present and working in their lives. There are many ways that God may use us to help them discover this, and today we are going to look at 4 stages in the development of our relationships that may help us as we try to be available to our Father.

- 1. Discerning God's footprints in people's stories**
- 2. Continuing the process of deepening dialogue with others**
- 3. Discerning where we can meet people's practical needs**
- 4. Following Christ and a focus on prayer**



We are not offering 4 steps; these are four stages that can contribute to the introduction of our human friend to our heavenly friend. Sometimes the stages may occur simultaneously or not in sequence. At other times the process might occur in the order we are discussing. Sometimes it happens in one conversation; sometimes it takes years of dialogue. The point is - there is no formula.

1. *Discerning God's footprints in people's story*

Looking for doorways that can open a person to faith can often help them to begin a journey. These doorways could be something like observing:

- A spiritual sensitivity in the person
- A desire to experience spirituality and exploration in the person
- A longing to be different or for change in the person
- That after a mistake the person wants to start over again

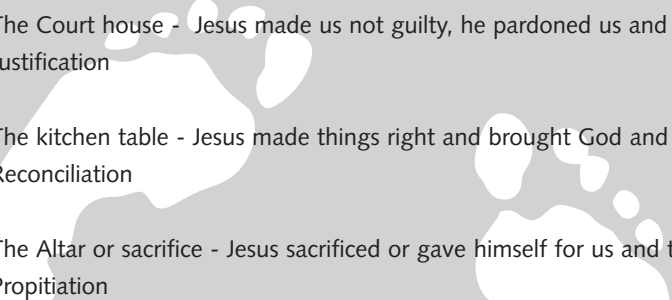
Discerning doorways is like uncovering needs, but we do this in a gentle and respectful way, just as Peter warns us in I Peter 3:15-16,

2. *Continuing the process of deepening dialogue with others*

As we listen to their story and think about parallels and examples where it might fit into Jesus' story, there are several things to keep in mind when considering sharing parts of the Gospel with them:

- You don't have to do it all at once - in fact if you are true to the Gospel, you CAN'T do it all at once!
- You don't have to do it the same way every time - in fact if you are true to the Gospel, you CAN'T do it the same way every time!
- You don't have to have all the answers - in fact if you are true to the Gospel, you really CAN'T have all the answers.

There are stories that are like word pictures or life parables, metaphors that can help us in sharing aspects of the Gospel. These word pictures don't explain the entire Gospel but they can speak into the heart of the person in their present situation or needs. They can even help a person to get some understanding of the cross of Christ, which is the central and most compelling aspect of the Gospel story. For example:

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1. The Market place or shopping centre - Jesus paid for and bought our lives, He Redeemed us
 2. The Court house - Jesus made us not guilty, he pardoned us and it's called Justification
 3. The kitchen table - Jesus made things right and brought God and us together by Reconciliation
 4. The Altar or sacrifice - Jesus sacrificed or gave himself for us and this is called Propitiation

Just about all of us can relate to each of these word pictures or metaphors somehow. We've all been to the shops; many of us have been in court or know someone who has. We all relate to the kitchen and family arguments that require reconciliation and we've all had to sacrifice or give up something. There are many stories that show examples of word pictures of the gospel that can come up in our normal conversation and experiences of life. We, like Jesus, are able to use our world and context to explain the richness of the Gospel with images such as;

- **Conflict/ Fighting/ Victory/Defeat experiences**
- **New birth/ new life/family membership experiences**
- **Washing/ cleaning/ renewing/ being whole experiences**
- **Travelling/journey/searching/following experiences**

3. Discern where we can meet people's practical needs

One of the most fundamental aspects of the Gospel message was the way Jesus walked among the people with compassion healing and meeting needs. Jesus was a 'Healer' Luke 5:13 he was 'Salvation' Luke 19:9, he was the 'Forgiveness of Sins' Luke 5:20 and it was all an integral part of his message to humanity. In the same way if we are not meeting needs and caring for the poor and outcast of our communities we are not representing the Gospel as Jesus saw it.

This is perhaps our greatest challenge as followers of Jesus. Our faith and evangelism does not start and stop with talking but with action. With repeated acts of compassion born from a deep love and appreciation of God's world and his people, we can bring light into seemingly hopeless and dark situations.

4. Following Christ and a focus on prayer.

We get back to our beginning and abide in Jesus. The challenge for all of us is to help others want to know Jesus and inspire them to ask questions and become excited about faith.

One of the most powerful attitudes that help to facilitate these things happening is 'Thankfulness' or 'Gratitude'. Appreciating where we are, and who we are with, and being thankful about it, helps us be an example for others.



Assignment

→ Share together some stories from our lives that can relate to what Jesus has done on the cross for us all.

→ Think together about how we might be able to meet the practical needs of those Jesus has called us to serve

Prayer time

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to learn the Scriptures and things necessary to share the Gospel.
- Ask the Lord to direct us to those whom he would have us serve and share Jesus and his precious Gospel.

Memory verse

But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12



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