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COJOURNERS EQUIPMENT PACK

## COJOURNER TRAINING FOR SMALL GROUPS

### COJOURNERS EQUIPMENT PACK BY KEITH DAVY

CoJourners is not a specific resource; rather it is an equipping paradigm, which provides an effective way of thinking about and teaching personal evangelism.

There are currently three CoJourners products that support and teach this evangelism approach. This is the CoJourners Equipment Pack for use in small groups.

A typical small group balances personal sharing, Bible study, and prayer. However, an often neglected, yet equally important, dimension of small groups is ministry training. The CoJourners Equipment Pack addresses this ministry component by providing practical evangelism discussions and action steps.

This does not replace the Bible study content, but rather supplements an element of ministry training.



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# Windows of the Soul

COJOURNERS № 2.1 | EXPLORER

Is there a window in the room? Stand on the other side of the room and describe what you can see through it. Now move closer to the window. What do you see? There is a principle at work – the closer you get the more you see.

The same principle works within everyday conversations. Casual comments can often be windows to a person's soul. These are conversational clues. On the surface they appear to be casual comments, but if you investigate with questions, you discover there is much more to be seen.

## Discuss

- Name examples of common conversational clues you might hear.
- Can you think of a recent example?

- What questions might you ask to explore a conversational clue?
- Read Colossians 4:5. How could exploratory questions help you obey this instruction?

## Action Plan

Pray that God will make you alert to comments that could be windows to the soul. Be prepared to ask probing questions to see what is behind the comment. Keep a journal or list of the conversations that result to share in your next small group meeting.

## Summary

Investigate revealing comments to get below the surface.



# Praying for You

COJOURNERS № 2.2 | EXPLORER

Prayer is perhaps the most common spiritual experience in America. More than 80 percent of Americans claim to pray to God. Prayer can provide a door through which to enter others' spiritual journeys. How? By simply asking others how you can pray for them. The request reflects a generally acceptable act of kindness. The answer often reveals a significant need.

Approach a number of acquaintances this week and say, "I try to pray for others, rather than just praying for myself. I was wondering if there is anything you would like prayed for. It could be school, family, relationships, finances, or whatever." If they share something, ask a few questions to understand more about the issue and its importance. Affirm their concern and assure them of your prayers.

Next week, be sure to ask the acquaintance about the issue. Ask if there has been an answer, or, if there is anything else they would like you to pray for?

## Discuss

- How do you think others will respond to the offer for prayer?
- Who would you like to approach about prayer?

## Action Plan

Pray that God will use these attempts to open doors into the journeys of others. Journal your encounters and share them at your next meeting. If appropriate, pray together for any who shared prayer requests.

## Summary

The offer of prayer can open the door to a person's inner life.



# Power Tools

COJOURNERS № 2.3 | EXPLORER

Listening can reveal many insights into a person's spiritual journey. But through questions, you can discover so much more. Questions can guide conversations to deeper levels and into desired topics. Most conversations remain at a surface level. Questions have the power to take a conversation below the surface.

## Discuss

- What questions do you like to use to discover where a person is spiritually?
- How do you think most people would respond to each of the following questions?
  1. What was your religious background as a child?
  2. What words would you use to describe your life spiritually?
  3. Do you have a spiritual belief of any kind?
  4. What don't you believe?

5. Have you ever experienced God? If so, how?
  6. Has anything dramatic happened that has convinced you that God is real?
  7. Is there a heaven and a hell?
  8. If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you would have eternal life? Why?
  9. What barriers keep you from trusting God?
- Brainstorm more good questions.

## Action Plan

Choose a question to ask a number of acquaintances this week. Conversationally explore their answers with other questions. Journal your conversations to share and discuss at your next small group meeting.

## Summary

Questions are the power tool to explore others' lives.



# What's Your Story

COJOURNERS № 2.4 | EXPLORER

Every person's spiritual journey has a past, a present and a future. To understand their journey, you need to explore where they have been, where they are and where they are going. Good questions can help people tell their story.

## Explore where they've been

- What was your religious background as a child?
- Was it positive, neutral or negative for you? Why?

## Explore where they are

- How would you describe your spiritual belief?
- Who is Jesus to you?

## Explore where they are going

- Lately, do you think you have been moving toward God, away from God or staying about the same?

- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your desire to know God personally?

## Discuss

- Whose spiritual journey would you like to explore?

## Action Plan

Pray for opportunities to explore the spiritual journey of those who you have discussed. This week ask permission: "I really enjoy hearing about others' spiritual experiences and I've never heard much about yours. Can I ask you some questions?"

## Summary

An explorer helps others tell their spiritual story.



# Traveling Companions

COJOURNERS № 3.1 | GUIDE

Spiritual journeys are best made in the company of others. In Jesus' ministry, crowds of curious, interested and seeking people were often found together with the apostles and other followers. Jesus often ministered to both groups together. For example, read Mark 8:34-38.

As you enter into someone's spiritual journey, seek to guide the person into two relational environments. First, introduce the individual to some friends who are already following Christ. These relationships will help provide encouragement to continue on. Second, invite the individual to a larger gathering of believers so he can see and experience the fellowship of the body. A healthy Christian community will water the truth of the gospel with the

love of God's people. That's an ideal environment for the seed of the gospel to take root in a life.

## Discuss

- When did you first begin to form Christian friendships? What difference did it make for you?
- What was the main community of believers that God used in your own spiritual journey?

## Action Plan

Plan an activity and invite the individuals that you are praying for and seeking to reach. It could be a recreational event, a party or whatever. This will give them a chance to form other Christian friendships.

## Summary

Relationships are vital for those journeying toward Christ.



# Embarking Together

COJOURNERS № 3.2 | GUIDE

A guide shows the way for traveling companions. Spiritually, this can be done in a relationally sensitive manner. The key is to ask permission.

- Can I tell you a little of my story?
- Can I show you what has really helped me?

An important word to use when asking permission is "sometime." • Sometime, I'd like to show you what has helped me understand my relationship with God and see what you think. Would you be up for that?

Asking to do something sometime (as opposed to right now) takes pressure off the moment. A positive answer expresses openness. Set up a time to talk over coffee or lunch. The prearranged time provides an ideal setting to talk. Both parties know the topic of discussion, so there is no awkwardness about bringing it up.

What if she says she's not interested? Asking permission has not harmed the relationship. Asking demonstrates respect.

## Action Plan

Try it out. Break up into threes. Take turns asking permission of each other, with the third person observing. After each has had a turn, discuss the approaches. What was best? What suggestions do you have?

This week ask two people a "sometime" question. When they respond positively, set up an opportunity to talk. Enlist others from your group to pray for these discussions.

## Summary

The place for a guide to begin is by asking permission.



# First Hand Experience

COJOURNERS № 3.3 | GUIDE

How much must a person know and say to be an effective witness? Turn the question around and discuss: How little can a person know and say and still be a powerful witness?

Read John 4:28-30, 39-41. Refer to the earlier part of the chapter to discover insights about the Samaritan woman.

- What had she experienced in life?
- What did she know about Jesus?
- What did she tell the people she knew about Jesus?
- What impact did she have?

Was the Samaritan woman an effective witness? Absolutely. She led her entire village to check out Jesus.

## Discuss

The Samaritan woman expressed her encounter with Jesus in a sentence and an invitation. Take turns trying to share your experience with Jesus in a sentence or two. Evaluate your initial attempts. Were they intriguing? Inviting?

## Action Plan

This week prepare a two-sentence statement of your experience with Jesus. Pray for an opportunity to share it with someone else to spur further conversation about Jesus.

## Summary

An intriguing sentence can spark the spiritual interest of others.



# Showing the Way

COJOURNERS № 3.4 | GUIDE

A guide must not only know the way, he or she must have the ability to show the way to others. The way to Jesus is found in the gospel. Read Romans 1:16 and Romans 10:14, 15.

You understood the gospel when someone explained it to you. You will also learn to share the gospel as others show you how. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and 2 Timothy 2:2.

## Discuss

- On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can clearly explain the gospel to others and lead them to Christ?
- Who do you know who could teach you how to communicate the gospel effectively?

You may learn to share the gospel from someone with more experience, such as your Bible study leader, a Christian leader, etc. Or, you may attend a training seminar or read a book on witnessing.

## Action Plan

Make a plan with your small group to get training in how to share the gospel with others.

## Summary

The gospel is the most important tool to guide someone to Jesus.



# Obstacles

COJOURNERS № 4.1 | BUILDER

Obstacles such as intellectual issues, emotional baggage or a lack of desire cause many people to get stuck in their spiritual journeys. What they need is someone to build a bridge that helps them over the obstacle. But first, we need to identify and understand the issues.

## Discuss

- Brainstorm a list of common obstacles that keep people from Christ. Be specific.
- In your opinion, what are the three most common obstacles on your list?
- Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 and 10:4, 5. What insights do these verses provide about obstacles?
- What other verses give insights into dealing with spiritual obstacles?

When a person is spiritually stuck, rarely is there just one issue. Normally there is a cluster of issues that together make a seemingly insurmountable barrier. Whatever a person's obstacles may be, remember they are ultimately spiritual issues. Therefore, the first response should be prayer.

## Action Plan

Consider those whose spiritual journeys you have begun to enter or explore. What obstacles have you become aware of? Take time to conversationally pray for spiritual breakthroughs in their lives.

## Summary

Though there are many obstacles that keep people from Christ, they are all spiritual.



# Beginning to Build

COJOURNERS № 4.2 | BUILDER

When a person comes to an obstacle on their path, they need a bridge to help them get over it. Spiritually, it's the role of the builder to provide such a bridge.

The place to begin is by understanding a person's issue. There are three elements to a good beginning in bridge building:

1. Understand the issue and know why it's important. Good questions will help you, such as, "What is it that keeps you from considering Christ?"
2. Let the person know you understand the issue. Express your understanding so she knows you have heard her. "What I hear you saying is..."
3. Affirm the significance of the issue. He needs to know you consider the issue significant as well. "I see what you mean. I don't want to minimize what

you're saying, but can I share something that has helped me?"

When you affirm a genuine understanding of an issue it brings you beside the person, rather than against them, as in a debate. It places you in position to help them overcome the obstacle, if they are willing.

## Action Plan

Try it out. Break into groups of threes. Have one person take the role of someone who is spiritually stuck. Let another try to understand the issue conversationally, while the third observes. After each has had a turn, discuss the approaches. What was best? What suggestions do you have?

## Summary

Bridge building begins with understanding.



# Master Builder

COJOURNERS № 4.3 | BUILDER

Jesus was the master when it came to building bridges to help people on their spiritual journeys. But he didn't always use the same bridge. Nor did he always have the same results.

## Read John 4:1-26.

- What obstacles stood in the way of the Samaritan woman's journey to God?
- How did Jesus deal with them?

## Now read Mark 10:17-23.

- What obstacles were in the way of this young man?
- How did Jesus seek to help the young man overcome his issues?

*Now compare the two incidents and the results.*

- What insights do you gain?
- What principles of building bridges can you learn from Jesus?

## Action Plan

Take time this week to re-read the two incidents above. Meditate on how Jesus sought to help each person. Ask God to make you an effective bridge builder. Remember, we can provide a bridge and encourage someone to continue on, but ultimately the decision is up to the individual.

## Summary

Jesus is the best model of a bridge builder.



# Gentle Persuasion

COJOURNERS № 4.4 | BUILDER

When people are stuck on their spiritual journey, they need help to think differently about the issue. That is the role of gentle persuasion. Your experience can help them. What has helped you think differently?

There are three common bridges.

1. The Bible—What verses speak to this issue?
2. Questions—Is there a way you can frame the issue differently by asking another set of questions?
3. Stories—Is there a story or an illustration that will help the person see the issue in another way?

## Discuss

- Identify a common obstacle that keeps people from coming to Jesus.
- What verses speak to the issue? What questions can you use to reframe the issue? What story or illustration could be used?

## Action Plan

Review the obstacles you have identified in conversation with others. Try to think of an appropriate bridge you could use next time someone brings up each issue.

## Summary

Gentle persuasion helps you build bridges for others who are stuck.



# Turning Points

COJOURNERS № 5.1 | MENTOR

As you explore other peoples' spiritual journeys, you will discover a number who have come to know Christ, but who now appear to be struggling or headed in the wrong direction. What they need is help getting turned around.

The *Satisfied?* booklet contains a message applicable for this situation. It communicates four key principles:

1. The Divine Gift—God has given us his Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with him and enjoy all he has for us.
2. The Present Danger—We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us if we fail to depend on his Spirit.
3. The Intimate Journey—By walking in the Spirit we increasingly experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us.

4. The Empowering Presence—We are filled with the Spirit by faith, enabling us to experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us.

Each principle is illustrated with verses from the Bible and helpful diagrams. Questions help apply the message to the struggling believer.

### Action Plan

Pray for the believers you know who need a turning point. Ask God to give you the opportunity to share the *Satisfied?* booklet with them. You may acquire *Satisfied?* booklets from a Campus Crusade staff member.

### Summary

Understanding the ministry of the Holy Spirit will help struggling believers turn around.



# Care Package

COJOURNERS № 5.2 | MENTOR

When people come to Christ, they are particularly vulnerable to difficulties and distractions that can spiritually derail them. They need mature believers to encourage them.

The apostle Paul's relationship to the new believers in Thessalonica provides an excellent model for us. Like Paul, we can care for new believers in five ways:

1. Pray for them. (1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3; 3:10, 11-13)
2. Spend time with them. (1 Thessalonians 2:1-20, especially 2:8)
3. Write to them, or provide them something appropriate to read. (1 and 2 Thessalonians)
4. Connect them with other believers. (1 Thessalonians 1:3; 3:6; 4:9, 10; 5:11, 12-15, 26-27)
5. Have another Christian leader connect with them. (1 Thessalonians 3:1, 2)

We can't guarantee another person will grow to spiritual maturity (Mark 4:13-20). But we can and should do all we can to help them grow.

### Action Plan

Identify younger believers who you know need a spiritual mentor. Which of the five can you do to encourage them in their spiritual journey? Plan to get started this week.

### Summary

Young believers need an active caregiver to help them grow.



# Life Connections

COJOURNERS № 5.3 | MENTOR

People grow spiritually in the context of relationships, and mentors can be the ones to guide new believers into these healthy communities of relationships.

Followers of Christ need three primary relationships. They are:

- A mature believer to help them grow. This may be you.
- A group of friends with whom to grow. This may become their small group.
- A community to be involved with. This is a larger fellowship of believers.

Help the new believer quickly form two out of the three primary relationships. A believer who is lacking all three will not grow. A believer who has only one primary relationship, regardless of which one, has little prospect for sustained growth. But we can expect

healthy growth for someone with two out of the three. Three out of three is the ideal greenhouse environment.

### Discuss

Which of the three were most significant in your spiritual growth? Why?

### Action Plan

Identify four to six Christians, perhaps newer believers, who you have a concern for their spiritual growth. How is their growth environment with respect to the three primary relationships? What can you do individually and as a group to help them have at least two of the three?

### Summary

Relationships are needed for healthy spiritual growth.



# Life Concepts

COJOURNERS № 5.4 | MENTOR

The early days in a new believer's journey can be filled with struggles. Many will face these five common issues:

1. Being uncertain: Am I really a Christian?
2. Feeling unworthy: I am bad because I still sin.
3. Being unable: I don't have what it takes to live the Christian life.
4. Being unprepared: Why do I struggle with wrong desires?
5. Being undeveloped: How do I grow in my Christian life?

Which of these struggles have you experienced? Share personal examples.

A spiritual mentor will help a young believer prepare in advance and possibly avoid these common struggles. Understanding and experiencing the Bible's answer is the best preparation. Five excellent passages that address these issues are:

1. Uncertainty—1 John 5:11-13
2. Unworthiness—1 John 1:5-2:2
3. Unable—1 Corinthians 2:12-3:4
4. Unprepared—Galatians 5:16-26
5. Undeveloped—Acts 2:42-47

### Action Plan

These issues and passages can be discussed together with a young believer by using *Life Concepts*. You can download copies of *Life Concepts* from [www.godsquad.com/Squadroom/Discipleship/lifeconcepts.htm](http://www.godsquad.com/Squadroom/Discipleship/lifeconcepts.htm) or acquire them from a Campus Crusade staff member. Study and master one concept a week and prepare to share them with others.

### Summary

A mentor grounds new believers in essential Biblical concepts.



# Ultimate Aim

COJOURNERS № 1.1 | MOTIVATION

Love compels witness—a love for God and a love for others. Those who love God, pursue his glory. Those who love others, seek their good. Seeking God’s glory and others’ good are both accomplished as we share the gospel.

We glorify God when we make him known. When we genuinely love God, we want others to know him so that he will be honored and glorified by them. The other side of the coin is that nothing could be better for a person than to know God. So God’s glory and others’ greatest good come together when we make God known. That is why love compels witness.

*Discuss John 17:1-5:*

- What was Jesus’ ultimate aim in life?
- How did he accomplish it?
- Examine a simple presentation of the gospel, such as, *The Four Spiritual Laws* or *Would You Like to Know God Personally?* What attributes of God are revealed through the gospel presentation?

*Action Plan*

Each day this week, pray that God gives you the desire to glorify him by sharing the gospel with others.

*Summary*

God’s glory and other’s good are both accomplished by making God known.



# Love in Action

COJOURNERS № 1.2 | MOTIVATION

Compassion is true love focused on real need. It is always found at the intersection of love and need. Both must be present to experience compassion.

We may have genuine love in our hearts, but if we aren’t exposed to need, there is no reason for compassion. On the other hand, if we are exposed to genuine need, but do not love, we will fall short of compassion. We may feel sorry, or even be sympathetic, but we will not demonstrate Christ-like compassion.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he experienced compassion for them because “they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). Individuals whose spiritual journeys have failed to lead to Christ have a genuine need—a need so great that the eternal Son of God would

leave his riches in heaven to come on a search and rescue mission (Luke 19:10; Romans 5:8). Do you exhibit the same compassion? Being a witness is a Christ-like expression of true compassion.

*Discuss*

- What evidence shows your peers are “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd”?
- Why do we fail to recognize the real needs in others’ lives?

*Action Plan*

Each day this week, ask God to show you the real needs of others, especially their need for the Shepherd.

*Summary*

Compassion is love focused on a lost person’s need.



# Unstoppable

COJOURNERS № 1.3 | MOTIVATION

The Great Commission begins with these words from Jesus: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:18, 19).

The early believers understood the implications of Jesus having “all authority.” They were unstoppable. When the local authorities commanded them to quit talking about Jesus, they replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19, 20).

To be accurate, history reveals one way the lower authorities did stop those acting under Jesus’ command. They killed them. First it was Stephen (Acts 7:57-60). Then it was James (Acts 12:2). They were followed by countless others

who were killed because of their faith in Christ. It became so common that *martus*, the Greek word for witness, began to bear the meaning of one who would give his life for what he believed and testified to. *Martus* is the root from which we get the English word martyr.

*Discuss*

- What stops us from witnessing today? Why?
- How easy is it to stop you?

*Action Plan*

Re-read the passages above. Each day this week, ask God to make you unstoppable in your witness.

*Summary*

Understanding Christ’s authority makes us unstoppable in witness.



# Inner Strength

COJOURNERS № 1.4 | MOTIVATION

Is it dangerous to be a witness for Christ? Is there risk involved?

It varies from situation to situation and from culture to culture. But in many lands, believers expose themselves to ostracism, punishment, imprisonment, and even death by their witness.

There are risks even in societies where there is freedom of religion and the free exchange of ideas. Social pressures and cultural norms create emotional and relational risks for the believer who shares the gospel with others.

How do we overcome our fears?

Sound teaching and practical training can help, but God has done something more. He has given us his Spirit, and with his Spirit comes power and boldness. Jesus’ last words to his followers were, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on

you; and you will be my witnesses ...to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NIV).

*Discuss*

- Read Acts 4:31. What is the relationship between the filling of the Spirit and boldness?
- Why do we need boldness to be God’s witnesses today?

*Action Plan*

Obtain a copy of the booklet *Satisfied?* from a Campus Crusade staff member. Make sure you understand and are experiencing the filling of the Spirit as explained in the booklet. Each day this week, ask God to fill you with his Spirit, making you a bold witness for Christ.

*Summary*

The power of the Spirit gives us the inner strength to witness.

