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PASSAGES: A COJOURNERS DEVOTIONAL

PASSAGES BY KEITH DAVY

To begin with, CoJourners is not a specific resource; rather it is an equipping paradigm which provides an effective way of thinking about and teaching personal evangelism. To get a better understanding of the CoJourners approach to evangelism, click below on "Additional Training."

There are currently three CoJourners products that support and teach this evangelism approach. This is the CoJourners Devotional for individual study and reflection.

The CoJourners Devotional "Passages" is a 28-day, evangelism-focused, daily devotional. In this regard it is completely unique, as evangelism is rarely (if ever) the focus of a devotional booklet.

"Passages" provides biblical motivation and training for sharing Christ with close friends as well as recent acquaintances, as daily prayer and meditation on God's word aid in breaking down walls and personal barriers to evangelism.



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Every person is on a spiritual journey. A CoJourneyer is one who joins others in their spiritual journey to help them come to Christ. Life has been viewed as a journey by all cultures throughout history. It is a universal concept. Viewing witness through the lens of a journey provides insight into our relationships with those we influence and our responsibilities to them. Imagine engaging in significant conversations to explore spiritual journeys and talk about Jesus. That is the CoJourneyer experience. There are four primary roles that we can play in another person's spiritual journey: The Explorer, The Guide, The Builder, and the Mentor. The role you play at any given time depends upon the relationship and spiritual journey of the other person.

Passages: A Devotional Journey is a 28-day experience to enrich your spiritual journey by engaging in God's Word, prayer and the spiritual journeys of others. Each week you will be introduced to a CoJourneyer role through devotional thoughts to motivate you, stimulate your prayers and encourage your attempts to engage with others.

Passages: A Devotional Journey is the personal component of the CoJourneyer resource family. For other resources visit www.wsnpress.com or contact r&d@uscm.org.



Passages: A Devotional Journey is a 28-day experience in prayer and witness. Prayer is the launching point for all that follows. Evangelism is always first and foremost a work of God. He is the Lord of the Harvest. Therefore the place to begin an evangelism initiative is always with prayer. *Passages: A Devotional Journey* provides two parts for your prayer involvement.

The first part is the Prayer Launch. Take 15 minutes to reflect, record and pray through the questions and prayer suggestions that follow. Use the 10⁺ List (page 6) throughout this devotional experience, praying for people and requests and adding to it as God leads.

The second part is woven throughout the devotionals. Each week your first devotional is focused on prayer and many action steps involve a prayer response.

Throughout this devotional journey, ask God for opportunities to enter into the spiritual journeys of others. Begin by praying for those God brings to mind, writing their names on your 10⁺ List. Add additional names in the days ahead. While you may begin with less, with time you will want to maintain a prayer list of ten or more for whom you are praying to come to Christ.



Pray for three different kinds of relational experiences.

1. Natural Connections: Pray For People You Know

Ask God who you should have on your 10+ List for prayer. Add friends and acquaintances he brings to mind with whom you desire the privilege of sharing Christ. Pray consistently for three requests.

- Pray that God would prepare their hearts to believe the gospel (Romans 10:1).
- Pray that God would open doors for significant spiritual conversations with you (Colossians 4:3).
- Pray that God would give you the words to speak clearly as you engage with them in spiritual conversations (Colossians 4:4).

2. Divine Appointments: Pray For Those God Brings to You

God will bring us unplanned opportunities to engage in spiritual conversations with people in whom he is already at work. Add the names of these “divine appointments” to your prayer list as God provides them.

- Ask God to help you make the most of these opportunities (Colossians 4:5).
- Ask God to enable you to respond to their need and interest with grace and truth (Colossians 4:6).



3. Outreach Ministry: Pray For Others Beyond Your Natural Relationships

Beyond the people already on your prayer list – your natural connections and divine appointments – there are others who need to hear about Christ. God desires his people to take the initiative to reach them. Add to your list any group you sense him leading you to help reach for Christ.

- Pray that God would give you the eyes to see the needs of others and the opportunities to influence them (John 4:35).
- Pray that God would send you as a worker in his harvest (Matthew 9:37-38).
- Pray that God would guide you to the specific individuals with whom he desires for you to initiate spiritual conversations (Acts 8:26-35).

Thanksgiving: Give God the Glory

Thank God daily for what he has done, is doing and will do in answer to your prayers. He is the Lord of the Harvest (Matthew 9:38).

Ten+ List

INSPIRATION



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
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10. _____
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- + _____

Week One: Explorer

EXPLORER



The Explorer: Discovering Spiritual Journeys

An explorer is one who journeys into unknown territory to learn and understand. Spiritually we enter into people's lives, or into deeper levels of their lives, to learn and understand their spiritual journey. We explore primarily through listening and asking questions, with genuine interest and concern. Listening enables the explorer to hear unmet needs and traces of the Spirit's work in others' lives. Questions help the explorer discover where others have been in their spiritual journey, where they are now and where they are going.

Heart Check

EXPLORER: DAY 1



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved” (Romans 10:1). Bonus Reading: Romans 9:1-3.

Have you ever had a medical check-up to see if you were healthy? It’s time to determine the health of your heart. But it’s not a physical you need; it’s a spiritual. This will test the strength of your heart for other people. Ready? Answer two questions. One, what do you want most for others? Two, what do you pray for others?

The apostle Paul provides his answers to these questions. His heart’s desire and his prayer was that his people, the Israelites, would be saved. In fact, his desire was so great that he experienced sorrow and anguish over their spiritual condition (Romans 9:1-3).

We often lack the passion and prayer that Paul possessed. We can be honest about that, but we don’t have to stay that way. Prayer is a key. Ask God to give you a heart for the lost. Ask him to help you to care about people’s eternal destiny and their present condition.

☛ **Thought:** Talk to God about people and then talk to people about God.

☛ **Take a Step:** Each day this week, ask God to give you a heart that passionately desires for others to know Jesus Christ. Pray for others to come to faith through your influence.

Power Play

EXPLORER: DAY 2



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31). Bonus Reading: Acts 4:1-31.

When engaging others in conversations about Christ, we need boldness. But where does that boldness come from? Is it an attitude we can generate ourselves?

Boldness is the product of the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives. There is a divine pattern found in Acts 4:31: first praying, then the filling, and finally speaking with boldness.

Witnessing in the power of the Spirit begins with prayer. Through prayer we express our dependence on God, and he aligns us with His purpose and plans. God responds to our prayers by filling us with his Spirit, if we ask. The filling of the Spirit imparts to us the power and ability to be a fruitful and bold witness.

We then take the initiative in the power of Holy Spirit to share God’s word with those around us.

☛ **Thought:** Success in witnessing is taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

☛ **Take a Step:** Ask God to fill you with his Spirit and power right now. Thank him for doing so. Be alert for opportunities throughout this week to speak for Christ. Be willing to take the initiative.

Exploring Outside

EXPLORER: DAY 3



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity” (Colossians 4:5). Bonus Reading: John 10:7-18.

Spiritual outsiders are those who have not entered into salvation through Jesus, the true “gate” to life (John 10:9). Some outsiders are spiritually near. Others will be far away. Some may be religious. Others are irreligious. Some live good lifestyles. Others bad. But all who haven’t entered through Christ are outsiders.

Paul instructs us to be wise making the most of every opportunity with outsiders. Though each situation is different we begin by starting where they are which requires us to explore.

To make the most of a situation, use questions to discern if a person is open to talk and to discover insights into their spiritual journey. With wisdom and genuine care, you will likely get to know the person better, deepen the relationship and have an opportunity to talk about Jesus.

☛ **Thought:** The best way to discover where a person is spiritually is to ask.

☛ **Take a Step:** Brainstorm a list of outsiders you know or could get to know. List individuals by name and include groups, such as classmates, coworkers, neighbors, etc. Look over the list. How well do you know the spiritual journey of your acquaintances? Explore as many as possible this month.

Divine Appointments

EXPLORER: DAY 4



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ Philip asked. ‘How can I,’ he said, ‘unless someone explains it to me?’ So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him” (Acts 8:30, 31). Bonus Reading: Acts 8:26-40.

There are people at the threshold of faith, ready to believe in Jesus if someone will simply explain how. Why do we fail to recognize this? It might be that we’ve gotten used to looking at people based on external appearances rather than internal realities. We think, “She looks like she has got life under control.” Or “I don’t think that person would want to talk about Jesus.” Yet, God may have prepared them to hear the good news about Jesus, the same good news Philip shared with this man.

Philip probed a bit, didn’t he? He asked a question to gauge what the man understood. His efforts were rewarded with genuine spiritual interest.

☛ **Thought:** The desire to understand reveals spiritual openness.

☛ **Take a Step:** Ask questions of someone to find out if he or she understands what it means to have a relationship with Jesus.

Hide and Seek

EXPLORER: DAY 5



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”” (Genesis 3:9).
Bonus Reading: *Luke 15:1-7*.

“Where are you?” That was God’s first question to the man and his wife when they turned away in sin. It is not that they were physically lost, though he and his wife were attempting to hide from God (Genesis 3:8). But God cannot be tricked. He knows everything (Psalm 139:1-3). They were experiencing the consequence of their sin—alienation from God. Ever since, men and women who are spiritually lost have wandered on their own (Isaiah 53:6), trying to hide whenever they sense God is near.

God hasn’t given up the hunt. Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost (Luke 19:10) and we can join with him in this mission. What better way to do so than to follow God’s example by asking, “Where are you in your spiritual journey?”

☞ **Thought:** The first step of a spiritual conversation is often a question.

☞ **Take a Step:** Ask a casual acquaintance about his spiritual journey. Use questions such as “What is your religious background or experience?” “What have you tried in your spiritual journey?” “Where are you now spiritually?” “Do you think you are moving toward God, away from God or staying about the same?”

Bad Company

EXPLORER: DAY 6



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and “sinners.”’ But wisdom is proved right by her actions” (Matthew 11:19). Bonus Reading: *Luke 19:1-10*.

The most common criticism of Jesus was also the truth. He was a “friend of sinners.” After all, they were the ones he came to save. Rather than withdrawing from those with immoral lifestyles, Jesus spent time with them. He loved them, dined with them, talked with them, and drew them to God. He was their friend. He knew they were spiritually needy causing them to be more open.

But Jesus loved them without compromise. He was rightly accused of being a friend of sinners, but never of being one himself. He associated with wrong-doers, but did not participate in their wrong-doing.

Don’t confuse bad behavior with spiritual disinterest. You cannot discover where a person is spiritually by mere observation. You have to enter into a conversation and explore lives. So, can anyone accuse you of keeping bad company?

☞ **Thought:** At times, being like Christ involves being a friend to those least like Christ.

☞ **Take a Step:** Consider the people around you. Whose lifestyle makes you uncomfortable? Take a step to get to know them. Use questions to explore their spiritual background and experiences, and to determine their spiritual openness.



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’ And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions” (Mark 12:34). Bonus Reading: John 3:1-21.

If you had been with Jesus, you may not have suspected the spiritual openness of this man. He was a teacher of the law. That group gave Jesus the most trouble, a group he condemned for hypocrisy (Matthew 23). While most people in this social group were resistant and hostile to Jesus, this man wasn’t. Nor was Nicodemus, a Pharisee counterpart (John 3:1-21; 19:38-40). Both men illustrate that a person’s religious background or social status does not determine spiritual proximity, but rather it is the response to Jesus.

We sometimes make assumptions about other peoples’ spiritual interest or openness, based on their background, behavior, or even how they look. Those assumptions are often wrong and keep us from entering into significant conversations about Christ. The only certain way to know where people are spiritually is to talk with them.

☞ **Thought:** Never assume you know another person’s spiritual condition without asking.

☞ **Take a Step:** Identify someone you have assumed is spiritually closed. Ask that person about his religious background. If he declines, simply thank him. If he seems negative, ask if he has had a bad experience or been turned off by religion. For now make your goal to understand.

The Guide: Showing the Way

A guide is someone who shows another the way on a journey. As we enter into the spiritual journey of others, we seek the privilege of showing them the way to Jesus. This implies a level of openness on their part and trust in us as a guide. An effective context to help others journey toward Jesus is to help them connect to a believing community. Often the guidance occurs within personal conversations. Our own spiritual journey can play a role in spurring interest, establishing trust and revealing gospel truth. But the gospel itself is the most powerful tool. The guide must understand gospel truth, growing in the ability to communicate it clearly and relevantly.

Open Doors

GUIDE: DAY 1



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** *“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains” (Colossians 4:3).*

Bonus Reading: *Romans 1:8-17.*

Do you ever wonder why you don't have more opportunities to engage in significant spiritual conversations? Maybe it's because you have forgotten to knock.

It begins with prayer. God opens the door of opportunity for you to enter into other people's spiritual journeys. Unless God in his grace was at work in that person's life, the door of the heart would remain closed.

The apostle Paul understood this. He prayed and enlisted others to pray that God would open doors for his message. God did so in many cities, such as Troas (2 Corinthians 2:12), and with many individuals, such as Lydia (Acts 16:14).

The more we pray for open doors, the more opportunities we can expect. And nothing is more exciting than to enter into the life journey of a friend or acquaintance when God has been at work opening the door and preparing the heart.

☞ **Thought:** Open doors are the product of answered prayers.

☞ **Take a Step:** On a 3x5 card, write a prayer for God to open conversational doors this week so that you can enter spiritual journeys and guide others to Christ.

Unstoppable

GUIDE: DAY 2



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** *“For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).* Bonus Reading: *1 Corinthians 9:15-23.*

Early believers were unstoppable in their witness. They knew that the one who had all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18) had commanded them to be his witnesses. He had given them his Spirit to empower them (Acts 1:8). As a result, there was only one way to silence the witness of the apostles, which was to kill them.

What stops us from being a witness? There are many reasons, but the big five are: 1. Desire: We want something else, such as acceptance or success, more than we want to be used by God. 2. Fear: We are afraid of offending someone or being rejected. 3. Lack of know-how: We are not sure what to say or how to say it. 4. Relational disconnectedness: We don't have or don't recognize opportunities to talk with others. 5. Busyness: We are too busy doing other things.

To overcome these obstacles, we need to get honest with God. Admit what is true of us and ask him to both forgive and change us.

☞ **Thought:** When you don't want to do what God wants you to do, ask him to give you “the want-to to want to.”

☞ **Take a Step:** Prayerfully reflect on the five reasons we don't witness. Consider which are obstacles for you. Confess them and ask God to change you.

First Things First

GUIDE: DAY 3



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** *“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus” (John 1:41, 42).* Bonus Reading: *John 1:35-51.*

Bringing others to Jesus requires maturity, training and skill. Right? Not necessarily. Some of the most effective witnesses in the Bible had just met Jesus. We may think that the first thing a new believer should do is to learn more about the Lord and grow spiritually. But the first thing Andrew did when he met Jesus was to bring his brother Peter to Jesus. Likewise Philip went to find his friend Nathaniel (John 1:43-51). The Samaritan woman at the well immediately shared her experience with the people of her village and many believed in Jesus through her simple testimony (John 4:39). Even the delivered demoniac amazed his people as he shared what God had done for him (Mark 5:20).

This doesn't mean that training and maturity won't help. They will. They will help us become more usable and effective. But don't let this stop you from getting started. Openly share what God has done for you and see how God uses you.

☛ **Thought:** A genuine encounter with Jesus is the only prerequisite to a powerful witness.

☛ **Take a Step:** This week, ask an acquaintance about her spiritual background. After listening to her experience, share a little of yours. Then briefly explain your encounter with Christ and what he is doing in your life now.

Sound Barriers

GUIDE: DAY 4



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** *“We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition” (1 Thessalonians 2:2).* Bonus Reading: *1 Thessalonians 2:1-9.*

Natural sound barriers must be broken to move deeper into spiritual conversations that lead to Jesus. The first barrier is at the beginning of the conversation. It is easier not to speak at all than to initiate a conversation. Once a conversation has comfortably begun, there is a second sound barrier. The second barrier keeps us from bringing up spiritual matters in the conversation. Once that barrier is broken a new sound barrier emerges. It is easy to stay in general spiritual dialogue and often difficult to bring up the gospel. Finally, when explaining the gospel, we often experience a sound barrier that keeps us from asking for a response from the other person.

Paul experienced fears like ours (1 Corinthians 2:1-5), but he did not allow them to hinder him from communicating the gospel. He loved people too much to keep him from sharing the most important message (1 Thessalonians 2:8).

☛ **Thought:** Breaking sound barriers enable spiritual conversations to go deep.

☛ **Take a Step:** Reflect on your conversations with the people on your 10+ Prayer List. What level of conversation do you have with them? Plan on breaking the next sound barrier in an upcoming conversation.

Amazing Works

GUIDE: DAY 5



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.’ So the man went away and began to tell in Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed” (Mark 5:19, 20).

Bonus Reading: *Mark 5:1-20.*

It wasn't surprising that the man's story amazed the people who knew him. After all, he was delivered from severe demonic oppression and a life of insanity. Anyone who knew him could see how much his life had changed.

If you have experienced Jesus' saving work, then he has done amazing things for you, as well. Is it not amazing to have the guilt of all your sins forgiven? Or, how about being given eternal life so that you may begin to experience it now and in fullness forever when you die? Being loved unconditionally by God is certainly amazing. And this is just the beginning of a list of amazing things that God has done for you (Ephesians 1:3).

Our conversations with others should include a sampling of what God has done for us.

☞ **Thought:** If the greatest thing that has happened to you is coming to know Christ, then the greatest thing you can do for someone else is to introduce him to Christ.

☞ **Take a Step:** Make a list amazing things God has done in your life. Consider how each would sound to a person who has not yet experienced God's work. How could you express each in a way that reveals its amazing nature?

First Importance

GUIDE: DAY 6



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day” (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4). Bonus Reading: *Acts 20:17-35.*

What is the most important topic of conversation? Paul would say it is the gospel. The gospel's essence may be summarized as simply the message of who Jesus is, what he has done and why. He is the Christ, the one sent to rescue us. He died on the cross to save us from our sins and rose from the dead, demonstrating that he is the Lord. That is the essence of the gospel.

While the gospel is so simple a child can understand it, it is so profound that a scholar will never finish exploring it. Nor will you ever finish experiencing it. You do not graduate from the gospel to move on to deeper truths in the Christian life. Rather you dig deeper into it. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote whole books sharing gospel truth. Paul wrote letters such as Romans and Galatians, unpacking the implications of the gospel. The whole Bible is centered on the gospel. Make it a lifelong quest to master the gospel, learning to communicate its essence and experiencing its fullness.

☞ **Thought:** The gospel is life's most important field of study.

☞ **Take a Step:** Memorize Romans 6:23. Learn to communicate the gospel using the diagram found in the ending section, A One Verse Gospel (page 41-42).



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” (Mark 8:29). Bonus Reading: Mark 8:27-30.

Questions are powerful tools to explore spiritual experiences of people and to guide them to a fuller understanding of the gospel. No question gets to the heart of the issue more quickly than the one that Jesus asked Peter and the disciples: “Who do you say I am?” Peter got it right when he declared that Jesus was the Christ. He didn’t fully understand everything yet, but it was an essential step in the journey of faith.

Too often our spiritual conversations touch peripheral issues without engaging this ultimate question. If you want to get to the heart of the matter, ask someone, “What have you decided about Jesus?” That question may take you to a deeper level of spiritual conversation and may help the person take a step forward on her spiritual journey. Remember to clarify who is Jesus and what he has done. That is the heart of the gospel.

☞ **Thought:** Life’s most important decision is about Jesus.

☞ **Take a Step:** Look for an opportunity to ask someone on your prayer list, “Who is Jesus to you?” If that person does not believe Jesus is her Savior and Lord, ask if she would be open to conducting an experiment regarding him. Suggest she read one chapter of Mark a day for the next two weeks. Then challenge her to reevaluate her conclusion.

The Builder: Providing Bridges Over Obstacles

When a person encounters an obstacle such as a river on a journey, they need a bridge to continue. Spiritually many people encounter obstacles that keep them from moving toward Christ. They, too, need bridges to continue going forward. Their obstacles may be intellectual objections, emotional baggage, or a host of other issues. The builder builds bridges over the obstacles with prayer and gentle persuasion. Prayer is most important, as the issues are ultimately spiritual in nature. But the builder will also come alongside those who are stuck, and with understanding and affirmation, use gentle persuasion to provide a bridge.

Courage to Speak

BUILDER: DAY 1



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should” (Ephesians 6:19, 20). Bonus Reading: Acts 4:23-31.

Perhaps this has happened to you. An opportunity to talk to someone about Christ presents itself, and you freeze. You aren’t sure what to say and you’re scared to speak. Afterward, you felt like something was wrong with you. Certainly strong Christians don’t struggle with sharing their faith the way you do. Or do they?

Paul experienced the same fears that we do (1 Corinthians 2:1-5). That’s one reason he enlisted others to pray for him. We’d be wise to follow his example.

We have two needs as we enter the spiritual journeys of others. First, we need God to give us the words to share the gospel in a clear and relevant manner. Second, we need him to supply the courage to share it. Courage doesn’t mean the absence of fear. Courage is the strength to act despite our fears. If Paul needed prayer for boldness, so do we.

☞ **Thought:** Don’t confuse courage with the absence of fear.

☞ **Take a Step:** Enlist at least three others to pray for you. Have them pray for courage to speak, as well as for open doors with others and clarity of speech.

Fear Factor

BUILDER: DAY 2



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling” (1 Corinthians 2:3). Bonus Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

Fear is a normal response in witnessing. This is because we are taking a risk. Even Paul experienced fear. The risks he experienced were far greater than those we typically face. His last stops before Corinth, the city in today’s passage, included Philippi, where he was thrown in jail (Acts 16:16-24), Thessalonica, where he was almost arrested (Acts 17:1-9), Berea, where a riot occurred (Acts 17:10-14), and Athens, where he had a very mixed reception (Acts 17:32). No wonder he was scared when he showed up in Corinth.

Yet his fears did not keep him from sharing Christ. He knew that nothing was more important than providing everyone, including the Corinthians, the opportunity to hear and understand the gospel, even if they might reject it and him. It was worth it.

How about you? What do you fear? Ask God to fill you with His Spirit and the boldness you need to be an effective witness to those who need to hear the gospel.

☞ **Thought:** A spiritual rescue can be a risky endeavor.

☞ **Take a Step:** Courage involves both an attitude and actions. Ask God to give you the courage to initiate a spiritual conversation with one of the individuals on your prayer list.

Common Ground

BUILDER: DAY 3



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you” (Acts 17:23). Bonus Reading: Acts 17:16-34.

As you enter into the spiritual journey of others, you will encounter obstacles. Don't be surprised. Paul did as well. When Paul encountered a group of philosophers in Athens who challenged and disputed him, he didn't give up (Acts 17:18). Rather, he looked for common ground. It may not have been obvious at first in this “city full of idols” (17:16). But he could identify with their religious inclinations (17:22) and their awareness that there was more than they knew (17:23). He identified their “unknown God” who he then proclaimed to them as the one true Creator who raised Jesus from the dead. The result—some sneered, others listened and a few became followers (17:32-34). The responses that Paul received are common to what we see today.

Effective bridge builders look for common ground in the midst of differences of outlook and belief. They don't compromise their own beliefs. Rather, they use the common ground as a starting place to build toward Jesus.

☛ **Thought:** There is always common ground if we will take time to look.

☛ **Take a Step:** The next time you are in a discussion with someone who believes differently, look for the common ground. Start with what you agree on and build to Jesus.

Gentle Persuasion

BUILDER: DAY 4



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15). Bonus Reading: Luke 20:20-40.

Dealing with questions and issues people raise in spiritual conversations requires preparation. But preparation is more than learning right answers. It involves cultivating right attitudes—gentleness and respect. Gentleness is not usually a term we associate with witness, but it should be. This is especially true in the role of the builder. We should respond to the openness and interest of others with gentleness and respect. And those same attitudes are needed when we encounter questions and objections.

Gentleness is strength under control. Think of a powerful stallion. Though its strong, it can be safe, if it's been trained. You can't be gentle without strength. A person without strength is not gentle, but weak. Likewise, a person whose strength is unrestrained is not gentle, but dangerous. It is gentleness that makes us safe to others, enabling them to be open and honest. By itself, the truth can be threatening and right answers can alienate. But when truth is coupled with gentleness, it can open the minds of the resistant.

☛ **Thought:** Jesus was not only powerful—he was gentle.

☛ **Take a Step:** Ask God to make you safe for others to be open and honest about their spiritual journeys.

Handling Opposition

BUILDER: DAY 5



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:25).

Bonus Reading: 2 Timothy 2:22-26.

One of the most challenging situations you may face as a witness is when someone opposes the gospel. According to Paul, what is needed most at that moment is gentle instruction. This involves grace and truth. We instruct with truth to explain the gospel with clarity so that the other might understand. But we do so with grace so that our manner attracts rather than repels. Put grace and truth together and you have a powerful combination that God can use in others’ lives.

Ultimately it is not our answers that make the big difference in another person’s life or thinking. It is God who is at work through those answers. He must draw the other to Christ. God must grant them repentance. You won’t see everyone turn and come to faith. But that is what we should pray and hope for each time we engage in conversation, especially those who oppose the truth.

☛ **Thought:** A gentle person is powerful in the hands of God.

☛ **Take a Step:** Think back to a discussion with someone who was strongly negative about what you believe. Did the conversation become heated? Did you maintain your gentle composure? Ask God to make you gentle but truthful when facing opposition.

Graceful Answers

BUILDER: DAY 6



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone” (Colossians 4:6). Bonus Reading: Colossians 4:2-6.

One of the greatest fears to plague us in witnessing is the possibility of being asked questions we don’t know how to answer. Let’s look at the principle that Paul gives us. Having the right answer or knowing what to say is important, but so is using the right manner of speech or knowing how to say it.

Our answers are to be full of grace. When we provide the right answer in the wrong manner, we often get involved in verbal sparring that wounds the participant and threatens the relationship. A grace-filled answer may foster a deeper relationship. It will express understanding for what the other person thinks and why it is important to them. But it will also share the truth in a way that invites further engagement and conversation. We should answer with grace and truth.

☛ **Thought:** The most effective bridges are built with grace and truth.

☛ **Take a Step:** Identify someone on your prayer list who appears closed to spiritual issues. Ask that person what bothers him most about religion. Don’t try to provide the right answer this time. Just listen and understand. Tell him that sometime later you’d like to talk more about it.



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** *“At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth” (Mark 10:22). Bonus Reading: Mark 10:17-31.*

Many obstacles keep people from Christ. The rich young man who came to Jesus seemed so close spiritually. He was there with Jesus, talking face to face, experiencing his love and listening to his insight. Yet an obstacle stood in the way of his willingness to trust Jesus and follow him. It was his great wealth. Regrettably he turned away and the opportunity of a lifetime, no, of eternity, had passed him by.

As we enter into the spiritual journeys of others, we want to help them over obstacles that keep them from coming to Christ. But we will not always be successful, no matter how hard we try. We cannot underestimate the effect that other influences have on a person’s ultimate choice. Jesus showed the rich young man the way to move beyond the idolatry of his wealth. But once the man understood the issue, he made his own decision.

We follow Jesus’ model—lovingly showing others the way beyond, but allowing others to make their decisions.

☞ **Thought:** Even the best bridge may not be crossed.

☞ **Take a Step:** Memorize this thought: “Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”

The Mentor: Encouraging Spiritual Growth

Spiritual journeys do not end when people come to Jesus. In fact, that is just the beginning. What do people that have come to Jesus need most? Their two greatest needs are to connect with a community of believers that will help them grow and to learn the foundational truths of following Christ. A mentor helps a person make connections and learn key concepts. The mentor encourages, guides and instructs the younger believer along the way.

Wrestling Match

MENTOR: DAY 1



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured” (Colossians 4:12). Bonus Reading: Colossians 1:3-14.

New believers need your prayers. They lack the inner strength and insight that comes with maturity, leaving them vulnerable to external pressures and struggles in the Christian life.

Paul prayed continually for the new believers he knew (1 Thessalonians 1:2). He even prayed for others he had never met, such as the believers in Colossae (Colossians 2:1, 2). A co-worker named Epaphras joined Paul by “always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in the will of God, mature and fully assured” (Colossians 4:12).

Too often our prayers sound more like a grocery list than a wrestling match. We are busy listing our desires rather than struggling on behalf of others’ spiritual well being. Perhaps that’s because we fail to recognize the struggle that others experience or the power of prayer to make a difference.

☛ **Thought:** Spiritual wrestling begins on your knees.

☛ **Take a Step:** Add new believers to your prayer list, recognizing the battle they face. Pray through Colossians 1:9-12 on their behalf. Other passages to use include Ephesians 1:15-19; 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13.

Guilty Silence

MENTOR: DAY 2



☛ **Key Bible Verse:** “Then they said to each other, ‘We’re not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let’s go at once and report this to the royal palace.’” (2 Kings 7:9). Bonus Reading: 2 Kings 7:3-16.

What would you do if this had happened to you? Imagine being one of the four men, rejected by society for a condition beyond your control and left to survive on your own (2 Kings 7:3-5). That was the situation for four desperate lepers when the nation of Israel was surrounded by an enemy and suffering great famine. Unexpectedly God brought deliverance to the lepers first. They found the enemy camp deserted with all they needed to not only survive, but to thrive. But it was what everyone else needed too! Would the lepers be silent and keep it for themselves? They recognized their silence would be wrong.

Our situation is not that different today. It’s not a physical famine that plagues most people in our culture today. It is a spiritual famine. God has given salvation and it has come to us first. Will we be silent and keep it to ourselves? Or will we take the initiative to share it with others who desperately need it?

☛ **Thought:** A witness is just one beggar telling another where to find the food.

☛ **Take a Step:** Make a list of the spiritual blessings you have received. Thank God for each one. Ask God for opportunities to share with others about them.

Remaining True

MENTOR: DAY 3



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts” (Acts 11:23). Bonus Reading: Acts 11:19-26.

We don't live in a neutral environment. The world, with all of its options and appeals, has a conforming influence on people's lives (Rom.12:2). It presents a constant drag on those who seek to follow Christ. That influence puts the spiritual lives of young believers at risk.

The leaders in the early church were aware of this challenge. When they heard of the new believers in Antioch, they sent Barnabas to them. When he saw evidence of their faith, he moved into action, “encouraging them to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts” (Acts 11:23). It is no wonder that these believers increased in number and influence, becoming one of the major centers of Christianity in the early church.

When you become aware of new believers, you can play a similar role in their lives. Encourage them to remain true to the Lord, nurturing their spiritual growth. If you do, only time and eternity will reveal the impact they have because of you.

- ☞ **Thought:** Your greatest impact will be in what others do because of you.
- ☞ **Take a Step:** Pray for God to give you a handful of younger believers to mentor spiritually. Is there someone you can start with now?

Growth Environment

MENTOR: DAY 4



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42). Bonus Reading: Acts 2:42-47.

Growth is influenced by environment. Plants need fertile soil, fresh water and plenty of sunlight to grow to maturity. But what do new believers need for healthy spiritual growth? What is their ideal environment?

Acts 2 recounts the experiences of the first believers after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension. They flourished in an environment of growth. But it didn't happen by accident. In Acts 2:42 we read that they devoted themselves to “the apostle’s teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” They spent quality time together, centered around Jesus and sharing life with one another.

In the same manner, believers today grow by being in the right environment. Activities can be helpful, but a growth environment is key. Prayer, Bible study, and fellowship are critical elements in a healthy growth environment. A mentor helps ensure younger believers are in an environment for growth.

- ☞ **Thought:** The best environment for growth is filled with grace and truth.
- ☞ **Take a Step:** Think of the new believers you know. Evaluate their environment for growth. Are they getting what they need to grow to maturity? If not, what can you do to help provide a better growth environment?

Priority Connections

MENTOR: DAY 5



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). Bonus Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:6-12.

Relationships matter. They provide the context for spiritual growth. Believers need an environment that is relationally rich. There are three primary connections:

1. A spiritual mentor to encourage and guide.
2. A group of believing friends to relate.
3. A community of believers to belong.

Believers need at least two out of the three connections to foster healthy growth. The ideal environment is, of course, all three. Little growth can be expected when a believer is functioning with only one of the connections and an isolated believer is in trouble.

We need to check our own environment first. Are we connecting with other believers? Then, as mentors for others, we can help them make the connections they need.

☞ **Thought:** Like babies, believers are born into a family.

☞ **Take a Step:** Reflect on the relational connections of the newer believers you know. Which of the three priority connections appear to be missing? What steps can you take to encourage these connections?

Get Ready

MENTOR: DAY 6



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Bonus Reading: Psalm 19:7-14.

Mentoring others on their spiritual journey can be a challenge. But God has provided the means of preparation. It is all found in his Word. In this passage, Paul reveals the pathway of preparation. He states, “The man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” How? It is the product of being transformed by God’s Word.

God’s Word instructs us in all we need to know and understand about following Christ. It shows us where we are falling short, rebuking us with love. It helps us get back on track, correcting us from our wandering ways. And finally it trains us in how to live rightly. As we are experiencing the impact of the Word in our lives, we are being equipped to help others as well.

☞ **Thought:** You only need to be one step ahead to help someone following behind.

☞ **Take a Step:** With a more mature believer, identify five to ten basic concepts a new believer needs to understand and experience. Find a key passage of the Bible for each one. Write the topics and references on the flyleaf of your Bible so that you can always refer to them.



☞ **Key Bible Verse:** *“Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away” (Mark 4:16, 17).* Bonus Reading: Acts 14:21-23.

When people receive Christ, their spiritual journey isn't over. It is just beginning. But the road ahead won't always be easy. There will be many dangers and obstacles along the way.

Jesus recognized that many who appeared to respond to the gospel would fail to persevere to maturity and fruitfulness. For some, it is because the road is too hard (Mark 4:16, 17). For others, the alternatives are too attractive (Mark 4:18, 19).

Young believers need the help and encouragement of others along their path. They need to understand the hardships ahead and to be encouraged to press on (Acts 14:21-23). That is why it is essential for mentors to guide and encourage them.

☞ **Thought:** Following Jesus is not problem-free, but power-filled.

☞ **Take a Step:** Memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13. Having this verse memorized helps equip you to encourage younger believers when they face various temptations.



There are many excellent resources available to help you be an effective CoJourneyer—joining others in spiritual journey to help them come to Jesus. A sampling is provided on the following pages.



There is no perfect question that works every time. But there are many good questions that can help you explore the spiritual journeys of others. Questions are like a map to help you see where people have been, where they are at and where they are going spiritually.

Here is a sampling:

- What is your religious background?
- What was your religious experience like growing up?
- Who has had the greatest impact on you spiritually? Why?
- Has anything dramatic happened in your life that convinced you that God is real?
- What have you tried in your spiritual journey?
- How has your search left you feeling?
- What words would you use to describe your life spiritually?
- Are you satisfied with where you are at or do you desire more?
- Do you think you are moving toward God, away from him or staying about the same?
- How strong would you say your desire is to know God personally?
- Who is Jesus to you?
- Have you ever come to the point of receiving Christ as your Savior or Lord, or is that something you are still heading toward?



Always Prepared: A One Verse Gospel

There are many ways to effectively communicate the gospel. You should learn a few of them to be prepared to help guide others to Christ. One easy method is to memorize Romans 6:23 (it's only 20 words) and the diagram that goes with it.

“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”
(Romans 6:23).

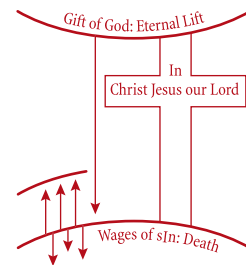
There are three phrases with three key ideas within each. Write the phrase as you draw the diagram and dialogue about it.

“The wages of sin is death”

- What is a wage?
- What is sin?
- What does it mean by death?

“the gift of God is eternal life”

- What is eternal life?
- Who gives eternal life?
- What is the difference between a wage and a gift?





“in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- Gifts often come in packages. When you get the package, you get the gift.
What “package” does eternal life come in?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the Christ?
- How does he become our Savior and Lord?

Encouraging a decision

- Have you ever received Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, or is that something you are still heading toward?
- Would you like to receive him now?
- If so, we could pray together. I’ll pray first and then you can pray, expressing your desire in your own words. Would you like to do that?

Resources:

CoJourners Equipment Pack - Twenty brief training discussions to add an equipping element to your small group Bible study.

Would You Like To Know God Personally - A brief four-point outline to help you explain to another person how to receive Christ.

Life@Large - A pamphlet to help people discover their story within the storyline of the Bible through seven themes, using Bible verses and questions.

Satisfied? - A brief four-point outline to help a struggling or young believer understand and experience the filling of the Spirit.

Building A Biblical Philosophy of Evangelism by Keith Davy & Daniela Byers - A 14-passage personal study to help you understand and develop strong biblical convictions regarding evangelism.

Jesus: Fact or Fiction - An interactive DVD with scientists, historians, philosophers and theologians addressing 50 of life’s toughest questions. It also features the film “JESUS”.

These resources and more are available at CruPress.
Go to CruPress.com or call 1.800.827.2788.

For additional resources, visit:

www.everystudent.com - A website filled with articles and issues to assist the person searching for God.

www.godsquad.com - A website of resources for Christian students seeking to be used by God in the lives of others.

www.campuscrusadeforchrist.com - The home page for the Campus Ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ. Visit the Student2Student link for additional witnessing resources.
