

90 Day Boot Camp

Will you accept the “90 Day Boot Camp Challenge?”

Yes ____ No ____ (check one)

Will you commitment to being at all Tuesday Night Studies during the Boot Camp?

Yes ____ No ____ (check one)

Will you begin the 90 Day Boot Camp Tonight?

Yes ____ No ____ (check one)

Where & When will you spend your 20-30 minutes alone everyday?

Time: _____ Place: _____

Who Will You Be Accountable to During the Boot Camp?

Name: _____ phone: _____ email: _____

List what you hope to achieve during this 90 Day Boot Camp:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Signed: _____ **date:** _____

Daily QT

90 Day Boot Camp

(35 Minutes per day)

I. Pray and Enter Into God's Presence – 5 min

II. Devotional Time in the Word – 15 min

- Daily Bible Study
- Read Chapter in "30 Days to Understanding the Bible"

III. Verse Memorization and Review – 5 min

- verses in "Beginning with Christ"
- verses in "Going On with Christ"
- verse in "The Bridge Illustration"
- TMS / Misc. Verses

VI. Apply / Plan / Pray – 10 min

- Pray for People and Events going on in your life and in the world
- Pray that God would direct and energize you for the day
- Pray that God would empower you to apply those things that you discovered in His Word today
- pray that in all you do, think, say, etc. it would glorify God and Him alone.

Daily Bible Studies

The Disciple's Ministry—Week of March 2-8, 2009

Jesus said: "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." John 13:15 This week we'll look at how the disciples followed the example of the ministry of Jesus.

Monday: Read *Luke 9:28* and *Mark 6:1, 30-31*.

1. List at least 4 things Jesus did with his disciples.
2. What do you think they talked about during these times?
3. What do you think the disciples gained from these conversations?

Read *Acts 2:42-47*. Here we see some of the believers following the example of Jesus and his disciples.

1. List at least 10 things that happened here.
2. What was the result of meetings like these?

Tuesday: Read *Acts 4:32-35*. (P.S. The Book of Acts is about the works or "acts" of the disciples after Jesus had returned to his fathers in heaven.)

1. What were some of the needs the believers had 2,000 years ago?
2. What are some of the materialistic needs you have? What are some of your non-materialistic needs?
3. List 3 of your talents. (ie. What are some things you are good at doing?)
4. Do you know anyone who needs your talents? (ie. Someone who could benefit from something you do well.)
5. How can you turn a talent God gave you into ministry?

Pray that God would show you new (or even old) opportunities for ministry.

Wednesday: Read *Ephesians 5:1-2; 6:10-20*.

1. How does Paul minister to the Ephesians in these verses?
2. Is there a negative or positive tone in his words?
3. Do you see yourself encouraging most of the time, or do you see yourself needing encouragement most of the time?

Read *Philippians 2:5*.

4. Think about what you know of Jesus Christ.
5. Did He have a positive or negative attitude?

Pray that your attitude would be the same as Christ's.

Thursday: Read *Ephesians 3:14-21* and *Philippians 1:9-11*.

1. How does Paul minister in these verses?
2. List at least 5 things Paul prays for the Ephesians.
3. List at least 5 things Paul prays for the Philippians.
4. What do these 10 things have in common?

Throughout his letters, Paul is constantly praying for his brothers and sisters in Christ. He prays that they will continue to grow in their relationships with Jesus Christ. Pray for 2 or 3 people that you would like to see come to know Christ or grow in Christ.

Friday: Read *Acts 8:26-35*.

1. What happens in this passage?
2. Who initiated the conversation?
3. How does this conversation resemble the conversation Jesus had with the Samaritan woman? (John 4:4-26)
4. How does the conversation end?
5. How was Philip blessed in this passage?

Saturday: Read *Acts 25:23-26, 32*. In this passage, Paul shares his testimony (the events that lead to a personal relationship with Jesus).

1. How does Paul begin his testimony?
2. Why is this significant?
3. How does Paul respond to the doubts of the king?
4. Write your testimony. Briefly explain (1) your life before you met Jesus, (2) what led you to Jesus (ie. Church, friend, YoungLife Weekend, etc.) 3) how you actually met Jesus Christ, (4) how has your relationship with Jesus changed your life? Try and make your testimony 5 minutes long.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for your hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15)

Sunday: Read *1 John 4:16, Romans 3:23, 4:25 and 10:9*.

1. What are the 4 Spiritual Laws from these verses?
2. Try to memorize these verses.

How to Honor God in Your Friendships—Week of March 9-15, 2009

MONDAY: Why do I feel lonely at times?

Read *Genesis 2:15-25* and *3:1-14*

1. Throughout Genesis God has creating things like the earth, the stars, animals, and man. After each creation He characterized each thing as "good" (See Genesis 1.) What did God say about the man he created?
2. What did Adam need? Why?
3. What was the world like before Adam and Eve disobeyed God?
4. Before sin entered the world, *Genesis 2:25* says that even though Adam and Eve were naked they were not ashamed. Why wasn't their appearance important?
5. How did Adam and Eve feel about themselves after they brought sin into the world?
6. Did Adam's need for a companion result from personal weakness or imperfection? (See *3:1-14*). In other words, did Adam's loneliness occur before or after sin had entered the world? What does that say about our need for others?

Application: God designed us with a built in need for other people. Even though Adam's relationship with God was perfect, He felt lonely. As a result of our "people-needs," we seek to have meaningful relationships with others and God. God recognized that need and has placed other people in the world to alleviate our loneliness. The need for others, therefore, isn't a result of sin or personal weakness. We are designed that way. Sin, however, results in feelings such as shame, anger, pain, and self-doubt that prevent us from relating with others in such a way that meets those "people-needs." Think about things in your life that prevents you from relating openly and lovingly to other people.

TUESDAY: What does a friendship with Jesus have to do with our friendship with others?

Read *1 John 1:1-4*, and *John 15:12-15*

John, a close friend of Jesus, described the relationship he had with Jesus (*1 John 1:1-4*). He refers to Jesus as the "Word of life." List some of the words he uses to describe what they have experienced (i.e. heard.) How close was John to Jesus?

1. Why does John want to tell (proclaim to) others about Jesus?
2. With whom do "they" (the Christians) have fellowship?
3. How did Jesus want his friends to relate to each other (*John 15*)?

Application: Christ tells us that a relationship with Him and with others will make our joy complete. This week make an effort to put love and joy into your relationship with Christ and with your friends.

WEDNESDAY: How do I love my friends?

Read *1 Corinthians 13:4-8a*.

1. List all the characteristics of love (TWENTY!)
2. Choose three characteristics of love. Which stand out?

This week keep these qualities in mind and make an effort to put them into action!

THURSDAY: How do I deal with conflict among friends?

Read *Ephesians 4:25-32*.

1. What does verse 25 say we should do if we are angry with someone? Why? When?
2. Is it wrong to be angry?
3. How can you be angry, but not sin?
4. What does verse 32 say we must do in situations of conflict?

Application: memorize *Ephesians 4:32*.

FRIDAY: What about reaching out to others?

Read *Matthew 25:31-46*.

1. According to verse 32, who will be gathered before Jesus to be judged?
2. Will people be evaluated based upon the actions of the nation or by their individual lives?
3. How can the King tell those that love and serve God apart from those who did not?
4. Describe how Christians who love the "King" (Jesus) act towards others.
5. What are some characteristics of individuals who Jesus wants us to befriend?

Application: Jesus had a special love for people who had needs. Sometimes people with needs are the hardest to love and the least desirable of friends. Think about a time when you reached out to someone who normally wouldn't be in your circle of friends. Now picture somebody that you should reach out to and befriend. Pray and ask God to give you someone new to reach out to this week. NOW DO IT!

Developing a Healthy Self-Image—Week of March 16-22, 2009

The Problem: What is a proper and healthy view of one's own importance and worth? How can I love myself without being conceited or self-centered? What does God say on this subject?

Monday:

Most of us have a very clear understanding and awareness of our sinfulness. Just below our surface self-confidence and I've-got-it-all-together mask, many of us think we are worthless, and we think that God thinks so too. We know that God hates sin, and we know that we are sinners, and we are sure that God hates us. But is this really the case?

- Read *Romans 3:10-18, 23; Genesis 6:5, and Psalm 5:4-6.*

What do these verses tell you about you and sin and God?

- Read *Romans 5:8* and *1 John 1:5-10*. This is the flip side.

2. What do these verses tell you?

It is true that we are sinners and that God hates sin. The good news is that God hates sin, but He loves the sinner and forgives him completely. Live like that today, for God's sake and for yours. Thank Him for His love!

Tuesday:

We all know people (and may have seen one in the mirror this morning!) who seem not even realize they are sinners. We sometimes major in forgiveness and freedom, and then get an inflated sense of our value and worth. This is just as wrong as being completely focused on our sinfulness.

Read *Philippians 2:3-8; Proverbs 25:6, 7, 22; Matthew 23:12, James 4:10, and Psalm 36 1:2.*

- What are some ways in which you exalt yourself when you are around other people? When you are alone?

- How has God humbled you in the past?

- What does it mean to humble yourself and how can you do it?

A healthy self-image, a healthy person, knows his position before God (a sinner who is completely free and forgiven) and knows his position before men (one beggar who can tell another beggar where to find bread).

PRAY that God can help you walk this fine line today and to live the abundant life that He promises.

WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO: God wants us to let go and let Him do things through us. What does it mean to die to self and live for God (*Gal 2:20*)?

Wednesday:

- Read *Romans 7:14-25*. This passage of Scripture was written by Paul, one of the greatest saints and evangelists the world has known, but you or I sure could have written it. Express the frustration Paul is describing in your own words.

- Think about some of the specific areas of your life where this is especially true and confess them to God.

- Read *John 15:4-5*. What does this passage say about Christ's role and place in a Christian's life? What does a branch need a vine for? How does this apply to your life?

PRAY that your relationship with Christ will be more like this.

Thursday:

Yesterday we learned that we could do nothing without Christ. Today read *Philippians 4:13*. This verse tells us that we can do everything and anything with Christ.

What are some areas of your life that you feel helpless in right now?

Based on *Phil 4:13* and *Eph 3:20*, ask God to fulfill His purposes in these areas and expect Him to work -- maybe not overnight, but surely and obviously. It will be hard, but practice the discipline of letting go and letting God. Ask Him to work, and get out of His way. Try to remember and meditate on this: I can't, but He can, and I am in Him and He is in me. I don't want to, but He does, and I am in Him and He is in me. I won't, but He will, and I am in Him and He is in me. I'm not, but He is, and I am in Him and He is in me.

WHAT WE CAN DO: Most of us don't like being dependent on anyone, even God. Our society teaches us that independence is to be valued, and with God that is not the case. The sooner we understand that, the better off we will be. What can we do to improve our self-image?

Friday:

One of the best things you can do is find out what particular strengths and gifts God has given to you. In learning how uniquely God has made you and in exercising your specific gifts, you will be more fulfilled and thus happier. Read *Romans 12:3-8* and *1 Corinthians 12: 4-31*.

- What do these verses say about spiritual gifts?

- Although it may be early in your spiritual journey, do you see any of the gifts mentioned here in your life?

- How would you go about "discovering" your gifts?

PRAY that God will reveal you gifts to you and that you can use them for His glory.

Saturday:

Another thing we can do to establish a healthy self-image is to get beyond thinking about only yourself and concentrate of serving others. Somehow we feel better about ourselves as we do things for others, as if God meant for it to be that way!!

Read *Matthew 20: 20-28*.

What is Jesus' point here to His disciples?

Do you know this to be true in your life?

Read *John 13:1-17*.

What is Jesus telling you about service here?

Who and in what ways will you serve this week?

PRAY for a servant's heart and attitude.

Sunday:

A third thing we can do in an effort to develop a healthy self-image is to set our minds on higher things. If we can get a heavenly mindset, earthly things (especially our place in it) pale in comparison.

Read *2 Corinthians 4:1 - 5:10*. Now read it again.

How do these verses help you see your place in God's scheme of things?

Specifically, what thoughts or verses challenge you in this passage?

How will you be different if you accept these challenges?

Psalm 103—Week of March 23-29, 2009

Why should we praise God? The psalmist gives us many reasons here. As we look in some detail at what he says, it should encourage our own thanksgiving. Each study looks at just a few verses, but you should try to see where they fit into the whole psalm.

Monday: 'Count your blessings.' Read *Psalm 103 1-5*.

The psalmist starts by encouraging himself to praise the Lord with his *whole* being, not merely an outward show. Like him we probably need the command in verse 2 not to forget how much God has done for us—when we do remember, it should encourage us to praise God, just as it did him.

Look through the whole psalm and write a list of all the things the psalmist says the Lord has done for him.

How many of these are things you can identify with? --Mark them on the list.

Now look back on your own experience as a Christian and write your own list of things (both spiritual and physical) for which you can praise the Lord.

Now spend some time in praise and thanksgiving for yourself -- use these lists to encourage you, as the psalmist did.

Tuesday: Looking back. Read *Psalm 103:6-8*.

Not only can the psalmist look to his own experience of God's blessing to encourage his praise, but also that of the whole people of God down the ages and in his own time. These verses recall the Lord's rescue of his people when they were oppressed in Egypt, and particularly his covenant with them at Sinai, when he re-vealed himself and promised to guide them.

What does the psalmist say here about God's character? Try to express it in your own words.

Consider: Can you think of examples of God's faithfulness to other parts of the world? Stop and thank God for his faithfulness, both to you and to others.

Wednesday: God's forgiveness. Read *Psalm 103:8-14*.

The psalmist turns to one particular example of God's compassion—his forgiveness.

How do we deserve to be treated?

Why doesn't God treat us like that?

Not an easy question!--the psalmist's only answer lies in his understanding of God's character (vs. 11-12). We have the privilege of seeing this much more clearly demonstrated in Jesus.

Read 1 Peter 2:21-25. What extra grounds do Christians have for being certain of God's forgiveness?

Stop and thank God for his forgiveness -- it may help to remember specific sins from the last day or so, confess them, and thank God that they are so decisively put away.

Is it easy to take God's forgiveness too lightly? What attitude towards God does the psalmist expect in those who are forgiven? How will this affect our attitude towards sin?

Thursday: 'We are dust.' Read *Psalm 103:13-18*.

What does the psalmist mean when he says we are dust and our life is like grass?

Do you ever think of yourself like this?

What does he say gives meaning to life?

Think about your non-Christian friends. What is important to them? What do they use to give meaning to life?

Consider: Do you ever let such things become more important to you than the Lord? Read Jesus' warning about such things in Matthew 6:19-24.

Read the whole psalm again, and look out for all that it says about the way the Lord loves us. Praise him for that love!

Friday: 'Our God Reigns.' Read *Psalm 103:17-22*.

As he contemplates all that God has done for him and for his people, the psalmist sums it up by saying that God rules over everything.

What response does the psalmist expect people to make to God's sovereignty?

Why do you think he calls not only men, but angels and all other creatures to join him in praise?

Read through the whole psalm again, and make a list of all that it teaches about God's character.

Consider: What does the Lord's rule mean for you personally? Do you have any problems which seem to be insoluble? Are there areas of your life where what you want and what God wants do not coincide? As you think and pray about these, it may help to look back at what this psalm says about God's love and faithfulness.

Weekend:

Pray: Since God is king over all, it follows that we can bring the needs of the whole world to him. Think of the major stories which have been in the news the past week, and take time to pray for the needs which these represent.

Go to Church!!!

Prayer—Week of March 30-April 5, 2009

Paul said, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. *Phil 4:5-6*. Paul also said, "pray continuously" *1 Thess 5:17*. This week we are going to reflect on prayer: how Jesus taught us to pray, how Paul prayed for his friends, and how we can also pray.

Monday: Read *Matthew 6: 5-13*.

What did Jesus tell his listeners to avoid in prayer?
How do hypocrisy and verbosity go together? How does each diminish prayer?
In Jesus' model prayer, to whom did he pray?
What 3 concerns, related to God, did he pray about first? What concerns followed?
What 3 personal concerns are to be the subject of prayer?
How do prayer and forgiveness go together?
If our Father knows what we need before we ask, why do we need to pray?
From Jesus' model prayer, what do you want to put into practice in your own life?
Rewrite the prayer in your own words (v 9-13) and pray it.

Tuesday: Read *Ephesians 1: 15-23*.

What did Paul pray for the Ephesians?
What motivated Paul's prayers?
What do the "eyes of your heart" see?
What is our "glorious inheritance"? (Use other scripture to back it up.)
In light of the power available to us (v. 19) what is your favorite excuse for operating on 2 cylinders instead of all 4?
How would you expect to change if your friends prayed verses 17-19 into your life?
Pray verses 17-19 for 2 or 3 of your friends.

Wednesday: Read *Ephesians 3: 14-20*.

What is the widest, longest, highest, deepest thing you can think of?
Considering *Ephesians 2:19-22*, why does Paul pray as he does? What are his under-lying views of God?
What moves you to want to live for God and others?
Would you describe your prayer life as one of feasting on God or fasting?
Where are God's love, power and fullness touching you?
Pray: Lord, help me to grasp the fullness of your love.

Thursday: Read *Philippians 1: 1-11*.

What feelings does Paul have for the Philippians (vv. 3-8)?
What concerns does Paul have for the Philippians (vv. 9-11)? Why?
What is the "good work" which will be completed when the Lord returns?
Does Paul love these Philippians because he prays for them? Or does he pray for them because he loves them?
What grade would you give yourself on expressing your feelings: To God? To your family and friends?
Who is the Paul in your life? The one who prays for you, encourages you, and loves you.
To whom can you extend "grace and peace" this week?
Pray: That God will press his peace into their situation and yours.

Friday: Read *Colossians 1: 3-14*.

What attracts you to certain strangers: Are they just "friends you haven't met"?
What about the other campaigner folks, what have you heard about them that prepares you to like them?
Paul hasn't met these believers, yet he is attracted to them. Why?
What qualities of this church would attract you most?
If faith, hope, and love are fruit of the gospel, then what does this fruit look like? Feel like?
How do your prayers for others compare with Paul's intensity, thankfulness, and clarity?
Where do you get "stuck" in prayer? How might God's power help you get unstuck (v.11)?
In the field of your life and those you pray for, are the fruits of faith, love, and hope being cultivated? How so?
Or are those fields neglected in drought? How will you tend to those neglected fields this week?

Saturday: Read *Philemon 1-7*.

When you write to someone requesting a big favor, do you "butter them up" first, or get to the point?
If Paul's goal was to affirm Philemon and his family, do you think he succeeded? If so, why?
What did Paul say that was the most affirming and was the basis of the appeal?
How are you doing at affirming and encouraging those around you?
What effect do you think more affirmation would have on your family? Friends? On those who need reconciliation?
Pray: Lord, help me to affirm and encourage those around me.

Sunday: GO TO CHURCH!!

The Letters of John (A Book Study) - Week of April 6-12, 2009

Wrong thinking about God and Jesus has existed ever since man began to worship. False teaching which stems from such ideas (or no teaching at all!) always has disastrous consequences in the church. Not only do people not know the truth intellectually it affects their day-to-day lives.

When this letter was written it is likely that the idea was circulating that, since Jesus is God, he surely never lived a fully human life; it only seems that he did. And as we might imagine, this was not without some very serious results. Speaking out of his own personal experience, John seeks to straighten out a few facts.

Monday:

The first letter of John is not easy to divide. Themes keep popping up throughout and all are mixed together. It deals, however, with some fundamental issues for a Christian.

Pray: that God will help you gain an overall grasp of the issues that are being dealt with.

Read *1 John* (the whole Book).

Read through the whole letter quickly and look out for its general themes, passing over the finer details. Watching out for reoccurring statements or phrases, noticing the first point in each paragraph and picking up the subheadings which may have been inserted into your version.

Make a note of what you see as the general themes, and any initial re-flections that you have on whether these issues are still around today.

Tuesday: Read *1 John 2:18-27*.

Write down what was the basic error that these people were making. (vs. 22-23)

What other things might they deny? (vs. 1:1; 4:15; 5:5, 10; 4:2, 9-14)

Most heresy focuses on or derives from a distorted understanding of who Jesus is.

Pray: that your own knowledge and understanding of him might always be true to the Bible. Also, pray from any person you know who has fallen away from Christ. Ask God to restore them.

Read *1 John 4:1-6*.

1. How would you sum up the kind of discernment that John writes about here?

Pray: for yourself and others in leadership positions that they may be discerning, and may be prevented from straying into error.

Wednesday: Read *1 John 1:5-2:17*.

Christians know the joy of sins forgiven - the fact that their sin need never again cut them off from God. But sin does remain a problem in our everyday living.

What evidence do you find for the assertion that sin remains a problem for the Christian?

What is God's remedy for this state of affairs (1:9-2:2)?

How does sin find expression in our lives?

Jot down specific areas which you need to bring before God now.

Read *1 John 2:28-3:10*.

What do these verses say about continuing to sin?

How would you use these verses to answer someone who believes that Christians will automatically live sinless lives?

Pray: Thank God that we can find forgiveness for all our sins.

Thursday: Read *1 John 3:11-24*.

We all have different ideas about what love is. For some it conjures up ideas of a romantic honeymoon. Others think of a mother's love for her child. And still others see it as nothing more than enlightened self-interest. There are probably as many ideas as there are people.

Try to compose a Christian definition of love.

Jot down the practical examples given here of love in action. Can you add any?

Pray: that God may give you opportunities to show practical love today.

Read *1 John 4:7-21*.

Take some time to meditate on what showing love meant to God.

Look back to the introduction to this study. Are there any ways in which your ideas about love should be corrected?

Memorize: This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (*1 John 4:10*)

Friday: Read *1 John 5:1-21*.

How, according to chapter 5, can you be sure that you are born of God?

How do we show that we love God?

What is it that puts us on the "winning side"?

Think of areas of your life that you lack assurance or certainty. How might you use these passages to help strengthen your faith?

John wants us to be certain of the things that he is writing about. Read *1 John 1:1-4* and then reflect on *1 John 5:13*.

Pray: for the areas in your life in which you are uncertain. And thank god for the certainty He gives.

Weekend:

Return to the themes noted down on the Monday. Reread the letter and pray over what God has been saying to you this week.

Read *2 John* and *3 John* as if they were letters you had received this morning.

Why do you think they were written?

Do you know of any similar situations today?

The Life of Peter—Week of April 13-19, 2009

This week we are going to look at the life of Peter. Peter has led an interesting life. If you were to describe Peter an appropriate word would be enthusiastic. The word enthusiastic, at its root, means, "filled with God." At the beginning of Peter's life he has raw enthusiasm. At the end of his life he has real enthusiasm. We are going to take a look at the changes that occur in Peter before and after he is "filled with God."

Monday: Read *Luke 5:1-11*.

Under what circumstances does Jesus meet his first disciples?

What does this preacher know about fishing? What does this fisherman know about Jesus' preaching?

What results from Simon's obedience? (v.5)

Why this confession of sin?

What new insights did Simon, James, and John have?

What about Jesus makes these 3 fishermen leave everything behind to follow him?

Notice: There were many people present that day. Why were these 3 men the only ones to respond in this way?

How did Jesus call you to himself? How did he get your attention?

PRAY: Lord, give me ears to hear your calling, eyes to see your way, and feet that will follow!

Tuesday: Read *Matthew 14:22-36*.

Notice: After a long day of serving and being with people, Jesus took time to be ALONE with the Father!

Of all the adventures in your life, which was the most daring? What were the risks?

What do Peter's actions reveal about his character?

Why do you think Jesus told Peter to come out on the water?

What do you learn about Jesus' hope for you in this passage?

What do the disciples conclude about Jesus because of this faith-stretching experience?

Would you be more likely to stay in the boat, or step out of it? Why?

Which do you think is the best course of action? Why?

What do you see in your own life that parallels Peter's attempt to walk on water?

PRAY: Lord, help me to always take steps toward you, even if it means walking into the unknown.

Wednesday: Read *Luke 9:18-20*.

If you asked the average person on the street, "Who is Christ?" what responses would you most likely get?

Why might Jesus be interested in his opinion poll? What affect would it have on him? On the disciples perception?

Why do you think Jesus refocuses to question? (v. 20)

What is Peter's enthusiastic response?

When did Jesus become more than a name in the history books to you?

Read *Luke 9: 28-36*.

Why might Jesus take these particular disciples to witness him transfigured & speaking with Moses & Elijah?

What was Peter's response to what occurred? Why?

PRAY: Lord, it is good to be with you, thank you for your many blessings!Thursday: Read *Luke 22:54-62*.

Have you ever felt like you have let someone down at a crucial point in their lives?

What character has Peter displayed so far?

How are the three accusations and denials similar? Different?

What was more heart-rending to Peter: The crowd? Jesus' look? Jesus' words?

Why such tears?

Peter has enthusiastically denied Christ. How do you think he feels about himself?

What do you think, he thinks, Jesus thinks of him?

Have you ever felt like Peter? When? Under what circumstance?

Notice: Peter is the only one who followed close enough to Christ to be put in the position to deny him

PRAY: Lord, give me the strength and courage to follow you closely, even to the cross. Give me tears of repentance when I have denied you. And give me the hope that comes from your forgiveness.

Friday: Read *John 21:1-14*.

How does Peter feel at the beginning of this passage?

In view of the type of fishing they were doing (all night, using nets), do you think

Peter's statement in verse 3 is indicative of just wanting something to do, or a return to his old business?

Compare the story with MONDAY. Why do you think Jesus might repeat this type of miracle now?

What is Peter's response? Why?

How do you think Peter feels now?

Where do you go to get away from it all? How does God meet you there?

What does God use to get your attention when he needs to reestablish contact: A crowbar? A sledgehammer? A good nights rest?

PRAY: Lord, thank you that when I have no idea what to do next, when I feel like I have let you down, you come looking for me until you find me. And then you nourish me with your presence.

Saturday: Read *John 21:15-25*.

Why do you think Jesus repeated the same question and charge to Peter three times?

How is Peter supposed to demonstrate his love and loyalty to Jesus now?

What is the closest you have ever come to blowing it so badly that you thought God was never going to speak to you again?

What did you discover about God in this experience?

Who do you know that needs to feel forgiveness by God? By you?

What will you do this week to remind this person that god is a God of Forgiveness?

Sunday: GO TO CHURCH!

Jesus Christ's Ministry—Week of April 20-26, 2009

Paul said, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (*1 Cor. 11:1*) Last week we said that ministry was meeting the needs of others. This week we'll look at the ways Jesus ministered. Look for ways to follow His example.

Monday: Read *John 4:4-26*.

- Who initiates the conversation?
- How does the Samaritan woman respond? Why?
- Who becomes the center of the conversation? Why is this significant?
- Why did the Samaritan woman keep talking to Jesus?
- How did this conversation end?

Jesus had the first and last word. What started with a simple request turned into a conversation centered on Jesus? Jesus told the Samaritan woman who he was and who he could be in her life.

Pray that God would be the center of your conversations.

Tuesday: Read *Matthew 8:5-13*. Since Rome ruled Palestine so harshly, the Jews hated the Romans. Moreover, this man was not ordinary Roman but a centurion—an officer in charge of occupation troops stationed throughout the country.

- How did Jesus respond to the man's request?
- How do you think the disciples and the Jews from Capernaum reacted to Jesus' compassion on such a hated man?

Do you know of anyone who is treated like a Roman soldier?

Jesus did not hesitate to grant this man's request. He showed the same love and mercy as he showed to others. Jesus knew that everyone needed him.

Pray that you could see, treat and love everyone like Jesus does.

Wednesday: Read *Leviticus 13:40-46*. The disease this passage speaks of is leprosy. Those with leprosy lived in caves outside the city. They were hardly ever seen, and certainly never touched by anyone who lived in the city.

Read *Mark 1:40-45*.

- What happened in this passage?
- How do you think the disciples and the Jews reacted to Jesus' compassion for this untouchable man?
- Everywhere we look there are "untouchables". These people aren't necessarily unapproachable because they're mean or rude, but for some reason they don't have friends. Do you know anyone who is treated like they have leprosy?

Yesterday we saw that Jesus ministered to people who were hated. Today we see that he also ministered to people who were avoided. He touched the "untouchables".

Pray that you could see, treat and love everyone like Jesus does.

Thursday: Read *Luke 18:31-34*. Jesus told his disciples the truth.

- How do you think you would have reacted if you were one of the disciples?
- List some other ways the disciples could have reacted.
- Do you think the disciples understood what Jesus meant sometime later? Why?
- How do you think the disciples would have felt if Jesus never told them the truth about what was to happen?
- Why are we afraid to tell the truth sometimes?

Sometimes it's scary to tell the truth. When we see one of our Christian friends stumbling in sin, God says we should warn them (*1 Thess. 5:14*). If we pray for sensitivity and consult Scripture for the words to use, the confrontation should be painless and encouraging. Another time it may be scary to tell the truth is when we're witnessing (telling or showing someone what we've seen to be true in our own lives). It's scary because we may not think they're going to understand what we're saying and they may be overwhelmed with the Gospel. But, if we're praying for sensitivity and consulting Scripture for the words to use, the conversation will surely be fruitful. Remember, we may not see the fruit of these conversations right away, and in some cases we may never see the fruit. But God says we should tell the truth and he will protect those who aren't ready to hear it (*Luke 18:34*).

Friday: Read *Mark 2:1-12*

What happened in this passage?

How did Jesus react to the interruption? How would you have reacted?

What was the external need this man had? What was the internal need? Which need do you think was more important to the paralytic and his friends? Which need was more important to Jesus?

What is the one need we all have in common?

We all have external and internal needs. As you minister to your Christian friends, remember that while they may appear to have a lot of external needs, the only real need we have as Christians is encouragement in our relationships with Jesus Christ. And while our non-believing friends may appear to have a lot of external needs, the only real need a non-believer has is salvation through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Letter of James—Week of April 27-May 3, 2009

Action! That's what James calls for. The evidence points towards his being the brother of Jesus. This letter seems like a collection of sermon notes - each theme capable of expansion. It states clearly that faith without resulting actions is dead!

Monday: Faith Tested Read *James 1*.

If I sin, well so what? Are there any absolutes anyway? Can't everyone do what is right in their own eyes?

1. Write down some of the differences between the doubter and the steadfast, persevering person (vs. 4,6). What produces a firm faith?
2. How can you decide which values you should use as your standards to live by (vs.5, 12,17)? How can they be achieved (vs. 21-22)?
3. 'Actions speak louder 4. How can you have an active faith in your own situation? (At home, in school, on the field, at work, etc.)

Write out *James 1:2-4* on a piece of paper or card and memorize these verses.

Tuesday: Action for the Needy Read *James 2*.

It is easy to believe - even the demons do. It doesn't cost them anything to demonstrate belief - does it you?

1. What is the principal illustrated in verses 1-7? How do your attitudes compare in terms of wealth, nationality, position...?
2. "Well officer, I was only doing 70 mph" or "Well, it was only a little dent." Guilty or not guilty according to verses 8-13 - and why?
3. What does James teach about the relationship of actions to faith?
4. Who is my neighbor and what is his or her need?

Wednesday: A Controlled Tongue Read *James 3*.

Usually hidden in the mouth, yet a slip of the tongue may end a friendship, start cruel rumors, endanger lives....

1. Verses 1- 12. Write down the illustrations used to picture the power of the tongue and its ability to reflect the heart of the owner. What is the main point of each teaching?
2. Verses 13-18. Consider the nature of earthly and divine wisdom. What kind of speech arises naturally from these sources?
3. What fires does your tongue start? Think back over this past week to conversations you have had, cross words spoken, speech that has encouraged your hearer. Let these verses act as a challenge to you.

Meditate on *James 3:17*.

Thursday: I want... Read *James 4*.

How can I be something of value for the Lord when I don't even 'value' myself - I'm always struggling within?

1. War - a strong word! How often are you at war with yourself and thus with others? What are the signs of this inner lack of peace, and social disquiet? Write them down as given by James.
2. Verses 7-10. What does the Lord require that he may 'lift you up'? Does humility mean becoming a 'door-mat'? Consider the active nature of Jesus' submission and humility (Phil. 2:5-8). What difference would active humility make in your life right now?
3. Verses 13-17. How does the quality of your life in God's eyes square with all human life being like a mist?

Pray: that your life may count for Christ. Express your dependence upon him as the source of power for a Christ-like humility and an active faith.

Friday: Test your faith. Read *James 5*.

1. Had your faith road tested lately? Is the 'road worthy'?
2. Is your faith of the quality that neither acknowledges God's rights in all areas of life nor your responsibilities to your fellow human beings? How may you guard against this, even in small things?
3. Write down the characteristics of those who are waiting for Christ to return.
4. How would you explain the meaning of patience (vs. 7) or perseverance, in the light of these qualities?
5. What are we shown about the power of prayer coming from people of faith? Is your prayer life like this? How can you learn to pray as Elijah did?

Pray: that you may have an active faith towards others, steadfast towards Christ, patiently waiting for the coming again of the Lord.

Weekend:

1. Moffat found 54 commands in 108 verses! Find as many of them as you can and look out for what James teaches about the relationship between faith and action.
2. Write down the characteristics of those who are waiting for Christ to return.
3. How would you explain the meaning of patience (vs. 7) or perseverance, in the light of these qualities?

GRACE—Week of May 4– 10, 2009

This weeks studies are going to be focusing on what probably is the most important and least lived aspects of our lives as Christians, God's grace in each of our lives. "But God demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." *Rom. 5:8* Grace: the undeserved gift of God to man. For me, pictures and stories communicate much more effectively than mere words. That being true, I'd like to start our dealing with grace by asking you to meditate each day on one of several Biblical illustrations of grace.

Monday: In scripture, God often uses the lives of people to illustrate a truth about Himself.

Read *Genesis 37,39, 41-45.*

Try to picture yourself in Joseph's situation.

Imagine being sold into slavery by your own family. Imagine rotting in jail for two years with nothing to do but think about what they have done to you.

Imagine, then having the perfect chance to get even. After all, don't they deserve it?

Yet, how did Joseph respond? Why?

When you look at your own life, what do you really deserve from God? Yet, what has He done? Read *Romans 5:8*

Tuesday: Read Hosea 1:2-10, 3:1,2 ch.II God here pictures Himself as a husband who continues to love an unfaithful wife. In fact, He will even buy her way out of prostitution.

In what ways has your sin enslaved you? Read *Romans 3:10-18.*

How has God bought you back? *Romans 3:23,24* Why?!!

Wednesday: Read *Matt. 13:44-47* and *Luke 15: 4-10* Think about this!! You are the treasure, you are the pearl, you are the sheep and you are the coin!! In each of those cases the fanatical search for the object is a mere shadow of the intensity of God's love and desire for you.

Thursday: Read *Luke 15: 11-24.*

How is your sin like the son's leaving home?

Just as the son decided to return, how must we do the same with our hearts?

How does the welcome the son received and the riches lavished upon him relate to our life in Christ?

Friday: Read Acts 7:54-8:3, 9:1,2 Here we have a man, Saul, who has completely dedicated himself to destroying Christianity?

How would you respond to that, if you were God?

How does God respond?

Read *Acts 9:3-19* His personal experience with God's grace and forgiveness enabled Paul to write: *Romans 5:6-11, Romans 8:1-4,38,39, II Cor. 5:17*

If God can do this for Paul/Saul, what can He do for us?

Saturday: Peter God's right hand man. The chief disciple. Christ even tells him that He is going to build His entire church upon Peter - pretty big responsibility.

How does Peter handle it?

Read *Matt. 26:69-75* Does God give up on this failure?

Read *John 21:1-17 I Peter 1:3,4*

Sunday: Enjoy Church Today! Meditate on the Sermon and Review Your Notes

Honesty and Integrity in a Fallen World—Week of May 11-17, 2009

Living an honest and integrity life does not come naturally. Everyone has faced the temptation to cheat on a test or on taxes, fail to report an error in your favor, or misrepresent the truth. It is safe to say that everyone has given into the desire to look out for their own interests even if it means being less than genuine. Living your life with integrity takes a decision, commitment, and lots of effort. Jesus offers us the power to live a life, which is pure and honest.

MONDAY: Foundation for morality; making Jesus the boss.

Read *Acts 4:1-3, 13-20*.

Why were Peter and John arrested?

Describe Peter and John based on these verses.

What was their social class, amount of religious training, or education levels?

What motivated them to talk about Jesus despite tremendous pressure from society?

How did they respond to pressure to stop doing what they believed they should do?

Application:

Name five ways in which you can let Jesus be the boss of your life. (i.e. caring for people like Jesus does, praying about decisions...)

What do you do when you are put to the test? Think about a time when you obeyed God. Now think about a time when you gave into the pressure. What made the difference?

What does making Jesus the boss have to do with honesty and integrity?

TUESDAY: Defining integrity

Define integrity. Look up the definition in the dictionary.

Read *Proverbs 6:16-19*, and *Proverbs 8:5-9, 13a*.

Name the seven things which the Lord hates and describe what each of them means.

What is the difference between being smart and being wise or worthy of honor?

What does wisdom have to do with integrity?

Application:

Name 2 ways in which you practice integrity.

Name 2 ways in which you could improve your integrity. Pray for help in these areas.

WEDNESDAY: Integrity before God.

Read *Hebrews 4: 12-16*

A two-edged sword has an incredible ability to cut quickly into its target. How is the Bible (Word of God) like a two-edged sword?

How are thoughts and attitudes evaluated by the Word of God?

Name some thoughts and attitudes which are spiritual and which are human.

Is it always easy to tell which is motivation your actions? They may be as close together as joints and marrow!

Application: Living a life of integrity takes an internal decision. When we are dishonest, our lives are less than whole, less than what Christ wants us to be. Rather than living life based on following rules and fearing threats, Christ offers life as a new person. He gives us a new and undefiled nature. The only way to stop living a life that lacks integrity is to allow Christ to make it new. Talk to Jesus about your life. Name three ways in which you resolve to live a life of integrity.

THURSDAY: Integrity before God.

Read *Hebrews 4:12-16* again, concentrating on verses 14-16. Also read *Romans 14:10-12* and *2 Corinthians 5:10*.

What kinds of things will we be giving an account for before God?

How does verse 15 describe Jesus? Why can he understand the temptations we face?

Why can we approach the throne of Grace with confidence?

When you think about standing before God, how do you picture Him? Will he care about how we lived our lives?

What does grace have to do with judgment?

Application

Since nothing is hidden from him, including our thoughts and motivations, be honest before him about some of your more human motivations.

Name some of the factors that influence you most in determining your moral values?

What helps you to be honest in your words and actions?

FRIDAY: Steps to integrity

Read *James 4:1-4*

What is the root of the problem with the people? (See especially verse 4.)

What eight steps does James give to build honesty and integrity in our lives? Define each one.

Application

What human feelings challenge your ability to live a life of integrity? (i.e. indecision, greed, anxiety (What if) , dishonesty (no one will know) , cheating (just this once), fear of failure, inferiority, crisis...)

Inform God of your desire to live honestly based on what challenges you the most from above.

SATURDAY: Reflect on *Galatians 5:22-26*

God's Call—Week of May 18-24, 2009

Paul said, "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one in love. Eph 4:1-2 And Peter said, "Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:10-11 This week we will look at how God called 7 men to Himself, a task, and a ministry.

Monday: Read *Exodus 3:1 - 4:17*.

- What was God's method in calling Moses?
- To what has Moses been called?
- What were God's instructions?
- What was Moses' response to God's call?
- Put yourself in Moses shoes (or sandals). How would you have responded?
- Did God make any promises? If so, what were they?

Pray: God help me to speak, and teach me what to say to those around me.

Tuesday: Read *Joshua 1:1-9*.

- 1. How does God call Joshua?
- What was Joshua called to do?
- What instructions did God give Joshua?
- What were God's promises to Joshua?
- Why do you think God told Joshua 3 times to be "strong and courageous"?

Pray: God give me the strength and courage to do the task you have laid out before me?

Wednesday: Read *Judges 6:11-40*.

- What did God call Gideon to do?
- What was Gideon's response (initial and final) to God?
- What were God's instructions to Gideon?
- What promises did God make to Gideon?
- What do you think about Gideon questioning God? (v.13, 15, 17, 36-30)

Notice:v.12 God called Gideon a "mighty warrior". Was Gideon a mighty warrior at that point? No, but he was by the end! God sees us *not* as we are but as we will be in Him! Read *Philippians 1:6*

Pray: Thank you Lord, for the man/woman You are molding me to be.

Thursday: Read *1 Samuel 3*.

- How did God call Samuel?
- Is his calling different from the others? If so, how?
- What was Samuel called to do?
- What was Samuel's response to God?
- What, if any, were God's promises to Samuel?
- What steps did Samuel take to get to know God?
- If you were Samuel what would you have done?

Pray God reveal Yourself to me through the Word, and may I "let none of your words fall to the ground."

Friday: Read *1 Samuel 16*.

- What method does God use to call David?
- Does this differ from the others? How?
- What was David called to?
- What were David's qualifications to be King?
- What would you be thinking or how would you be feeling if you were David?
- What was David's response to God's call?

Pray: Thank you God that You are qualification enough for any task placed before me!

Saturday: Read *Isaiah 6:1-13*.

- How did God call Isaiah?
- What is Isaiah called to?
- How does he respond to God's calling (initially and finally)?
- What instructions, if any, did God give Isaiah?
- What were God's promises to Isaiah?

Pray: Lord, may I always be ready and willing to say, "Here I am." Send me!

Sunday: Read *Jeremiah 1:4-19*.

- What did God call Jeremiah to do?
- What was Jeremiah's response?
- How would you respond if you were Jeremiah?
- What instructions were given to him?
- What were God's promises to him?

Pray: Lord help me not to think of what I cannot do, but of what I *can* do with you!

The First Letter of Peter—Week of May 25-31, 2009

Remember Peter? He was the blustery, impetuous fisherman who was witness to so much of the life of Jesus; he protested his love for his Lord, yet was unable to own allegiance to him when it came to the crunch.

And do you remember Jesus' words to Peter? 'Feed my sheep' and 'on this rock I will build my church'.

In this letter we see Peter fulfilling Jesus' commission to be a church leader. He is probably writing from what is now the greater part of Northern Turkey. It is likely that he is writing on the eve of the outbreak of persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. This letter could have served to prepare the readers for such a time. As it stands, it is full of relevant teaching for us in the twentieth century. We shall be drawing out themes from the letter. But make sure that you do not just look at isolated verses. Try to get a grasp of the letter as a whole.

Monday: Peter Read *1 Peter*

The apostle Peter had come a long way from the days when he was a fisherman on the Lake of Galilee. Some say that such an ill-educated man could not have written this letter in Greek. But Jewish boys were taught in the synagogue and his hometown, Bethsaida, was on a commercial trade route. And he was writing with the help of Silas anyway (5:12). He certainly was writing from his deep personal knowledge of Jesus.

Read through the whole letter of 1 Peter. As you do so, write down the names Peter gives to Jesus: see 1:19, 2:4-8, etc.

Take each of these names and use them to thank God for Jesus. For example, as the perfect lamb (1:19).

Jesus makes it possible (without the sacrifice needing to be repeated) for us to get right with God. What does this mean to you?

Tuesday: Suffering

The world is full of suffering. This is more acute for some than others. Christians are not exempt. Indeed, being a Christian can be the cause of suffering. This was true for Peter's readers as well!

Read *1 Peter 1:3-9*

1. The words 'keep', 'kept' or 'shielded' occur several times in 1:4-5. How would the idea of God's purpose and protection help the Christian who is isolated or under pressure?

Read *1 Peter 3:8-17* and *4:12-19*

Write down the many points he is making about suffering. When have you suffered for your faith, experienced unjust accusations and the like? Can you think of others suffering right now? Pray for yourself and them with points in mind.

The purpose of suffering is a difficult problem. What indications does Peter give why a Christian suffers? See 1:6-7, 4:1-2, 5:9-10.

Pray: for Christians around the world who are being persecuted for their faith.

Wednesday: Holy Living

'Be holy, because I am holy' (1:16). Peter was quoting from Leviticus. The people of God were to be pure, untouched by the filthy practices of the tribes around them. To be holy and pure means to live life God's way. But what does that mean?

Trace the process by which we are set free to be holy (1:13-23).

What will be the characteristics of this new life of holiness? See 1:2, 22; 2:1, 11, 12; 3:10-12; 4:2; 5:5-7.

How does this affect others? 2:12, 15; 3:1-2, 15-16; 4:4.

Think through your schedule today. Are there any activities which you need consciously to bring to God for him to make them holy?

Pray then that the holiness of your life will challenge others to think about Christ- and look out for God to act through you.

Thursday: Relationships

Peter has stressed that Christians are individually part of one nation (2:9). We can not live in isolation. We have to live in relationship with others - both Christian and secular. How does God affect our relationships?

How were these Christians to respond to every authority? Why was this important (2:13-18)?

Put the principle in 2:16 into your own words. How should this affect relationships at school and in your home?

How was Peter transforming the commonly held view of his day about inferiority of women (see 3:1-7)? What lasting principles about husband and wife relationships is he stating here?

In the light of all these relationships, what should our response as Christians be to disrespectful comments about our boss, principal, friend, brother/sister?

Pray: for those who are in authority today and in the coming years.

Friday: Church

Relationships within the church are included in this letter. Before you begin, ask yourself how conscious are you of working at and taking care of relationships with people in your church? Too careful or lazy? (Do you even go to church?)

What are the characteristics of a good church leader? See 5:1-4. Pray for your leaders now in their responsibilities.

Read *1 Peter 5:5* slowly. Are respect and humility the characteristics you would expect to see in a church? Do your attitudes affect this in your church? Be practical.

3. Put 4:7-11 in your own words, then underline any statements that you feel are lacking in your church life.

Spend time praying that the Lord will enable your church to reflect these characteristics - and again, be specific.

Weekend:

1. Read through *2 Peter*. Look out for the three main themes:

Christians are called to be holy.
False teaching must be rejected.
The day of the Lord is coming.

You could then read through the book of Jude to see parallels.

2. Compare *1 Peter 2:21-22* with *Isaiah 53*.

3. GO TO CHURCH

What Is Ministry And Why Is It Important? - Week of June 1-7, 2009

Monday: Just what is ministry? Read Mark 4:35, 5:43 and John 2:1-11

In each of these instances Jesus did something very different and yet each one was ministry. Ministry is responding to the needs of anyone you meet.

List the different ways that Jesus ministered in these verses.

Pray: Consider your own needs and the way Christ has met them. Thank Him and pray for present problems.

Tuesday: Ministry goes far beyond meeting physical needs. Read John 4:1-42 and John 3:1-21.

To what needs was Christ ministering to here?

2. In what ways is this ministry of the most important kind?

Reflect on Christ's ministry to you on a spiritual level.

Pray: Thank God for his forgiveness and grace in your life. Confess your sins and enjoy His forgiveness!!!!!!

Wednesday:

Read Luke 12: 22-32.

How can I minister to other people? I've got all these needs of my own.

If Christ promises to meet all of our needs, including our voracious hunger for friendship and love, we can give ourselves away with reckless abandon!

Pray: Again, thank God for His promise to meet all your needs. Pray for the courage to give yourself away because God promises to take care of you.

Thursday:

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 and 1 John 4:19

Why should I minister?

What is the motivation?

How am I any different than a social worker?

If we try to minister to others out of the motivation of their needs and compassion for their problems, I am convinced that we will burn ourselves out. Compassion is important, but the only effective ministry is one that is driven by an overwhelming sense of God's love in the life of the minister!

Pray: Thank God for His love for you. Take time to just reflect on the enormity of His love for you! (Eph. 3:15-21 can help) Rejoice in the love of God!

Friday: What should my ministry be? Read II Cor. 5:14-21 again. Read 1 John 3:16-18.

What does it mean to reconcile a relationship?

Do the people around you need to be reconciled with God? How can you help?

What physical needs could you meet for those sitting next to you in school?

Remember, every person you meet is an opportunity for ministry!

Pray: That God would show you the people in your life who really need you to minister to them. Pray for the wisdom to minister to exactly what their needs are.

Saturday:

Read II Cor. 4: 6,7 and Romans 12:2

This is all fine and good, but how in the world do I do it?

I spend almost all of my time thinking about myself, how can I start to think of others?

How can you minister? You can't! God can, through you!

Pray: For God's Spirit to give you the desire and the ability to minister to others.

Sunday: GO TO CHURCH!!!!!!!

Preparing a Personal Testimony

Developing the BEFORE, HOW, and AFTER sections

1. BEFORE:

a. Many people's actions spring out of their unsatisfied deep inner needs. What were one or two of your unsatisfied deep inner needs before you came to know Jesus Christ? Some examples of inner needs are:

- lack of peace
- fear of death
- something missing
- no meaning to life
- desire to be in control
- loneliness
- lack of security
- lack of purpose
- no significance
- no real friends
- no motivation
- compartmentalized life

b. Non-Christians are usually trying to satisfy their deep inner needs through unsatisfactory solutions. In the past, what unsatisfactory solutions did you use to attempt to meet those deep inner needs? As you develop your testimony, list the positive as well as the negative solutions you may have tried. Some examples are:

- marriage/work
- work
- sex
- family
- sports/fitness
- money
- drugs/alcohol
- popularity
- hobbies/entertainment
- school
- friends
- status/power/position

2. HOW

a. Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your deep inner needs. Identify the events that led to your conversion. In some cases this may have taken place over a period of time.

b. State specifically the steps you took to become a Christian. If there is a particular passage of scripture that applies here, you may want to use it

c. Include the gospel clearly and briefly. The gospel includes:

- All have Sinned
- Sins Penalty
- Christ Paid the Penalty
- Salvation Not By Works
- Must Receive Christ
- Assurance of Salvation

3. AFTER

a. State how Christ filled or is filling your deep inner needs. In the *before* you expressed your needs and how you tried unsuccessfully to meet them. You now want to briefly show the difference that Christ has made in your life.

b. Conclude with a well thought out and planned ending statement. It is good to end with a favorite verse and a challenge for those you are talking to, to investigate further in their own lives the things you have talked about.

Preparing a Personal Testimony Guidelines

1. *Make it sound conversational.* Avoid literary sounding statements. Use informal language.
2. *Share, don't preach. Say "I" and "me", not "you".* This helps keep the testimony warm and personal.
3. *Avoid religious words, phrases or jargon:*

Religious words	Possible substitutes
Believed/Accepted Christ	Committed my life to Christ
Sin	Turning my back on God
Went Forward	Turned my life over to God
Under the blood	God forgave me for all my sins
Saved/Born again	Became a follower of Christ
Christian	Follower of Christ - Believer

4. *Generalize so more people can identify with your story.* Don't name specific churches, denominations, or groups. Avoid using dates and ages.
5. *Include some humor and human interest.* When a person smiles or laughs, it reduces tensions - humor is disarming and increases attention.
6. *Avoid dogmatic and mystical statements which skeptics can question,* such as: "I prayed and God gave me a job" or "God said to me..."
7. *Simplify as much as possible*
8. *Keep it 3-5 minutes long -*

Remember the 3 B's: "Be brief, Be clear, Be gone."

Navigation Tools

The Bridge to Life

A Tool for Sharing the Gospel

Your non-Christian friends may have many questions before they are ready to trust Christ. But one thing *all* of them need at some point is a clear explanation of the Gospel and how they must respond to receive God's gift. Are you ready to provide this crucial information clearly? This "Bridge Illustration" can be sketched out anytime, anywhere, in 15 or 20 minutes.

When you draw out the Bridge for a friend, you walk them through four major points of the Gospel:

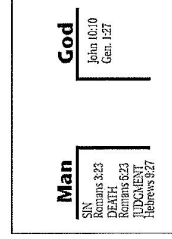
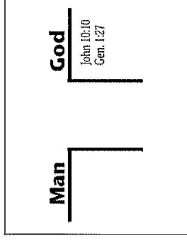
(I) *God's Love* (II) *Man's Problem* (III) *God's Remedy* (IV) *Man's Response*

As you draw out the illustration, turn to each Scripture reference and have your friend read it. Included with each step of the diagram are several questions for you to ask. These will help you understand what your friend thinks about his/her relationship with God.

I. God's Love

God created us in His own image to be His friend and to experience a full life assured of His love. But He didn't make us robots—He gave us the freedom of choice.

- Q1 What do you think it means to really live life to the fullest?
- Q2 How are God and mankind different?



II. Man's Problem

Mankind has chosen to disobey God and thus become separated from Him. This separation means the penalty of an eternal spiritual death.

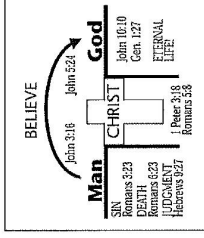
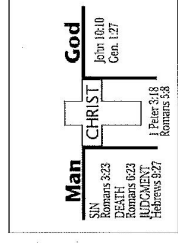
- Q3 Have you ever wanted to talk to God but He seemed far away?
- Q4 When you think of death, what do you think of?

III. God's Remedy

On our own, we cannot attain the perfection needed to bridge the gap between mankind and God. Christ's death alone is adequate for our sin and bridges the gap between God and man.

Q5 If death can be defined as separation from God, what is life?

Q6 Why did Christ die?



IV. Man's Response

Believing means trust and commitment—acknowledging our sinfulness, trusting Christ's forgiveness, and letting Him control our life. Eternal life is a gift for us to receive.

- Q7 Where would you place yourself in this illustration?
- Q8 Is there any reason why you shouldn't cross over to God's side and be certain of eternal life?

Once you've memorized and practiced this "Bridge Illustration," invite a Christian friend out to lunch or coffee. Ask them to pose as a non-Christian friend while you practice drawing out the Bridge on a table napkin. Have your friend give you feedback. Then invite a non-Christian friend out for lunch and share the Gospel!

What should you do when someone accepts Christ?

A good place to start would be to send us an e-mail message at: devotion@navigator.org. Give us your address, and we'll send you information about basic steps to take to help a new believer grow.

The Bridge to Life (a pocket-size version) is available from NavPress. For more information, call (800) 366-7788 or visit <http://www.navpress.org>.

© The Navigators, 1997

B - Proclaim Christ—The Bridge Illustration

All Have Sinned

Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Isaiah 53:6 - We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Sin's Penalty

Hebrews 9:27 - Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

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

Christ Paid the Penalty

I Peter 3:18 - For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Salvation Not By Works

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast.

Titus 3:5 - He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Must Receive Christ

John 1:12 - Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Revelation 3:20 - Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Assurance of Salvation

I John 5:13 - I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

John 5:24 - I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

How to Memorize a Verse or Passage Effectively

1. Before you start to memorize the verse, read it aloud several times.
2. Learn the Topic, reference, and the First Phrase as a unit
3. After you have reviewed the Topic, Reference, and the First phrase a few times, add the second phrase. Gradually add phrases until you know the whole verse.
4. Work on the verses audibly whenever possible.
5. As you memorize and review the verse, think about how it applies to your own life.
6. Always review the verse in this sequence:
Topic: “Christ the Center”
Reference: “Second Corinthians five seventeen”
Verse: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”
Reference: Second Corinthians Five Seventeen
7. The most critical **element** in scripture memory is: **REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW.**
The most important time to review a verse repeatedly is right after you can quote the whole verse (topic, reference, verse, and reference again) without making a mistake. Review the verse a minimum of once daily after that, preferably several times a day. The more you review, the greater your retention.
8. The most critical **concept** in scripture memory is: **OVER-LEARNING**
A verse should not be considered memorized simply at the point when we can quote it accurately. Only when we have reviewed it frequently enough for it to become *ingrained* in our memory should we consider a verse memorized

Beginning With Christ

Assurance of Salvation

I John 5:11-12 - And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Assurance of Victory

I Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Assurance of Forgiveness

I John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Assurance of Answered Prayer

John 16:24 - "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

Assurance of Guidance

Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Going On With Christ

Living in Christ

John 15:5 - "I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Living by the Word of God

Acts 20:32 - "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Living by the Spirit of God

Romans 8:14 - Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Living by Faith

II Corinthians 5:7 - We live by faith, not by sight.

Living a Life of Love

I John 4:11 - Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Living in Fellowship

I John 1:7 - But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Living as a Witness

I Peter 3:15 - But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. 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.

Living a Life of Generosity

II Corinthians 9:6-7 - Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.