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## BASIC FOLLOW-UP

### POSTCARDS FROM CORINTH • CHAPTER EXCERPT

Postcards is the Users Guide for personal discipleship. While The Compass provides content for one-on-one discipleship, Postcards tackles the practice, philosophy, and difficult challenges that are a part of discipleship.

Here, for example, is a partial list of the topics covered: Habitual Sin, Authority Issues, Christian Counseling, Fasting, Theological Conflicts, Coaching Through Trials, Challenging to Conferences, Confronting Sin, Ministering Cross-Culturally, The Role of Faith, Difficulties in Sharing the Ministry of the Spirit, Selection, Conflict Resolution, Why Does Leadership Matter, Conducting Basic Follow-up... Postcards contains 47 articles on all critical issues of discipleship.

POSTCARDS FROM CORINTH



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# Jump Start

## On Basic Follow-up

Imagine going to foreign country. In preparation for your trip you'd have two basic options to learn the language. One would be a thirty-day-crash-course-teach-me-how-to-say-bathroom curriculum. The other option would be to invest several years and really learn how to speak the language.

In the world of ministry there is a similar distinction made between discipleship and what is commonly called “Basic follow-up.” Basic Follow-up is not a commitment to discipleship for the duration of life or even college life. For a variety of reasons, you may rarely meet with the individual again after you have gone through follow-up. Follow-up is the term used for grounding someone in the essentials of the Christian life, and giving them the basic tools and teaching they need to move forward in their faith.

Whenever you see someone come to Christ or someone new gets involved with your Bible study it is a good idea to initiate Basic Follow up, making sure their foundation has no major cracks. In Campus Crusade, Basic Follow-up is comprised of the following topics: assurance of salvation, confession and dealing with sin, prayer and how to have a quiet time, walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, and principles of spiritual growth.

You could argue that other topics should be included and you could certainly feel free to add them. For example in some countries, demon possession actually makes it to the top five. But if a person understands and applies these principles you have given them the basic ingredients to be able to cook for themselves (have a personal walk with God).

### GET BACK

In C. S. Lewis's book *The Screwtape Letters*, the demon Wormwood learns lessons on human temptation from his uncle Screwtape. He is advised that if the man begins to ponder spiritual things too deeply it may have devastating effects and the man may become serious about his commitment and faith. A vexing problem for a young demon. The uncle advises him to bring him outside where the reality and busyness of life will distract his thoughts and the critical moment will be lost—nothing like a loud honk-

ing bus to bring one back to the material world.

If a person has trusted Christ or had agreed to go through Basic-Follow-up it can be a mistake to schedule the appointment for a week later though this is the common practice. This gives Satan seven days to steal the seeds that have been sown, arouse skepticism and distrust and to distract them from the choices they are beginning to make. Try to get back in touch with them in the next couple days. Many decisions for Christ actually take place in the first follow-up appointment, even if they have expressed a decision or claim to be a Christian already. This first appointment is really a matter of life and death and you need to be persistent in getting together because Satan will be persistent in keeping you apart.



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## FOLLOW-UP MADE SIMPLE

*Life Concepts* takes the foundational Christian concepts mentioned above and puts them into five lessons each centered on the study of one passage. All of the questions are right on the sheet. You don't have to be a genius or even a very mature Christian to share the *Life Concept* series ([campuscrusade.com](http://campuscrusade.com)). These are the lessons

*Stepping from Uncertainty to Confidence* (teaching assurance of salvation)

*Stepping from Feelings of Unworthiness to Forgiveness*

(teaching forgiveness and confession)

*Stepping from Being Unable to Empowered* (teaching about being filled with the Spirit)

*Stepping from Being Unprepared to Equipped* (Walking in the Spirit)

*Stepping from Being Undeveloped to Maturity* (principles of Spiritual Growth)

## FIRST MEETING

First appointments can be kind of weird, and the person might think you're kind of weird (who goes around teaching Bible lessons?). The apostle Paul says that he, "became all things to all men," meaning he sought to find common ground with those that he ministered to. If you meet them in their room (which you should as there's a better chance they'll show up) scan around their room and look for some connection points, some non-spiritual issue on which to shoot the breeze. This cultivates a relationship and communicates that you are a normal person who also listens to music and watches movies.

Keep the time short—forty minutes, maximum. You could painlessly get talking and before you know it an hour and twenty minutes have gone by. No, she probably didn't mind, but next week when she must decide if she'll be around when you stop by, she'll remember that meeting could take up to an hour and half, and rationalize that she just doesn't have the time. Keep it to forty minutes.

## BRING A GIFT

  
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You can ratify their decision to follow Christ by bringing some kind of “gospel” gift to the appointment. I often bring a cheap journal and a Bible. In-between follow-up appointment two and three, I talk about having a Quiet time, suggesting they use the journal I brought to write down their thoughts, and bring mine as an example. A new Bible and journal is a tangible reminder that they have made a decision, and that their life is now different.

## BRING A FRIEND

Depending on where the student lives I try to bring another Christian student with me who lives somewhere near by. I’m not thinking that they’ll become best buds or tennis partners, but knowing there are other students who have made the same decision, who live close by, serves a purpose.

## A BASIC SKILL

General Electric Phone Company: this is how I was taught to remember the order of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. In the second or third follow-up, one of the most helpful things I have observed someone do is to quickly teach a system where a new disciple, by the end of the appointment, can learn the names and order of the New Testament books. This information makes them feel that they know their way around the Bible, and that they have learned a tangible skill.

## AFTER FOLLOW-UP

You have pursued them for six weeks, and have done them an enormous service for which they can never repay: you have grounded them in their faith. But before investing more of your precious few ministry hours, you need to look for them to take a step toward you and God. During follow-up you should ask them to attend a weekly meeting or Bible study. If they’ve come, great. But now, as you come to the end of Basic Follow-up you need to explain that the next step for their growth is involvement in a Bible study. You really need to see some commitment on their part before continuing to invest weekly time. You are not a private tutor. You are a link and bridge to the Christian body and they must take some steps to join that body. You are a bridge not a doorstep.