

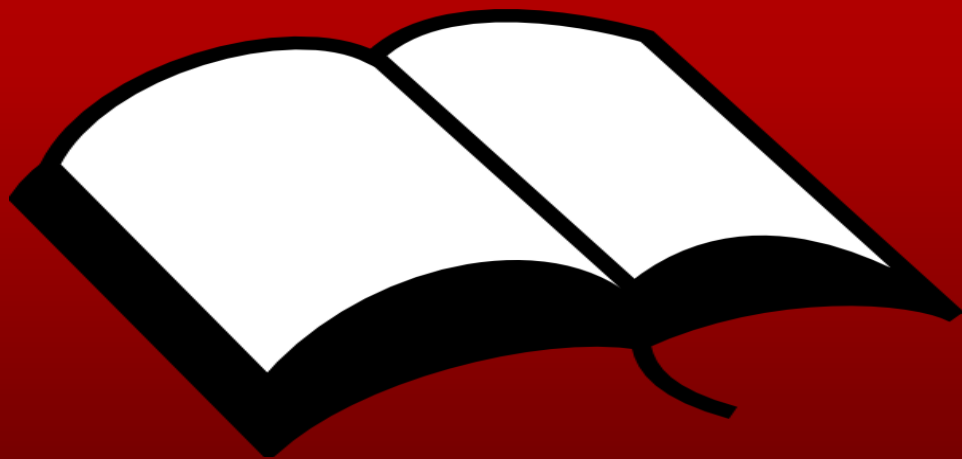
MATTHEW L. TINKHAM, JR., MDiv

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ... to the end of the earth.” -Acts 1:8 (ESV)

SHARING

YOUR FAITH

a training seminar on practical methods of
personal evangelism and soul-winning



PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

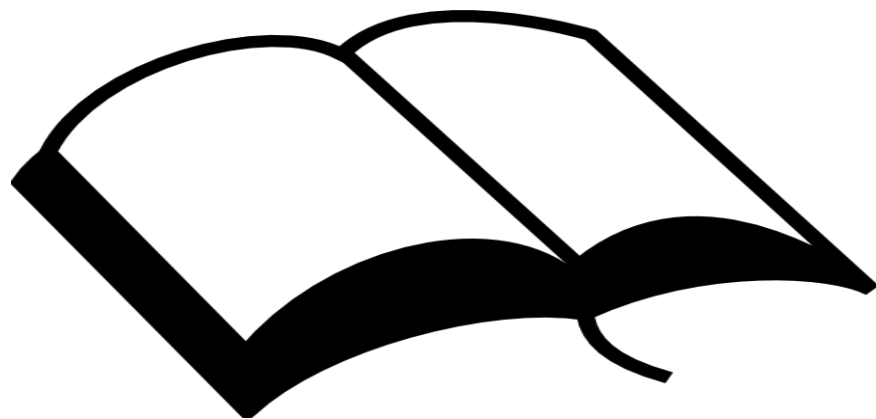
Second Edition

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PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK
Second Edition

SHARING YOUR FAITH
Participant Workbook

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv
Telephone: 423-310-2780
Email: matthewtinkhamjr@gmail.com
Website: www.matthewtinkhamjr.com

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~SESSION I~

SECRETS TO SPIRITUAL POWER

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8 ESV).

A. THE SUCCESS OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Review the following passages from the book of the Acts of the Apostles, paying close attention to the portions with added emphasis.

“⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to *wait for the promise of the Father*, which, he said, ‘you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized** with *the Holy Spirit* not many days from now. ... ⁸ But you will receive *power when the Holy Spirit* has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth’” (Acts 1:4–5, 8 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like *a mighty rushing wind*, and it *filled* the **entire** house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of *fire* appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were **all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as *the Spirit* gave them *utterance*. ... ¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to *my words*. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that *I will pour out my Spirit* on **all flesh**, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days *I will pour out my Spirit*, and they shall prophesy. ...

²¹ And it shall come to pass that **everyone** who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

“²² Men of Israel, hear *these words*: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know, ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ... ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the

Father *the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this* that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ...’³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’³⁸ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be **baptized every one** of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive *the gift of the Holy Spirit*.³⁹ For *the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off*, **everyone** whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’⁴⁰ And with *many other words* he bore witness and continued to exhort them ...⁴¹ So those who received *his word* were **baptized**, and there were **added** that day **about three thousand souls**” (Acts 2:1–4, 14–18, 21–23, 32–33, 37–40a, 41 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁴⁷ ... And the Lord **added** to their **number day by day** those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47b ESV; emphasis added).

“⁴ But many of those who had heard *the word* believed, and the **number** of the men came to **about five thousand**. ...⁸ Then Peter, *filled with the Holy Spirit*, said to them ...¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that *they had been with Jesus*” (Acts 4:4, 8, 13 ESV; emphasis added).

“³¹ And when *they had prayed*, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were **all filled with the Holy Spirit** and continued to speak *the word of God* with boldness.³² Now the **full number** of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.³³ And with *great power* the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them **all**” (Acts 4:31–33 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹² Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. ...¹⁴ And **more** than ever believers were **added** to the Lord, **multitudes** of both men and women ...¹⁶ The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were **all** healed” (Acts 5:12a, 14, 16 ESV; emphasis added).

“² And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right that we should give up preaching *the word of God* to serve tables.’³ Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, *full of the Spirit* and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.⁴ But we will devote ourselves to *prayer* and to the ministry of *the word*.’⁵ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man *full* of faith and *of the Holy Spirit*, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.⁶ These they set before the apostles, and *they prayed* and laid their hands on them.⁷ And *the word of God* continued to **increase**, and the **number** of the disciples **multiplied greatly in Jerusalem**, and a **great many** of the priests became obedient to the faith.

“⁸ And Stephen, *full of grace and power*, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ...¹⁰ But they could not withstand the wisdom and *the Spirit* with which he was speaking. ...

“⁵⁵ But he, *full of the Holy Spirit*, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 6:2–8, 10; 7:55 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached *good news* about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptized, both men and women**. ...¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received *the word of God*, they sent to them Peter and John,

¹⁵ who came down and *prayed* for them that they might receive *the Holy Spirit*, ¹⁶ for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received *the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 8:12, 14–17 ESV; emphasis added).

“³¹ So the church throughout **all** Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and **was being built up**. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of *the Holy Spirit*, it **multiplied**” (Acts 9:31 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, *the Holy Spirit fell* on **all** who heard *the word*. ⁴⁵ And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because *the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles*. ⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, ⁴⁷ ‘Can anyone withhold water for **baptizing** these people, who have received *the Holy Spirit* just as we have?’ ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ. ... ¹⁵ As I [Peter] began to speak, *the Holy Spirit fell* on them just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered *the word of the Lord*, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit**.’ ¹⁷ If then God gave the same *gift* to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?’” (Acts 10:44–48a; 11:15–17 ESV; emphasis added).

“²⁴ [F]or he [Barnabas] was a good man, *full of the Holy Spirit* and of faith. And a **great many** people were **added** to the Lord” (Acts 11:24 ESV; emphasis added).

“²⁴ But *the word of God* **increased** and **multiplied**” (Acts 12:24 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁴⁴ The next Sabbath almost the **whole** city [Antioch] gathered to hear *the word of the Lord*. ... ⁴⁹ And *the word of the Lord* was **spreading throughout the whole region** [Pisidia]. ... ⁵² And the disciples were *filled* with joy and *with the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 13:44, 49, 52 ESV; emphasis added).

“²¹ They preached *the good news* in that city [Derbe] and won a **large number** of disciples. ...” (Acts 14:21a NIV; emphasis added).

“⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they **increased in numbers daily**” (Acts 16:5 ESV; emphasis added).

“²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to **increase** and **prevail mightily**” (Acts 19:20 ESV; emphasis added).

What was the secret behind the successful evangelism of the early Christian church?

“The arguments of the apostles alone, though clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice that had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Spirit sent the arguments home to hearts with divine power. The words of the apostles were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting men of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory.”¹

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 45.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned about _____ times in the book of Acts. Technically speaking, then, the acts recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles were more so the Holy Spirit's acts through the apostles and less so the apostles' acts in and of themselves. For this reason, the book should be more accurately titled, "The Acts of *the Holy Spirit*."

What made the disciples ready and available for their reception of the Holy Spirit?

"As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. ... They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character. Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought, how differently they would act! If they could only see the Master again, how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him, and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by word or an act of unbelief! ...

"The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.

"These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised."²

B. OUR GREATEST NEED

If we are going to be successful soul-winners, we must first have a meaningful and _____ relationship with _____ through _____ and study of the _____ of _____, and receive the _____ of the _____ by faith.

"The **greatest need** facing the Seventh-day Adventist Church today is to receive the **Holy Spirit**. To receive that power will do two things for the church: it will produce the **fruit** of the Spirit, and it will empower the church through the **gifts** of the Spirit."³

² Ibid., 36–37.

³ Russell Burrill, *Revolution in the Church: Unleashing the Awesome Power of Lay Ministry* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1993), 19; emphasis added.

“It is **impossible** to be a successful witness for God without the power of the Holy Spirit flowing into our lives.”⁴

One of the **greatest** reasons for small results in evangelism is due to a _____ of the Holy Spirit’s power.

“If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of our midst today, about ninety-five percent of what we are doing in our churches would go on, and we would not know the difference. Yet if God had taken the Holy Spirit out of the midst of the first Christian community, about ninety-five percent of what they were doing would have ceased immediately.”⁵

C. WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

One reason why there is a lack of power to witness from the Holy Spirit is that we do not understand who the Holy Spirit *is* so that we can know him and accordingly invite him into our lives.

“Dr. Bill Bright, the founder and former president of Campus Crusade for Christ, points out that his organization has surveyed ‘thousands of Christians in churches around the world’ and sadly, ‘nearly _____ of the respondents have indicated that they have little knowledge of who the Holy Spirit is or why He exists.’”⁶



The Holy Spirit is not merely some invisible essence, force, or influence that emanates from the Father and/or the Son, functioning as the presence and power of God. Rather, he is more than this; he is fully, equally, and coeternally a _____ with the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The Holy Spirit is just as real, just as much a Divine Person, just as much a Member of the Godhead as the Father and the Son.”⁷

Notice the following evidence that points to the Holy Spirit being both **divine** and **personal** in nature—the “third person of the Godhead.”

I. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

The Scriptures affirm the full, equal, and coeternal deity or divinity of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son.

⁴ Ernestine and Mark Finley, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 2002), 28; emphasis added.

⁵ David Watson, *I Believe in the Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978), 166.

⁶ Mark A. Finley, *Revive Us Again* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010), 29.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

- a.** The Greek terms “Spirit” (πνεῦμα, *pneuma*) and “God” (θεός, *theos*) appear in parallel to one another or are seemingly used interchangeably (e.g., Acts 5:3–4; 1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19–20).
- b.** Some statements in the Old Testament that were originally spoken by יהוה (*Yahweh*) or “the LORD” are attributed to the Spirit in the New Testament (e.g., Ps 95:8–9 in Heb 3:7–11 [cf. Exod 17:7]; Isa 6:8–9 in Acts 28:25–27; Jer 31:33 in Heb 10:15–17).
- c.** The Spirit is sometimes referred to as or identified with “the Lord” or κύριος (*kurios*), which is the Greek equivalent of the tetragrammaton or יהוה (*Yahweh*) in Hebrew, the sacred covenantal name of God (e.g., 2 Cor 3:16–18).
- d.** The Spirit is described as possessing the incommunicable, essential/necessary attributes of deity.
- Eternality (e.g., Heb 9:14)
 - Sovereignty (e.g., 1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:3–4)
 - Omnipotence (e.g., Luke 1:35; 11:20 [cf. Matt 12:28]; Rom 15:18–19; 1 Cor 12:11)
 - Omniscience (e.g., Isa 40:13–14; John 14:26; 16:12–13; 1 Cor 2:10–11)
 - Omnipresence (e.g., Ps 139:7–10; John 14:6)
- e.** Divine honor is paid to the Spirit (e.g., Matt 12:30–32; Mark 3:28–29; Luke 12:8–10), the Spirit is invoked in divine blessings (e.g., Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4–5), and the Spirit is the initiator of true worship of God (e.g., Phil 3:3).
- f.** Specific works/operations of the Spirit are actions that only a deity can perform.
- Creation (e.g., Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4)
 - Providential renovation (Ps 104:30)
 - Spiritual working upon or within humans (Exod 8:19; 31:1–11; 36:30–35), including regeneration or new birth (John 3:5–8; Titus 3:5)
 - Resurrection of the dead (Rom 8:11)
 - Inspiration of prophets and the writers of Scripture (2 Sam 23:2; Isa 59:21; Jer 1:2, 8, 15, 19; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 1 Cor 2:13; Heb 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:11; 2 Pet 1:21)

“While there is less biblical data regarding the divinity of the Spirit, Trinitarians understand this to be a byproduct of progressive revelation, noting that emphasis on the Spirit comes late in the history of redemption and thus is explicitly reported ‘late’ in the canon of Scripture.”⁸

⁸ John C. Peckham, *The Doctrine of God: Introducing the Big Questions* (New York: T&T Clark, 2020), 223.

2. The Personhood of the Holy Spirit

The Scriptures affirm that the Holy Spirit is a distinct (yet not separated) divine person from the Father and the Son (i.e., he possesses personhood or personality).

a. The traditional characteristics of personhood in philosophy are attributed to the Spirit.

- Self-awareness (e.g., Acts 10:19–20; 13:2)
- Intellect (e.g., John 14:26; 15:26; Rom 8:16, 26–27; 1 Cor 2:10–11)
- Emotion (e.g., Isa 63:10; Rom 15:30; Eph 4:30)
- Volition (e.g., Acts 16:7; 1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:3–4)

b. ~~Gendered personal language (i.e., masculine personal pronouns, as opposed to neuter impersonal pronouns) is used in reference to the Spirit (e.g., John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7–8, 13–14; Eph 1:14).~~⁹

c. The Spirit is often portrayed as being treated by humans in a personal way, meaning that the Spirit is passible or personally affected by other's treatment.

⁹ Many theologians and biblical commentators often assume that, in John 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13–14, the neuter noun πνεῦμα (*pneûma*) or “Spirit” is the antecedent of the masculine demonstrative pronoun ἐκεῖνος (*ekeînos*) or “that” because it is the nearest substantive that precedes ἐκεῖνος. This supposed shift in grammatical gender from neuter to masculine would put ἐκεῖνος and its supposed referent πνεῦμα out of grammatical concord—that is, ἐκεῖνος, in such a case, would be in violation of the Greek grammatical rule that a demonstrative pronoun must be in agreement with its antecedent in number AND gender. This asserted grammatical incongruence in gender between ἐκεῖνος and πνεῦμα has been explained by these scholars to be a case of *constructio ad sen-sum* or “construction according to sense.” This means that the pronoun ἐκεῖνος is masculine and not neuter because it is intended to agree with the natural, *not* grammatical, gender of πνεῦμα. This grammatical phenomenon is said to be indicative of the apostle John’s belief in the Spirit as a person.

John indeed used masculine pronouns in reference to the Spirit—for example, the masculine demonstrative pronoun ἐκεῖνος (*ekeînos*), meaning “that one” when used pleonastically (John 14:26; 15:26) or “he,” when the force of the demonstrative has been weakened so that it functions as a third-person masculine personal pronoun (John 16:8, 13, 14); the masculine relative pronoun ὅς (*hós*), meaning “who” (“whom” in the case of John 15:26); the third person masculine personal pronoun αὐτός (*autós*), meaning “he” (“him” in the case of John 16:7); and the masculine reflexive pronoun ἐαυτοῦ (*eautoû*), meaning “himself” (John 16:13). However, in those same passages, John employed neuter pronouns as well—such as the neuter relative pronoun ὃ (*hó*), meaning “which” (14:17, 26; 15:26), and the third person neuter personal pronoun αὐτό (*autò*), meaning “it” (14:17, twice; 15:26). If John 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13–14 are indeed cases of *constructio ad sen-sum*—meaning that John intended to refer to the personhood of the Spirit explicitly by using masculine pronouns—then it would seem that there would be consistent use of only masculine pronouns (not also neuter pronouns). Therefore, the use of both masculine and neuter pronouns calls to question the view that 14:26; 15:26; and 16:13–14 as cases of *constructio ad sen-sum*.

In reality, the pattern for how John used the nominative case of τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας (*to pneûma tēs alētheias*) or “the Spirit of truth” in the upper room discourse is that every occurrence of the nominative case of τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας (John 14:16–17, 26; 15:26; and 16:7–15) has the function of apposition to the masculine noun παράκλητος, the subject nominative. Thus, the antecedent of the masculine pronouns used by John in reference to the Spirit is the masculine subject nominative παράκλητος, not the appositional nominative πνεῦμα. This means that there is absolutely nothing abnormal or meaningful in John’s use of pronouns in the contexts that refer to the Spirit. See Wilson Paroschi, “‘Another Paraclete’: The Holy Spirit in John 14–17,” *Ministry* 84.4 (2012): 26–27; Daniel B. Wallace, in *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 331–332; idem, “Greek Grammar and the Personality of the Holy Spirit,” *BBR* 13.1 (2003): 97–125. The fact that παράκλητος is grammatically masculine does not have any implication regarding the personality (much less the natural gender [i.e., masculinity]) of the Spirit. The gender of παράκλητος, as well as that of πνεῦμα, is nothing more than a linguistic accident, and no theological conclusion should be derived from it. However, the fact that John titled the Spirit παράκλητος is theologically significant (see below).

- The Spirit can be blasphemed (e.g., Matt 12:31–32; Mark 3:29), lied to (e.g., Acts 5:3–4), resisted (e.g., Acts 7:51), grieved (e.g., Isa 63:10–11; Eph 4:30; cf. Isa 58:10), quenched (e.g., 1 Thess 5:19), and insulted (e.g., Heb 10:29).
- Furthermore, humans are able to respond to the Spirit (e.g., Acts 10:19–21).

d. The Spirit is presented as being separate and distinct from his power—that is, the Spirit is not a power but rather possesses power (e.g., Luke 1:35; 4:14; Acts 10:38; Rom 15:13; 1 Cor 2:4).

e. The Spirit is placed in juxtaposition with other persons (e.g., Acts 14:23).

f. Numerous works of the Spirit are of such a nature that they necessitate personhood or personality in order to be performed.

- Notable are the Spirit's works of creating (e.g., Gen 1:2), teaching (e.g., Luke 12:12; John 14:26), instructing (e.g., Neh 9:20), leading (e.g., Rom 8:14), regenerating (e.g., Titus 3:5), searching (e.g., 1 Cor 2:10), speaking (e.g., Acts 8:29; 13:2; Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22), crying (e.g., Gal 4:6; cf. Rom 8:16), interceding (e.g., Rom 8:26–27), commanding (e.g., Acts 16:6–7), testifying (e.g., John 15:26–27), guiding (e.g., John 16:13), illuminating, revealing (e.g., 1 Cor 2:9–10), striving with people (e.g., Gen 6:3; Isa 63:10), convicting (e.g., John 16:8–15), causing the disciples to remember all things (e.g., John 14:26), glorifying Christ (e.g., John 16:14), appointing church leaders (e.g., Acts 13:2; 20:28), and raising the dead (e.g., Rom 8:11).

3. The Deity AND Personhood of the Holy Spirit

Several scriptural passages affirm that the Holy Spirit is both fully, equally, and coeternally deity or divine AND a distinct (yet not separated) divine person from the Father and the Son (i.e., he possesses personhood or personality).

a. The Spirit is mentioned regularly alongside of and in close association with, while being distinct (yet not separated) from, the Father and the Son, who are also considered divine and personal members of the Trinity (e.g., Isa 42:1; 48:16; 61:1–2; 63:7–14; Matt 3:16–17; 12:28; 28:19; Luke 3:21–22; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7–11, 13–15; Acts 2:33, 38; 10:38; Rom 1:1–4; 14:17–18; 15:16, 30; 1 Cor 2:1–4; 6:11; 12:3, 4–6; 2 Cor 1:21–22; 13:14; Gal 3:11–14; 4:6; Eph 1:3–14, 17; 2:18, 20–22; 3:14–17; 4:4–6; Phil 3:3; 2 Thess 2:13–14; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 John 3:23–4:3; Jude 20–21; etc.).

b. In several texts, the Spirit is deeply connected to the deity and person of the Son while distinct (yet not separated) from him, indicating that the Spirit too is divine and has personhood.¹⁰

¹⁰ In this regard, some biblical scholars and theologians have found such a claim in the use of the Greek adjective ἄλλος (*állos*) by the apostle John in John 14:16 to connect the Son and the Spirit as *παράκλητοι*. In this text, Jesus called the

- There is a dual application of the Greek term παράκλητος (*paraklētos*)—meaning “advocate,” “comforter,” or “helper”—to the Son (e.g., 1 John 2:1) and to the Spirit (e.g., John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). As such, they share a plethora of economic actions in the historical plan of redemption in common with one another.
- The Son and the Spirit speak together in the messages to the seven churches. Each of the seven messages begins with words from Christ (Rev 2:1–6, 8–10, 12–16, 18–28; 3:1–5, 7–12, 14–21), and end with, “Hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7a, 11a, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 ESV).
- Both Jesus and the Spirit glorify another member of the Trinity. The Spirit glorifies (John 16:14) and testifies about (John 15:26) the Son, and the Son parallels, glorifying (John 1:14; 2:11; 13:31–32; 17:5, 24) and testifying about (John 8:12–14, 18) himself and the Father (John 12:28; 13:31; 14:13; 17:1, 4; 21:19). Likewise, the Father glorifies himself (John 12:28) and the Son (John 8:54; 13:32; 17:1, 5).

“Jesus was the most marked and influential personality ever in this old world, and the Holy Spirit was to supply His vacated place. No one but a person could take the place of that wonderful person. No mere influence would ever suffice.”¹¹

While the last few decades have seen an explosion of interest in spirituality and pneumatology (i.e., the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit) within Christianity and throughout the broader world, much of this pneumatological renewal and emphasis has produced pneumatologies that tend to diminish the divine personal (relational) Spirit of the Trinity by depersonalizing, universalizing, subjectivizing, and immanentizing him. These usually come in four basic varieties.

- **Charismaticism:** the charismatic kind that manifests a yearning for ecstatic experiences of spiritual power primarily via the supernatural χαρίσματα (*charismata*) or “spiritual gifts,” among which *glossolalia* is often preeminently esteemed and supremely desired (e.g., Pentecostalism, the charismatic renewal, ecumenism, etc.).

Spirit ἄλλον παράκλητον (*állon paraklēton*), “another advocate.” These scholars often understand the adjective ἄλλος qualitatively (i.e., indicative of the quality of the referent) to mean “another of the *same* kind.” They usually contrast ἄλλος with the corresponding Greek adjective ἕτερος (*héteros*) or “other,” which they understand to oppositely mean “another of a *different* kind.” What is important to notice is that these scholars understand both ἄλλος and ἕτερος as bearing both quantitative *and* qualitative notions: ἄλλος compares two or more substantives that are qualitatively the same or similar, and ἕτερος contrasts two or more substantives that are qualitatively different. Thus, the argument is made that the Spirit is a παράκλητος of the *same kind* as the Son, indicating that the Spirit is equal to the Son qualitatively; he has the same (or equal) quality of divinity and personality as that of the Son.

New Testament scholar, Wilson Paroschi, rightly calls this argument into question. While he allows for the possibility of ἄλλος containing “an allusion to the personality of the Spirit”—because the Spirit would come to fill the vacancy left by Jesus at his ascension and to carry out works that require personality—he rejects any ontological reading that sees ἄλλος as indicative of Jesus and the Spirit as having the same divine nature (“‘Another Paraclete,’” 26–27). Instead of the meanings proposed earlier for ἄλλος and ἕτερος, Paroschi insists that ἕτερος “usually involves a qualitative distinction,” while ἄλλος “is merely quantitative” with no intended qualitative sense (*ibid.*). Thus, ἄλλον παράκλητον in John 14:16 should be understood quantitatively to mean that the Spirit is a παράκλητος *in addition to* the Son, which is indicative of his distinctiveness as a person.

¹¹ LeRoy E. Froom, *The Coming of the Comforter*, rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1956), 41.

- **Contemplative Spirituality:** the more contemplative, even pantheistic/panentheistic, type that is influenced by Eastern religions in which a profound connection with the “divine spirit” within oneself is sought via meditative/transcendental and/or ascetic practices and disciplines that supposedly lead to self-discovery, clarity, serenity, ecstasy, and mystical “oneness” with the universal, monistic *zeitgeist* (e.g., asceticism, monasticism, mysticism, etc.).
- **Spiritual Warfare:** the polemical sort accompanied by excessively robust demonologies that craves spiritual power and authority for waging so-called “spiritual warfare” over and against unseen oppressive forces of evil by identifying, binding up, and casting out cosmic and “local” demonic spirits and their satanic despotic influences (e.g., deliverance ministries, animism, etc.).
- **Sacramentalism:** the sacramental or sacerdotal species that inextricably confines the work of the Spirit to the church and its holy orders by way of the effectual administration of the ecclesial sacraments (i.e., *ex opere operato*) to its recipients, which is controlled by the bishop or priest who has received the indelible spiritual character (or mark/seal) permanently imprinted on his soul via *ordinatio* or “ordination” and thereby possesses the *sacra potestas* or “sacred power” and authority of the Spirit¹² “to act in the power and place of the person of Christ”¹³ (i.e., *virtute ac persona ipsius Christi Capitis*) to grant forgiveness and dispense saving grace (e.g., Roman Catholicism, some mainline Protestant denominations, etc.).

Person **NOT**
Possession

The Holy Spirit is **not** a spiritual power or force that can be called upon, possessed, used, controlled, or manipulated by us. Rather, the Holy Spirit is **a divine person of the triune God** who commissions, empowers, and equips us for the work of evangelism and discipleship.¹⁴

Why is it important to you *personally* that the Holy Spirit be viewed as a divine person of the Trinity?

¹² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 427 (1537–1538).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 431 (1548).

¹⁴ See Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., review of *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God’s Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life*, by Michael S. Horton, *AUSS* 56.2 (2018): 356–360.

D. THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Many are, perhaps, tempted to say, “If Jesus was here with us in person just as he was with the twelve disciples, then the Christian life and our witnessing efforts would be more effective. Now that he is present in the heavenly sanctuary, he is so far away from us down here.” But is this way of thinking consistent with what Jesus taught about his departure?

1. Jesus said that he needed to go in order to become the _____ of salvation to the Father and the kingdom of heaven through his substitutionary atoning death on the cross.

“¹ ‘Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.’ ⁵ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ ⁶ Jesus said to him, ‘**I am the way**, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him’” (John 14:1–7 ESV; emphasis added).

2. Jesus indicated that there would be a greater capacity for _____ with him by coming into spiritual union with him by faith via the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

“¹⁶ ‘And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, **for he dwells with you and will be in you**. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you**. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and **you in me**, and **I in you**’” (John 14:16–20 ESV; emphasis added).

“Jesus changed the preposition that tells how the Spirit relates to us. He didn’t say that the Holy Spirit would merely be *with* us, as Jesus was with the disciples. Now the Spirit is to be *in* us.”¹⁵ “Through the ages past, the Holy Spirit had been with faithful believers; but from Pentecost forward, God’s purpose was that He ‘will be **in** you.’ ... The First and Second Persons of the Godhead, the Father and the Son, take up **residence in our hearts** through the Third Member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶

“Jesus expected to be **closer** to His disciples *after* His departure than He was while He was **physically** present with them!”¹⁷

¹⁵ Ron Clouzet, *Adventism’s Greatest Need: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2011), 22; emphasis original.

¹⁶ Finley, *Revive Us Again*, 34–35; emphasis added.

¹⁷ Clouzet, *Adventism’s Greatest Need*, 23; italics original; emphasis added.

3. Jesus pointed out that the coming of the Holy Spirit will give his disciples a _____ that surpasses all understanding because he will come to us via the presence of the Holy Spirit.

²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. ²⁷ **Peace** I leave with you; my **peace** I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and **I will come to you.**’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe” (John 14:25–29 ESV; emphasis added).

4. Finally, Jesus comforted his disciples that his departure is to their _____ because of the benefits that will come to them through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

⁴ “But I [Jesus] have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your **advantage** that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. ¹² I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:5–15 ESV; emphasis added).

E. THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit’s Works on behalf of the Non-believer

a. The Holy Spirit brings non-believers to _____ regarding right and wrong through his work of _____ grace (Ps 36:5; 119:64; 136:1–9; 145:9; Isa 26:10; Luke 6:35–36; Rom 1:19–2:16).

⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will **convict** the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:

⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged” (John 16:7–11 ESV; emphasis added).

“God’s Spirit is the power that convicts us of sin, righteousness, and judgment. That is, He brings to our attention what is wrong in us—(sin), what is right in us through Him (righteousness), and our need to make a decision between the two (judgment).”¹⁸

“Common grace is defined ... as ‘grace extended to all persons through God’s general providence’ in such things as ‘his provision of sunshine and rain for everyone.’ Common grace provides for not only God’s sustaining of a sinful world but also furnishes the theological foundation for an awareness of God and consciousness of right and wrong, even for secular people (Rom. 1:19–2:15), and for civil justice in secular societies in spite of human depravity.”¹⁹

b. The Spirit gives the non-believer _____ grace, drawing him or her to Christ and enabling him or her to choose to receive God’s saving grace and experience conversion through the free gifts of _____ and _____.

“¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to **all** people” (Titus 2:11 NIV; emphasis added).

“⁴ In him [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ... ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world” (John 1:4–5, 9 ESV).

“⁴⁴ ‘**No one** can come to me [Jesus] **unless** the Father who sent me draws him’” (John 6:44a ESV; emphasis added).

“³² ‘And I [Jesus], when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all** people to myself’” (John 12:32 ESV; emphasis added).

Prevenient grace is the initiatory grace that _____ saving grace. It is given universally and indiscriminately to *all* fallen humans through (1) the preaching of the Word and (2) the persuasive work of the Holy Spirit to enliven sufficiently their spiritually dead and totally depraved minds and hearts so that they may be able to choose to respond freely in repentance and faith in Christ and his work of atonement.

“... that grace which ‘goes before’ or prepares the soul for entrance into the initial state of salvation. It is the preparatory grace of the Holy Spirit exercised toward man helpless in sin. As it respects the guilty, it may be considered mercy; as it respects the impotent, it is

¹⁸ Luis R. Torres, *Gaining Decisions for Christ: A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2001), 30.

¹⁹ George R. Knight, “The Grace that Comes Before Saving Grace,” in *Salvation: Contours of Adventist Soteriology*, ed. Martin F. Hanna, Darius W. Jankiewicz, and John W. Reeve (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2018), 291. For a fuller discussion of common grace, see Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation: The Doctrine of Salvation*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology, ed. John S. Feinberg (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 76–77.

enabling power. It may be defined, therefore, as that manifestation of the divine influence which precedes the full regenerate life.”²⁰

“Since mankind is hopelessly dead in trespasses and sins and can do nothing to obtain salvation, God graciously restores to all men sufficient ability to make a choice in the matter of submission to him. This is the salvation-bringing grace of God that has appeared to all men.”²¹

Prevenient grace “antecedes human responsiveness so as to prepare the soul for the effective hearing of the redeeming Word. This preceding grace draws persons closer to God, lessens their blindness to divine remedies, strengthens their will to accept revealed truth, and enables repentance. Only when sinners are assisted by prevenient grace can they begin to yield their hearts to cooperation with subsequent forms of grace.”²²

“[P]revenient grace ... is universal. Just as the results of Adam’s sin are universal, so in the justice of God is the gift of prevenient grace through the Holy Spirit a universal gift to every person. ... A second major characteristic of prevenient grace is that it is irresistible grace even though its work in the human heart can be resisted. It is irresistible because the Holy Spirit works with every person who comes into the world whether that person wants His ministration or not. Still, simply because God provides prevenient grace to each person born into the world does not mean that he or she must respond positively to it. Since one aspect of prevenient grace is the restoration of freedom to choose for or against God, the work of grace may be resisted (Matt. 23:37; John 5:40; Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:29). ... With these facts in mind, and with the teaching of the New Testament on the will in view, it should not be said that people who have responded to God have free will, but rather that they have *freed will*, which is the third major characteristic of the work of prevenient grace. The fourth characteristic is that conversion is the hinge that ties the work of prevenient grace to that of saving grace. When reacted to positively, prevenient grace results in saving grace. ... Finally, prevenient grace is responsible grace, because it positions a person to make a faith choice for God, which leads to ongoing responsibility through a person’s post-conversion life.”²³

Unaided by the prevenient grace of God given by the Holy Spirit, sinful, unconverted human beings are unable to choose to believe because of their fallen state of _____ that has resulted in spiritual death and the bondage of the human will to the mastery of sin (e.g., Rom 3:9–19; 3:23; 6:6–23; 1 Cor 3:3; Eph 2:1–5).

“It is **impossible** for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. ... Education, culture, *the exercise of the will*, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are

²⁰ H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology*, 3 vols. (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1952), 2:345–346; as quoted in Knight, “Grace that Comes Before,” 290–291.

²¹ Henry Clarence Theissen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 344–345; as quoted in Kenneth Keathley, “The Work of God: Salvation,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2014), 572.

²² Thomas C. Oden, *Transforming Power of Grace* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993), 47; as quoted in Knight, “Grace that Comes Before,” 291.

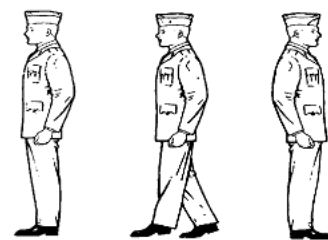
²³ Knight, “Grace that Comes Before,” 292–294.

powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. *His grace alone* can quicken the *lifeless faculties of the soul*, and attract it to God, to holiness.”²⁴

“The very first step to Christ is taken through **the drawing of the Spirit of God**; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent.”²⁵

“Christ is the ‘Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.’ John 1:9. As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart. But against these principles there is struggling an antagonistic power. The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, **unaided**, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. Co-operation with that power is man's greatest need.”²⁶

When one chooses not to resist God’s prevenient grace, he or she receives God’s saving grace through the subjective experience of conversion. The Greek term ἐπιστροφή (*epistrophē*) or “conversion” come from the verb ἐπιστρέφω (*epistrephō*), which means “to turn,” “to change direction,” or “to return” and thus, “describes an act of turning, turning around, back, changing direction, [or] returning.”²⁷ The Hebrew verb for “to repent,” שׁוּב (*shūv*), connotes the same idea. As such, conversion entails two simultaneous turns—repentance and faith—that compose a single movement, just as a soldier performs a single smooth 180-degree about-face pivot from facing once direction to facing the completely opposite direction. Repentance and faith constitute to sides of the same coin of conversion.



“The first step of the Christian life is called conversion. It is the act of turning from one’s sin in repentance and turning to Christ in faith. ... **Conversion is a single entity that has two distinguishable but inseparable aspects: repentance and faith.** Repentance is the unbeliever’s turning away from sin, and faith is his or her turning toward Christ. They are, respectively, the negative and positive aspect of the same occurrence. In a sense, each is incomplete without the other and each is motivated by the other.”²⁸

²⁴ White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1956), 18; emphasis added.

²⁵ White, “Justified by Faith,” in *Selected Messages*, 3 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1958), 1:390; emphasis added.

²⁶ White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1952), 29; emphasis added.

²⁷ Lesley DiFransico, “Repentance,” *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, ed. Douglas Mangum et al., Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

²⁸ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 864–865; emphasis added.

– **Repentance** (negative aspect): the turning _____ a life of sin, guilt, shame, condemnation, and death penalty (Hos 14:1–2; Ezek 14:6; 18:21, 30; 33:11; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30).

The Greek verb for “repentance” is “μετανοέω (*metanoēō*), which literally means ‘to think differently about something or to have a change of mind.’”²⁹ Hebrew has two verbs for “to repent”: (1) נָחַם (*nacham*), which means “to sorrow,” “to grieve,” “to lament,” or “to regret” one’s own actions (Jer 8:6), and (2) שׁוּב (*shūv*), which means “to turn” or “to return.” Thus, repentance requires a change of mind about oneself that entails four aspects.

- _____: the honest acknowledgement and realization of our guilt and shame that results from our sin and our totally depraved and rebellious hearts and minds.
- _____: a profound and sincere sorrow for our sin and how it breaks the heart of God and our relationship with others that results in genuine regret and an authentic abhorrence of our sin (Jer 31:9; Joel 2:12–13).

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin, and a turning away from it.”³⁰

“Real repentance is sorrow for one’s sin because of the wrong done to God and the hurt inflicted upon him.”³¹

- _____: the admission of our sin before God and those who were injured by our sin (Lev 5:5; Num 5:5–7; Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:9).
- _____: the reformational and transformational decision to forsake and abandon sin and make appropriate restitution for it (Isa 45:22; 55:7; Ezek 14:6; 18:21, 30; 33:11; Matt 3:8; Luke 19:8; Acts 19:19).

Repentance is a _____ given to the sinner at the initiative of God (Acts 5:31; 11:18; Rom 2:4; 2 Tim 2:25).

“The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.”³²

²⁹ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 867. See also “μετανοέω,” BDAG, 640.

³⁰ White, *Steps to Christ*, 23.

³¹ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 868.

³² White, *Steps to Christ*, 26.

+ **Faith** (positive aspect): the turning _____ a new, Spirit-filled life in union with Jesus Christ (Heb 11:6).

The Greek term for “faith” or πίστις (*pistis*) connotes two distinct yet related aspects.

- _____: the intellectual assent to and cognitive acceptance of the factual propositions of biblical teachings (e.g., Matt 9:28; Heb 11:6; 1 John 4:1), as in “credence” or “being convinced.”
- _____: the firm and settled confidence *in* the reliability, dependability, and trustworthiness of God to fulfill his saving promises, as in “placing trust” (Matt 18:6; Mark 1:15; John 1:12; 2:11, 23; 3:18; Acts 10:43; 19:4; Gal 2:16; Phil 1:29; 1 Pet 1:8; 1 John 5:10, 13).

“You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins, and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this *because He has promised*. ... Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise,—God supplies that you are forgiven and cleansed It is so if you believe it.”³³

Faith is also a _____ given at the initiative of God (Rom 12:3; 1 Cor 12:9) that cannot be exercised without the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

“In the New Testament, the one primary word that represents the idea of faith is the verb πιστεύω (*pisteuō*) together with its cognate noun πίστις (*pistis*). The verb has two basic meanings. First, it means ‘to believe what someone says, to accept a statement (particularly of a religious nature) as true.’ ... At least equally important are the instances in which πιστεύω and πίστις signify ‘personal trust as distinct from mere credence or belief.’ ... [T]he type of faith necessary for salvation involves both believing that and believing in, or assenting to facts and trusting in a person. It is vital to keep these two together.”³⁴

While conversion is largely a human subjective response to God’s initiative through prevenient grace, repentance and faith are gracious gifts freely given at his initiative, and the exercise thereof is only possible through the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

“Although ... conversion [is] a human response to divine initiative, even repentance and faith are gifts from God. ... Thus, humanly exercised repentance and faith are also gracious works of God in the life of the believer.”³⁵

³³ Ibid., 49–51; emphasis original.

³⁴ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 869–870.

³⁵ Ibid., 871–872.

Accompanying the experience of conversion is that of _____.
 “Regeneration is that work of the Spirit at conversion that renews the heart and life (the inner self), thus restoring the person’s intellectual, volitional, moral, emotional, and relational capacities to know, love, and serve God.”³⁶

“⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, **by the washing of regeneration** [from παλιγγενεσία (*palingenesia*)] **and renewal of the Holy Spirit**, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:4–7 ESV; emphasis added).

Regeneration is described in the New Testament as ...

- a spiritual *re-creation* (καινή κτίσις [*kainē ktisis*] or “new creation”), “a radical inner change wrought by God’s power, whereby one becomes a new spiritual being”³⁷ (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15);
- a spiritual *revivication* and *resurrection* (συζωοποιέω [*syzōopoieō*] or “to make alive together with someone” and συνεγείρω [*synegeirō*] or “to raise up with someone”) “from death to life by identification with the risen Christ”³⁸ (Eph 2:4–6; Col 2:12–13; cf. 1 Pet 1:3–5);
- a spiritual *circumcision of the heart* “or an inner spiritual transformation born out of penitent faith”³⁹ (Col 2:11, 13);
- a spiritual *washing*, “signifying the cleansing of former sins”⁴⁰ (1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; cf. Eph 5:26);
- and a spiritual *rebirth* from above (γεννάω ἄνωθεν [*gennaō anōthen*] and ἀναγεννάω [*anagennaō*] or “to be born again/from above”) by the Holy Spirit (John 1:13; 3:3–8; Jas 1:18; 1 Pet 1:3–5, 22–23).

“A soul corrupted by sin is represented by the figure of a dead body in a state of putrefaction. All the washings and sprinklings enjoined in the ceremonial law were lessons in parables, teaching the necessity of a work of regeneration in the inward heart for the purification of the soul dead in trespasses and sins, and also the necessity of the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.”⁴¹

“Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart He must find men who were willing to have

³⁶ Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 293.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ White, “The Return of the Exiles—No. 7: Words of Encouragement,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 84.51 (December 19, 1907): 8.

regeneration of heart. He came to give to men new hearts. ...

“Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great Offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. He who drinks from the water of the fountain of life, will be filled with the new wine of the kingdom. Faith in Christ will be the means whereby the right spirit and motive will actuate the believer, and all goodness and heavenly-mindedness will proceed from him who looks unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith. Look up to God, look not to men. God is your heavenly Father who is willing patiently to bear with your infirmities, and to forgive and heal them. ... By beholding Christ, you will become changed, until you will hate your former pride, your former vanity and self-esteem, your self-righteousness and unbelief. You will cast these sins aside as a worthless burden, and walk humbly, meekly, trustfully, before God. You will practice love, patience, gentleness, goodness, mercy, and every grace that dwells in the child of God, and will at last find a place among the sanctified and holy.”⁴²

“The human character is depraved, deformed by sin, and terribly unlike that of the first man as he came from the hands of the Creator. Jesus proposes to take man's deformity and sin, and to give him, in return, beauty and excellence in his own character. He engages to renovate the soul through the truth. Error cannot do this work of regeneration; therefore we must have spiritual eyesight to discern between truth and falsehood, that we fall not into the snare of the enemy.”⁴³

“[R]egeneration differs from conversion in several important respects. (1) Conversion involves a synergism of divine and human working, whereas regeneration is strictly a *monergistic operation*. ... (2) Whereas conversion is a sinner's conscious act of turning to God in penitent faith, regeneration is an *unconscious* transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit ... (John 3:8). (3) Conversion generally occurs over a period of time, whereas regeneration is an *instantaneous* work. (4) If we consider a secondary use of the term, the conversion of believers from sin may be repeated again and again, but regeneration is a uniquely *unrepeatable event* in a life.”⁴⁴

“In brief, regeneration breaks the paralyzing bonds of holistic depravity and radically renews the sinner's heart, mind, and soul into the image of Christ. As in the case of sinful depravity, the transformation wrought by the new birth is *holistic*; not merely some, but all of the sinner's capacities are significantly renewed and enabled. ... Consider the following results of Holy Spirit regeneration. (1) *Intellectually*, regeneration enables minds of sinners once blind and ignorant of spiritual truths to comprehend the things of God (1 Cor 2:12, 14–16; 2 Cor 4:4; Col 3:10). The new birth effects renewal of the human capacity to know, love, and affirm God's purposes. Holy Spirit transformation results in spiritual discernment formerly incapacitated by sin. (2) *Volitionally*, the new birth liberates believers' wills from moral bondage, enabling them to affirm and pursue kingdom values (Rom 6:13; Phil 2:13; 2 Thess 3:5). Lesser loyalties give way to supreme loyalty to God and his purposes. In the twice-born, enmity toward God is replaced by a new passion to glorify the King of kings and Lord of lords. (3) *Emotionally*, regeneration initiates the reintegration of disordered affections and feelings (Rom 8:15[;] ... 2 Tim

⁴² Idem, “Christ the Center of the Message,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 71.12 (March 20, 1894): 177–178.

⁴³ Idem, “The Heavenly Guest,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 62.46 (November 24, 1885): 721.

⁴⁴ Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 295; emphasis original.

1:7). Twice-born persons are far more capable of manifesting love, empathy, compassion, etc., than once-born persons. (4) *Morally and ethically*, regenerate believers are freed from depraved and enslaving passions. Indeed, the saved progressively become like Christ in thought, word, and deed. Spirit-transformed people exchange the sordid works of the flesh (Gal 5:19–21) for the attractive fruits [*sic*] of the Spirit ... (vv. 22–23). And (5) *relationally*, the new birth establishes genuine fellowship with the triune God (1 Cor 1:9; Eph 2:22; 1 John 1:3) and meaningful relationships with other believers (Rom 12:5; Eph 2:14–15, 19–20). The twice-born come to know experientially that God created them to enjoy community. Spirit regeneration motivates newborn children of God to move from lonely isolation to rejuvenating fellowship. In sum, the new birth effects a significant transformation and renewal of the capacities inherent in man and woman as *imago Dei*.⁴⁵

“Christ came to our world to restore the moral image of God in man. ... Christ seeks to engage the attention of repentant sinners, that they may read the expression of love in his face, and receive him as their Saviour. He would turn men's minds from every sound that emanates from him who abode not in the truth. He has knowledge to impart,—the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, who comes to the believing soul under the great seal of solemn assurance. I speak to you, he said; I, who speak not merely as a man,—I, who am the Truth,—I, who am acquainted with heaven, and all the characters that shall be there admitted,—I, who hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven,—I say, ‘Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God.’ The realization of the absolute necessity of regeneration through the Holy Spirit comes to all who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honor, and immortality. ... There is power in Christ to redeem the mental and moral character, and to mold the man after the divine likeness.”⁴⁶

The external sign of baptism by immersion in water is linked to and chronologically follows conversion and regeneration in the *ordo salutis* or “ordered steps of salvation” (Acts 2:38, 41; 10:47). Baptism serves as the outward symbol by which one who has freely responded to the preveniently gracious promptings of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Word through repentance of sin and faith in the gospel message is emblematically identified with Jesus’s death, burial, and resurrection (Rom 6:3–8) and publicly incorporated into the Spirit-filled body of Christ, the church (Acts 2:38, 41, 47; 1 Cor 12:13).

In summary the plan of the redemption of humanity and its implementation are a _____ (from the Greek *μόνος* [*monos*], meaning “only,” and *ἔργον* [*ergon*], meaning “work” or “energy”) in that the triune God *alone* is responsible for the working out of salvation in all of its parts to which humans freely respond through repentance and faith in Christ solely by the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

“⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8–9 ESV).

⁴⁵ Ibid., 297–298.

⁴⁶ White, “Go, Preach the Gospel,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 75.29 (July 19, 1898): 454.

2. The Holy Spirit's Works on behalf of the Believer

a. He progressively sanctifies our _____ to produce “the fruit of the Spirit” so that our lives become living testaments to the world of the character of God and the transformative power of the gospel (i.e., sanctification).

“²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules” (Ezek 36:26–27 ESV).

“²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (Gal 5:22–23 ESV).

“This fruit [of the Spirit] can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. ‘When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.’ Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.”⁴⁷

“If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one. ... It is our privilege to lay this burden [of self] at the feet of Christ and in its place take the character and similitude of Christ.”⁴⁸

b. He calls and commissions us to _____ for Christ.

“²⁶ ‘But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will **bear witness** about me. ²⁷ And you also will **bear witness**, because you have been with me from the beginning” (John 15:26–27 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁸ ‘But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8 EV; emphasis added).

“Jesus stressed that the main objective of receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit is power for effective witnessing for leading other souls to Him.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Idem, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1900), 68–69. The character of God is preeminently love (1 John 4:8, 16).

⁴⁸ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 9:189.

⁴⁹ Finley, *Pace Setters Evangelistic Syllabus*, 5.

c. He supplies us with the needed spiritual _____ to witness.

“⁸ ‘But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth’” (Acts 1:8 EV; emphasis added; cf. Matt 28:18–20).

d. He teaches us _____, the biblical truth that Jesus taught, so that we may effectively carry out the great commission.

“¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matt 28:18–20 ESV; emphasis added).

“²⁶ ‘But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, **he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you**’” (John 14:26 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹³ ‘When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all the truth**, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come’” (John 16:13 ESV; emphasis added).

e. He gives us _____.

“¹⁰ But Moses said to the LORD, ‘Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.’ ¹¹ Then the LORD said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² Now therefore go, and **I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak**’” (Exod 4:10–12 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹⁷ ‘Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, **to bear witness** before them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, **for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour**. ²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you’” (Matt 10:17–20 ESV; emphasis added).

f. He equips us with _____ to witness.

“⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if **service**, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his **teaching**; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his **exhortation**; the one who contributes, in **generosity**; the one who **leads**, with zeal; the one who does acts of **mercy**, with cheerfulness” (Rom 12:4–8 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of **wisdom**, and to another the utterance of **knowledge** according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of **healing** by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of **miracles**, to another **prophecy**, to another the ability to **distinguish between spirits**, to another various kinds of **tongues**, to another the **interpretation of tongues**. ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. ... ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first **apostles**, second **prophets**, third **teachers**, then **miracles**, then gifts of **healing**, **helping**, **administrating**, and various kinds of **tongues**. ²⁹ Are all **apostles**? Are all **prophets**? Are all **teachers**? Do all work **miracles**? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of **healing**? Do all speak with **tongues**? Do all **interpret**? ³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way” (1 Cor 12:4–11 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹¹ And he gave the **apostles**, the **prophets**, the **evangelists**, the **shepherds** and **teachers**, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love” (Eph 4:11–16 ESV; emphasis added).

BIBLICAL LISTS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Romans 12:6–8

- Exhortation
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Ministry/Service
- Prophecy
- Teaching

1 Corinthians 12:8–10, 28

- Administration
- Apostleship
- Discernment
- Faith
- Healing
- Helping
- Knowledge
- Miracles
- *Prophecy*
- *Teaching*
- Tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues
- Wisdom

Ephesians 4:11

- *Apostleship*
- *Prophecy*
- Evangelism
- *Pastoring/Teaching*

*The items in italics are in more than one of the above lists of spiritual gifts.

If you are having difficulty in identifying your own spiritual gifts, consider taking one of these free online spiritual gifts tests and prayerfully review the results.

- **Spiritual Gifts Test (Adult Version):**
<https://spiritualgiftstest.com/spiritual-gifts-test-adult-version/>
- **Spiritual Gifts Test (Youth Version):**
<https://spiritualgiftstest.com/spiritual-gifts-test-youth-version/>

You may also find the following free and paid online temperament and personality tests helpful in our journey to discover the ways God the Holy Spirit has uniquely gifted you.

- **The TypeFinder® Personality Test:**
<https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>
- **The Enneagram Personality Test:**
<https://www.truity.com/test/enneagram-personality-test>
- **The Big Five Personality Test:**
<https://www.truity.com/test/big-five-personality-test>
- **The TypeFinder® Temperament Test:**
<https://www.truity.com/test/typefinder-temperament-test>
- **The TypeFinder® Research Edition:**
<https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-research-edition-2017>
- **Personality Assessment (paid):**
<https://spiritualgiftstest.com/personality-assessment/>

g. He _____ us by making available his _____.

“¹⁶ ‘And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ *Even* the Spirit of truth ... ¹⁸ **I will not leave you comfortless:** I will come to you. ... ²⁶ But the **Comforter**, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. ²⁷ **Peace** I leave with you, my **peace** I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid’” (John 14:16–17a, 18, 26–27 KJV; emphasis added).⁵⁰

h. He eliminates our _____ by replacing them with a confident, courageous, and fearless _____ (παρρησία [*parrēsia*]).

⁵⁰ All scriptural quotations marked “KJV” are taken from *The Holy Bible: King James Version* (Bellingham WA: Logos Research Systems, 1995).

- On the day of Pentecost, the disciples in the upper room “were **all filled with the Holy Spirit**,” including the apostle Peter (Acts 2:4 ESV; emphasis added). Afterward, Peter is reported to have preached a Spirit-empowered, Christ-centered sermon “with **confidence** [from (παρρησία *parrēsia*)]” or boldness (Acts 2:29 ESV; emphasis added).
- Peter was “**filled with the Holy Spirit**” in Acts 4:8 ESV. As a result, in Acts 4:13, Peter and the apostle John act with “**boldness**.”
- In Acts 4:29 believers praised God for the release of Peter and John from prison and asked God to give them “**all boldness**” to speak the Word of God. Consequently, “³¹ ... when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and continued to speak the word of God with **boldness**” (Acts 4:31 ESV; emphasis added).
- In Acts 9:17, Ananias told the apostle Paul (then called “Saul”) that God brought him to him so that he may be “**filled with the Holy Spirit**” (ESV; emphasis added). This Spirit-infilling stirred Barnabas to report to the disciples how Paul “at Damascus had preached **boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι] in the name of Jesus” (Acts 9:27 ESV; emphasis added). Subsequent to this meeting with the apostles, Paul “went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching **boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι] in the name of the Lord” (Acts 9:29 ESV; emphasis added).
- In Acts 13:9, Luke informed his readers again that that Paul was “**filled with the Holy Spirit**” (ESV; emphasis added). Later he recounted that in Antioch of Pisidia Paul and Barnabas “spoke out **boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι]” to the Jews that persecuted them (Acts 13:46 ESV; emphasis added). Subsequently, Paul and Barnabas ministered at Iconium, where “they remained for a long time, speaking **boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι] for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands” (Acts 14:3 ESV; emphasis added).
- Speaking of Apollos, Acts 18:25 indicates that he was “**ferve[n]t in the [S]pirit**” (KJV; emphasis added). As a result, Apollos spoke “**boldly** [from παρρησιάζομαι (*parrēsiazomai*)] in the synagogue” (Acts 18:26 ESV; emphasis added).
- Acts 19:1–7 tells the story of Paul baptizing disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus “in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 19:5 ESV) who had never heard of the Holy Spirit. After they were baptized, Paul had “laid his

hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying” (Acts 19:6 ESV). Undoubtedly, Paul, as has been indicated earlier in Acts, was necessarily filled with the Holy Spirit in order to impart this promised gift to others. Later, Luke recorded that Paul “entered the synagogue” in Ephesus “and for three months spoke **boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι], reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8 ESV; emphasis added).

- Coming to the last few years of his ministry, Paul, while making a defense of the gospel and his ministry before King Agrippa, countered Festus’s accusation that Paul had fallen into insanity, stating that he had spoke “**boldly** [again, from παρρησιάζομαι]” “true and rational words” to the king (Acts 26:25–26 ESV; emphasis added).
- Luke concluded his account of Paul’s Spirit-filled missional adventures, with focus on his ministry in Rome, writing: “³⁰ He [Paul] lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, ³¹ proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with **all boldness** and without hindrance” (Acts 28:30–31 ESV; emphasis added).

From this textual data, it is interesting to note that boldness, confidence, courage, and fearlessness in Acts is **ALWAYS** a result of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

F. OUR MOST COMMON FEARS IN EVANGELISM ANSWERED

_____ is one of the strongest forces that keeps us from actively being involved in personal witnessing. We are afraid of our own _____, _____, and _____.

The Holy Spirit provides three answers to banish these three most common fears from our hearts.

“⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of **power** and **love** and **self-control**” (2 Tim 1:7 ESV; emphasis added).

Upward
Connection

- God’s gift of _____ will banish the fear of _____.

“⁸ ‘But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth’” (Acts 1:8 EV; emphasis added).

Outward
Commitment

- God's gift of _____ will eliminate the fear of _____.

"Unless you receive the Holy Spirit, you **cannot** have the love of God in the soul; but through a living connection with Christ, we are inspired with love and zeal and earnestness."⁵¹

Inward
Control

- God's gift of _____ removes the fear of _____.

"And many who are working with a very different purpose, fall into a like error. They are working for others' good; their duties are pressing, their responsibilities are many, and they allow their labor to crowd out devotion. Communion with God through prayer and a study of His word is neglected. ... They walk apart from Christ, their life is not pervaded by His grace, and the characteristics of self are revealed. Their service is marred by desire for supremacy, and the harsh, unlovely traits of the unsubdued heart. **Here is one of the chief secrets of failure in Christian work.**"⁵²

G. HOW TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Possess a _____ to be filled.

"The Spirit **cannot** be poured out unless there are people **willing** to be filled with power, enabling them to share Christ with the world around them."⁵³

2. Fully _____ your life to God.

"There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not **surrender** the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. ... They want to manage themselves. **This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift.**"⁵⁴

"The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have **yielded** themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The **more closely** believers have walked with God, the **more clearly** and **powerfully** they have testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. ... Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love."⁵⁵

⁵¹ White, "Need of Dependence on God," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 69.39 (September 27, 1892): 610; emphasis added.

⁵² Idem, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 52; emphasis added.

⁵³ Burrill, *Revolution in the Church*, 16; emphasis added.

⁵⁴ White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 672; italics original; emphasis added.

⁵⁵ Idem, *God's Amazing Grace* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1973), 204; emphasis added.

3. Offer God your complete _____ by faith.

“³⁰ ‘The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who **obey him**’” (Acts 5:30–32 ESV; emphasis added).

4. Spend time in _____, pleading for the presence of the Spirit in your life.

“⁹ ‘And I tell you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who **asks** receives, and the one who **seeks** finds, and to the one who **knocks** it will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**’” (Luke 11:9–13 ESV; emphasis added).

“Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day’s duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be ‘laborers together with God.’”⁵⁶

5. Have the _____ that, if you ask for the gift of the Spirit, then you will receive him in his fullness.

“²² And Jesus answered them, ‘Have **faith** in God. ²³ Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but **believes** that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, **believe** that you have received it, and it will be yours’” (Mark 11:22–24 ESV; emphasis added)

6. Take time to fervently study the _____.

“In order to **succeed** in this work, we must have the **power** and **presence** of the **Holy Spirit**. We can only have this as we spend time in **studying the Scriptures** and **communing with God**.”⁵⁷

“It is a **sin** for those who attempt to teach the Word to others to be themselves neglectful of its study. ... One who does not possess a knowledge of the Word of life, has no right to try to instruct others in the way to heaven.”⁵⁸

7. Start _____ today!

“Workers are needed **now**. As a people, we are not doing one fiftieth of what we might do as active missionaries. If we were only vitalized by the Holy Spirit, there would be a hundred missionaries where there is now one. ... There is great need of workers, and there are many ways

⁵⁶ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 56.

⁵⁷ Don and Marjorie Gray, *You Are My Witnesses: Sharing Jesus in the 21st Century*, In His Word Bible Lesson Series (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2003), 53; emphasis added.

⁵⁸ White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 249. (emphasis added)

in which they can labor. A good work cannot be done by the human agent alone. For the full development and efficiency of the intellectual as well as the spiritual powers, there is, there must be, a vital connection with God, a communion with the highest source of activity. Then with the soul all aglow with zeal for the Master, we can be a blessing to others. ... Those who become partakers of the grace of Christ will guide others to the living stream.”⁵⁹

“And **today** God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. **Today** the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. ... The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, **they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power**. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God.

“On the other hand, there are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service.

“It is true that in the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. ...

“But unless the members of God's church **today** have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

“Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their **daily** need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves **daily** to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. **Daily** they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. **Daily** they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.”⁶⁰

H. CONCLUSION

After Paul had preached for “three Sabbath days” in “a synagogue of the Jews” at Thessalonica, a great multitude embraced Jesus as the Christ, “many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women” (Acts 17:1–2, 4 ESV). Sadly, many of the Jews were not persuaded (Acts 17:5). They gathered together a mob from the marketplace and set out to capture Paul and his companion, Silas. An attack was made on the



⁵⁹ Idem, *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1923), 507; emphasis added.

⁶⁰ Idem, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 53–55; emphasis added.

house of Jason, where Paul and Silas had stayed. Fortunately, at the time of the attack, Paul and Silas had already left; unfortunately, Jason and some of the other believing Christian brothers and sisters were inside the dwelling. The mob, further enraged by the absence of Paul and Silas, dragged Jason and the other believers from the house and brought them before the city authorities (Acts 17:5–6). The accusation brought against them is found in Acts 17:6–7 ESV: “⁶ ‘These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ⁷ ... saying that there is another king, Jesus.’”

Today, God is calling **you** to be a Spirit-filled world-changer!

YOU

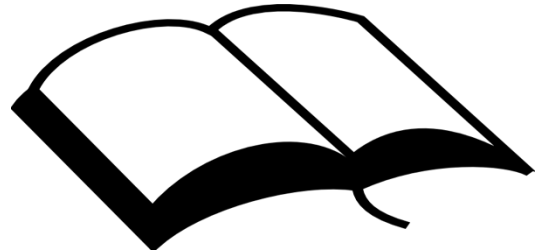
**TOO CAN BE ONE WHO TURNS THE WORLD
UPSIDE DOWN FOR CHRIST!**

PRACTICE

Write out a personal prayer that cries out to God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to equip you to be a powerful soul-winner for Christ.



Write down some biblical passages that help to alleviate your fears concerning personal evangelism by encouraging Spirit-filled boldness.



~SUPPLEMENT 1A~

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. JESUS, OUR INTERCEDING HIGH PRIEST

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, since the day of Pentecost, has been enthroned in the heavenly sanctuary as our high-priest and king always mediating and interceding on our behalf for our redemption.

“²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24, ESV).

“³³ Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is **interceding for us**” (Rom 8:34 ESV; emphasis added).

“²⁴ [B]ut he [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since **he always lives to make intercession for them**. ²⁶ For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens” (Heb 7:24–26 ESV; emphasis added).

“¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1 ESV).

The high priestly prayer in John 17:1–26 is one beautiful example of Jesus’s intercessions for us.

B. CALLED TO BE INTERCESSORS

As disciples of Jesus who are called to follow his example, we are invited to intercede in prayer on behalf of others, especially those who do not know Jesus or his teachings.

“¹ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people ³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:1, 3–4 ESV).

Intercessory Prayer: a special variety of prayer that is offered on behalf of others with particular focus on their responsiveness to the work of the Holy Spirit in their life unto salvation.

Jesus longs to have intercessory prayers “²¹ that ... would argue the case of a man with God, as a son of man does with his neighbor” (Job 16:21 ESV). Job is an excellent example of intercessory prayer because “⁵ ... he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all [his ten children (Job 1:2)]. For Job said, ‘It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.’ Thus Job did **continually**” (Job 1:5 ESV; emphasis added). Furthermore, after God grew angry with Job’s friends for providing incorrect reasons for Job’s suffering, Job interceded for his friends, and God answers his prayer of intercession.

“⁷ After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: ‘My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. ⁸ Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.’ ⁹ So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the LORD had told them, and the LORD accepted Job’s prayer” (Job 42:7–9 ESV).

God is on the lookout for intercessors like Job and Daniel. For example, when God raised charges against Israel and foretold the resulting judgment to come (i.e., the Babylonian exile), he searched for one who would intercede for Israel’s sin and injustice. The prophet Ezekiel recounted, “³⁰ ‘And I [God] sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none’” (Ezek 22:30 ESV).

Our intercession for others should be **fervent** and **perpetual** not a “one and done” sort of a deal. When God announced the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to the patriarch Abraham, he repeatedly interceded on behalf of those who lived in the cities (Gen 18:16–33).

The intercessory prayer of the prophet Daniel for Judah in exile to Babylon serves as a helpful model for praying intercessory petitions on behalf of others (Dan 9:1–19). See also Jesus’ prayer of intercession in John 17:1–26.

In order to effectively intercede in prayer for others, we must love them with God’s love. When Israel sinned at the foot of Mount Sinai by creating and worshipping a golden calf, Moses pleaded for forgiveness on their behalf more than once, even being willing to die on behalf of them. God honored Moses’ prayers for Israel and renewed the covenant with repentant Israel (Gen 32:1–34:35).

“³⁰ The next day Moses said to the people, ‘You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.’ ³¹ So Moses returned to the LORD and said, ‘Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. ³² But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written’” (Exod 32:30–32 ESV).

When we become an intercessor for others in prayer, the Holy Spirit also intercedes alongside of us, attaching his “groanings too deep for words” to our prayers “according to the will of God” (Rom 8:26–27 ESV).

“²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but **the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.** ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because **the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God**” (Rom 8:26–27 ESV; emphasis added).

As we are living in the midst of a cosmic conflict between the spiritual forces of good and evil (Eph 6:12), it is necessary to be arrayed with “the whole armor of God” (Eph 6:11 ESV). Intercessory prayer is one of the offense weapons of that armor that we are to don, especially intercession for those who are battling on the “frontlines” (Acts 12:5; Rom 15:30; Col 4:2–3). Intercessory prayer calls for God’s intervention and can push back the dark forces of evil in the lives of others (e.g., Dan 10:1–21).

“¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ **praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,** ¹⁹ **and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,** ²⁰ **for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak**” (Eph 6:10–20 ESV; emphasis added).

As the prophet and priest Samuel pointed out to the people of Israel, it is a **sin of omission** for followers of God to neglect to intercede in prayer on behalf of others.

“¹⁹ And all the people said to Samuel, ‘Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king.’ ²⁰ And Samuel said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. ²¹ And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. ²² For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name’s sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself. ²³ **Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by**

ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. ²⁴ Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. ²⁵ But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king.”

God calls us to pray for those whom we are trying to reach with the gospel.

God would have the truth opened to the men ... who are ignorant of the soul's great necessity. There are some who are especially fitted to engage in this work; there are those who should seek the Lord daily, making it a study how to reach persons of this class, not to have merely a casual acquaintance with them, but to lay hold of them by personal effort and living faith, manifesting a deep love for their souls, a real concern that they shall have knowledge of the truth as it is presented in the word of God. ...

“[T]hese persons whom God has gifted, ministers and people, are to be laid hold of by the hand of living faith. Let the workers grasp the promises of God, saying, ‘Thou hast promised, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’ I must have this soul converted to Jesus Christ.’ Solicit prayer for the souls for whom you labor; present them before the church as objects for the supplication. It will be just what the church needs, to have their minds called from their little, petty difficulties, to feel a great burden, a personal interest, for a soul that is ready to perish. Select another and still another soul, daily seeking guidance from God, laying everything before Him in earnest prayer, and working in divine wisdom. As you do this, you will see that God will give the Holy Spirit to convict, and the power of the truth to convert, the soul.”¹

PRACTICE: TEN “MOST WANTED” LIST

Write down a list on the lines provided below of individuals (family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.) for whom you want to be offering up intercessory prayers that they may not resist the work of the Holy Spirit through prevenient grace and the preaching of the Word of God.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

¹ Ellen G. White to Dr. and Mrs. J. H. Kellogg, Granville, Australia (April 18, 1894), Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Lt 47, 1894).

Now, write down some specific needs of the above individuals for which you can make prayerful supplication to God and intercede! What promises of Scripture will you claim for them?



~SESSION II~

CHRIST'S METHOD OF EVANGELISM

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then he bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”

—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 143.

A. OUR FIRST WORK

One of the very first commands given by Jesus to his disciples following his resurrection was the called to work with him in saving of souls for the kingdom (i.e., the great commission).

“¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt 28:18–20 ESV; emphasis added).

“The **highest** of all sciences is the science of soulsaving. The **greatest** work to which human beings can aspire is the work of winning men from sin to holiness.”¹

“The conversion of souls to God is the **greatest**, the **noblest** work in which human beings can have part.”²

“To every soul that accepts Jesus the cross of Calvary speaks: ‘Behold the worth of the soul: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the **all-important** work for time; it is to be far-reaching as eternity.”³

“To win souls to the kingdom of God must be their **first** consideration.”⁴

“The **greatest** work, the **noblest** effort, in which men can engage, is to point sinners to the Lamb of God.”⁵



¹ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 398; emphasis added.

² Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 7:52; emphasis added.

³ Ibid., 5:456; emphasis added.

⁴ Idem, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 31; emphasis added.

⁵ Ibid., 18; emphasis added.

Why, then, is Christianity in North America on the decline, and we are baptizing so few new converts into the church?

B. ARE WE DOING SOMETHING INEFFECTIVE?

Why haven't our evangelism strategies always produced results like those found in the book of Acts?

"I believe that much of our evangelism is ineffective because we depend too much upon technique and strategy. Evangelism has slipped into the sales department. I am convinced that we must look at Jesus, and the quality of life He calls us to, as a model for what to believe and how to reach out to others."⁶

Today, the church has been operating its evangelism as a _____ department. The post office staff has become our evangelistic team. We have solely depended on the use of marketing materials (flyers, billboards, newspaper ads, websites, etc.) to accomplish evangelism with little results, at least not reaching our potential. Jesus and the apostles did none of this and still won thousands of souls for the kingdom of heaven.

We need to ask the question: How did Christ draw such big crowds in the Gospel narratives and have such great results?

"We are to learn from Christ the science of soul saving."⁷

"We are slow to realize how much we need to understand the teachings of Christ and His methods of labor."⁸

**We have not imitated Jesus sufficiently
in his modeling of successful soul-winning methodology!**

C. IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE!

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs and won their confidence. Then he bade them, 'Follow Me.'"⁹

⁶ Rebecca Manley Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker & into the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 13.

⁷ White, "Notes on Travel—No. 7: A Visit to Redlands and Riverside," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 82.13 (March 30, 1905): 8.

⁸ Idem, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1913), 391.

⁹ Idem, *The Ministry of Healing*, 143.

Christ's method of evangelism was _____. We have become quite _____ and _____ oriented in our approach to evangelism.

"Too frequently the common thread that runs through [programs] is an emphasis on tasks and end results rather than on people and process. ... Christ's program was first and foremost people."¹⁰

A major reason our meager results have been due to the fact that our witnessing has largely lacked a _____ and _____ human touch. We are so worried about numbers and personal success that we forget what leads to true success in the mission of the church.

D. JESUS' COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE

Jesus's compassion for people is narrated many times throughout the Gospels. Jesus sought personal relationships with people because he genuinely loved and care about them.

"³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, **he had compassion for them**, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt 9:35–36 ESV; emphasis added).



"The gospel of Christ is not consistent with an evangelism which seeks to ignore or avoid sincere personal relationships."¹¹ "An evangelism that ignores the experience of the individual person is not consistent with the gospel of Christ. 21

We can only possess this love for people by receiving it from Jesus. Therefore, we must be praying that the God who is love (1 John 4:8, 16) will pour "into our hearts" his passionate love for people "through the Holy Spirit," just as he promised (Rom 5:5 ESV; cf. Gal 5:22; Eph 3:17b–19). This love for people is what made a difference for Jesus' evangelism and it will make a difference for ours too.

Jesus instructed us to follow his example—to "¹ ... be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph 5:1–2 ESV)—and he will make us into successful soul-winning fishers of men (i.e., witnesses).

"¹⁹ And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men'" (Matt 4:19 ESV).

¹⁰ Philip G. Samaan, *Christ's Way of Reaching People: The Fine Art of Relational Witnessing* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1990), 34.

¹¹ Wayne McDill, *Making Friends for Christ: A Practical Approach to Relational Evangelism* (n.p.: Baptist Sunday School Board, 1980), 13.

E. CHRIST'S STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM

Before Jesus commissioned His twelve disciples to go make disciples, he demonstrated for them the divine strategy that would effectively accomplish the work of evangelism.

“³⁵ And Jesus **went throughout** all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:35–36 ESV; emphasis added).

“The gospel commission is the great missionary charter of Christ’s kingdom. The disciples were to work earnestly for souls, giving to all the invitation of mercy. **They were not to wait for the people to come to them; they were to go to the people with their message.**”¹²

Jesus _____ to the multitude, showed compassion to them by meeting their needs, shared the good news of his kingdom with them, and bid them to follow him.

Christ’s Evangelistic Strategy: The _____ calls and sends out _____ into the world who, using his _____, are to take his _____ to the _____.

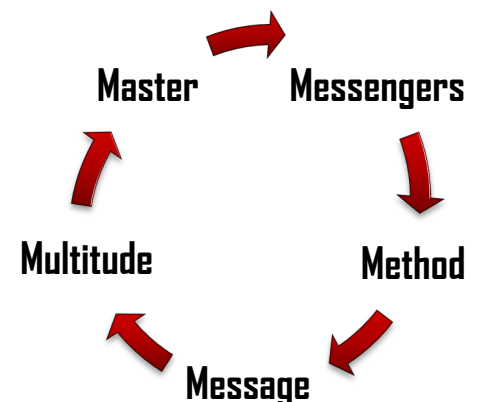
Master: Jesus, “the Lord of the harvest”
(Matt 9:38)

Messengers: His disciples
(Matt 10:1, 5, 16)

Method: Showing compassion and meeting needs (Matt 9:35–36; 10:8)

Message: The gospel and the coming kingdom of God (Matt 9:35; 10:7, 27)

Multitude: Lost people who are considered “ripe for the picking”
(Matthew 9:35–36; 10:6)



Jesus said that praying for God to send out laborers (i.e., messengers) into the field (i.e., world) to gather the harvest (i.e., the multitude) is how this evangelistic strategy is to be initiated.

“³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore **pray earnestly** to the Lord of the harvest **to send out laborers** into his harvest’” (Matt 9:37–38 ESV; emphasis added).

¹² White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 28; emphasis added.

The problem we face is not that there is no one to evangelize, but rather that there is a _____ of evangelists to invite the multitude of people—“harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36 ESV)—who are waiting for someone to call them to come to Christ.

“More people than we think are longing to find the way to Christ.”¹³

“Many are waiting to be personally addressed.”¹⁴

“There are many who want to know what they must do to be saved. They want a plain and clear explanation of the steps requisite in conversion.”¹⁵

“There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.”¹⁶

A notable biblical example of this reality is the story of Philip’s evangelistic ministry in Samaria as recorded in Acts 8:4–40. Philip found several “men and women” who were responsive to his preaching of the “good news about the kingdom of God” (Acts 8:12 ESV). After the successful mission in Samaria God called Philip to “go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza,” and he obediently “rose and went” (Acts 8:26–27 ESV). There he found an Ethiopian eunuch stopped along the road, waiting from some to teach him about the significance of the messianic prophecies of Isaiah, especially that of Isa 53:7–8 (Acts 8:27–34). The Spirit urged Philip, “Go over and join this chariot” (Acts 8:29 ESV). Philip ran to the chariot and helped the Ethiopian eunuch understand how those prophecies pointed to Jesus (Acts 8:35). This divine appointment resulted in the Ethiopian eunuch expressing faith in Jesus as the Messiah and being baptized (Acts 8:36–40). Today, not unlike the Ethiopian eunuch, there are people just waiting for someone to befriend them and guide them in the acceptance of Jesus and his teachings.

Also, notice that the messengers that God empowers and sends are the very ones that are told to pray for God to send messengers.

“¹ And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. ... ⁵ These twelve Jesus **sent out**, instructing them, ... ¹⁶ ‘Behold, I am **sending you out** ...’” (Matt 10:1, 5, 16 ESV; emphasis added).

¹³ Idem, *Gospel Workers*, 158.

¹⁴ Idem, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 141.

¹⁵ Idem, “Our Sacred Calling,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 64.8 (February 22, 1887): 114.

¹⁶ Idem, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 109.

Those who pray for laborers to be sent into the world are precisely the ones Jesus empowered to be those laborers. Thus, his instruction for his disciples to pray for laborers was intended to bring conviction to their hearts to listen to God's call.

F. FRIENDSHIP (RELATIONAL) EVANGELISM

How do we effectively labor in the harvest in alignment with Jesus's example?

Friendship Evangelism: "[T]he use of personal relationships as a bridge to expose a friend to the gospel."¹⁷

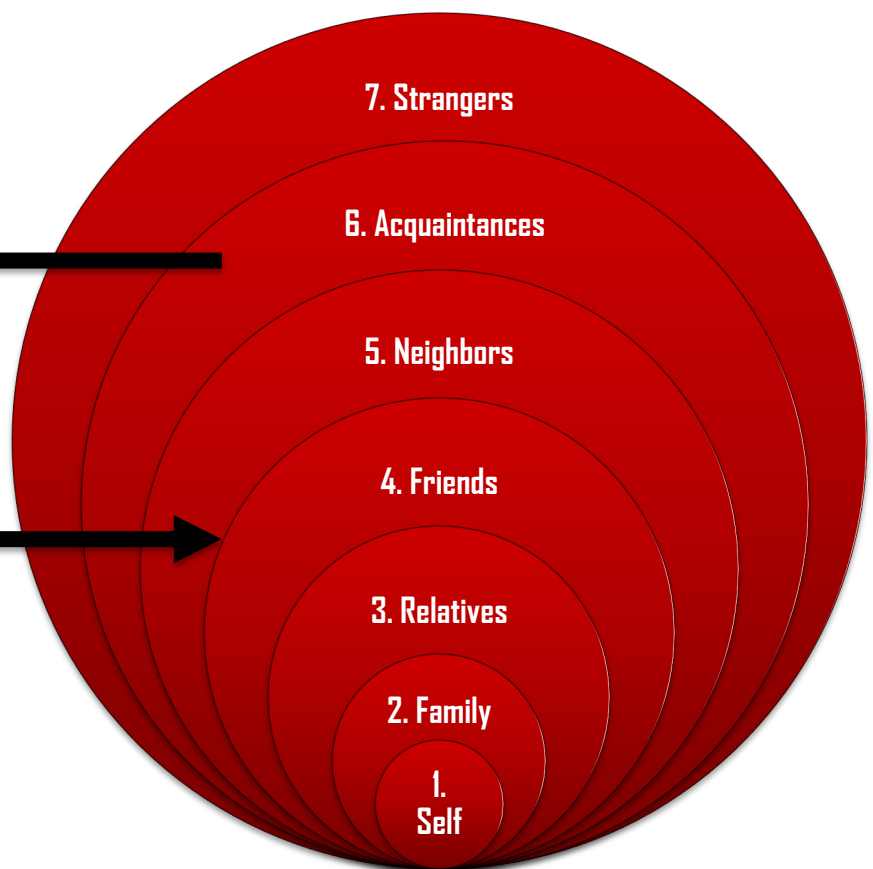
"Friendship evangelism means that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, you consciously work at building relationships that will open doors to lead people to the gospel."¹⁸

Donald A. McGavran's researched showed that most church members—sixty to ninety percent—came to Christ through the influence of neighbors, friends, and relatives.¹⁹

"About 90% of friendship converts remain faithful to the church while 90% of impersonal evangelism converts do not remain faithful to the church."²⁰

← The more distant the relationship, the more difficult and the more expensive it is to bring this person to Christ.

→ The closer the relationship, the less expensive and the less difficult it is to bring this person to Christ.



¹⁷ Carlos G. Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning 1: Basic Strategies* (N.p.: 2007), 77.

¹⁸ James W. Zackrison, *Power to Witness* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1993), 48.

¹⁹ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 23.

²⁰ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 77.

In friendship evangelism, you will be required to make significant investments of time because relationships require time to grow and develop. Unlike traditional evangelism in which you set a certain time, meet at a certain place, and go through a certain pre-determined series or study, friendship evangelism puts you on call twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week! Since you have cultivated a friendship, your new friend may make requests of and demands on you at inconvenient times.²¹

G. CHRIST'S 5-STEP METHOD OF EVANGELISM

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs and won their confidence. Then he bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”²²

How does one effectively foster those friendships so that they lead to kingdom growth?

I. Socialization: _____ with people as one who desires their good.

We must go to where the people are and build relationships with them through genuine connection and meaningful shared experiences.

“¹⁹ ‘The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds” (Matt 11:19 ESV; cf. Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:29–32; 15:1–2).

“[Jesus] reached the hearts of people by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of the lake, and at the marriage feast. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs. ... In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are. They will seldom seek us of their own accord.”²³

“The prince of teachers, He sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He presented the truth in such a way that ever after it was to His hearers intertwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. He taught in a way that made them feel the completeness of His identification with their interests and happiness. His instruction was so direct, His illustrations were so appropriate, His words so sympathetic and cheerful, that His hearers were charmed. The simplicity and earnestness with which He addressed the needy, hallowed every word.

“What a busy life He led! Day by day He might have been seen entering the humble abodes of want and sorrow, speaking hope to the downcast and peace to the distressed. Gracious, tenderhearted, pitiful, He went about lifting up the bowed-down and

²¹ Ibid., 81.

²² White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 143.

²³ Idem, *The Desire of Ages*, 151–152.

comforting the sorrowful. Wherever He went, He carried blessing.

“While He ministered to the poor, Jesus studied also to find ways of reaching the rich. He sought the acquaintance of the wealthy and cultured Pharisee, the Jewish nobleman, and the Roman ruler. He accepted their invitations, attended their feasts, made Himself familiar with their interests and occupations, that He might gain access to their hearts, and reveal to them the imperishable riches.

“... With unwearying patience and sympathetic helpfulness He met men in their necessities. By the gentle touch of grace He banished from the soul unrest and doubt, changing enmity to love, and unbelief to confidence.

“He could say to whom He pleased, ‘Follow Me,’ and the one addressed arose and followed Him. The spell of the world's enchantment was broken. At the sound of His voice the spirit of greed and ambition fled from the heart, and men arose, emancipated, to follow the Saviour.”²⁴

“We are **not** to wait for souls to come to us; we must **seek** them out where they are. When the word has been preached in the pulpit, the work has but just begun. There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them.”²⁵

a. Check-out the favorite “fishing holes” of soul-winners.

“Frequent fishermen have their favorite fishing holes. They catch more in these familiar spots because they understand the fish’s behavior—what they like to eat, when they bite and where they like to rest and nest. Winning souls is a lot like fishing. There are favorite places where you can always find a good catch of people for the Lord.”²⁶



🐟 Visit with your close _____ of _____
(i.e., family, friends, and neighbors).

“John [the Baptist] directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathaniel. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our **kindred, friends, and neighbors**” (John 1:35-51).²⁷

🐟 Visit with your _____ at your place of employment.

“Even while engaged in their daily employment, God’s people can lead others to Christ.”²⁸

²⁴ Idem, *The Ministry of Healing*, 23–25.

²⁵ Idem, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1900), 229; emphasis added.

²⁶ Gary Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), 33–34.

²⁷ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 141; emphasis added.

²⁸ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:39.

- Visit with _____ who visit your local church.
- Visit with _____ in your church and school.
- Visit with _____ and _____ church members.
- Visit with people who have made contact with or requested materials from a church-sponsored or church-supporting _____ (e.g., It is Written, Voice of Prophecy, Breath of Life, Faith for Today, Jesus 101, LifeTalk Radio, SermonView, Bible Research, Amazing Facts, Peace Finders, etc.).
- Mail out a _____ offering free Bible studies, and visit those who respond.
- Go _____ asking people to help you with a short survey, and then offer free Bible study guides.

“House-to-house labor, searching for souls, hunting for the lost sheep, is the most essential work that can be done.”²⁹

When doing door-to-door ministry, be sure to follow Jesus’s “rule of two.”

⁷ And he called the twelve and began to send them out **two by two**, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ... ¹⁰ And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹² So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them” (Mark 6:7, 10–13 ESV; emphasis added).

b. Socialize smartly.

“As we should cultivate sociability, let it not be merely for amusement, but for a purpose. There are souls to save.”³⁰

“Socializing is where we also are to start. This is not partying for pleasure, but is socializing with a holy purpose. Some Christians treat lost people like hazardous waste and isolate themselves. At the other extreme are those who venture so close

²⁹ Idem to G. A. Irwin, I. H. Evans, U. Smith, and A. T. Jones, Stanmore, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (April 21, 1898), Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Lt 137, 1898).

³⁰ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:599.

to the lost that they become like them in character and aren't different enough to pull them to safety. Both extremes are ineffective witnesses."³¹

c. Use meet-and-greet acronyms to foster meaningful dialogue.

The following acronyms are effective tools for initiating and maintaining conversations with people and getting to know them in ways that builds confidence and puts them at ease.

L.O.V.E.³²

Location

- “Where did you live before moving here?”
- “Where were you born?”

Occupation

- “What do you do for a living?”

Vacation

- “What do you like to do when you're not working?”

Experience

- “What's your experience with God, religion, or church?”

T.O.P.I.C.S.³³

Today's Immediate Situation and Surroundings.

- “Is this your first time here?”
- “How did you learn about this church?”

Occupation and Education Background (job, work, school, etc.)

- “What kind of work are you in?”

Place (birthplace, home, etc.); Partner (married, single, etc.); Parents (family)

- “Where are you from?”
- “Are you married?”
- “Do you live close by?”
- “How are your kids?”

Interests (hobbies, recreation)

- “What do you do for fun?”

Current Events (news)

- “Did you hear about the hurricane that hit Florida yesterday?”

Share (yourself, church, Sabbath School class, etc.)

F.O.R.T.³⁴

Family

“The first thing that you can most easily talk to people about is their families or themselves. Someone has said that the sweetest word in the human language is the name of the person to which you are talking to. Talk to the person about himself and his family and he will know that you are interested to learn about various interests that they may have. Get them to tell you where they were born, how many children they have and were

³¹ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 42.

³² Joe Cirigliano, *Getting to Know People* (n.p.), 1.

³³ Gibbs, *Spiritual Friends Manual* (Roseville, CA: Amazing Facts, n.d.), 4.

³⁴ Amazing Facts, *SALT Program Manual* (n.p.), 18–20.

they live. This will relax and divert their minds from the fear of you and your mission. They will feel that you are truly interested in them.”

- “How is your family doing?”
- “Are you married?”
- “Do you have children/grandchildren?”
- “Are you originally from this area?”

Occupation

“Most women will be interested in their husband and children, and most men will usually be interested in their jobs and hobbies. Get the man to tell you about his occupation or what he does for recreation and he will warm up to you, telling you about the things that he would not have thought of telling you a few minutes before. If the lady of the house works outside the home, she may also like to talk about her work. You will learn a great deal about people by just listening to what they will tell you and also by what you do not say.”

- “What kind of work do you do?”
- “How long have you worked there?”
- “What kind of work did you do?” (for the retired or unemployed)
- “How do you like your job?”

Religion

“It is helpful to know the person’s religious background so that we can help him in his religious growth. ... This approach lets the person start where they are most comfortable and it will give you an opportunity to ask other short questions that will give you a religious profile of the person. This is very valuable information as you discover if he/she is a church member, attends church, studies the Bible, etc. This will help you adapt your approach to fit his spiritual needs.”

- “Have you been a (denomination/religion) all of your life?”
- “Do you attend church?”
- “Does your whole family attend together?”

Testimony

“You have the opportunity to build a bridge by which you can now lead the person to begin thinking about the message of salvation that you have come to share with him. You will not want to preach or exhort, but you can witness to your own relationship with Jesus Christ. This is not a time to share the Sabbath or how you became an Adventist. It is a time to share how you came to know CHRIST. Simply, you are to share what Christ has done for you, how He has delivered you and from sin, how He is your friend, etc. Try to fit your testimony to some felt need that the person with whom you have been visiting has expressed. Show them, by sharing your own experience in Christ how He has been the answer to a similar problem that you have had in your life. This will help the person want to know the same Savior who has helped you, and it will create a feeling of kinship with you as he or she identifies with your problem and the solution you found in Jesus.”

- Share your personal testimony.
- “I have recently been sharing with my friends some interesting Bible lessons that have meant much to me. May I share them with you?”

“When you ask a person a question, try to phrase it in such a way that it cannot be answered by a ‘yes’ or a ‘no.’ This is called asking _____. It makes for a much more enjoyable conversation.”³⁵

d. Desire their good.

“We do not develop friendships with people for the purpose of sharing the gospel with them. We develop friendships because we **care** for them, as an expression of God’s love that is operating through us. ... We do it because we live for others, not for ourselves. Yet, **true friendship** and **true love** will **compel** us to share the gospel.”³⁶

2. Sympathy: Show _____ for them.

As you build relationships through conversations and meaningful shared experiences, listen carefully to discover their “hurts, habits, and hang-ups;” needs; and the longings of their heart. Respond to them in authentic heartfelt sympathy.

“[Jesus] allowed people to see that he genuinely cared for them and understood their deepest longing.”³⁷

3. Service: Minister to their _____.

Seek to serve by touching the needs of the _____ person: financially, socially, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically.

“Jesus was constantly looking for ways to serve and relieve suffering.”³⁸

*In John 2, Jesus met a **social** need.* At the wedding feast at Cana, the host ran out of wine, Jesus turned six stone jars of water into refreshing new wine. He alleviated the host’s social embarrassment.

*In John 3, Jesus met a **spiritual** need.* Nicodemus, a Pharisee, asked for a meeting in the dead of night. Jesus showed him exactly what he was looking for and how to get it. He said, “You must be born again.” He satisfied Nicodemus’ soul, which was longing for salvation.

*In John 4, Jesus met an **emotional** need.* The woman at the well had an emotional need. This woman had gone through six husbands. Jesus offered her emotional support, treating her with kindness.

*In John 5, Jesus met a **physical** need.* A man had lain by the pool of Bethesda for 38 years. Jesus said, “Do you want to be made whole?” Then He healed him.

³⁵ Ibid., 19.

³⁶ Annie J. Kjaer, *The Cycle of Evangelism: Christ’s Method* (n.p.), 2; (emphasis added).

³⁷ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 42.

³⁸ Ibid.

4. **Security:** Win their _____.

As you are developing a relationship with others, sympathizing and supporting them in their times of need, you will secure their trust and confidence in your friendship.

“If we neglect to win confidence, people will be defensive when we witness to them.”³⁹

Mutual self-disclosure and sharing in meaningful activities together are other great ways of building trust.

a. The Denominational Question

Today, many people are wary about Christians who are so forward and are not “closet” Christians. This is because they are worried about being tricked to join a _____. Therefore, some are quick to ask of which religion or denomination you are a part. What do you share when asked that question?

Unfortunately, there is significant misunderstanding and a wide circulation of misinformation about the beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. For this reason, if you are not asked the denominational question **do not** volunteer the information. We are not to be ashamed of who we are, but neither do we want to prematurely share information that may lead to biases.

“In laboring in a new field, **do not** think it your duty to say at once to the people, We are Seventh-day Adventists; we believe that the seventh day is the Sabbath; we believe in the non-immortality of the soul. **This would often erect a formidable barrier between you and those you wish to reach.** Speak to them, as you have opportunity, upon points of doctrine on which you can agree. Dwell on the necessity of practical godliness. Give them evidence that you are a Christian, desiring peace, and that you love their souls. Let them see that you are conscientious. Thus you will gain their confidence; and there will be time enough for doctrines. Let the heart be won, the soil prepared, and then sow the seed, presenting in love the truth as it is in Jesus.”⁴⁰

If you are asked the denominational question, kindly answer in honesty and without evasiveness. Moreover, include in your answer a brief explanation that builds common ground and alleviates concerns as far as possible. The explanation below of the “four Cs of Seventh-day Adventism”⁴¹ may be helpful in guiding you in your thoughtful response.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ White, *Gospel Workers*, 119–120; emphasis added.

⁴¹ Adapted from Amazing Facts, *SALT Program Manual*, 21.

“We often get confused with some non-Christian groups, but we are really much like any other Christian church. May I share with you a quick summary of our four main beliefs?”

Christ: We believe that Jesus Christ is the fully divine Son of God, co-eternal and self-existent with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. God’s Son chose to become fully human so he could live and die for us. We believe he is now our high priest-king in the heavenly sanctuary, interceding for us and judging the world (Heb 1:1–3; Col 1:16–18).

Cross: We believe that Jesus paid the penalty of death for human sin through his suffering and atoning death on the cross (2 Cor 5:19). This was sufficient for all the sins and made provision for salvation for all of humanity. Anyone who believes in Jesus as his/her personal Savior and Lord and accepts the grace of his shed blood is forgiven by God and receives the gift of eternal life, “not by works, lest any man should boast.” This makes him/her a child of God and part of God’s family (Eph 2:9).

Commandments: We believe that by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit and because we love Jesus, we choose to live in harmony with all of God’s revealed will in Scripture—including the Ten Commandments (John 14:15). These commandments, written with God’s own finger, describe the principles of his kingdom and reveal the character of God’s true children. We choose to remember all ten—including God’s Sabbath gift of time (Exod 20:8–11).

- Only share the final sentence about the Sabbath if they have inquired about the Sabbath. Do not get into the a discussion of the antichrist or mark of the beast with them!

Coming: We believe that Bible prophecy reveals that Jesus will come again very soon to deliver us from sin. Every person will see, hear, and know that the King of glory has come to take his born-again children to be with him forever (Rev 1:7; 1 Thess 4:16–17). This truly is the “blessed hope” of all God’s children.

5. Solicitation: Bid them to _____ Christ

The point of transition in your friendship with others is after you have won their _____. Until then, it will be ineffective to share God’s Word. Once you have won their trust and confidence, invite them to do Bible studies with you.

“We come close to people **UNTIL** their hearts are warmed, confidence is won, and trust is gained. **THEN**, we share God’s word. This is the method of Christ.”⁴²

“Go to your neighbors one by one, and come close to them **till** their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. Sympathize with them, pray with them, watch for opportunities to do them good, and as you can, gather a few together and open the Word

⁴² Amazing Facts, *SALT Program Manual*, 13; emphasis original.

of God to their darkened minds. ... Do not neglect speaking to your neighbors, and doing them all the kindness in your power, that you ‘by all means may save some.’”⁴³

“It is important to remember Christ’s method in **ALL** our relationships.”⁴⁴

H. GOD’S MOST SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISTIC PLAN

“The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought to home to every soul. To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ’s method. His work was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the **one-soul audience**. **Through that one soul the message was often extended to thousands.**”⁴⁵

Time	Evangelist <i>1,000 Converts a Day</i>	Lay Believer <i>1 Convert a Year</i>
After 1 Year:	365,000 converts	2 converts
After 2 Years:	730,000 converts	4 converts
After 3 Years:	1,095,000 converts	8 converts
After 4 Years:	1,460,000 converts	16 converts
After 5 Years:	1,825,000 converts	32 converts
After 8 Years:	2,920,000 converts	256 converts
After 23 Years:	8,395,000 converts	8,388,000 converts
After 24 Years:	8,760,000 converts	16,777,216 converts (nearly twice that of the evangelist)
After 25 Years:	9,125,000 converts	33,554,432 converts (nearly 3.75 times that of the evangelist)
After 26 Years:	9,490,000 converts	67,108,864 converts (seven times that of the evangelist)

“Every addition to the church should be one more agency for the carrying out of the great plan of redemption.”⁴⁶

I. TWO PRINCIPLES TO KEEP IN MIND

1. Learning Curve Principle: “When a person seeks to acquire a new skill, it will take them longer to accomplish a task than someone who has experience.”⁴⁷

⁴³ White, “The Necessity of Labor,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 65.11 (March 13, 1888): 161; emphasis added.

⁴⁴ Amazing Facts, *SALT Program Manual*, 13; emphasis original.

⁴⁵ White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 229; emphasis added.

⁴⁶ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:47.

⁴⁷ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 28.

2. Law of Averages: “If you are going to win one person, you will need to witness to and study with several.”⁴⁸

“¹ Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. ² Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth. ³ If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth, and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie. ⁴ He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap. ⁵ As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything. ⁶ In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good” (Eccl 11:1–6 ESV).

“Share the Word of God with several persons for after many days it will prosper. Give the Word to seven, and also eight. Do not limit it to only one person for you do not know what will happen. Don’t wait for the ideal or perfect time to share Christ for if you do this the devil will make sure you don’t find it and consequently you will not reap a harvest of souls. Wherever you go, morning or evening, share the good news of salvation, because you don’t know what will prosper, either this Bible study or that one, or whether both studies will lead to a positive decision for Christ and His truth.”⁴⁹

J. CONCLUSION

“True missionary work is that in which the Saviour's work is best represented, His methods most closely copied, His glory best promoted. Missionary work that falls short of this standard is recorded in heaven as defective. It is weighed in the balances of the sanctuary and found wanting.”⁵⁰

K. MY COMMITMENT TO CHRIST IN EVANGELISM

I, _____, by God’s power and grace, dedicate my life to be used by Him to double my personal membership this year. I will seek to win one person to Christ and to train this person to win a soul the following year. Understanding that there is joy in heaven over one who repents (Luke 15:7), I will participate in doubling the joy of God and angels.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

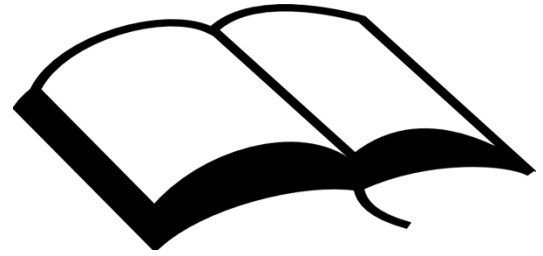
⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁰ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:230.

PRACTICE 1

The following biblical texts show Jesus doing one of the five steps of his method for evangelism. Look up each text and identify which activity of Christ's method is being emphasized therein. An answer key is provided below for if you get "stuck."



A. Socialization: "mingled with men as one who desired their good"

B. Sympathy: "showed His sympathy for them"

C. Service: "ministered to their needs"

D. Security: "won their confidence"

E. Solicitation: "bade them, 'Follow Me'"

1. John 1:43
2. Matt 11:19
3. Mark 1:41–42
4. Mark 2:16
5. Matt 9:36
6. Matt 9:8
7. Mark 8:2–3
8. Matt 7:28–29
9. John 6:1–2
10. Matt 20:34

11. Luke 15:1–2
12. Mark 1:33–34
13. Matt 4:19–20
14. Matt 15:32
15. John 2:23
16. Matt 14:14
17. Luke 7:13
18. Matt 9:9
19. Matt 9:10–11
20. John 21:19

A	11. Luke 15:1–2
C	12. Mark 1:33–34
E	13. Matt 4:19–20
B	14. Matt 15:32
D	15. John 2:23
C	16. Matt 14:14
B	17. Luke 7:13
E	18. Matt 9:9
A	19. Matt 9:10–11
E	20. John 21:19

E	1. John 1:43
A	2. Matt 11:19
C	3. Mark 1:41–42
A	4. Mark 2:16
B	5. Matt 9:36
D	6. Matt 9:8
B	7. Mark 8:2–3
D	8. Matt 7:28–29
D	9. John 6:1–2
C	10. Matt 20:34

Answer Key

PRACTICE 2

Write down a list on the lines provided below of individuals (family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.) with whom you can start developing friendships, utilizing Christ's method of evangelism.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Now, choose three or four of those names to commit intentionally to taking them through Christ's 5-step method of evangelism. Place a star by their names.

Write down a few ways that you can create meaningful shared experiences with these individuals.

[illegible]

*Much of the material in this session was compiled from Gary Gibbs' book, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), and Philip G. Samaan's book, *Christ's Way of Reaching People: The Fine Art of Relational Witnessing* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1990), which are excellent resources for any soul-winner. These books may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com.

~SUPPLEMENT IIA~

EVANGELISTIC INVITATION CANVASS

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. INTRODUCTION

People want to know three things:

1. Who are you? (With what organization are you connected?)
2. What do you want?
3. How long are you going to stay?

Door Approach: *“Hello, my name is _____ and this is _____. We are here for just a moment to invite you to a free Bible prophecy seminar taking place in this community this Friday night.”*

(Put the flyer for the evangelism series in his/her hand.)

B. START A CONVERSATION

“Have you ever studied Bible prophecy before?”

(Listen to his/her response.)

“Many people are talking about Bible prophecy with all the events happening in our world today. Some are even afraid of it. But I have found that Bible prophecy actually gives me hope.”

“This prophecy seminar will cover topics like _____.”

(Show him/her the sermon titles in the flyer.)

“We believe that you’ll be amazed at how specific the Bible is about what’s going on in our world right now. The admission is free, and it is designed for people of any religion, denomination, or faith. If you have children, there will be a free children’s program as well. We’d love for you to come for a night and check it out.”

(Use the FORT acronym or other for holding conversations to connect with the person at the door.)

C. CONCLUSION

“Would you be interested in coming one night to check it out?”

If yes: *“Great, we’ll be looking forward to seeing you there! If you’d like we encourage you to register online and reserve a seat at _____.”*

(Ask their name, review time and place)

If no: *“Okay, you can keep this and pass it on to a family member or friend who might be interested. Thank you for taking time for us.”*

If interested but can’t come to meetings: *“Okay, since you can’t make it, we’d like to give you an offer for some free Bible study guides that cover the same topics from the Bible that will be discussed at the seminar.”*

(Try to get them to fill out the card and return it to you at the door if possible.)

Prayer: If you sense the Holy Spirit moving you to pray with the person and the person seems open, ask them if they have any prayer requests and pray for them before you leave.

D. ANSWERS TO POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/OBJECTIONS

Question 1: “What church are you with?”

Answer: *“This is one of the community services provided by your local Seventh-day Adventist Church. Have you heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?”*

(Share the four Cs of Seventh-day Adventism if/when appropriate.)

“Do you know any Seventh-day Adventists or have any Seventh-day Adventist friends?”

Objection 2: “I already have my own church.”

Answer: *“These meetings are for anyone from any denomination. They are simply designed to help you learn the Bible better.”*

Objection 3: “I’ll be out of town next week.”

Answer: *“The seminar will be continuing at the same times next week. So, you could check it out then if you’d like to.”*

~SUPPLEMENT IIB~

BIBLE STUDY REQUEST CARD FOLLOW-UP

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. INTRODUCTION

People want to know three things:

1. Who are you? (With what organization are you connected?)
2. What do you want?
3. How long are you going to stay?

Door Approach: *“Hello, my name is _____ and this is my friend _____ . Is _____ home?”*

(Wait for the person on the card to come to the door.)

“We are from the local Discover Bible School (or other), which is sponsoring a Bible study program in this area. We recently received your card requesting Bible studies.”

(Have their card in your hand and show it to him/her).

“We are delighted that you are interested in studying the Bible. You requested the Bible study guides and we have them here to give you as a free gift. May I take just a few minutes to explain how to complete them?”

B. START A CONVERSATION

(Use the FORT acronym or other for holding conversations to connect with the person at the door.)

Introduce Lessons: *“This series of lessons covers the teachings of the Bible by topic. The lessons answer common questions like, Why would a God of love allow sin and suffering? What happens after death? What will heaven be like? These lessons have helped many to better understand the Bible for themselves.”*

Explain the Studies: *“The questions are in bold. What you do is look up the answers from the Bible and write them on the line below each question. These questions have helped a*

lot of people to better understand the Bible and I'm confident they will do the same for you."

(Have them get their Bible and do numbers 1 and 2 with you so that they get used to the lessons.)

"What we do is leave the lesson with you to fill out. Then we can come back at a convenient time next week to go over the lesson with you and leave the next one for you if you are interested. Each lesson takes less than an hour to go over. As you fill it out, be sure to write any questions you may have in the margin. Does this sound like something you would be interested in?"

If yes: If yes, set up time/day for your return. Be sure to confirm the correct address and telephone number. Do your best to get them into personal in-home Bible studies.

If no: If he/she hesitates or says no, offer the Discover Bible Study Guides.

"We also have a correspondence series of lessons for (repeat their objection, e.g., busy people). You can do it in the privacy of your own home at your own pace. They cover the same topics. All you do is just read through the booklet and fill out the answer sheet at the end. Mail in the answer sheet in the back and then we'll grade it and mail it back to you with your next two lessons for free. Would you be interested in doing that?"

C. CONCLUSION

Confirm the next appointment again and pray with the person at the door.

Prayer: If you sense the Holy Spirit moving you to pray with the person and the person seems open, ask them if they have any prayer requests and pray for them before you leave.

D. ANSWERS TO POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/OBJECTIONS

Question 1: "What church are you with?"

Answer: *"This is one of the community services provided by your local Seventh-day Adventist Church. Have you heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?"*

(Share the four Cs of Seventh-day Adventism if/when appropriate.)

"Do you know any Seventh-day Adventists or have any Seventh-day Adventist friends?"

Objection 2: “I already have my own church.”

Answer: *“These Bible study lessons are for anyone from any denomination. They are simply designed to help you learn the Bible better.”*

Objection 3: “I thought I was just going to get something in the mail.”

Answer: *“We have found that most people appreciate someone coming by to explain how the lessons work and answer any questions they may have, so we try to stop by in person if we can.”*

If he/she hesitates or says no, offer the Discover Bible Study Guides.

“We also have a correspondence series of lessons. You can do it in the privacy of your own home at your own pace. They cover the same topics. All you do is just read through the booklet and fill out the answer sheet at the end. Mail in the answer sheet in the back and then we’ll grade it and mail it back to you with your next two lessons for free. Would you be interested in doing that?”

~SUPPLEMENT IIc~

LITERATURE PURCHASE FOLLOW-UP

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. INTRODUCTION

People want to know three things:

1. Who are you? (With what organization are you connected?)
2. What do you want?
3. How long are you going to stay?

Door Approach: *“Hello, my name is _____ and this is my friend _____ . Is _____ home?”*

(Wait for the person on the card to come to the door.)

“I am a volunteer representing the HHES Student Education Scholarship Program. A few days ago, one of our students, _____ (name), stopped by and you helped him/her with a school scholarship by purchasing _____ (book name). Have you had a chance to read any of them? And if so, are you enjoying them?”

(Have their receipt in your hand and show it to him/her).

“You indicated at the time you made your purchase that you were interested in Bible studies. I have stopped by briefly in response to your interest. Do you have a minute?”

“Well, we are delighted that you are interested in studying the Bible. I brought the first lesson with me today so that you can see what it is like. These lessons are absolutely free. After that we can set-up a time for me to bring you the next lesson, depending on your interest. May I take just a few minutes to explain how to complete them?”

B. START A CONVERSATION

(Use the FORT acronym or other for holding conversations to connect with the person at the door.)

Introduce Lessons: *“This series of lessons covers the teachings of the Bible by topic. The lessons answer common questions like, Why would a God of love allow sin and suffering?”*

What happens after death? What will heaven be like? These lessons have helped many to better understand the Bible for themselves.”

Explain the Studies: *“The questions are in bold. What you do is look up the answers from the Bible and write them on the line below each question. These questions have helped a lot of people to better understand the Bible and I’m confident they will do the same for you.”*

(Have them get their Bible and do numbers 1 and 2 with you so that they get used to the lessons.)

“What we do is leave the lesson with you to fill out. Then we can come back at a convenient time next week to go over the lesson with you and leave the next one for you if you are interested. Each lesson takes less than an hour to go over. As you fill it out, be sure to write any questions you may have in the margin. Does this sound like something you would be interested in?”

If yes: If yes, set up time/day for your return. Be sure to confirm the correct address and telephone number. Do your best to get them into personal in-home Bible studies.

If no: If he/she hesitates or says no, offer the Discover Bible Study Guides.

“We also have a correspondence series of lessons for (repeat their objection, e.g., busy people). You can do it in the privacy of your own home at your own pace. They cover the same topics. All you do is just read through the booklet and fill out the answer sheet at the end. Mail in the answer sheet in the back and then we’ll grade it and mail it back to you with your next two lessons for free. Would you be interested in doing that?”

C. CONCLUSION

Confirm the next appointment again and pray with the person at the door.

Prayer: If you sense the Holy Spirit moving you to pray with the person and the person seems open, ask them if they have any prayer requests and pray for them before you leave.

D. ANSWERS TO POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/OBJECTIONS

Question 1: “What church are you with?”

Answer: *“This is one of the community services provided by your local Seventh-day Adventist Church. Have you heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?”*

(Share the four Cs of Seventh-day Adventism if/when appropriate.)

“Do you know any Seventh-day Adventists or have any Seventh-day Adventist friends?”

Objection 2: “I already have my own church.”

Answer: *“These Bible study lessons are for anyone from any denomination. They are simply designed to help you learn the Bible better.”*

~SUPPLEMENT II D~

MEDIA MINISTRY CONTACT FOLLOW-UP

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. INTRODUCTION

People want to know three things:

1. Who are you? (With what organization are you connected?)
2. What do you want?
3. How long are you going to stay?

Door Approach: *“Hello, my name is _____ and this is my friend _____ . Is _____ home?”*

(Wait for the person on the card to come to the door.)

If no: Assure them that you will be happy to check on the problem for them, **then check!** Call 1.800.SDA.PLUS and ask for the media ministry’s 800 number & order the requested material for the person.

(Then talk to them about the program itself.)

“Have you watched the program for very long? Do you enjoy it?”

If yes:

- *“Great! Have you had a chance to read it yet?”*
- *“Did you enjoy it?”*
- *“Do you have any questions with which we might be able to help you?”*
- *“Would you like more material on this subject ... or any other subject?”*
- *“Have you watched the program for very long?”*

B. START A CONVERSATION

(Use the FORT acronym or other for holding conversations to connect with the person at the door.)

Introduce Lessons: *“This series of lessons covers the teachings of the Bible by topic. The lessons answer common questions like, Why would a God of love allow sin and suffering? What happens after death? What will heaven be like? These lessons have helped many to better understand the Bible for themselves.”*

Explain the Studies: *“The questions are in bold. What you do is look up the answers from the Bible and write them on the line below each question. These questions have helped a lot of people to better understand the Bible and I’m confident they will do the same for you.”*

(Have them get their Bible and do numbers 1 and 2 with you so that they get used to the lessons.)

“What we do is leave the lesson with you to fill out. Then we can come back at a convenient time next week to go over the lesson with you and leave the next one for you if you are interested. Each lesson takes less than an hour to go over. As you fill it out, be sure to write any questions you may have in the margin. Does this sound like something you would be interested in?”

If yes: If yes, set up time/day for your return. Be sure to confirm the correct address and telephone number. Do your best to get them into personal in-home Bible studies.

If no: If he/she hesitates or says no, offer the Discover Bible Study Guides.

“We also have a correspondence series of lessons for (repeat their objection, e.g., busy people). You can do it in the privacy of your own home at your own pace. They cover the same topics. All you do is just read through the booklet and fill out the answer sheet at the end. Mail in the answer sheet in the back and then we’ll grade it and mail it back to you with your next two lessons for free. Would you be interested in doing that?”

C. CONCLUSION

Confirm the next appointment again and pray with the person at the door.

Prayer: If you sense the Holy Spirit moving you to pray with the person and the person seems open, ask them if they have any prayer requests and pray for them before you leave.

D. ANSWERS TO POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/OBJECTIONS

Question 1: “What church are you with?”

Answer: *“This is one of the community services provided by your local Seventh-day Adventist Church. Have you heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?”*

(Share the four Cs of Seventh-day Adventism if/when appropriate.)

“Do you know any Seventh-day Adventists or have any Seventh-day Adventist friends?”

Objection 2: “I already have my own church.”

Answer: *“These Bible study lessons are for anyone from any denomination. They are simply designed to help you learn the Bible better.”*

~SESSION III~

SHARING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



““Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven’s chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. ... That which will be most effective is the testimony of our own experience. ... These precious acknowledgements ... , when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.”

—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 347.

A. COSMIC CONFLICT AND THE TRIAL OF GOD

Our world is in the midst of a cosmic conflict between the benevolent triune God (1 John 4:8, 16) and Satan and his forces of evil (Eph 6:12; Rev 12:7–12). The reality of this conflict and the existence of evil raises the question of _____—the vindication of divine goodness and love in view of the existence of evil. Systematic theologian, John C. Peckham describes a biblical approach to theodicy in view of this great controversy.

“This theodicy of love begins with the premise that love must be freely given and freely received. A genuine love relationship between God and creatures is possible only if God consistently grants creatures the freedom to will otherwise than God desires, which entails epistemic and consequential freedom. Accordingly, a genuine love relationship requires the possibility that creatures might reject God’s ideal will and, consequently, the possibility of evil. “Whereas God’s (ideal) desires are sometimes unfulfilled because creatures sometimes exercise their consequential freedom otherwise than God desires, God remains sovereign and omnipotent and will finally accomplish his overarching purpose (his remedial will), the certainty of which is established via (complex) divine foreknowledge, without compromising creaturely freedom. Meanwhile, evil occurs because creatures have willed otherwise than God ideally desires. “However, there appear to be evils that God could prevent without undermining the kind of free will necessary for love. Accordingly, this theodicy of love goes beyond two-dimensional conceptions of providence, which account only for the agency of God and earthly creatures. It does so by espousing a three-dimensional conception, which also accounts for the agency of celestial beings such as angels and demons. A cosmic conflict wherein the devil and his minions oppose God’s moral government of love is robustly supported in both Scripture and the Christian tradition. Whereas neither the devil nor any other creatures could oppose the omnipotent God at the level of sheer power, **this cosmic conflict is primarily of an epistemic nature, revolving around the devil’s slanderous allegations that God is not fully good, just, and loving. Such an epistemic conflict cannot be settled by sheer power but requires a cosmic demonstration.** “Within the conflict, Satan and his cohorts are temporarily granted significant jurisdiction over the earth, limited according to jointly negotiated and thus covenantal rules of engagement, which correspondingly limit (morally) the exercise of God’s power to eliminate or mitigate the evils

that (temporarily) fall with the enemy’s jurisdiction. Whereas God maintains the sheer power to prevent all evils and ideally desires that no evil occur, there are some evils that God cannot (morally) prevent because of his commitment to the flourishing of love and the covenantal rules of engagement. This model provides a framework for understanding why God sometimes does not prevent horrendous evils, while upholding divine omnipotence, omniscience, and a robust conception of God’s providence. Whereas God does everything he (morally) can to prevent or eliminate evil, in some cases doing so would contravene the covenantal rules of engagement, subvert the creaturely free will necessary for love, or otherwise result in greater evil or less flourishing of love.

“Although creatures suffer immensely because of evil, the voluntarily suffering God of the cross suffers most of all, providing the conclusive demonstration of his utter love and justice by Christ’s subjection of himself to death on a cross. In so doing, God demonstrates that he considers *this* world to be worth the cost to himself. While this God suffers, he nevertheless maintains the power to eliminate evil once and for all, ushering in an eternity of pure bliss. This theodicy thus posits love—within the context and constraints of a cosmic conflict—as the morally sufficient reason for God to permit evil in this world.”¹

In this cosmic war and demonstration of character, Satan maliciously challenged the heavenly government of love, placing God and his character on trial in the universe. Satan claims that God is unloving, an oppressive tyrant with an unjustly restrictive law.

Therefore, in this trial of the cosmic courtroom, Satan is the _____, God is the _____, and the universe is the _____. We, who believe in and have experienced the loving character of God are the _____.

What is a witness? _____

“A witness is a person who can give a first-hand account of something.”²

“A witness is ‘one who can testify to the facts bearing on any specific question, because he has observed directly; also the attestation of the fact or facts involved.’”³

We are called to the judgment bar in the cosmic courtroom to bare testimony to the true nature of the character of God and the governing principles of his law.

God’s character is love!

“⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love**. ... ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 John 4:8, 16 ESV; emphasis added).

¹ John C. Peckham, *Theodicy of Love: Cosmic Conflict and the Problem of Evil* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 139–140; italics original; emphasis added. For a full discussion of this theodicy of love and the cosmic conflict, see the rest of the book.

² Carlos G. Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning 1: Basic Strategies* (N.p.: 2007), 19.

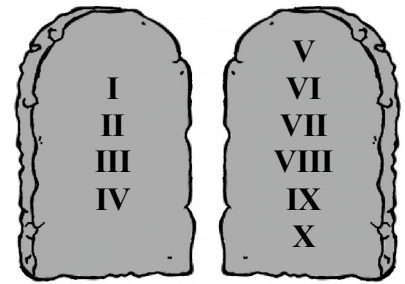
³ Idem, *Turning the World Upside Down* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000), 8.

God's character of love is a beautifully integrated and perfect blend of (1) grace and mercy and (2) justice and fairness.

“⁶ The LORD passed before him [Moses] and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.’ ⁸ And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped” (Exod 34:6–8 ESV).

God’s law is a transcript of his character of love! The first four commandments of the Decalogue address our vertical relationship of love with God and the last six address our horizontal relationships of love with one another.

“³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ ³⁷ And he said to him, ‘You shall **love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall **love** your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets’” (Matt 22:34–40 ESV; emphasis added).



“¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (Rom 7:12 ESV).

“All things in nature testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy. His prohibitions and injunctions are not intended merely to display His authority, but in all that He does He has the well-being of His children in view. He does not require them to give up anything that it would be for their best interest to retain.”⁴

B. WHAT IS WITNESSING?

Witnessing: A believer sharing with unbelievers his or her personal experience of the love of God as demonstrated in the person of Jesus Christ.

This definition entails that, if we are going to witness, we must have a genuine firsthand experience of God’s character and law of love, as did the apostles of the early Christian church.

“¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen with our eyes**, which we **looked upon** and have **touched with our hands**, concerning the word of life—
² the life was made manifest, and we have **seen** it, and **testify** to it and **proclaim** to you the

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1890), 600.

eternal life, which was with the Father and was made **manifest** to us—³ that which we have **seen** and **heard** we **proclaim** also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:1–3 ESV; emphasis added).

“No man has any right to recommend to others what he has not himself tasted and tested. Some people need something to tell more than they need power to tell it. Too often we preach of things in which we have no personal experience. I earnestly ask: What have you to tell that makes you so eager for God to give you power to tell it?”⁵

“_____ is a natural result of our _____ and _____ to Jesus.”⁶

“Everyone who is saved is called to testify to the fact of his salvation.”⁷

Lifestyle Evangelism: “The process through which the everyday words and deeds of a maturing Christian draw others to Christ.”⁸

“From a Christian perspective...witnessing is more than what we say at certain inspired moments. Witnessing involves all that we **are** and **do**. We cannot avoid witnessing. However, we may do it in such a way that the Holy Spirit may use it for His purposes, or we may do it so poorly that those who observe us get a distorted understanding of what Christianity is all about.”⁹

“It is not by preaching the truth, not only by distributing literature, that we are to witness for God. Let us remember that a Christlike life is **the most powerful argument** that can be advanced in favor of Christianity.”¹⁰

C. WHAT IS A PERSONAL TESTIMONY?

In the legal context of the judicial system, a testimony is a statement by a person who is brought into a courtroom and placed under oath to tell, attest to, or give witness to his or her personal, firsthand knowledge and/or experience as an eyewitness with reference to the case that is being heard.

In the religious context of personal evangelism and witnessing, a personal testimony is an account that relates to others one’s personal, firsthand knowledge and experience with Jesus Christ and his saving and transforming power.

⁵ LeRoy E. Froom, *The Coming of the Comforter*, rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1956), 104–105.

⁶ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 20.

⁷ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, 2017), 212.

⁸ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 67.

⁹ Idem, *Turning the World Upside Down*, 9; emphasis added.

¹⁰ Idem, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 67; emphasis added.

D. WITNESSING IN A POST/METAMODERN, MULTICULTURAL AGE

Western society is presently being influenced by two primary philosophical streams: (1) postmodernism and (2) metamodernism.

Postmodernism: a broad-based philosophical movement that arose in the late twentieth century in reaction against the modernism—the objective, foundationalist, and positivistic ideologies of the Enlightenment that began in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It expresses an attitude of extreme skepticism characterized by deconstruction, irony, pastiche, eclecticism, relativism, and nihilism. It rejects the idea of “universal validity,” such as the attempt of grand meta-narratives to structure and organize all of life. It opposes binary oppositions, stable identity, hierarchy, and categorization. It disputes the possibility of epistemic certainty, moral and ethical absolutism, and access to an unmediated reality through observation and experience (i.e., empiricism) or objective knowledge through reason (i.e., rationalism). It asserts there is no absolute, universal, objective truth, alternatively affirming relativism and pluralism. As such, it understands all experience of reality to be interpretation that is self-referential, biased, and historically, culturally, and socially conditioned.

Metamodernism: developments in contemporary culture that wish to move beyond both the naivety of modernism and the abysmal skepticism of postmodernism by oscillating between them (hence the prefix, “meta-”). It is spurred forward by a desire for change and progress and a yearning for meaning, resulting from the myriad of recent crises—such as climate change, financial meltdown, systemic injustice, the global pandemic of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), and escalation of global conflicts. Over against postmodernism, it is a resurgence of sincerity, hope and optimism, romanticism, affect, and the potential for grand meta-narratives and universal truths, whilst not forfeiting all the critiques that postmodernism raised against modernism. It is a kind of informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism, and a moderate fanaticism that moves between sincerity and irony, deconstruction and construction, apathy and affect, and attempting to attain some sort of transcendent position, as if such a thing were possible.¹¹

In our post/metamodern, multicultural age, people find stories, especially personal stories, very compelling. While there may be resistance to overarching meta-narratives from adherents of postmodernism, personal narratives are usually always welcomed by everyone.

¹¹ Luke Turner, “Metamodernism: A Brief Introduction,” *Notes on Metamodernism*, January 12, 2015, <http://www.metamodernism.com/2015/01/12/metamodernism-a-brief-introduction/>.

Therefore, the _____ “may be the most powerful tool available to the willing witness.”¹²

“⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. ¹¹ **And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony**, for they loved not their lives even unto death. ¹² Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!’” (Rev 12:7–12 ESV; emphasis added).

“There is **nothing** as influential to convert others than our own testimony of what God has done for us.”¹³

“As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. ... We can tell how we have tested His promise, and found the promise true. We can bear witness to what we have known of the grace of Christ. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing.”¹⁴

People may argue against and disagree with what we teach theologically, but they cannot *ethically* argue against or disagree with your own personal *lived* experience.

“Stories have a way of breaking down barriers. People usually turn off their critical-thinking skills and drop their guards when listening to a story.”¹⁵

“Strive to arouse men and women from their spiritual insensibility. Tell them how you found Jesus and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream.”¹⁶

Notice these biblical examples of converted individuals going out and sharing their testimonies.

¹²Will McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 235.

¹³Gary Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), 61; emphasis added.

¹⁴White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 340.

¹⁵McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 235.

¹⁶White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 9:38.

- **The Demoniac**

“¹⁸ As he [Jesus] was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹ And he did not permit him but said to him, ‘Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.’ ²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled” (Mark 5:18–20 ESV).

- **The Woman of Samaria**

“²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ ‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’ ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him [Jesus]. ... ³⁹ **Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony**, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world’” (John 4:28–30, 39–42 ESV).

Our personal testimonies give people _____ that we are qualified to share Christ. They are like our _____ that prepare and qualify us to do personal evangelism. Your person testimony should be one of the first spiritual things that you share with someone when witnessing to them.

E. TWO KINDS OF PERSONAL TESTIMONIES

1. _____ **Testimonies:** These testimonies focus on how Jesus is impacting your life in relation to typical human needs, problems, and issues, especially those in the present.

2. _____ **Testimonies:** These testimonies focus on how you came to know Jesus and trust in him.

F. SHARING YOUR SALVATION TESTIMONY

Salvation testimonies are composed of three major parts and a close.

“[E]veryone may be able, through his own experience, to ... bear witness to that which he himself has seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ. He can testify: ‘I needed help, and I found it in Jesus. Every want was supplied, the hunger of my soul was satisfied; the Bible is to me the revelation of Christ. I believe in Jesus because He is to me a divine Saviour. I believe the

Bible because I have found it to be the voice of God to my soul.”¹⁷

1. _____: Your life BEFORE accepting Christ

“I needed help ...”¹⁸

“Write what your life was like before you came to know Christ.”¹⁹

“This part of the testimony seeks to give the listener something to identify with. If the listeners see similarities between their own experience and that of the witness, they will be more likely to accept the solutions the believer has found.”²⁰

Share _____ symptoms that distressed you before you accepted Jesus as your Savior (e.g., fear, anxieties, uncertainties, confusion, emptiness, unhappiness, hopelessness, enslavement to sin, addition, anger/embitterment, etc.). When possible share aspects of your life experience that are similar to those of the person with which you are sharing.

2. _____: Your acceptance of Christ

“... and I found it in Jesus.”²¹

“Write how you came to know were lost and how you came to see Jesus as the Forgiver and Leader of your life.”²²

Share _____ things that brought you to the point of faith in Jesus.

“Never give a long list of sacrifices you had to make since you became a Christian or the things you had to give up or the hardships you had to face. Instead, emphasis the positive benefits of being a Christian.”²³

3. _____: Your life AFTER having accepted Christ

“Every want was supplied, the hunger of my soul was satisfied; and the Bible is to me the revelation of Christ. I believe in Jesus because He is to me a divine Saviour.”²⁴

“Write out the major one or two positive differences/changes Christ is making in your life.”²⁵

“Tell them how you found Jesus, and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn precious lessons from His Word. Tell them of the gladness and joy there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let

¹⁷ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:321.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 236.

²⁰ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 109.

²¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:321.

²² McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 236.

²³ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 1:111.

²⁴ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:321.

²⁵ McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 236.

your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream.”²⁶

“An emphasis on the warmth and friendliness the believer has found in the church usually strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of lonely people.”²⁷

Share the _____ positive benefits of being in a relationship with Christ. Tell what he has done for you since your conversion experience.

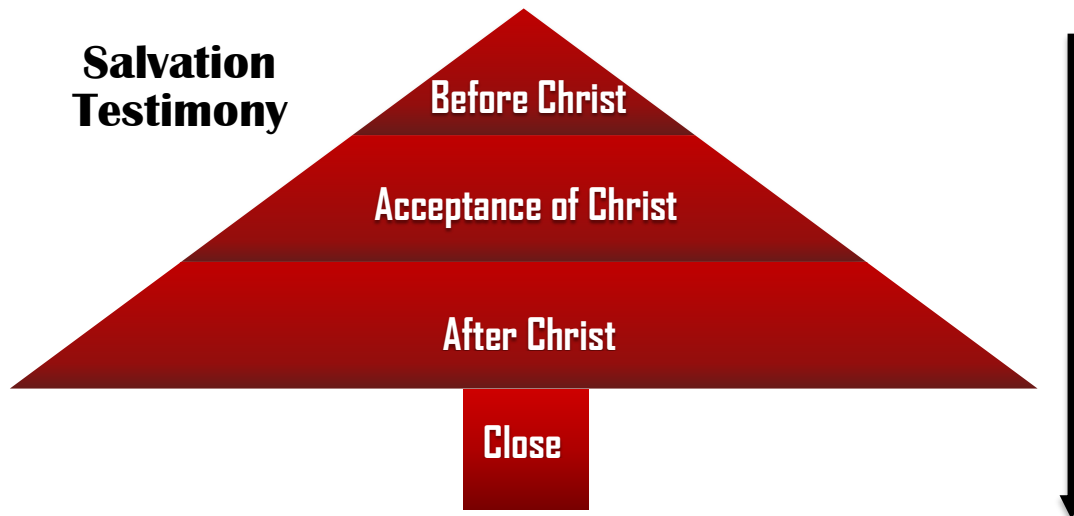
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| • Genuine friendships | • Joy | • Fellowship with God’s people |
| • Forgiveness and pardon from sin | • God’s reassuring presence in difficult times | • Fulfillment |
| • Release from guilt and shame | • Health | • Empowerment of the Holy Spirit |
| • Hope of eternal life | • Love | • Purpose |
| | • Peace | |
| | • Deliverance from fear | |
| | • New life perspective | |

4. The Close

“Close in such a way as to lead the person to Christ, not away from Him if they do not receive Christ in that setting.”²⁸

Use an appropriate _____ that ties your testimony together.

“Try to develop your testimony around one major theme with supporting information.”²⁹



²⁶ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:38.

²⁷ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 109.

²⁸ McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 237.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 236.

G. “THOU SHALT NOT’S” OF SHARING SALVATION TESTIMONIES

1. **Thou shalt not** use religious clichés or _____.

“Write in understandable language, removing religious terms that would not be understood.”³⁰

Examples to avoid:

- “Since I came into the message of present truth ...”
- “When I learned the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath ...”
- “Since I joined the remnant church ...”

2. **Thou shalt not** _____ by telling the minute details of how sinful you used to be.

“There are Christians who think and speak altogether **too much** about the power of Satan. They think of their adversary, they pray about him, they talk about him, and he looms up greater and greater in their imagination. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Savior, who cast out the evil one from heaven. Satan is pleased when we magnify his power. **Why not talk of Jesus? Why not magnify His power and His love?**”³¹

“Beware of the danger of dwelling too much on the first part” of your testimony.”³²

3. **Thou shalt not** speak _____ of other religions or denominations.

“Don’t be negative about other religions or in any matter if possible.”³³

4. **Thou shalt not** _____ details or worry that your testimony is not exciting enough to share.

5. **Thou shalt not** use too many _____ (one to three are probably in order).

6. **Thou shalt not** feel that you have to share _____ of your testimony at once if the situation warrants a delay.

7. **Thou shalt not** _____ your testimony.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 493; emphasis added.

³² Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 109.

³³ McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 236.

H. “THOU SHALT’S” OF SHARING SALVATION TESTIMONIES

1. **Thou shalt** keep your testimony focused on _____ and the plan of salvation.

“³² ‘And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself’” (John 12:32 ESV).

“Keep your testimony on point without too many details that distract people from seeing Christ.”³⁴

Use phrases like the following:

- “Since I accepted Christ ...”
- “After I accepted Jesus as my Saviour ...”
- “Jesus has given me ...”

2. **Thou shalt** keep it _____.

“The testimony should be prepared to be shared in about three minutes if shared without dialogue.”³⁵

3. **Thou shalt** _____ in any way with the people with whom you are sharing.

“Focus on how your story connects with the lost person, not just on telling your story.”³⁶

4. **Thou shalt** write and practice your testimony with Christian friends until it becomes natural. Listen to their _____ and make needed _____.

5. **Thou shalt** learn to share your testimony from any _____.

- front, middle, back
- middle, back, front
- back, front, middle

6. **Thou shalt** learn to ask people _____ about themselves. This will usually lead the unbelieving person to ask you about yourself in order that you may have an opportunity to share your testimony.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 237.

I. CONCLUSION

“Remember that not everyone will be receptive to your presentation, no matter how well prepared or appealing it may be. God has given every human being the power of choice, and we should respect it. Remember that not even Jesus was able to win every soul to whom He appealed.”³⁷

“Remember that soul-winning work is God’s work. This being true, feelings of personal failure or success should not have a place in it.”³⁸

“Workers for Christ are **never** to think, much less to speak, of *failure* in their work.”³⁹

EXAMPLE: THE APOSTLE PAUL’S TESTIMONY

Observe how the apostle Paul gave his personal salvation story when he was put on trial in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3–21). For reference, Paul’s conversion story can be found in Acts 9:1–19. Also, you can read a shorter telling of Paul’s salvation testimony in Acts 26:12–18.

1. Before Christ

“³ I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, ⁵ as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear me witness. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished” (Acts 22:3–5 ESV).

2. Acceptance of Christ

“⁶ ‘As I was on my way and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone around me. ⁷ And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ ⁸ And I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ ⁹ Now those who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ And I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Rise, and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do.’ ¹¹ And since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus” (Acts 22:6–11 ESV).

³⁷ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 114.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 19; emphasis added.

*Much of the material in this session was compiled from Gary Gibbs' book, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), and Will McRaney, Jr.'s book, *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), which are excellent resources for any soul-winner. The former may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com. Both may be purchased online at www.amazon.com.

~SESSION IV~

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“¹⁴ ‘And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come’” (Matt 24:14 ESV).

“⁴³ But he [Jesus] said to them, ‘I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the ... towns ... for I was sent for this purpose’” (Luke 4:43 ESV).

A. THE MOST IMPORTANT CONVERSATION YOU WILL EVER HAVE!

“Presenting the gospel is the _____ thing we do.”¹

The apostle Paul exclaimed, “¹⁶ ... Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16 ESV).

In fact, gospel proclamation that reaches all people groups (from ἔθνος [*ethnos*], meaning “a body of persons united by kinship, culture, and common traditions”²) around the world is the only end-time “sign” given by Jesus that indicates that the actual end of all things has arrived.

“¹⁴ ‘And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come’” (Matt 24:14 ESV).

If we desire to “hasten” the coming of our Lord, then we need to concentrate on communicating the gospel to all!

Jesus understood that his own purpose for coming into the world at the time of his incarnation was to “preach” the gospel or “the good news of the kingdom of God.”

“⁴³ But he [Jesus] said to them, ‘I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the ... towns ... for I was sent for this purpose’” (Luke 4:43 ESV).

“²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people” (Matt 4:23 ESV; cf. 9:35; Luke 8:1).

¹ Gary Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), 56.

² “ἔθνος,” BDAG, 276.

The everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ is the most important message that you can share with someone! Moreover, nothing else matters until one has embraced the good news of Jesus.

“Every student should either make a favorable decision for Christ or reaffirm their commitment to Him **before** you introduce testing truths. ... What difference does it make if you help someone become a Sabbath-keeping, tithe-paying vegetarian if they have not surrendered to Jesus?”³

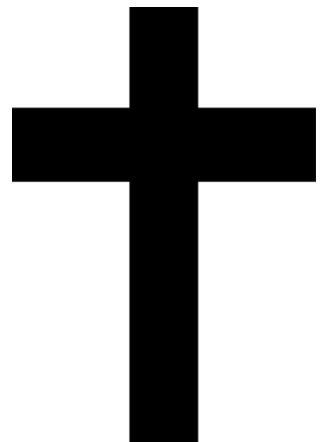
“The decision for Christ should be gained **before** taking up what we speak of as ‘testing truths,’ such as the Sabbath, the state of the dead, Christian standards, and other matters that may affect the person’s lifestyle.”⁴

B. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The term “gospel” comes from the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον (*euangelion*), which simply means “good news.” The gospel is God’s message of “good news” for humanity.

What is the content of the gospel? The apostle Paul stated the content explicitly in his letter to the Christians in ancient Corinth.

“¹ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the **gospel** I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,** ⁴ **that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,** ⁵ **and that he appeared ...**” (1 Cor 15:1–5 ESV; emphasis added).



In a nutshell, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in his fullness constitutes the whole of “good news” from God for humanity. More specifically, Jesus’s (1) death, (2) burial, (3) resurrection, (4) and appearances are crucial moments in his life that resulted in the provision for the salvation of humanity from sin.

“¹¹ For I would have you know, brothers, that the **gospel** that was preached by me is not man’s gospel. ¹² For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ... ¹⁵ But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, ¹⁶ was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach **him** among the Gentiles” (Gal 1:11–12, 15–16 ESV; emphasis added; cf. 2 Cor 4:4).

Furthermore, the gospel is the “good news of the kingdom of God” (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 10:7; 24:14; Mark 1:14–15; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 16:16; Acts 8:12; 20:25; 28:30–31), meaning

³ Ibid.; emphasis added.

⁴ Carlos G. Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning 1: Basic Strategies* (N.p.: 2007), 117; emphasis added.

that the gospel message includes (1) the inbreaking of the kingdom of God in the past via the powerful, incarnate ministry of Jesus; (2) the inauguration of the kingdom of God and his reign in the present (i.e., “already,” in the “here and now”) via the post-resurrection enthronement of Jesus as the high priest-king and covenantal head of humanity, especially the church; and (3) the actualization of the heavenly kingdom of God in the eschaton (i.e., “not yet,” in the “then and there”) via the glorious second advent of Jesus.

The gospel is wholly and only the good news about Jesus!

C. WHAT IS A GOSPEL PRESENTATION?

Gospel Presentation: “A gospel presentation is a presentation of the basics of the good news of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, His kingdom come/coming, His death, burial, and resurrection, and the free forgiveness of sins for those who repent and trust in the person of Jesus Christ.”⁵

D. GIVING A GOSPEL PRESENTATION

“A Christian witness should always be ready to identify an opportunity to present the gospel. Sometimes the opportunity appears in unusual places and circumstances.”⁶

“The gospel is to be presented not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power. ... He is not content merely to announce these blessings; He presents them in the most attractive way to excite a desire to possess them.”⁷

In order for your gospel presentation to produce the desired fruit, the following four factors must be in place.

1. “The extent to which you have won the confidence of the individual” with which you are studying.⁸
2. “The amount of his [or her] knowledge and understanding of the plan of salvation.”⁹
3. “The degree of his [or her] desire for what Christ has to offer.”¹⁰
4. “The measure of his [or her] willingness to yield to the Holy Spirit.”¹¹

⁵ “Gospel Presentations,” *Theopedia*, http://www.theopedia.com/Gospel_presentations

⁶ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 115.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 826.

⁸ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 117.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

To launch into a gospel presentation, you should begin with a _____.
The following are a variety of different options you could use as a model.

- “In your opinion, how does one become a Christian?”
- “Would you be ready to meet Jesus if He should return now?”
- “Do you have the assurance of eternal life if you were to suddenly die tonight?”
- “If you were to go up to the pearly white gates of heaven, and before you enter, an angel stops you and says, ‘_____ (insert name), we are so happy that you are here. We have been looking forward to your entrance into heaven for a long time. But before we let you in, we need you to answer a question. Why should God let you enter?’ how would you answer the angel’s question?”

If the individual does not understand and/or has not experienced the gospel of Jesus (which can be determined by how he or she answered the question), then give him or her a _____.

Here are five examples of different creative types of gospel presentations you could make. Each of these will appeal to different kinds of people and types of learning styles.

E. EXAMPLE 1: AROUND THE BASES

“Around the Bases”¹² is a gospel presentation that will appeal to your Bible study contacts who appreciate team sports.

1st Base

God has good plans for us and desires to have a close relationship with us.

2nd Base

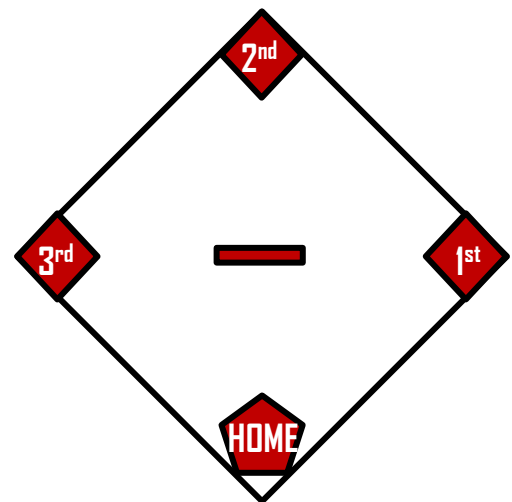
Sin has separated us from God breaking the our relationship with Him.

3rd Base

Christ died on the cross to pay for our wrongdoing and to bring us back into relationship with God.

Home Plate

If we want to get to our heavenly home and partake of God’s good plans for us, we must receive Christ.



¹² Ibid., 238.

F. EXAMPLE 2: THE GOSPEL KEYCHAIN

The “Gospel Keychain”¹³ is a unique gospel presentation that will appeal more to “crafty” kinesthetic learners. The keychain can be placed on a key ring and serve as a reminder of the day he or she accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Supplies Needed

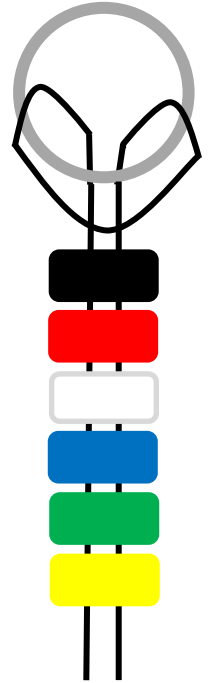
- Short piece of string leather
- Key ring
- Six colored beads (1 black, 1 red, 1 white, 1 blue, 1 green, 1 yellow)

Instructions

1. Knot the piece of string leather around the key ring as shown.
2. Push both ends of the string leather through the colored beads in the following order: black, red, white, blue, green, and yellow.
3. As you string each colored bead, explain the significance of its color as indicated below.

Meaning

- Knot: Beginning of our lives
- Black: Sin has separated us from God
- Red: Jesus died to pay for our sins
- White: Jesus gives us his robe of righteousness making us white as snow
- Blue: Baptism shows the world our death to self and surrender to Christ
- Green: As we grow in Christ, the Holy Spirit transforms us into his likeness
- Yellow: We will soon receive our crowns of glory and eternal life in heaven



G. EXAMPLE 3: THE BRIDGE DIAGRAM

The “Bridge Diagram” is a simple and common graphical tool used to illustrate and present the gospel in a clear and concise manner. The developing picture is helpful for learners who are more visually oriented.

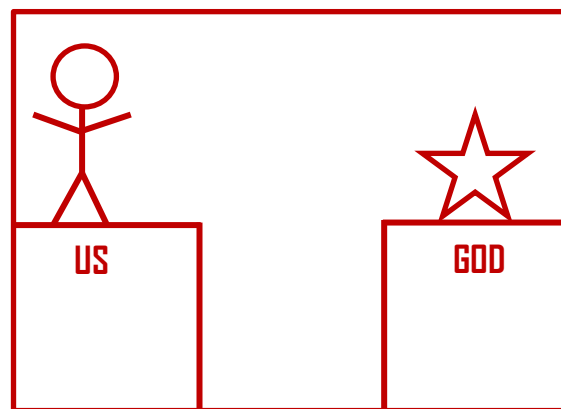
1. Begin by explaining what you will be doing and give an introduction to the gospel:

I would like to share with you something called the gospel. The word “gospel” literally meant “good news” in Greek and was what Jesus focused on when he taught and preached.

¹³ Adapted from the “powerband bracelets” gospel presentation of Will McRaney, Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 239.

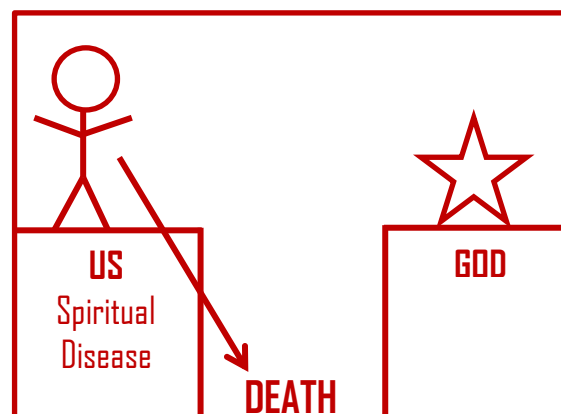
2. Begin drawing the bridge diagram:

The gospel or good news, however, begins with some bad news. The left side of this picture represents all human beings, including you and me. The right side with the star represents God. God is “holy,” which means that he is “pure.”



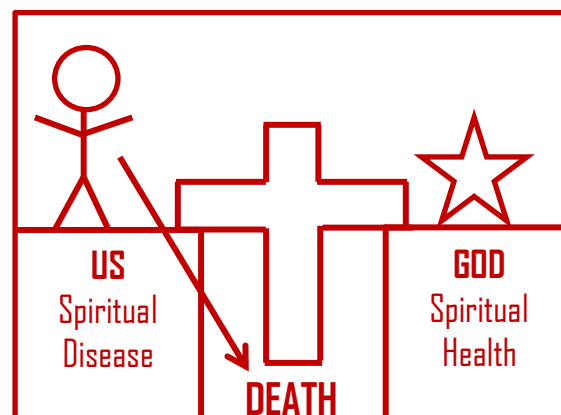
3. Talk about the spiritual disease of sin:

But we have been separated from God (point to chasm) because we have a spiritual disease. That spiritual disease is called “sin.” This spiritual disease leads us to act, speak, and think in ways that are contrary to God’s purity. For instance, we may lie, covet, gossip, belittle others (or substitute own list). This spiritual disease is 100% fatal; it inevitably leads to spiritual death and finally.



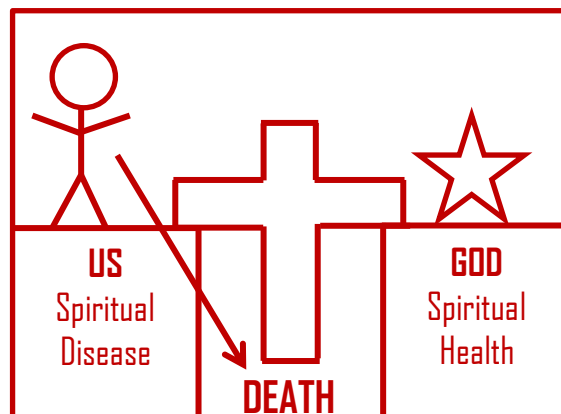
4. Talk about God’s solution:

But God has a problem too because He still loves us and wants a relationship with us. God had to find a way to bridge this gap. He sent His Son, Jesus, to come to this earth and live a life without sin. He died on the cross and was buried to pay for all the wrong things we have done. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. He conquered death once and for all and made it possible for us to receive spiritual health instead of disease and abundant, eternal life instead of death.



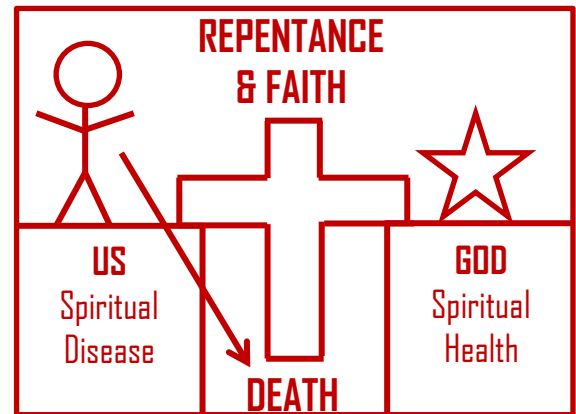
5. Explain the promise of abundant life:

Through Jesus and the cross, we now have access to God and the promise of spiritual health. The signs of spiritual health are things like love, joy, peace, the certainty of eternal life with God, a relationship with God, and power.



6. Talk about repentance and faith:

To accept this spiritual health and cross over from death to life, we must repent and have faith. Repentance means a “change of heart.” a change of heart in recognizing our spiritual disease, a change of heart in recognizing Jesus’ ability to take that away, a change of heart in receiving spiritual health and abundant life by faith, and a change of heart in claiming Jesus as the leader of your life.



7. Ask the diagnostic question:

If you had to place yourself in this diagram, where do you think you would place yourself?

a. If the person places him/herself on the left side:

Is there anything that would prevent you from repenting today and crossing over to receive spiritual health and abundant life?

If YES, address obstacles.

If NO, invite them to cross over the bridge today with prayer.

b. If the person places him/herself on the right side:

Great! Can you share with me when and how you made that decision to cross over the Bridge?

c. If the person places him/herself on the cross or is unsure:

May I suggest the following: (Draw figure on the left side of the cross with an arrow moving to the right) Are you over here but moving towards the right side?

If YES, go to **a** and re-word as “completely crossing over.”

If NO, ask for clarification.

8. The prayer:

In the prayer, invite the person to repeat after you line by line. A suggested prayer:

Jesus, I know that I have a spiritual disease. I believe that you came and died to cure me of this disease. I know that you rose again to conquer death. I receive your spiritual health and abundant life today. I choose to follow you as my leader from now on. Amen.

H. EXAMPLE 4: THE FOUR SPIRITUAL LAWS

“The Four Spiritual Laws”¹⁴ gospel presentation was developed by the late evangelical evangelist, Bill Bright, and is a variation of the “Bridge Diagram.” You can order hardcopy booklets of it from online from CRU, Bright’s ongoing parachurch ministry that was formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ.

Have you heard of the 4 spiritual laws?

Just as there are physical laws that govern the physical universe, so there are spiritual laws that govern your relationship with God.

LAW 1: God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.

- **God’s Love**

“¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16 ESV).

- **God’s Plan**

“¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10 ESV).

Why is it that most people are not experiencing that abundant life? Because ...

LAW 2: Man is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God’s love and plan for his life.

- **Man Is Sinful**

“²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23 ESV).

Man was created to have fellowship with God; but, because of his own stubborn self-will, he chose to go his own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is an evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

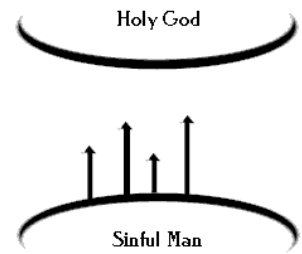
- **Man Is Separated**

“²³ For the wages of sin is death [spiritual separation from God]” (Rom 6:23 ESV).

“² [B]ut your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God” (Isa 59:2 ESV).

¹⁴ Bill Bright, *Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?* (N.p.: Bright Media Foundation, 2003), https://crustore.org/media/wysiwyg/pdf/Four_Spiritual_Laws_English_.pdf.

This diagram illustrates that God is holy and man is sinful. A great gulf separates the two. The arrows illustrate that man is continually trying to reach God and the abundant life through his own efforts, such as a good life, philosophy, or religion-but he inevitably fails.



The third law explains the only way to bridge this gulf ...

LAW 3: Jesus Christ is God's only provision for human sin. Through him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.

- **He Died in Our Place**

“⁸ [B]ut God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8 ESV).

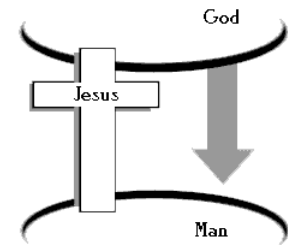
- **He Rose from the Dead**

“³ ... Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ ... he was buried, ... he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and ... he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred ...” (1 Cor 15:3–6 ESV).

- **He Is the Only Way to God**

“⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”” (John 14:6 ESV).

This diagram illustrates that God has bridged the gulf that separates us from him by sending his Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.



It is not enough just to know these three laws ...

LAW 4: We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

- **We Must Receive Christ**

“¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12 ESV).

- **We Receive Christ through Faith**

“⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8–9 ESV).

- **When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth**

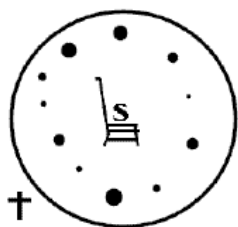
Read John 3:1–8.

- **We Receive Christ Through Personal Invitation**

“²⁰ ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me’” (Rev 3:20 ESV).

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (i.e., repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive our sins and to make us what he wants us to be (i.e., faith). Just to agree **intellectually** that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an **emotional** experience. We receive Jesus Christ by **faith**, as an act of the **will**.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives:

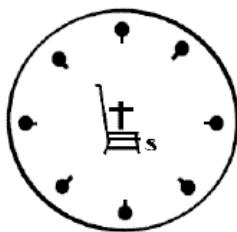


Self-directed Life

S: Self is on the throne

†: Christ is outside the life

●: Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration



Christ-directed Life

†: Christ is in the life and on the throne

S: Self is yielding to Christ, resulting in harmony with God's plan

●: Interests are directed by Christ, resulting in harmony with God's plan

Which circle best represents your life?

Which circle would you like to have represent your life?

The following explains how you can receive Christ:

You Can Receive Christ Right Now by Faith through Prayer

(Prayer is talking with God)

God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart.

The following is a suggested prayer:

Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If it does, I invite you to pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as he promised.

How to Know that Christ Is in Your Life

Did you receive Christ into your life? According to his promise in Rev 3:20, where is Christ right now in relation to you? Christ said he would come into your life. Would he mislead you? On what authority do you know God has answered your prayer? (The trustworthiness of God himself and his word.)

The Bible Promises Eternal Life to All Who Receive Christ

“¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may **know** that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:11–13 ESV; emphasis added).

Thank God often that Christ is in your life and that he will never leave you (Heb 13:5). You can know on the basis of his promise that Christ lives in you and that you have eternal life from the very moment you invite him in. He will not deceive you.

An important reminder ...

Do Not Depend on Feelings

The promise of God’s word, the Bible—not our feelings—is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God himself and his word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship among **fact** (God and his word), **faith** (our trust in God and his word), and **feeling** (the result of our faith and obedience). (Read John 14:21.) The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, as Christians we do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trust worthiness of God and the promises of his word.



Now that You Have Received Christ

The moment you received Christ by faith, as an act of the will, many things happened, including the following:

- Christ came into your life (Rev 3:20; Col 1:27).
- Your sins were forgiven (Col 1:14).
- You became a child of God (John 1:12).
- You received eternal life (John 5:24).
- You began the great adventure for which God created you (John 10:10; 2 Cor 5:17; 1 Thess 5:18).

Can you think of anything more wonderful that could happen to you than receiving Christ? Would you like to thank God in prayer right now for what he has done for you? By thanking God, you demonstrate your faith.

To enjoy your new life to the fullest ...

Suggestions for Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth results from trusting Jesus Christ. “The righteous shall live by faith” (Gal 3:11 ESV). A life of faith will enable you to trust God increasingly with every detail of your life, and to practice the following:

Go to God in prayer daily (John 15:7).

Read God’s word daily (Acts 17:11); begin with the Gospel of John.

Obey God moment by moment (John 14:21).

Witness for Christ by your life and words (Matt 4:19; John 15:8).

Trust God for every detail of your life (1 Pet 5:7).

Holy Spirit—allow him to control and empower your daily life and witness (Gal 5:16–17; Acts 1:8).

Fellowship in a Good Church

God’s word instructs us not to forsake “the assembling of ourselves together” (Heb 10:25 NKJV). Several logs burn brightly together but put one aside on the cold hearth and the fire goes out. So, it is with your relationship with other Christians. If you do not belong to a church, do not wait to be invited. Take the initiative; call the pastor of a nearby church where Christ is honored, and his word is preached. Start this week and make plans to attend regularly.

I. EXAMPLE 5: THE ROMAN ROAD

Roman Road: The Highway to a Relationship with God

The “Roman Road”¹⁵ is not only a systematic way to build highways inherited from the Roman Empire in the first century. It is also God’s plan of salvation set forth in Paul’s letter to the Romans. Also known as the “Roman Road,” the following is a collection of passages that build a beautiful and systematic approach to the gospel of grace by and through Jesus Christ.

Rom 1:20–21

We must acknowledge God as the Creator of everything and accept our humble position in God’s creation.

¹⁵ “Roman Road,” *All About God*, <https://www.allaboutgod.com/roman-road>.

Rom 3:23

We must all realize that we are sinners and that we need forgiveness. We are not worthy of God's grace.

Rom 5:8

Through Jesus, God gave us a way to be saved from our sins. God showed us his love by giving us the potential for life through the death of his Son, Jesus Christ.

Rom 6:23

If we remain sinners, we will die. However, if we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior and repent of our sins, we will have eternal life.

Rom 10:9–10

Just confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead and you will be saved!

Rom 10:13

There are no religious formulas or rituals. Call upon the name of the Lord and you will be saved!

Rom 11:36

Determine in your heart to make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life today.

Roman Road: Are You Ready to Accept God's Gift of Salvation?

If you truly believe the message of the "Roman Road" and want to accept God's gift of salvation right now, it is a matter of repenting of your sins and turning the rest of your life over to Jesus Christ. Again, this is not a ritual based on any specific words or prayers, but rather, a willful decision and a sincere step of faith.

"Father, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your Son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey you, and to do your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen."

If you decided to receive Jesus today, welcome to God's family. Now, as a way to grow closer to him, the Bible tells us to follow up on our new commitment.

- Get baptized as commanded by Christ.
- Tell someone else about your new faith in Christ.

- Spend time with God each day. It does not have to be a long period of time. Just develop the daily habit of praying to him and reading his word. Ask God to increase your faith and your understanding of the Bible.
- Seek fellowship with other followers of Jesus. Develop a group of believing friends to answer your questions and support you.
- Find a local church where you can worship God.

J. NO LIMITS!

You are not limited to these presentations alone. Use your imagination and creativity to develop an innovative gospel presentation of your own to cater to the situation of the individual with whom you are studying the Bible. The sky's the limit!

K. A CONFESSION OF FAITH

After making a gospel presentation, lead the person with which you are studying the Bible to make a confession of faith.

Confession of Faith: “A confession of faith is a statement of faith in Jesus” made in the presence of witnesses.¹⁶

While the variant text of Acts 8:37 is likely not original to Acts, because of its absence from most Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, it nevertheless helpfully exemplifies a confession of faith.

“³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?’ ³⁷ And Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he replied, **‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’** ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:36–38 ESV; emphasis added).

The Bible stressed the need of a confession to be connected to someone’s acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

“³² ‘Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven’” (Matt 10:32–33 NKJV).

¹⁶ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 102.

“¹⁰ ... at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:10–11 ESV).

Paul stated in Rom 10:8–13 that there are two conditions that must be met for one to receive salvation.

“⁸ But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.’ ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’” (Rom 10:8–13 ESV).

1. _____ with your mouth

2. _____ in your heart

It is for this reason that Seventh-day Adventists require baptismal candidates to make a profession or confession of faith before a local congregation, demonstrating that they believe in Jesus and have accepted his teachings. We refer to this as the

_____.

A confession of faith should be made in front of witnesses and express faith and/or a decision that has been made.

The name of Jesus should be used in a confession of faith.

“¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12–13 ESV).

“³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31 ESV).

“¹⁶ ‘And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all’” (Acts 3:16 ESV).

“¹² ‘And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved’” (Acts 4:12 ESV).

“¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11 ESV).

“¹³ For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’” (Rom 10:13 ESV).

“⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9–11 ESV).

Confessions of faith can only be made by the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

“³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says ‘Jesus is accursed!’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3 ESV).

Examples¹⁷

- “I love Jesus.”
- “Jesus is my Savior and Lord.”
- “I accept Jesus as my personal Savior and Lord.”
- “Jesus is the King of my heart.”
- “I surrender my life to Jesus.”
- “I give my heart to Jesus.”
- “I renew my commitment to Jesus.”
- “I have decided to follow Jesus.”
- “I want to spend eternity with Jesus.”

L. THE SINNER’S PRAYER

Each successful gospel presentation should end with a sinner’s prayer. The prayer should include the following elements.

1. Repentance: turning away from sin

- a. Conviction: acknowledgement of sin
- b. Contrition: abhorrent sorrow for sin
- c. Confession: admission of sin
- d. Commitment: abandonment of sin

2. Faith: turning toward Christ

- a. Petition: asking for forgiveness of sin on account of Christ’s atoning death
- b. Belief: acceptance of Jesus as both Savior and Lord
- c. Trust: assurance and confidence that he will save

3. Consecration: turning over all to Jesus in surrender

¹⁷ Ibid., 105.

PRACTICE 1

Write out your own confession of faith.

PRACTICE 2

Write out a sinner's prayer that incorporates all of the elements outlined above and through which you can guide someone who wants to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord.

PRACTICE 3

Use the space below to practice the “Bridge Diagram” gospel presentation with a friend.

*Much of the material in this session was compiled from Gary Gibbs’ book, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), and Will McRaney, Jr.’s book, *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), which are excellent resources for any soul-winner. The former may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com. Both may be purchased online at www.amazon.com.

~SESSION V~

CREATING 3-POINT BIBLE STUDIES

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matt 28:18–20 ESV).

A. WHAT IS EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP?

The term “evangelism” derives from the Greek noun, εὐαγγέλιον (*evangelion*), meaning “gospel” or “good news.” Therefore, in its most basic sense, evangelism is “the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ,” the fulfillment of the great commission.¹

“¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matt 28:18–20 ESV).

The goal of evangelism is to “make disciples” or _____. What is a disciple? The word in its original language, μαθητής (*mathētēs*), refers to an “apprentice,” “pupil,” or “adherent” of a teacher—in other words, “a follower of a master,” “an individual who follows the discipline taught by a teacher.”²

Disciple: A baptized individual who has accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and serves him in the fellowship of the church, utilizing his/her own spiritual gifts to make new disciples.

“A disciple is a person who has been born again, joined the church, identified his or her spiritual gifts, accepted a role in the church compatible with those gifts, and is committed to fulfilling that role *without continual external motivation*.”³

Because the goal of evangelism is to “make disciples,” Seventh-day Adventist evangelism involves more than just gospel proclamation. The great commission requires that evangelism should result in a baptized disciple who has been taught “to observe all

¹ Carlos G. Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning 1: Basic Strategies* (N.p.: 2007), 12.

² Ibid., 13.

³ James W. Zackrison, *Power to Witness* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1993), 23; emphasis original.

that I [Jesus] have commanded,” including using his or her own spiritual gifts to make new disciples (Matt 28:18–20 ESV). For this reason, Seventh-day Adventists take a more holistic and thorough approach to evangelism that sees evangelism and discipleship as a _____ rather than a historical _____.

“The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord’s side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, point the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the **requirements of the gospel** to bear upon the candidates for baptism.”⁴

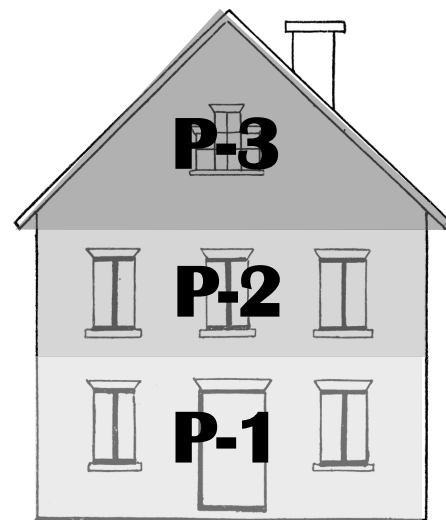
Therefore, a Seventh-day Adventist of evangelism could be understood in this way: the process of discipleship by which a person is persuaded by the power of the Holy Spirit through the presentation of biblical doctrines in the context of the everlasting gospel and the three angels’ messages to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, be baptized, serve him in the fellowship of the church, and utilize his/her own spiritual gifts to make new disciples.

B. THREE APPROACHES TO EVANGELISM

1. Presence Evangelism (P-1): “The Christian does evangelism by living the gospel before the lost.”⁵

2. Proclamation Evangelism (P-2): The Christian does evangelism by introducing the lost to the gospel through personal or public efforts.

3. Persuasion Evangelism (P-3): The Christian does evangelism by persuading or motivating the lost to become disciple of Jesus through the proclamation of the gospel and biblical doctrines.



P-1 is compared to an open door of a house that provides access to a person’s heart. P-2 is compared to windows of a house that allow the light to enter and illuminate the interior. P-3 is compared to the roof of a house which symbolizes its completion.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 6:95–96; emphasis added.

⁵ Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning*, 15.

Approach ⁶	House	Goal	Emphasis	Preferred by
Persuasion	Roof	People decide	Doctrines	Seventh-day Adventists
Proclamation	Windows	People hear	Gospel	Evangelical Protestants
Presence	Doors	People helped	Testimony	Other Christians

C. THE CYCLE OF EVANGELISM

Cycle of Evangelism: A holistic Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic approach in which a person is brought through a discipleship process, resulting in a disciple of Jesus Christ that in turn becomes a disciple-maker.

Love Quadrant (12:00–03:00) “is characterized by building relationships that lead to an interest in Christ, the church, and the teachings of the Bible.”⁷

Learn Quadrant (03:00–06:00) “is characterized by activities which lead to baptism and membership in the Body through an understanding of God's Word and His will.”⁸

“**Live Quadrant** (06:00–09:00) is characterized by activities which lead a disciple to greater spiritual maturity; practicing the spiritual disciplines, bearing the fruit of the Spirit, and exercising spiritual gifts.”⁹

“**Lead Quadrant** (09:00–12:00) is characterized by activities in which authentic disciples are now leading others into God's saving grace and reproducing new disciples.”¹⁰



⁶ Ibid., 17.

⁷ Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *2013 Evangelism Grant Application* (N.p., 2013), 2.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

D. WHY DO EVANGELISM?

We should get involved in evangelism because ...

1. Jesus lived and breathed evangelism. He is our _____, and, as such, we should live out his modeled lifestyle of evangelism.

2. God wants _____ to be saved (cf. Ezek 18:23, 32).

“³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires **all people** to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for **all**, which is the testimony given at the proper time” (1 Tim 2:3–6 ESV; emphasis added).

“⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that **any** should perish, but that **all** should reach repentance” (2 Pet 3:9 ESV; emphasis added).

3. All of _____ rejoices, when we lead someone to repentance and faith.

“¹⁰ ‘just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents’” (Luke 15:10 ESV).

4. Jesus _____ **all** of his disciples to do the work of evangelism and discipleship. Professed disciples of Christ who do not participate in evangelism are making false claims.

“¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matt 28:18–20 ESV).

5. Those who get involved in the work of evangelism receive _____ from heaven.

“Not only are they a blessing to others, but the work they do for Christ brings blessing to themselves.”¹¹

6. Doing the work of evangelism “_____” the second coming of Jesus.

“¹⁴ ‘And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come’” (Matt 24:14 ESV).

7. Evangelism _____ the church and ushers in _____.

¹¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:39.

8. Our love for God _____ us to do evangelism (2 Cor 5:14).

“¹⁵ ‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments’” (John 14:15 ESV).

“No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus. ... If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell.”¹²

9. There are people seeking salvation and waiting for someone to _____ them.

“Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.”¹³

E. JESUS GAVE BIBLE STUDIES

In addition to Jesus meeting the needs of others and preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, he also spent time giving personal Bible studies and leading small groups in order to help his followers understand the Scriptures better.

“¹³ That very day [resurrection Sunday] two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, ‘What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?’ And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, ‘Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?’ ¹⁹ And he said to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to him, ‘Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.’ ²⁵ And he said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’ ²⁷ **And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.**

“²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.’ So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, **while he opened to us the Scriptures?**’ ³³ And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who

¹² Idem, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1956), 78.

¹³ Idem, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 109.

were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

“³⁶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you!’ ³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸ And he said to them, ‘Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.’ ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

“⁴⁴ Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ ⁴⁵ **Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** ⁴⁶ and said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high’” (Luke 24:13–49 ESV; emphasis added).

If we are called to use Jesus’s method and strategies for evangelism, then we will also give personal Bible studies and lead small groups in our efforts to reach others.

“The Lord’s methods are to be followed. By doing house-to-house work, by giving Bible readings in families, the worker may gain access to many who are seeking for truth. By opening the Scriptures, by prayer, by exercising faith, he is to teach the people the way of the Lord.”¹⁴

“The plan of holding Bible readings was a heaven-born idea. There are many, both men and women, who can engage in this branch of mission labor. ... By this means the Word of God has been given to thousands; and the workers are brought into personal contact with people of all nations and tongues. ... God will not permit this precious work for him to go unrewarded. He will crown with success every humble effort made in His name.”¹⁵

F. WHY GIVE PERSONAL BIBLE STUDIES?

1. _____ gave personal Bible studies and led small groups (Luke 24:13–49).
2. The first-century Christian church of the New Testament grew significantly by giving personal Bible studies and leading small groups.
 - Philip gave the Ethiopian eunuch a personal Bible study on Isa 53 (Acts 8:26–39).
 - Peter gave Cornelius and his household a personal Bible study (Acts 10:1–48).

¹⁴ Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:38.

¹⁵ Idem, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 192.

- Paul taught a small group about the person of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1–7).

3. The early _____ effectively and quickly spread the message of the seventh-day Sabbath by giving personal Bible studies.

- Cyrus Farnsworth and Fredrick Wheeler studied with Joseph Bates and led him to embrace the truth about the seventh-day Sabbath.
- Joseph Bates studied with James Hall, James White, and Ellen Harmon, and, as a result, they accepted the seventh-day Sabbath.

4. My own personal experience and that of others confirm that one of the most effective ways of sharing biblical truth is through personal Bible studies. In fact, it is more effective in most places than holding public evangelism meetings.

“I was once shown a place in which a tent effort had been made. Great preparations were made, and the expense entailed was large. Enough was done to awaken the whole community, and in one sense it was awakened; but it was to warn of the dangerous errors held by those who were preaching the truth. An alarm was sounded, and falsehoods were repeated again and again. The stay-away argument was urged with much effect. The laborers were disappointed with their efforts, for only a few came to hear, and very few decided to obey the truth.

“I was shown this same place at another time. I saw two Bible workers seated in a family. With the open Bibles before them, they presented the Lord Jesus Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour. Their words were spoken with freshness and power. Earnest prayer was offered to God, and hearts were softened and subdued by the softening influence of the Spirit of God. As the Word of God was explained, I saw that a soft, radiant light illuminated the Scriptures, and I said softly, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’

“These workers were not boastful but humble and contrite in heart, realizing always that the Holy Spirit was their efficiency. Under its divine influence, indifference was dispelled, and an earnest interest was manifested. The precious light was communicated from neighbor to neighbor. Family altars which had been broken down were again erected, and many were converted to the truth.”¹⁶

G. PERSONAL BIBLE STUDIES AND A VIBRANT CHRISTIAN LIFE

“Remember that training is important. It is a delicate art to win souls for Christ. And you need to be prepared. But no amount of preparation in techniques of presenting Christ can possibly make you a success until you know Christ for yourself. If your presentation is mechanical, simply something you have learned, people will be quick to detect it. If your life really reflects Christ, then men and women will be drawn. If it does not, then they will quickly decide that you have nothing to offer them. People are turning away from

¹⁶ Idem to Elder G. B. Starr, “Sunnyside,” Cooranbong, Australia, August 11, 1896, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Lt 95, 1896).

cold formality. They want a religious experience that lives and breathes. If people see Christ in all His beauty they will gladly follow Him into all truth.”¹⁷

H. TWO METHODS OF GIVING PERSONAL BIBLE STUDIES

1. _____ **Method:** “is where you leave the Bible lesson for your interest to complete on their own and then review it with them at a later time.”¹⁸
2. _____ **Method:** “is where you first present the material and then at the close of the Bible study you leave a Bible lesson with your interest to complete at a later date.”¹⁹

I. THE PRESENTER METHOD OF GIVING PERSONAL BIBLE STUDIES

1. Create a powerful three-point topical Bible study of your own to present to the Bible study contact.
2. Present the three-point Bible study and call the Bible study contact to decision upon the presented topic.
3. Have the Bible study contact study further the presented Bible topic on his/her own using a Bible study guide/lesson to help direct his/her study.

J. STEPS TO WRITING EFFECTIVE 3-POINT BIBLE STUDIES

Step 1: _____ and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Step 2: _____ the Bible study guides/lessons set you will use.

- What lessons do you want to use and best fit your teaching style?
- Which set would fit the Bible study contact best?

What follows is a list of current Bible study guides/lessons that are available for your use.

¹⁷ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Witnessing for Christ: Guide for Witnessing Laymen*, 102.

¹⁸ *Amazing Facts, SALT Program Manual* (n.p.), 29.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Adults

- *Amazing Facts Study Guides* (Amazing Facts)
- *Discover Bible Study Guides* (Voice of Prophecy)
- *Focus on Prophecy* (Voice of Prophecy)
- *Hope for the Future* (Gene Hall, Hamblin Company)
- *In His Word Bible Lesson Guides* (Seminars Unlimited)
- *It Is Written Bible Study Guides* (John Bradshaw, It Is Written)
- *Native New Day* (Voice of Prophecy)
designed for Native Americans
- *Prophecies of Hope* (Gary Gibbs)
- *Prophecy Seminar* (Seminars Unlimited)
- *Revelation Seminar* (Seminars Unlimited)
- *Revelation Speaks Peace Study Guides* (Shawn Boonstra, Voice of Prophecy)
- *Salah Allah* (R. M. Harnisch)
designed for Muslims
- *Search for Certainty* (Mark A. Finley)
- *Storacles of Prophecy/Landmarks of Prophecy* (Doug Batchelor, Amazing Facts)
- *The Faith of Jesus Bible Study Guides* (Carlos E. Aeschlimann)
- *We Believe: A Study Guide of Bible Principles*

Children and Youth

- *Amazing Adventure Bible Guides* (Doug Batchelor, Amazing Facts)
- *Bible Adventures for Young Readers: God Loves Me 28 Ways* (Charles Mills)
- *Christwise: Discipleship Guides for Primary, Juniors, Teens, and Youth* (Troy Fitzgerald)
- *Following Jesus: A Junior Baptismal Guide* (Monte Church)
- *God Loves Me 28 Ways for Kids* (Charles Mills and Linda Koh)
- *Good News for Today: What Every Young Person Should Know about God's Plan for His/Her Life* (Marjorie Gray)
- *It's My Choice: Junior Baptismal Guide* (Steve and Marit Case)
- *KidZone* (Voice of Prophecy)
- *Making Jesus My Best Friend: Baptismal Preparation for Younger Children* (Claudio and Pamela Consuegra)
- *My Place with Jesus Bible Guides* (It Is Written)
- *What We Believe for Kids* (Jerry D. Thomas)
- *What We Believe for Teens* (Seth J. Pierce)
- *What We Believe: Prophecies of Daniel for Teens* (Seth J. Pierce)
- *What We Believe: Prophecies of Revelation for Teens* (Seth J. Pierce)
- *What We Believe: Getting to Know Ellen White for Teens* (Seth J. Pierce)

Step 3: Do the _____ yourself.

Step 4: Decide upon the _____ of the lesson.

It is important to figure out the topic of the lesson so that you know what to communicate during the study. To help discover this theme try to sum up the entire lesson's material into one point.

- What is the main point of this lesson?

Step 5: Determine the _____ of the study.

- What do you want the study to accomplish?
- Based on the theme of the lesson, what decision do you want the Bible study contact to make in response to this study?

Examples:

- *Salvation:* To accept Jesus as his/her personal Savior and Lord.
- *The Bible:* To commit to spending personal time studying the Word of God.
- *The Second Coming of Christ:* To allow Christ to make him/her ready for his second coming.
- *The Sabbath:* To accept the Sabbath rest that Christ offers on the seventh day of the week.

Step 6: Choose _____ points that will help to accomplish the objective.

- Your three points should derive from three different and key questions in the lesson.
- Pick the questions that have the strongest biblical support.
- Find non-negotiable points that are the clearest and easiest to understand.
- At least one point must bring out the gospel of Christ.

“Theoretical discourses are essential, that people may see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole; **but no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel.**”²⁰

“Gird up the loins of your mind, that you may present the truth of God acceptably. Preach the truth in its simplicity, but let your discourses be short. Dwell decidedly on a **few important points**. Realize every moment that you must have the presence of the Holy Spirit; for it can do a work that you cannot do of yourself. ... Keep decidedly to a **few points**. ... Present the truth as it is **in Jesus**, that those who hear may receive the very best impression.”²¹

Why Only 3 Points?

- Keeping to three points helps to keep the Bible study focused and not get off topic with tangential matters.
- It keeps the Bible study simple, helping the Bible study contact to remember the main points.

²⁰ White, *Gospel Workers*, 158; emphasis added.

²¹ Idem, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1923), 310; emphasis added.

- It prevents you from wearing out your welcome in the Bible study contact's home by keeping the Bible study brief. The study should be no more than _____ in time.

“¹² ‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now’” (John 16:12 ESV).

“¹⁷ Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house, lest he have his fill of you and hate you” (Prov 25:17 ESV).

- It helps you lead the Bible study contact and remain in control of the direction of the Bible study.

Step 7: Support those points by providing additional _____ that is not found in the lesson.

- Give at least two points to support each of your three main points; one of them should be a text from Scripture.
- You can also utilize any of the following: historical-cultural facts, archeological findings, personal testimonies, illustrations, other biblical texts, quotations, etc.

Step 8: Create _____ between the three main points.

- Transitions will help the Bible study contact to follow your train of thought and connect the related points together.
- Transitions include a summary of previous point(s) and an introduction to the next point. They function as a bridge over water between two masses of land.
- Thought-provoking questions can be used to transition.

Step 9: Find a catchy and relevant _____ that makes a smooth entry into the Bible study bridging the gap from conversation to content.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| • Bible story | • Poem | • Thought-provoking question |
| • Personal experience | • Song | • Etc. |
| • Object lesson | • Current event | |
| • Powerful quotation | • News article | |

Characteristics of a Good Introduction

- It makes the study relevant to the Bible study contact life.
- It catches the attention of the other person.

- It creates a desire to learn and gives him/her a taste of things to come.
- It provides a point of reference for him/her.

Step 10: Create a four-point close to bring your Bible study contact to a _____.

EXAMPLE

Daniel 2

Introduction: Early reformer named John Huss betrayed by man ...

- King of Italy and Bohemia promised Huss safe custody and transport to meet with them.
- Thomas Wentworth carried a document signed by King Charles I which read, “Upon the word of a king you shall not suffer in life, honor, or fortune.”
- The king broke his promise and a death warrant was signed by the same monarch.
- Last word of John Huss were, “Put not your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation” (Psalm 146:3 ESV).
- Decades ago, a person’s word meant something. They used to say, “my word is my bond.” But especially now days, people cannot be trusted.

Objective: Today we will see that the only one who we can truly trust is God. He is the only one who knows the future. We can trust him with our future because he is setting up an eternal kingdom for us!

Point 1: People today, just like in Daniel’s day, cannot be trusted.

Question 4: Whom did the king summon to tell him his dream? (Dan 2:10–11)

- Instead of going to God who has the dream, he went to the “wise men,” and as a result, he was disappointed.

Notice what God says about those who trust in man.

- Not only will they be disappointed but also cursed!
 “⁵ Thus says the LORD: ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. ⁶ He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land’” (Jer 17:5–6 ESV).
- We cannot even trust our own judgment! Why? Because self is our greatest enemy!
 “⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?
¹⁰ ‘I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds’” (Jer 17:9–10 ESV).

So, when is it safe to trust people?

- After we test them.
 “¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1 ESV).
- How do we test them?
 “²⁰ To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn” (Isa 8:20 ESV).

Transition: *So, we see that the only way we can trust people is if they give us the Bible. So, we see*

according to the lesson that the “wise men” lost their lives ... except for Daniel. Why? Let’s find out in our next point.

Point 2: God has given us evidence through prophecy so that we can trust him.

Question 8: Whom did Daniel say could reveal the mystery of the king’s dream?

- Daniel trusted in God instead of himself, and God honored his request. Daniel is an example for us!
 “²⁸ ‘[B]ut there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days’” (Dan 2:28 ESV).
- Trusting God is giving him permission to lead us.
 “⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Prov 3:5–6 ESV).

The wise men of Babylon failed the king, but God came through and revealed the meaning of the dream to Daniel. Let’s briefly go over what the dream meant.

- Use a visual aid of the statue in the lesson and go over the historical facts and dates of the dream.



Transition: *We see that all these kingdoms were destroyed because they trusted in themselves and in their own strength instead of God. What is the next kingdom that will be set up?*

Point 3: Christ has a kingdom that he is preparing, and he wants us to be a part of it!

Question 19: Who will set up the next world empire?

- Who will be a part of this kingdom?
 “⁴⁴ ‘And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure’” (Dan 2:44–45 ESV).
- Then shall the righteous shine forth! Who is righteous?
 “⁴³ ‘Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear’” (Matt 13:43 ESV).
- None are righteous! How then can we inherit this kingdom?! Is there hope?!
 “¹⁰ as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one’” (Rom 3:10 ESV).
- Notice ... it is by the precious blood that Jesus shed for you and me that we may be made righteous!
 “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 cleanses us from all sin. ... ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:7, 9 ESV).

4-Point Close

1. *Information:* Is it clear that it is not safe to trust in man and even not ourselves, but that we can only trust God and his Word?
2. *Conviction:* Do you believe that God knows your future and that he wants you to be a part of his eternal kingdom?

3. *Desire*: When I think of the heartaches that we sometimes experience in this world, it makes me long to be a part of that glorious kingdom. God is preparing a kingdom for us where there will be nothing but eternal happiness (Rev 21:4)! Why trade this world for the heavenly world that Christ wants to give us?

4. *Action*: Will you join me in choosing to trust God and God alone with our futures?

PRACTICE 1

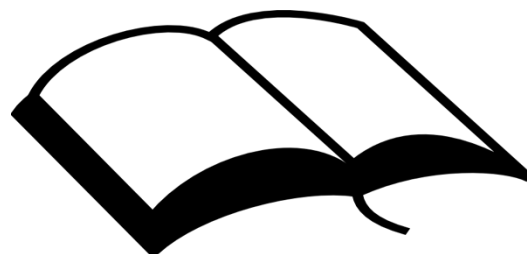
Of the three Ps, which evangelism approach is demonstrated in the texts below?

Presence Proclamation Persuasion

Acts 18:4 _____

Dan 1 _____

Matt 5–7 _____



PRACTICE 2

Practice writing out a personal Bible study on the doctrine of the state of the dead.

The State of the Dead

Theme: People do not go to heaven or hell when they die, but they sleep in the grave until Jesus comes again to resurrect them.

Introduction: _____

Objective: _____

Three Key Points:

1. _____

Supporting Information:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Transition: _____

2. _____

Supporting Information:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Transition: _____

3. _____

Supporting Information:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

PRACTICE 3

Practice writing out a personal Bible study on the doctrine of the second advent of Christ.

The Second Coming of Jesus

Theme: Jesus's second coming will be a literal event that everyone will see and hear. We should live ready today because we do not know when he will come though it will be soon.

Introduction: _____

Objective: _____

Three Key Points:

1. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

Transition: _____

2. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

Transition: _____

3. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

~SESSION VI~

GAINING DECISIONS FOR CHRIST

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“In order to lead souls to Jesus there must be a knowledge of human nature and a study of the human mind. Much careful thought and fervent prayer are required to know how to approach men and women upon the great subject of truth.”

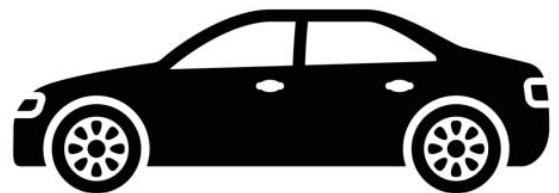
—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 4:6.

“As men [and women] of spiritual understanding conduct Bible studies with them, telling them how to yield to the power of the Holy Spirit, that they may be fully and firmly established in the truth, the power of God will be revealed.”

—Ellen G. White, “The Work in Oakland and San Francisco,” December 26, 1906, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Ms 105, 1906).

A. ILLUSTRATION: BUYING A NEW CAR

When seeking to purchase a new car, what steps do you take?



B. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DECISION-MAKING: FOUR BASIC LEVELS

I. _____ (cognitive): “This level is where an individual begins to accumulate the facts regarding the decision to be made.”¹

“Right decisions won’t be made in life unless an individual has right information.”²

¹ Mark A. Finley, *Persuasion: How to Help People Decide for Jesus*, Church Leadership Series (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016), 18.

² Ibid.

a. “_____ occurs when an individual receives too much information too quickly.”³

“If this happens, the individual not only resists the information, but also rejects the one giving it.”⁴

How to Avoid Information Overload

- “Present testing truths gradually. If possible do not present three or four new truths back-to-back in the same week.”⁵
- “Visit people in their homes immediately after the presentation of testing truths to clear up any major questions. This reduces frustration.”⁶

b. “_____ occurs when the individual hears truth but does not act upon it.”⁷

“To preach [or teach] for a decision, to inform the intellect and stimulate the emotions but not to appeal for a response hardens a person in their desire not to respond.”⁸

How to Avoid Programmed Non-response

- Make regular systematic appeals at the end of each Bible study.
- “[V]isit the individual to affirm their positive decision, answer questions, and encourage the person to act immediately.”⁹

2. _____ (spiritual): “After gathering information, an individual begins to sense what seems to be the right decision in the particular situation—what really ought to be done.”¹⁰

“The most significant element necessary for a person to make a true spiritual decision is the element of conviction.”¹¹

Conviction is entirely the work of the _____; it is “the voice of God speaking to the conscience.”¹²

³ Ibid.

⁴ Brian McMahon & Lowell Hargreaves, “Gaining Decisions,” in *Evangelistic Syllabus* (Roseville, CA: Amazing Facts, 2008), 4.

⁵ Finley, *Persuasion*, 18.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 19.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 19.

¹¹ Luis R. Torres, *Gaining Decisions for Christ: A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2001), 30.

¹² Ibid.

“Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the cooperation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven.”¹³

a. How Does Conviction Work?

The Holy Spirit moves upon the conscience of the individual via his common grace and prevenient grace, enabling his/her will and revealing to him/her the decision that he/she should make in response to the presented truth.

“⁷ ‘Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, **he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:** ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged’” (John 16:7–11 ESV; emphasis added).

“God’s Spirit is the power that convicts us of sin, righteousness, and judgment. That is, He brings to our attention what is wrong in us—(sin), what is right in us through Him (righteousness), and our need to make a decision between the two (judgment).”¹⁴

Conviction creates ...

+ “the deepening sense of _____ by taking the appropriate action” (positive aspect).¹⁵

– “the deepening sense of _____ by not taking that action” (negative aspect).¹⁶

“[T]o have greater success in soul winning we must learn to cooperate with, and watch for, the moving of the Spirit as His influence is demonstrated by the corresponding response of the hearer.”¹⁷

To aide in the work of conviction, it is important for you to build up _____ **early** and present **all** doctrinal truth as it is in

¹³ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 671.

¹⁴ Torres, *Gaining Decisions for Christ*, 30.

¹⁵ Finley, *Persuasion*, 19.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Torres, *Gaining Decisions for Christ*, 34.

_____ so that the Bible study contact feels that he/she would have to give up Jesus in order to reject the new truth.

b. How to Know When Someone Is Convicted

You must become personally acquainted with the workings of the _____.

“[I]f you have experienced His promptings, it will aid you in detecting the Spirit’s influence in the lives of others. This personal knowledge will also enable you to help others recognize it in their own hearts and thus be encouraged to respond appropriately.”¹⁸

“⁷ ‘Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:7–8 ESV).

“Like the wind, which is invisible, yet the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the Spirit of God in its work upon the human heart. That regenerating power, which no human eye can see, begets a new life in the soul; it creates a new being in the image of God. While the work of the Spirit is silent and imperceptible, its effects are manifest.”¹⁹

“Though we cannot see the Spirit of God, we know that men who have been dead in trespasses and sins, become convicted and converted under its operations. The thoughtless and wayward become serious. The hardened repent of their sins, and the faithless believe. The gambler, the drunkard, the licentious, become steady, sober, and pure. The rebellious and obstinate become meek and Christlike. When we see these changes in the character, we may be assured that the converting power of God has transformed the entire man. We saw not the Holy Spirit, but we saw the evidence of its work on the changed character of those who were hardened and obdurate sinners. As the wind moves in its force upon the lofty trees and brings them down, so the Holy Spirit can work upon human hearts, and no finite man can circumscribe the work of God.”²⁰

Jesus carefully observed the countenance and body language of his hearers, watching for indicators of conviction. Follow Jesus’s example!

“Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenances of His hearers. The faces that expressed interest and pleasure, gave Him great satisfaction. As the arrows of truth pierced to the soul, breaking through the barriers of selfishness, and working contrition, and finally gratitude, the Saviour was made glad. When His eye swept over the throng of listeners, and He recognized among them the

¹⁸ Ibid., 30–31.

¹⁹ White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1892), 57.

²⁰ Idem, “Operation of the Holy Spirit Made Manifest in the Life,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 73.18 (May 5, 1896): 273.

faces He had before seen, His countenance lighted up with joy. He saw in them hopeful subjects for His kingdom. When the truth, plainly spoken, touched some cherished idol, He marked the change of countenance, the cold, forbidding look, which told that the light was unwelcome. When He saw men refuse the message of peace, His heart was pierced to the very depths.”²¹

“He [Jesus] spoke directly to every mind and appealed to every heart. He watched the faces of His hearers, marked the lighting up of the countenance, the quick, responsive glance, which told that truth had reached the soul; and there vibrated in His heart the answering chord of sympathetic joy.”²²

There are both _____ and _____ indicators that give evidence of God’s unseen presence and work when someone is under the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit.

Example 1: “The Spirit of God is manifested in different ways upon different men. One under the movings of this power will tremble before the Word of God. His convictions will be so deep that a hurricane and tumult of feeling seem to rage in his heart, and his whole being is prostrate under the convicting power of the truth. When the Lord speaks forgiveness to the repenting soul, he is full of ardor, full of love to God, full of earnestness and energy, and the life-giving spirit which he has received cannot be repressed. Christ is in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. His feelings of love are as deep and ardent as was his distress and agony. His soul is like the fountain of the great deep broken up, and he pours forth his thanksgiving and praise, his gratitude and joy, until the heavenly harps are tuned to notes of rejoicing. He has a story to tell, but not in any precise, common, methodical way. He is a soul ransomed through the merits of Jesus Christ, and his whole being is thrilled with the realization of the salvation of God.”²³

Example 2: “Others are brought to Christ in a more gentle way.”²⁴ “All are not constituted alike. Conversions are not all alike. Jesus impresses the heart, and the sinner is born again to new life. Often souls have been drawn to Christ when there was no violent conviction, no soul rending, no remorseful terrors. They looked upon an uplifted Saviour; they lived. They saw the soul’s need; they saw the Saviour’s sufficiency and His claims; they heard His voice saying, ‘Follow Me,’ and they rose up and followed Him. This conversion was genuine, and the religious life was just as decided as was that of others who suffered all the agony of a violent process.”²⁵

²¹ Idem, *The Desire of Ages*, 254–255.

²² Idem, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), 231.

²³ Idem, “Operation of the Holy Spirit,” 273.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Idem to Edwin Jones, Crystal Springs, St. Helena, CA, May 19, 1890, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Lt 15a, 1890).

Positive Indicators

- Joy
- Sharing with/Telling others
- Personal applicaion
- Tears
- Cannot stay away
- Lighting up of the face
- Becoming friendly
- Questions
- Studying
- Positive changes in attitude
- Lifestyle changes
- Making restitution
- Peace
- Praying about it

Negative Indicators

- Sorrow
- Rejection
- Argument
- Tears
- Avoidance
- Anger
- Resistance
- Objections
- Refusal to study
- Negative changes in attitude
- Rebellion
- Denial
- Restlessness
- Irritability

For biblical examples of different experiences of and responses to conviction, see the following stories: David (2 Sam 12:13; Ps 51), Naaman (2 Kgs 5:9–15), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:47), the disciples (Matt 14:33), the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17–22), Peter (Luke 22:61–62), the Samaritan woman (John 4:19, 25–26, 28–30, 39–42), Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37–38), the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:34–38), Cornelius (Acts 10:24–27), the Roman jailer (Acts 16:29–31)

3. _____ (emotive): In this stage, “people sort out their own feelings, identify not merely what they ought to do, but what they want to do.”²⁶

“It is necessary to present the gospel to men and women in such a way that, not only will they have adequate information and be convicted, but they will want to act on it.”²⁷

Jesus understood the art of heightening desire as demonstrated in his encounter with Cleopas and another one of his disciples on the road to Emmaus.

“³² They said to each other, ‘Did not **our hearts burn within us** while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?’” (Luke 24:32 ESV; emphasis added).

What follows are five strategies for arousing and heightening desire.

a. Illustration: “‘You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.’ But salt can. Place a block of salt next to the water, let the horse lick the salt, and soon it will become so thirsty it will want to drink. Salt awakens desire. As soul winners, we are



²⁶ Finley, *Persuasion*, 19.

²⁷ Ibid.

the salt of the earth. It is necessary to present the gospel to men and women in such a way that, not only will they have adequate information and be convicted, but they will want to act on it.”²⁸

“¹³ ‘**You are the salt of the earth**, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven’” (Matt 5:13–16 ESV; emphasis added; cf. Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34).

b. Strategy 1: _____ and _____

- Present the benefits of _____ (e.g., inner peace instead of inner turmoil, reception of the Holy Spirit, true happiness, heavenly home, forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt).

“Our appeal here is to get the eyes of the person off the problems being faced on earth, and onto heavenly realities; to show clearly the contrast between what he/she is clinging to and what all of heaven has to offer.”²⁹

- Present the consequences of _____ (e.g., removal of further light and truth, acceptance of lies, rejection of the Holy Spirit, separation from God’s special presence).

c. Strategy 2: _____—a “main motivating factor in human behavior” that “declares that individuals will act on a given item when the benefits are maximum and the risk minimum.”³⁰

“²⁹ Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰ who will not receive a **hundredfold** now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life’” (Mark 10:29–30 ESV; emphasis added).

“Jesus’s words [in Mark 10:29–30] are too plain to be misunderstood. Whatever an individual gives up Jesus offers a thousand times more in return—His peace, His spiritual power to overcome sin, the joy of fellowship with other Christians, the inner happiness in knowing we are doing God’s will—all of these are immeasurable blessings.”³¹

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 29–30.

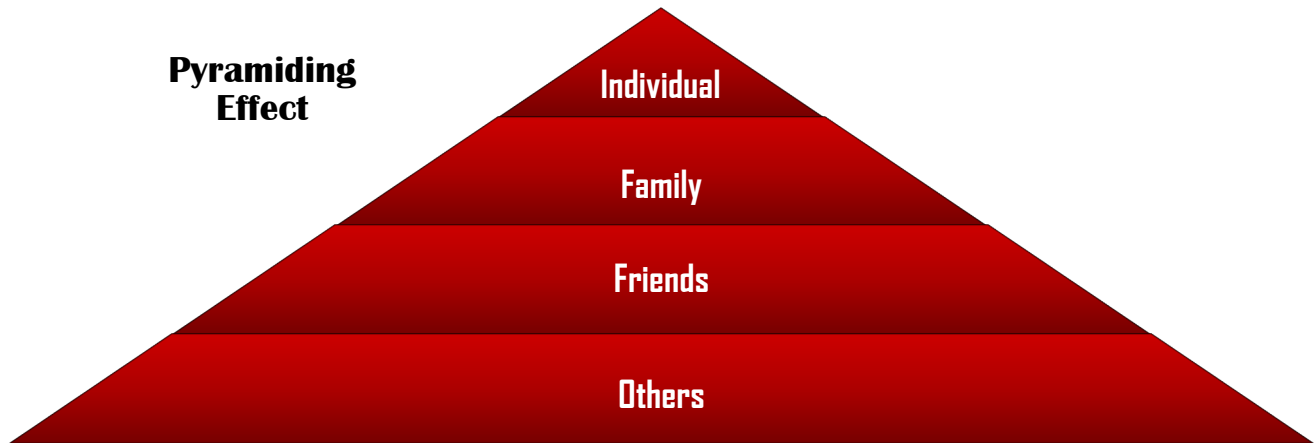
³⁰ Ibid., 30. See Em Griffin, *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1984), 100.

³¹ Ibid., 31.

d. Strategy 3: _____—bringing into view the expectations of others and revealing the increasing influence an individual would have upon others for whom he/she cares.

Some individuals are not interested in making a decision for Christ without having a sense that the significance of their decisions to follow Jesus will extend beyond the borders of their own existence, reaching the lives of others.

“So do not underestimate the value, particularly to those of strong influence and character, of appealing to them on the basis of other lives they will touch. ... It can be a powerful force in leading men and women to make a commitment to Christ. ... You will motivate men and women to make decisions for Jesus Christ as they see the influence of their decisions upon others. Help them to see how their decision is like a pebble thrown into a pond with ripples that go out from the shores of earth to the shores of eternity.”³²



e. Strategy 4: _____—“[t]his principle asserts that when presented with a new idea, an individual attempts to find some type of consistency with his existing beliefs before integrating the new concept into his life. Thus, many people tend to resist change since it produces a tension of ideas. When new desires are awakened, however, a greater tension may be felt if one resists a change that he [or she] knows he [or she] ought to make. It is at this point, when men and women sense that *to do nothing* will conflict with their conscience, that desire results in action.”³³

Example: “When hearing the message of the seventh-day Sabbath, for example, individuals may experience some tension when considering a change of lifestyle. But if they have committed their lives totally to Jesus, and can sense the strong connection between keeping the Sabbath and showing their love for Christ, then they will experience a greater friction if they resist the Sabbath message. Therefore, to minimize the friction

³² Ibid., 39–40.

³³ Ibid., 42.

between themselves and Jesus, it would be easier for them to accept the Sabbath than to reject it.”³⁴

Three Steps to Cognitive Consistency³⁵

- Develop a deep love for Jesus in the hearts of those with whom you are studying.

“The very first and most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour.”³⁶

“The wonderful love of Christ will melt and subdue hearts when the mere reiteration of doctrines would accomplish nothing.”³⁷

- Present each testing truth as being very important to Jesus, emphasizing that Jesus expects him/her to accept and act upon the truth.
- Show him/her that to resist the truth is not to resist the doctrine, but is actually to resist Jesus, the Author of that doctrine.

f. Strategy 5: Help them to feel the five motivating desires as far as possible.

- Desire for _____.
- Desire for _____ and _____.
- Desire to _____.
- Desire to _____.
- Desire for _____.

4. _____ (physical): “When conviction and desire are heightened, an individual takes action.”³⁸

“Decisions stem out of the interplay of knowledge, conviction, and desire in a person’s mind. When a person’s knowledge, conviction, and desire in reference to a given subject reach a certain intensity, the human mind moves into decision and action in regard to it.”³⁹

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Adapted from *ibid.*

³⁶ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 6:53–54.

³⁷ Idem, *The Desire of Ages*, 826.

³⁸ Finley, *Persuasion*, 20.

³⁹ J. L. Shuler, *Securing Decision*, 2:1, as quoted in Finley, *Persuasion*, 20.

“Have your student express their decision in their own words, because expression deepens impression.”⁴⁰

a. How to Encourage Decisions

To encourage decisions, keep these three factors in mind—the three Ps.

- What is the individual’s _____?
- What is the person’s _____?
- Is the person ready to make a _____?

C. ALWAYS CALLING FOR A DECISION

You should always call for a _____ in **every** Bible study.

“For the secret of our success and power as a people advocating advanced truth will be found in making direct, personal appeals to those who are interested, having unwavering reliance upon the Most High.”⁴¹

It is important for **you** to make the _____ with the Bible study contact. It is more powerful for you to give an invitation for them to join you in making the decision.

D. WHY CALL FOR A DECISION?

Reason 1: Not calling for a decision can _____ and _____ the Bible study contact.

“By man’s make up, he needs the opportunity to respond to the gospel. Someone has well said that impression without expression can lead to depression. To preach for response and to fail to provide an opportunity for a commitment can frustrate those who hear the gospel and deepen them in their habit of procrastination.”⁴²

“[A]ll logic is against telling someone to do something without pressing him to act immediately.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Gary Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), 104–105.

⁴¹ White, “Address to Ministers,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 69.35 (August 30, 1892): 545.

⁴² Roy J. Fish, *Giving a Good Invitation* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1974), 10.

⁴³ Finley, *Persuasion*, 74.

“Nothing is more cruel and damaging to distract people religiously than to make them ready for a decision and fail to give an invitation to register the decision.”⁴⁴

Reason 2: “Social psychologists declare that there is a high correlation between intention to act and actual behavior. The stronger the intention to act, the more likely it is that action will follow.”⁴⁵

“Time is a major factor affecting the correlation of action with decision. The greater interval between the decision and the action desired, the less likely it is that the person will take that action.”⁴⁶

“Individuals should be led to make a decision as soon as” ...

- “they have sufficient knowledge to make the decision,”
- “all their major objections have been met,” and
- “they believe that it is what God wants them to do and they are convicted that God is leading them to make the given decision.”⁴⁷

“The longer the time lapses between their being convicted and their taking action, the less likely they are to take that action.”⁴⁸

Reason 3: “[W]hen an individual acts based on a given attitude, the attitude is strengthened.”⁴⁹

“The more we act a certain way, the deeper our convictions will be. ... Psychologically, the greater and more repeated the action, the deeper the attitude will be ingrained.”⁵⁰

Reason 4: It conditions the Bible study contact to be used to going through the _____, so that bigger decisions will be made easier and programmed non-response will be prevented.

Reason 5: Making a public decision invites _____.

Reason 6: Emergency can unexpectedly happen at any time (death, relocation, sickness, etc.).

⁴⁴ A. E. Grundstaff, *The Effective Invitation*, 146, as quoted in Finley, *Persuasion*, 74.

⁴⁵ Finley, *Persuasion*, 73.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 73–74.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 74.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 74–75.

E. CONSTRUCTING A 4-POINT CLOSE FOR BIBLE STUDIES

The close of the Bible study should be composed of _____ points phrased in the form of _____.

The first point should begin at the first level in the decision-making process (i.e., information). Each point should be an attempt by the Bible study instructor to move his/her Bible study contact to the next decision-making level until he/she makes a decision for Christ and his truth.

Point 1 (cognitive): Appeal to _____ and _____ of the mind.

In the close of the Bible study give a summary of the topic discussed. Make sure that the *information* that was presented is _____ and your Bible study contact has received sufficient information to make an informed decision.

Sample Questions

- It is clear that ... ?
- Does it make sense that ... ?
- Do you see that ... ?

If the Bible study contact answers “no” to this question, go back and clarify the information. If the Bible study contact answers “no” a second time, there is most likely an objection that needs to be addressed.

Point 2 (spiritual): Appeal to the _____.

The Bible study contact must not only understand the information presented, but he/she must realize that it is truth. He/she should begin to realize what is right or wrong as he/she saw from the Bible. Ask a question(s) that will provide the Holy Spirit with an opportunity to bring *conviction* upon his/her heart and mind.

Sample Questions

- Do you believe that ... ?
- Do you sense the importance/significance of ... ?
- Has the Lord been working in your life about ... ?
- What has the Lord been saying to you concerning ... ?
- Is there something that has been holding you back from ... ?
- Do you sense some inner promptings concerning ... ?

The diagnostic questioning process is **critical** to assessing and prompting conviction. It allows you to discover whether or not the person has objections that need to be answered. _____ are obstacles to conviction.

Point 3 (emotive): Appeal to the _____.

Plant a *desire* to accept the presented topic in the heart of the Bible study contact and “fan the flame.” Use the strategies discussed above to do this. This should move the Bible study contact to want to follow the new teaching. Make him/her excited about the truth. Stress the benefits of the right decision.

Appeal Tools

- Read biblical text, quote, poem, etc.
- Tell story, share illustrations, etc.
- Personal testimony; experience

Sample Questions

- Do you want to ... ?
- Is it your desire to ... ?
- Would you like to ... ?

Point 4 (physical): Appeal for a _____ to action.

In this the final question leading to decision, make sure that the decision is centered on Christ, not just the doctrine itself. Call for some kind of response or *action*.

Sample Questions

- Will you choose with me to ... ?
- Will you commit to ... ?
- Will you join me in ... ?

It is important for this appeal question to sound like an _____. The Bible study contact is being invited to join the Bible instructor in some decision.

F. “THOU SHALT NOT’S” OF GAINING DECISIONS

1. Thou shalt not proceed without heart preparation and prayer.
2. Thou shalt not condemn a person’s past life. Give him/her hope for the future.

3. Thou shalt not argue or lose your temper or your patience.
4. Thou shalt not interrupt the person who is raising an honest objection. His/Her opinion is important.
5. Thou shalt not adopt the “that is nothing compared with” attitude toward the person’s problems. Instead, empathize with them.
6. Thou shalt not shut the door of mercy in his/her face because he/she is slow to accept.
7. Thou shalt not use the “take it or leave it” approach.
8. Thou shalt not give the person the impression that you are “running him/her down to get him/her.” Over-anxiety has driven many a fish from the hook.
9. Thou shalt not talk with a person about joining the church in the presence of friends.
10. Thou shalt not over urge or give the sense that you are pressuring him/her.
11. Thou shalt not give the impression that you are in a hurry, even if you are.
12. Thou shalt not stay for refreshments after the decision is secured.⁵¹

EXAMPLE

The Great Controversy

Theme: We are living in the midst of a cosmic conflict between Christ and his angelic forces of good and Satan and his demonic forces of evil that began in heaven at the instigation of Satan and came to earth through the fall of Adam and Eve. God in Christ defeated Satan on the cross and will soon destroy him once and for all.

Introduction: _____

Objective: To decide to be on God’s side in the cosmic conflict between the forces of good and evil.

Three Key Points:

1. Satan, not God, was the originator of all evil, sin, and suffering that we experience on the earth.

⁵¹ Adapted from McMahon and Hargreaves, “Gaining Decisions,” 13.

2. We are living in the midst of a cosmic conflict between Jesus and his angelic forces of good and Satan and his demonic forces of evil.
3. Christ defeated Satan by his victorious death on the cross and will soon destroy him once and for all.

4-point Close:

1. *Information:* Is it clear that Satan, not God, was one who introduced and perpetuates evil, sin, and suffering in our world, and, as a result, we are living in the midst of a cosmic conflict between the spiritual forces of good and evil?
2. *Conviction:* Do you believe that Christ has gained the victory over the devil, death, and sin and that he can give you the power to overcome it too?
3. *Desire:* If we choose him, God still can give us happiness even in the midst of this sin-polluted world in which we live!
 - Jesus said, “¹⁰ ‘The thief [Satan] comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly’” (John 10:10 ESV).
4. *Action:* Will you, with me, surrender your life to Christ so that he can give us his abundant life and so that we can be on God’s winning team in the great controversy?

PRACTICE 1

Practice writing a four-point close for a personal Bible study on the doctrine of Scripture.

The Bible

Theme: The Bible is the inspired written word of God; it is the only trustworthy source of truth and can transform us when we commit to studying and following its Christ-centered teachings.

Introduction: _____

Objective: _____

Three Key Points:

1. The entire content of the Bible was revealed to the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles and is divinely inspired (i.e., God-breathed) by the Holy Spirit.
2. The Bible is the only dependable and trustworthy source of truth today.
3. The Bible, the written word, reveals and is centered on Jesus, the living Word; if we commit to studying and following its teachings, we will be powerfully transformed by him.

4-point Close:

1. *Information:* _____

2. *Conviction:* _____

3. *Desire:* _____

4. *Action:* _____

PRACTICE 2

Practice writing a complete three-point personal Bible study with a four-point close on the doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Theme: The seventh-day Sabbath is a divinely established memorial of creation and redemption for all humanity during which special blessings and rest are available in Christ for those who keep it holy.

Introduction: _____

Objective: _____

Three Key Points:

1. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

Transition: _____

2. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Transition: _____

3. _____

Supporting Information:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

4-point Close:

1. *Information:* _____

2. *Conviction:* _____

3. *Desire:* _____

4. *Action:* _____

*Much of the material in this session has been compiled from Ernestine and Mark A. Finley's book, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (n.p.: Hart Research Center, 2002); Mark A. Finley's book, *Persuasion: How to Help People Decide for Jesus* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016); and Louis R. Torres' book, *Gaining Decisions for Christ: A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: 2001). These books are excellent resources for any soul-winner and may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com. You may also purchase them from www.amazon.com.

~SESSION VII~

GIVING 3-POINT BIBLE STUDIES

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“The plan of holding Bible readings was a heaven-born idea. There are many, both men and women, who can engage in this branch of missionary labor. Workers may thus be developed who will become mighty men of God. By this means the word of God has been given to thousands; and the workers are brought into personal contact with people of all nations and tongues.”

—Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 192.

A. IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES FOR GIVING BIBLE STUDIES

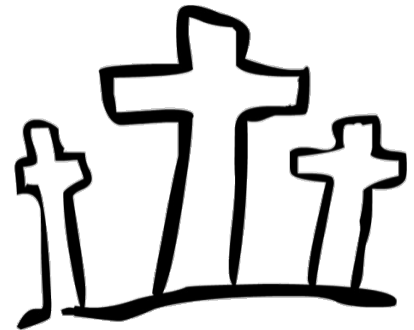
1. Have a distinct _____.

“Before attempting to teach a subject, he [the Bible instructor] should have a **distinct plan** in mind, and should know just what he desires to accomplish. He should not rest satisfied with the presentation of any subject until the student understands the principle involved, perceives its truth, and is able to state clearly what he has learned.”¹

2. Always _____ Jesus and present him _____.

“³² ‘And I [Jesus], when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’”

“**Christ crucified—talk it, pray it, sing it and it will break and win hearts.** This is the power and wisdom of God to gather souls for Christ. Formal, set phrases, the presentation of merely argumentative subjects, is productive of little good. The melting love of God in the hearts of the workers will be recognized by those for whom they labor. Souls are thirsting for the waters of life. Do not be empty cisterns. If you reveal the love of Christ to them, you may lead the hungering, thirsting ones to Jesus, and He will give them the bread of life and the water of salvation.”²



“Be sure to bring people to Christ before introducing testing truths. Once they have accepted Jesus, they will be more prepared to obey Him.”³

¹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), 233–234; emphasis added.

² Idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 6:67; emphasis added.

³ Gary Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing: Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith* (Keene, TX: Seminars Unlimited, 2011), 103.

“Every Bible study subject that is presented should have Christ at the center. It is the Christ of the cross that attracts.”⁴

“Never should a sermon be preached, or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the hearers to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:20) Every true doctrine makes Christ the center, every precept receives force from His words.”⁵

When making appeals, we must ensure that the invitation to decision is designed in such a way that it is clearly coming from Christ and not only ourselves.

Example: “Don’t ask people to keep the Sabbath only because it is the right day. Invite them instead to follow Jesus and show their love for Him by keeping His Sabbath holy.”⁶

Remember to apply the strategy for stirring up desire in the Bible study contact’s heart called “cognitive consistency.”

3. Reveal truth _____.

“¹⁸ But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day” (Prov 4:18 ESV).

“Truth must be progressive. ... Allow the truth to come together piece by piece and to dawn on the conscience.”⁷

Example: Jesus did not give all of his teaching at once to his disciples, but rather revealed it to them piece by piece until they finally received it in its fullness.

“¹² ‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth ...’” (John 16:12–13 ESV).

a. The _____ and _____ Principle “teaches that only as new truths are clarified and confirmed in the minds of the listeners can future truths be received and accepted.”⁸

“The presenter must ascertain, at every new step, whether the hearers accept or reject the message, and how they have decided to integrate these new concepts into their present value structure. If this is not done, resistance will continue to build to the point of rejection.”⁹

⁴ Ernestine and Mark A. Finley, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (n.p.: Hart Research Center, 2002), 57.

⁵ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:54.

⁶ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 104.

⁷ Ibid., 90.

⁸ Mark A. Finley, *Persuasion: How to Help People Decide for Jesus*, Church Leadership Series (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016), 48.

⁹ Ibid.

“Any truths which appear hazy or inconsistent provide obstacles for further progress, but clearly-understood truths become stepping stones for further understanding of God’s Word.”¹⁰

b. Remember the 3 Ps; they will help you apply the “clear and set” principle.

- What is the individual’s _____ ?

Example Question: “Have you ever heard a message on the Bible Sabbath before,? Was the Sabbath totally new for you?”¹¹

- What is the person’s _____ ?

Example Question: “Do you have any questions regarding the Sabbath?”¹²

If there are questions/objections that arise, seek to answer them.

- Is the person ready to make a _____ ?

Example Question: “What would it mean for you personally if you decide to keep the Sabbath? Let us suppose you were going to keep it. Would you have a problem keeping the Sabbath because of your work? Would it bring hardship to your family? What would it mean personally? ... If Jesus were here and personally declared, ‘If you love me, keep my commandments [John 14:15],’ how would you respond? ... [I]f Jesus himself invited you to keep the Sabbath, what would you say to Jesus?”¹³

+ If the Bible study contact responds positively to the question, then bring them to a decision; call them to make the commitment.

– If the Bible study contact responds negatively to the question, close the meeting asking them to do further study of the Scriptures for Christ to reveal his truth on the subject. Leave with them some additional literature on the topic.

“I know if Jesus were here today and he asked you to keep the Sabbath, you would be willing to do it, because you want to please Jesus, do you not? Let us just kneel down and ask him to show you from his word what he wants you to do on the matter. I know these things are new to you, but, if the word of God says them, and Jesus teaches them, I know you want to follow him. So let us pray and tell Jesus that today. Would you like to do that?”

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 66.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

c. Seven Major Decisions to Clear and Set¹⁴

- The *inspiration of the Bible* and its central revelation of *Jesus Christ* as the divine, personal Savior of the world and the Lord of life.
- Christ's special end-time messages from the three angels (Rev 14:6–12) to prepare people to meet him at his imminent *second coming*.
- Christ's call for full Spirit-filled obedience to his *law*, including the *seventh-day Sabbath*.
- God's plea to *glorify him with our bodies* as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and to give up harmful consumables, such as alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, other addictive substances, and unclean meats.
- The biblical teaching of the *sleeping state of humans in death* and the *nature of hell*, in contrast to the rising view of spiritualism in the world.
- The Bible and the *gift of prophecy* as identifying marks of the *remnant church* and a desire to live up to the *standards* of both.
- *Baptism by immersion* as the sign and seal of accepting Christ and becoming an active part of his visible church on earth.

4. Keep your arguments to a _____ on any subject.

“It is not the best policy to be so very explicit, and say all upon a point that can be said, when a few arguments will cover the ground, and be sufficient for all practical purposes, to convince or silence opponents.”¹⁵

5. Give _____ explanations.

“Never search for words that will give the impression that you are learned. The greater your simplicity, the better will your words be understood.”¹⁶

6. _____ people where they are.

“Christ drew the hearts of his hearers to him by the manifestation of his love, and then, little by little, as they were able to bear it, he unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom. **We also must learn to adapt our labors to the condition of the people—to meet men [and women] where they are.** While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love—the love of Christ—is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience.”¹⁷

¹⁴ Adapted from *ibid.*, 51–52.

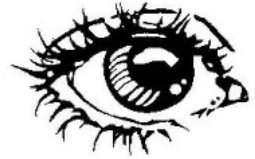
¹⁵ White, *Gospel Workers*, 376.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁷ *Idem*, “How the Truth Should Be Presented,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 67.46 (November 25, 1890): 57; emphasis added.

a. Perceptual Patterns: Students of human behavior place men and women in one of three classes of perceptual pattern sets: _____, _____, and _____.

_____ **Learners:** These individuals “solve problems by *seeing* the solution in the form of *pictures* in the mind. Since their analytical thought processes are visual, such people respond well to slides or charts and diagrams.”¹⁸



Examples

- “*Picture* Jesus dying on the cross for you, with nails through His hands and blood trickling down His cheeks. As you *look* into His eyes, is there anything more important than surrendering your whole life to Him?”¹⁹
- “*Imagine* the smile on Jesus’ face as you are baptized on Sabbath. *See* the angels as they gather around the Father’s throne to *witness* your baptism.”²⁰
- “*Visualize* what it will be like to walk through those heavenly gates and down the streets of gold. *Think* of the splendor of heaven, the bright flowers, crystal streams, and gates of pearl.”²¹

_____ **Learners:** These individuals “structure their thought patterns around the mode of *sound*.” Their “predominant sense is *hearing*.”²²



Examples

- “Don’t you *hear* Christ *calling* you today?”²³
- “Think of that glorious angel chorus and that *loud, clear* trumpet *fanfare*! What a joy those *sounds* will bring to your heart.”²⁴
- “*Listen* to the *voice* of Jesus as He says, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant.’”²⁵

¹⁸ Finley, *Persuasion*, 53; emphasis added.

¹⁹ Ibid., 54–55; emphasis added.

²⁰ Ibid., 55; emphasis added.

²¹ Ibid.; emphasis added.

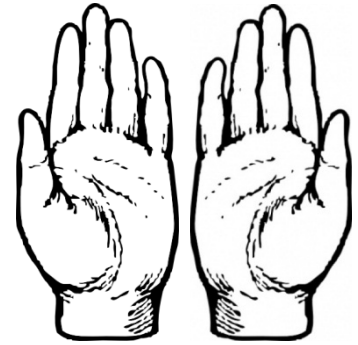
²² Ibid., 53; emphasis added.

²³ Ibid., 55; emphasis added.

²⁴ Ibid.; emphasis added.

²⁵ Ibid.; emphasis added.

Learners: These individuals' thought patterns "center largely on the mode of *touch*" and *doing* something with their *hands*.²⁶



Examples

- "As you surrender your life to Jesus you will receive that *healing presence*, that inner contentment that all humanity longs for. The *feeling* of peace that you desired for so long will be yours."²⁷
- "The decision that you are about to make will lead you on a path with Jesus Christ where you'll *feel His hand in yours*, *sense* His leading, step by step."²⁸
- "As the water *covers* you in baptism you will experience a wonderful *sense* of sins *covered*, of *cleanness*, and a *removal* of all guilt. Oh, you may not have a *feeling* of electrical energy going up your spine, but you can perceive the *arms of Christ around you*. You can *sense* the *warmth of His embrace*."²⁹

"Naturally, most people do not fall exclusively into one of these categories. Yet, each of us does have a tendency to operate primarily within the realm of one of these three sense impressions."³⁰

"One reason we have so few outstanding soul winners is because most appeal to others in terms of their own perception. ... You must step out of yourself. You must enter into the needs and longings of others and identify with their perceptual patterns."³¹

7. Stick with the _____ of the Bible study and do not go on _____.

8. Keep good _____, especially when calling for decisions.

9. *Always* call for a _____ during *each* and *every* Bible study.

²⁶ Ibid., 53; emphasis added.

²⁷ Ibid., 55; emphasis added.

²⁸ Ibid.; emphasis added.

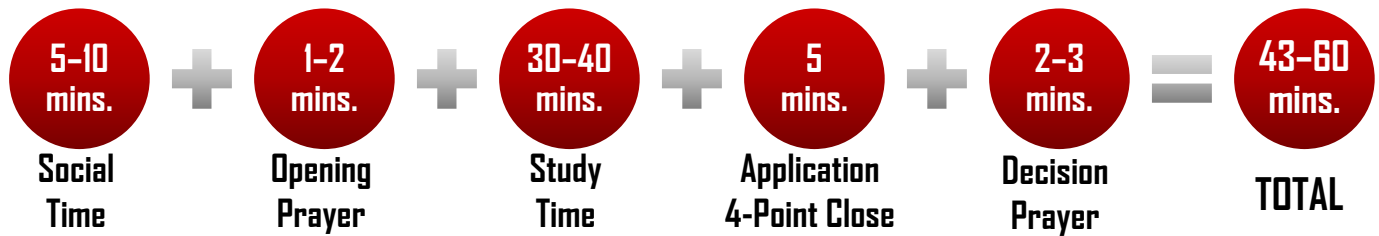
²⁹ Ibid.; emphasis added.

³⁰ Ibid., 53.

³¹ Ibid., 55.

“As you present testing truths, ask often, who is now willing, as they have heard the words of God, pointing out their duty, to consecrate their hearts and minds, with all their affections, to Christ Jesus.”³²

B. A SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR BIBLE STUDIES



“It is best to keep the study time less than an hour. Even if they want you to stay longer it is wise not to take too much of their time. It is far better for them to be anxious for you to come than to dread your visit because you stay so long.”³³ After prayer, **leave!**

“Always leave on a spiritual note. Do your small talk and visiting before the lessons begin, not after.”³⁴

C. ANSWERING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

“The first thing to do with any question is to _____ your student.”³⁵

Example

- “That is a very good question!”
- “Thank you so much for your offer!”
- “I am glad you thought of that question!”



Common Question 1: A question concerning an unrelated topic

- Affirmation: “That’s a very good question!”
- “Why don’t we finish our Bible study together, and I will happily answer your question afterward.”

³² White, *Evangelism*, 284.

³³ Amazing Facts, *SALT Program Manual* (n.p.), 29.

³⁴ Carlos G. Martin, *The Science of Soul Winning 2: Advanced Approaches* (n.p., 2008), 8.

³⁵ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 79.

Common Question 2: A question concerning a future topic to be studied

- Affirmation: “That is a very good question!”
- “Actually, we are going to have a whole study on this subject a little later. If you don’t mind, I would like to discuss this question more thoroughly at that time?”

OR

- Affirmation: “That is a very good question!”
- “What do you think about it?”
- “That is good. We are going to have a whole study on this subject a little later. If you don’t mind, I would like to discuss this question more thoroughly at that time?”

OR

- Affirmation: “That is a very good question!”
- “What do you think about it?”
- “That is good. Would you like an assignment that will help you find your answer? I can show you how to find it in your own Bible.”
- Show them how to use a concordance to topically discover the answer. This will keep them busy with finding the answer until you share with them on the subject.

Common Question 3: A question that cannot be answered on this side of heaven

- Affirmation: “That is a very good question!”
- “I think this is one of those questions where people have their opinions, but the Bible does not clearly address it. We may have to wait for heaven for the answer.”

Common Question 4: A question to which we do not know the answer

- Affirmation: “That is a very good question!”

- “But to tell you the truth, I do not know. I have not thought about that one before. Give me a little time to research what the Bible has to say. Ok? Then, I will get back with you and share what I find.”

Common Question 5: An offer of coffee, tea, snacks, or meals that contain food items not appropriate for you to eat

- “Thank you for your kind offer, but I just ate, and I am quite full already.”

OR

- “Thank you so much for the offer! A glass or bottle of water would be perfect.”

OR

- “Thank you for your offer, but I would feel bad if you felt that you had to prepare something for me every time I come over.”

OR

- “I really appreciate your graciousness, but I try to be regular with my eating habits and not snack between meals.”



D. MANAGING DISTRACTIONS

1. Children

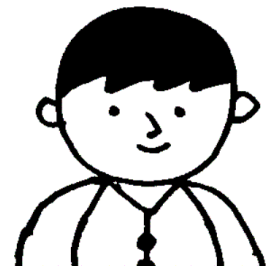
- Suggest to the Bible study contact to reschedule the Bible study for a time during which the children are at school, taking a nap, or in bed.

OR

- Bring a Bible study partner with you who can entertain the children and keep them from interrupting the Bible study.

OR

- Bring a coloring book, illustrated storybook, a set of children's Bible studies, or other activities that keep the children occupied during the Bible study.



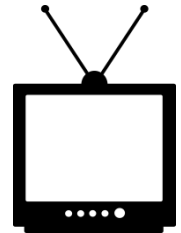
2. Phone Calls

- Ask, “Is this a good time for us to study the Bible or should I come back at a later time today or later this week?”



3. Television

- Ask, “Is this your favorite program?” They will usually say “no” and turn off the TV.



OR

- Kindly ask, “Would it be okay to turn the television off?”

OR

- Ask, “May I turn the volume down on the television?” Once permission is granted, turn it down all the way.

4. House Guests

- If the subject matter is appropriate (Bible, second coming, salvation, etc.), enthusiastically invite the house guest(s) to join the Bible study (with permission from the Bible study contact).



OR

- If the subject is not appropriate (Sabbath, State of the Dead, Mark of the Beast, etc.), deal with the situation in one of these ways.
 - Ask, “Is this a good time for us to study the Bible or should I come back at a later time today or later this week?”
 - Say to the house guest(s), “I would absolutely love for you to join our Bible study, but I have not had the opportunity to give you the necessary background information for this study. I do not want you to be confused and lost in our study. We could spend time together at another time, or I would be delighted to give you the background information some time so that I can catch you up, and you can regularly join our weekly Bible studies. What would you prefer?”

E. MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES THAT OCCASIONALLY ARISE

“The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things” (Prov 15:28 ESV).

1. Handling Wrong Comments

Sometimes the Bible study contract will make comments that are unbiblical or false. You do not necessarily need to correct him/her on the spot, especially if it is concerning a future topic.

Example Response

- “That is an interesting point. We have an entire study that will address it later.”

2. Working with Argumentative People

Sometimes someone with whom you are studying will be very argumentative.

Jesus was never argumentative, and, accordingly, neither should we be argumentative.

“The Saviour knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness.”³⁶

“If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Rom 12:18 ESV).

Do not _____ with him/her; it never helps the situation.

“A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention” (Prov 15:8 ESV).

“Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition.”³⁷

Remain _____ and be _____.

“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Prov 15:1 ESV).

“The spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible.”³⁸

³⁶ White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 31.

³⁷ Ibid., 511.

³⁸ Idem, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 353.

Example Responses

- “I want you to know that I respect your opinions.”
- “I am happy to study with you, but it seems you do not really agree with much of what I share. Am I understanding you correctly?” *Listen considerately to their answer.* “I am willing to continue studying together if you think it will help you learn more about the Bible, but I do not think arguing is profitable for either of us. How do you feel about this?”
- “There are many people who share your views. So, I can understand what you are saying.”
- “I know how you feel. I have felt that way too.”
- “I was brought up to believe this way too, so I can sympathize with you.”
- “I respect your opinions. If you want I will be happy to share with you why I believe what I do.”

3. Working with Unaccepting People

“There are times a student will confess that they can’t accept what you are teaching.”³⁹

Example Responses

- “You know, I asked the same questions when I was introduced to this subject. At first, I could not believe it. But then as I was praying about it, I realized that what I really wanted was Bible truth. That is when I decided that, if this is what the Bible teaches and if it is what Jesus said, then it is what I want.”
- “As we study to find God’s will, I think the most important test for any teaching is, ‘Is this what the Bible really teaches?’ Is there a clear ‘thus saith the Lord’ for what I currently believe?”
- “Is there any way I can help clarify what we have studied?”
- “I understand that this subject may be different for you. May I leave these additional texts with you to consider and this literature on the topic that you might find helpful?”

³⁹ Gibbs, *The New Winsome Witnessing*, 84.

F. “THOU SHALT NOT’S” OF GIVING BIBLE STUDIES

1. Thou shalt not over prove your subject.
2. Thou shalt not mention things that can only be demonstrated from the Spirit of Prophecy.
3. Thou shalt not drop off Bible studies like the pizza guy.
4. Thou shalt not allow your studies to become merely social visits.
5. Thou shalt not present controversial subjects early in the studies.
6. Thou shalt not spend too much time with someone whose goal is to convert you (e.g., Jehovah’s Witnesses or Latter-day Saints [i.e., Mormons]).
7. Thou shalt not be overzealous or pushy.
8. Thou shalt not stay too long.

G. “THOU SHALT’S” OF GIVING BIBLE STUDIES

1. Thou shalt make sure you are consistent with your Bible study meetings.
2. Thou shalt spend much time in prayer for your students each day.
3. Thou shalt pay special attention to those who appear to be irreligious.
4. Thou shalt expect God to be working, and listen to the Holy Spirit!
5. Thou shalt study the lesson before you go.
6. Thou shalt repeat your main points.
7. Thou shalt affirm the Bible study contact for correct answers.
8. Thou shalt turn the pages of the Bible slowly and speak the order of the books of the Bible as you turn the pages. This will help the person with whom you are studying not to feel inadequate in finding the right books, and it will also help them learn the order of the Bible.
9. Thou shalt have the spirit of a learner.

10. Thou shalt be sensitive to real needs.
11. Thou shalt be adaptable and flexible!
13. Thou shalt pray without ceasing!

PRACTICE 1

Practice answering the difficult questions below.

Scenario 1: You are discussing the second coming of Christ in your Bible study with Julie, and she asks you a question about the identity of the antichrist. How will you respond?

Scenario 2: You are having a Bible study with John, and he asks you if you would like to have the Bible study over supper. He has prepared a meal that includes unclean meats. How will you answer him?

PRACTICE 2

Practice responding to the Bible study distractions below.

Scenario 1: You are in the middle of a Bible study on the 1,000 years of Rev 20 with Peter, and one of his neighbors comes over to visit. How will you handle the situation?

Scenario 2: You are trying to conduct a Bible study with Meredith, but the television is blaring in the living room and stealing away her attention at times. What can you do to address the situation?

PRACTICE 3

Practice responding to the potential problems below that can arise in a Bible study.

Scenario 1: Allen is studying with you on that Sabbath, but he insists on arguing with you about what day really is the Sabbath. How will you deal with Allen's hostility?

Scenario 2: The Bible study for today with Trisha is on the subject of death. She comments in the study that she believes hell is burning now and burns forever. You have not studied the doctrine of hell as of yet. How will you respond to her unbiblical comment?

*Much of the material in this session has been compiled from Ernestine and Mark A. Finley's book, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (n.p.: Hart Research Center, 2002). This book is an excellent resource for any soul-winner and may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com.

~SUPPLEMENT VIIA~

AN ORDER OF BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin and has been searched for as for hidden treasure..”

–Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 3:447.

A. CONSTRUCTING A HOUSE

It makes sense that, when constructing a new house, there is a set order in which the parts of the home are to be assembled.

“The erection of any worth-while building follows carefully drawn blueprints. Before the first stake is driven, a blueprint is prepared, which outlines the structure step by step. A real builder sees the finished house before the first spade of dirt is turned. ... There is a certain order in the construction of a house. The windows cannot be put in until the frames are set in the walls. The shingles cannot be put on until the rafters are in their proper place, and the sheathing has been nailed in its place. **In the same way, there is a proper order to be followed in the construction of the temple of truth by the successive sermons of a public effort.**”¹



B. LINKS IN A CHAIN

The topics of a series of Bible studies should be arranged in a way where one subject leads into the next. This helps the Bible study contact see the interconnectedness of the teachings of Scripture like the links of a chain.



¹ John L. Shuler, *Public Evangelism: Its Approach and Problems* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1939), 72–73; emphasis added.

“As far as possible, the evangelist should so arrange his subject that they will be like links in a great chain. The whole series should be forged together, so that each successive subject will take up the story of truth just where the previous lecture ended.”²

“God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin and has been searched for as for hidden treasure.”³

“But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, ‘here a little, and there a little.’ Isaiah 28:10.

“When thus searched out and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth. The types of the Jewish economy are made plain by the gospel. Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion.

“In searching out the various parts and studying their relationship, the highest faculties of the human mind are called into intense activity.”⁴

C. THE FRAMEWORK: THE THREE ANGELS’ MESSAGES

The center of the interlinked system of truth of Scripture is Christ!

“The truths of the gospel are not unconnected; uniting they form one string of heavenly jewels, as in the personal work of Christ, and like threads of gold they run through the whole of Christian work and experience.

“Christ is the complete system of truth. He says, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ All true believers center in Christ, ... all meet in Christ, and circulate about Christ.”⁵

“Christ is the Center of all true doctrine.”⁶ “Christ is the center of all our faith and hope. Those who can preach the matchless love of God, those who with softened heart can lift up Jesus, and inspire hearts to give Him their best and holiest affections, are doing a high and holy work.”⁷

“The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I

² Ibid., 8.

³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 3:447.

⁴ Idem, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), 123–124.

⁵ Idem, “Testimony Regarding Brother Buster,” Norfolk Villa, Prospect Street, Granville, New South Wales, Australia, August 3, 1894, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Ms 34, 1894).

⁶ Idem, “The Bible as Our Study-Book,” July 20, 1899, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Ms 96, 1899).

⁷ Idem, “The Canvasser and His Work,” July 2, 1899, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, MD (Ms 122, 1899).

present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption—the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.”⁸

The framework for the truths of Scripture in the end-time can be found in the three angels’ messages of Rev 14:6–12 in the context of the cosmic conflict between Christ and Satan. Here is where the doctrines intertwine with one another.

“⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.’

⁸ Another angel, a second, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.’ ⁹ And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.’ ¹² Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev 14:6–12 ESV).



“It takes the [sharing] of this special message to make intelligent and genuine Seventh-day Adventists. The gospel of Jesus Christ, in the setting of the three angels’ messages, is God’s present-truth message for this hour.”⁹

“Any attempt to present Adventism outside of the setting of the messages is to separate it from its real source of power.”¹⁰

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light-bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and their angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God’s people are to be true to the trust committed to them.”¹¹

Example: “Separate the Sabbath from the messages, and it loses its power; but when connected with the message of the third angel, a power attends it which convicts unbelievers and infidels, and bring them out with strength to stand, to live, to grow, and flourish in the Lord.”¹²

⁸ Idem, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 315.

⁹ Mark A. Finley, *Pace Setters: Evangelistic Syllabus* (n.p.), 107.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:19.

¹² White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:33.

D. A SUGGESTED ORDER OF BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

Title	Topic	#
Is There Anything We Can Trust?	The Word of God	1
Does God Exist?	Existence of God, Divine Attributes, and the Trinity	
Is There Hope for the Future?	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Dan 2)	2
Keys for Unlocking Bible Prophecy	Introduction to Bible Prophecy	
A World in Turmoil	Signs of the Times (Matt 24)	3
The Manner of Christ's Coming	Second Coming of Jesus	4
Who Am I and From Where Did I Come?	Creation (Gen 1–2)	
Good God! Bad World! Why?	The Great Controversy, part 1 (Gen 3) Origin of Evil and Human Sin	7
Cosmic War!	The Great Controversy, part 2 (Job 1–2; Dan 10) Spiritual Warfare and the Unseen Realm	
How to Find Personal Peace	The Gospel and Salvation (Rev 12:7–12; Rom 1–5)	5
The Secret of a New Life	The New Birth (John 3)	6
Revelation's Most Thrilling Message	The Three Angels' Messages	8
What's Behind Rising Crime, Violence, & Immortality?	The Law of God	11
Christ's Special Sign	The Seventh-day Sabbath	12
Tampering with Heaven's Constitution	The Antichrist and Change of the Sabbath (Dan 7)	13
Source of Spiritual Power	Messianic Prophecies of Jesus (Dan 9)	
The Bible's Longest & Most Amazing Prophecy	2,300-day Prophecy & The Sanctuary (Dan 8 & 9)	9
A Date with Destiny: The Judgment	The Investigative Judgment	10
Dead or Alive?	Death to Self and Surrender to God (Rom 6–8)	
Modern Cults Identified Five Ways!	Cultic Deceptions	14
Our Greatest Need—New Lifestyle!	Health	15
How Your Home Can Survive the Coming Crisis	Marriage and Family	
The Real Truth About Death	State of the Dead	16
God's Love in the Fires of Hell	Hell	17
How to Successfully Bury the Past	Baptism by Immersion	18
A Financial Secret	Tithe & Offerings & Stewardship	19
Growing as a Christian	Sanctification	20
Why So Many Denominations?	Church History (Rev 5–6)	
God's Church Identified	Remnant Church (Rev 12:1–6, 13–17)	21
Prophets and Prophecy/Visions and Dreams	The Gift of Prophecy (Ministry of Ellen G. White)	22
The Mystery of Spiritual Babylon Revealed	Babylon (Rev 17–18)	23
Holy Spirit & the Unpardonable Sin	Holy Spirit & the Unpardonable Sin	24
From Disappointment to Triumph	Adventist Movement (Rev 10)	25
The Mark of the Beast and the Mystery Number of 666	The Mark of the Beast (Rev 13:1–10)	26
The United States in Prophecy	The United States (Rev 13:11–18)	27
Armageddon and the Seven Last Plagues	Armageddon & the Seven Last Plagues (Rev 15–16)	28
Revelation Predicts a 1,000-year World Blackout	The Millennium (Rev 20)	29
Above the Crowd	The 144,000 & Christian Standards (Rev 7)	
Revelation's Glorious Climax	Heaven (Rev 21–22)	30

*The lesson numbers for each topic listed above coordinate with Mark A. Finley's *Search for Certainty* Bible study guides (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2010).

~SUPPLEMENT VIIb~

THE FINAL REVIEW MEETING

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. CLEAR AND SET FOR BAPTISM OR PROFESSION OF FAITH

It is important that, after having concluded all of the Bible studies, that the Bible study contact be prepared for profession of faith and/or baptism by immersion in a final review meeting during which he or she is “cleared” on the twenty-eight fundamental beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church and his or her commitment to them is “set.”

This is necessary because ministry best practice and denominational policy require that, in addition to being “instructed from the Scriptures regarding the Church’s fundamental beliefs and practices and the responsibilities of membership,” “[b]aptismal candidates and those being received into fellowship by profession of faith shall affirm their acceptance of the fundamental beliefs in the presence of the local congregation or other properly appointed body” by publicly expressing agreement with the baptismal vow.¹

B. EXAMPLE COMMITMENT

During this final review meeting, the Bible instructor should review the topics discussed, answer any questions or objections that may remain, and lead the Bible study contact to commit fully to Jesus and his teachings and decide to join the Seventh-day Adventist® Church by baptism by immersion or profession of faith. Below is an example of a covenant document that can be used or adapted to facilitate this process.

This meeting should also be used to instruct the Bible study contact in the responsibilities of church membership and to discuss the logistical plans and arrangements for his or her baptism and/or profession of faith.

Be sure to include your local church pastor and/or head elder in this final review meeting, as they will be facilitating the candidate’s baptism and/or profession of faith.

¹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist® Church Manual* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016), 44, 45.

My Commitment to the Teachings of God's Word for the Last Days

1. _____ I believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and I want to live by its teachings making it the **one** and **only** authority of my life for faith and practice (2 Tim 3:15–17; Matt 4:4).
2. _____ I believe that there is one God manifested in three coeternal, coequal persons: the Father; his Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit (Matt 3:16–17; 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14).
3. _____ I believe in the following: (1) God is the Creator of all that exists and that he created the earth in six literal, consecutive days and rested on the seventh day of the creation week from all his creative work (Gen 1; 2:1–3); (2) in the days of Noah, the earth was destroyed by a literal worldwide flood that lasted for forty days and forty nights (Gen 6–8).
4. _____ I believe that, because of his great love for humanity, Jesus Christ died on the cross as a vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of atonement to pay the penalty of my sin and breaking God's holy law (John 3:16; 1 John 3:4; Rom 3:21–25; 1 Cor 15:3).
5. _____ I repent of my sin and accept Jesus Christ as my personal Savior (Acts 20:21; Rev 3:20). I believe that, because Jesus shed his blood for me, he freely forgives and pardons my sins; regenerates me in a “new birth” by the power of the Holy Spirit; and grants me the gift of eternal life (Matt 26:28; Rom 6:23; 1 John 5:11–13). He takes my sin, and I receive his righteousness.
6. _____ I desire Jesus to be the ruler and personal Lord of my life. Therefore, I surrender my life completely to be ruled by him and his truth-filled teachings as taught in his written word. I also desire to grow in my understanding of his will and to maintain a relationship with him through daily personal Bible study, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines (Rom 6:16–18; John 14:15; 1 John 3:22).
7. _____ I believe that a Christian who loves Jesus will choose by the Holy Spirit's enabling to keep all of his commandments that are found in Scripture, especially those in the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:3–17; John 14:15). It is my purpose, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to obey this law of God (Rom 7:7, 12; 8:4; Rev 14:12; 22:14).
8. _____ I believe “the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord” (Exod 20:8–11). As a follower of Jesus Christ, I want to keep the Sabbath holy “according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56) from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday (Lev 23:32; Neh 13:19; Isa 58:13–14; Mark 1:32).
9. _____ I look forward to the literal, visible, audible, and personal second advent of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven when “every eye will see him” (Rev 1:7; Acts 1:9–11). Knowing not “the day nor the hour” of his return, it is my purpose to make needful and necessary preparations to live always ready to meet him at his appearing (Matt 24:44).
10. _____ I believe in the following: (1) that there is a literal sanctuary in heaven of which the wilderness tabernacle was an earthly model, where Jesus Christ was inaugurally enthroned on the day of Pentecost as the covenantal head of humanity, the king of the earth, and our high priest who is now ministering in this heavenly temple on behalf of humanity (Heb 8:1–2; Rev 4–5; 11:19); (2) that in 1844, Christ entered the Most Holy Place of this heavenly temple, beginning the pre-Advent

Investigative Judgment, and is now, since that time, judging the dead and the living to prepare for his return, therefore, fulfilling the prophecy, the “hour of his judgment is come” (Dan 7:9–10; 8:14; 9:20–27; Rev 14:7).

11. _____ I believe that humanity is mortal (i.e., we do not possess an “immortal soul”) and that, at death, we do not immediately go to heaven or hell but sleep unconsciously in the grave, awaiting the resurrection at Christ’s return (Ps 13:3; Eccl 9:5–6; John 5:28–29; Acts 2:29, 34).

12. _____ I believe in the following: (1) the resurrection of the dead in Christ when Jesus returns (1 Thess 4:13–18); (2) the desolation of the earth and the binding of Satan on earth for 1,000 years (1 Thess 5:1–3; Jer 4:23–26; 25:30–33; Rev 20:1–3); (3) the righteous will be in heaven during the 1,000 years, reigning and judging with Christ (Rev 20:4); (4) the wicked will be resurrected and Satan will be loosed at the end of the 1,000 years (Rev 20:5, 7); (5) Satan, sin, evil, and the wicked will meet their final destruction in the lake of fire (i.e., hell) at the end of the 1,000 years (Rev 20:15; Mal 4:1–3); (6) the wicked will be entirely consumed, not burn forever in hell; and (7) God will create a new heaven and a new earth after this final destruction (Rev 21:1, 4–5).

13. _____ I believe that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19, 20; 10:31) and therefore will abstain from all forms of sexual immorality (Lev 18:1–30; 1 Cor 6:9–11, 18–20); consuming unclean meats (Gen 7:2; Lev 11; 2 Cor 6:17–18), blood, and fat (Lev 7:24–27; 17:10–12); and the use of alcohol (Prov 20:1; 23:29–33), tobacco, nicotine, caffeine, illegal drugs (Exod 20:13), and other addictive mind-altering substances (Acts 15:19–20). By God’s grace, I want to take advantage of the eight health principles in order to live a healthy life (3 John 2)—nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, temperance, air, rest, and trust in God.

14. _____ Through the power of Jesus, I desire to overcome the sinful ways of the world (1 John 2:14–17) in these ways: (1) by God’s grace, I will avoid, reading, watching, and listening to sinful things that the Bible condemns—my entertainment choices will follow the guidelines found in Phil 4:8 (Eph 5:19); (2) wanting to follow in the humble steps of Jesus, I will not wear jewelry or immodest clothing (1 Pet 2:21; 3:3–4; 1 Tim 2:9, 10).

15. _____ I believe that marriage between one man and one woman was God’s original plan in Eden which was affirmed by Jesus and should be formally recognized by the laws of the state (Gen 2:24; Heb 13:4). I will not be involved in a “common law” relationship (Matt 19:3–9; John 2:1–11).

16. _____ I believe that the Seventh-day Adventist® Church has been given the remnant message and mission of Bible prophecy, which is to prepare people for the second coming of Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the three angels’ messages (Rev 12:17; 14:6–16). I believe in church organization (1 Cor 12:28) and in the importance of church attendance and participation (Heb 10:25). I wish to follow the example of Jesus, who “as His custom was, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day” (Luke 4:16). I desire to be an active participant in the worldwide mission of the church, utilizing my unique spiritual gifts to edify the body of Christ and advance God’s kingdom (Matt 28:18–20; 2 Cor 12:4–11).

17. _____ I believe that Jesus has given spiritual gifts to his church, one of which is “the spirit of prophecy,” and I understand that the Seventh-day Adventist® Church recognizes this gift in the ministry of Ellen G. White (Rom 12:4–8; 1 Cor 12:9–11, 27–28; Eph 4:8, 11–16; Joel 2:28–29; Rev 12:17; 19:10).

18. _____ I believe that Jesus established the ordinances of foot-washing and celebrating the Lord's Supper, and it is my desire to participate in these special services in remembrance of him (John 13:1–17; 1 Cor 11:23–26).

19. _____ I believe in the biblical teaching of returning tithe and offerings and choose to faithfully return my tithe and offerings (Mal 3:8–10; Matt 23:23; 2 Cor 9:7–8). Desiring to be a good steward of all God has given me, it is my purpose to support the Lord's work according to my ability. As a steward, I will also refrain from gambling.

20. _____ I believe in baptism by immersion (Matt 3:16–17), which symbolizes the death and burial of my old life of sin and the resurrection of my new life in Jesus (Rom 6:3–6). It is my desire to surrender self to Jesus and follow him by being baptized (re-baptized) and become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church (Acts 2:41, 47; 19:1–5; 1 Cor 12:13).

My Purpose

Having surrendered myself fully to Jesus Christ and desiring to serve him here and to live with him forever, it is my declared purpose and desire to accept these principles of Bible truth and obey them by his grace and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _(_____) _____ Mobile Phone: _(_____) _____

E-mail: _____

Birth Date: _____

C. BAPTISMAL VOW

Below is the current baptismal vow and approved alternative vow, as voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

Baptismal Vow²

1. Do you believe there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons?
2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for your sins and believe that by God's grace through faith in His shed blood you are saved from sin and its penalty?
3. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior, believing that God, in Christ, has forgiven your sins and given you a new heart, and do you renounce the sinful ways of the world?
4. Do you accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, your Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and accept His promise of transforming grace and power to live a loving, Christ-centered life in your home and before the world?
5. Do you believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word, the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian? Do you covenant to spend time regularly in prayer and Bible study?
6. Do you accept the Ten Commandments as a transcript of the character of God and a revelation of His will? Is it your purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord and the memorial of Creation?
7. Do you look forward to the soon coming of Jesus and the blessed hope, when "this mortal shall ... put on immortality" [1 Cor. 15:54 KJV]? As you prepare to meet the Lord, will you witness to His loving salvation by using your talents in personal soul-winning endeavor to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing?
8. Do you accept the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts and believe that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church?

² See *ibid.*, 45–46.

9. Do you believe in Church organization? Is it your purpose to worship God and to support the Church through your tithes and offerings and by your personal effort and influence?

10. Do you believe that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and will you honor God by caring for it, avoiding the use of that which is harmful, and abstaining from all unclean foods; from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages; from the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption; and from the misuse of or trafficking in narcotics or other drugs?

11. Do you know and understand the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Do you purpose, by the grace of God, to fulfill His will by ordering your life in harmony with these principles?

12. Do you accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and desire to be so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of your sins?

13. Do you accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship? Do you desire to be a member of this local congregation of the world Church?

Alternative Vow³

1. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, and do you desire to live your life in a saving relationship with Him?

2. Do you accept the teachings of the Bible as expressed in the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and do you pledge by God's grace to live your life in harmony with these teachings?

3. Do you desire to be baptized as a public expression of your belief in Jesus Christ, to be accepted into the fellowship of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and to support the Church and its mission as a faithful steward by your personal influence, tithes and offerings, and a life of service?

³ Ibid., 46.

~SESSION VIII~

DEALING WITH OBJECTIONS

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

KEY



“¹⁵ ... [I]n your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶having a good conscience ...” (1 Pet 3:15–16 ESV).

“¹⁹ ‘... [D]o not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you’” (Matt 10:19–20 ESV).

A. OBJECTIONS GUARANTEED

When you are giving Bible studies with those who have not yet acquired an expanded knowledge of biblical truth, you will undoubtedly run into objections (e.g., financial, spiritual, social, doctrinal, etc.).



“When you are giving a series of Bible studies, people will raise questions regarding the new truths they are learning. ... Very few people make up their minds to accept truth and unite with the church without a struggle.”¹

Objections are _____ to making decisions for Christ and must be address. How are you supposed to deal with objections that are raised by your Bible study contact?

B. HOW DID JESUS RESPOND TO OBJECTIONS?

Jesus masterfully answered the questions, excuses, and objections of the people among whom he ministered.

As one of many examples, in Mark 12, one of the Jewish scribes of the law approached Jesus and asked him a question concerning the greatest commandment. Notice Jesus’s kind and biblical response.

¹ Ernestine and Mark A. Finley, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (n.p.: Hart Research Center, 2002), 85.

“²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:29–31 ESV).

In his response, Jesus quoted from two different passages in the Old Testament: Deut 6:4–5 and Lev 19:18.

The scribe responded positively, affirming Jesus’s answer.

“³² And the scribe said to him, ‘You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12: 32–33 ESV).

Jesus answered people’s objections by using passages of Scripture that he had _____ himself and stored in his heart through _____.

“¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You” (Ps 119:11 NKJV).

“The Savior patiently listened to people’s questions and kindly answered them from God’s word.”²

If we are to respond to the objections of others effectively, we should follow the example modeled by Jesus.

C. SEVEN POINTERS FOR RESPONDING TO OBJECTIONS

I. Discover what _____ him/her.

“You cannot help a person fully surrender to Jesus if you do not know what is keeping him/her from doing so. You cannot help a person overcome obstacles if you don’t know what they are.”³

“The sacred responsibility rests upon the minister to watch for souls as one that must give an account. He must interest himself in the souls for whom he labors, finding out all that perplexes and troubles them and hinders them from walking in the light of the truth.”⁴

Use diagnostic questioning to discover objections.

² Ibid., 85.

³ Ibid., 86.

⁴ Ellen G. White, “Address to Ministers,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 69.35 (August 30, 1892): 545.

- “Have you previously committed your life to Jesus?”
- “Do you have any questions about ... ?”
- “Have you thought about being baptized?”

2. Come _____ to your Bible study contacts.

“Many a laborer fails in his work because he does not come close to those who most need his help. With the Bible in hand, he should seek in a courteous manner to learn the objections which exist in the minds of those who are beginning to inquire, ‘What is truth?’ Carefully and tenderly should he lead and educate them, as pupils in a school.”⁵

“Getting close to your Bible study contacts will help them through the difficult time of meeting obstacles.”⁶

You will win the confidence of your Bible study contacts if you come close to them. This will make them feel _____ to share with you their feelings, concerns, and problems.

3. Never _____.

“Often, as you seek to present the truth, opposition will be aroused; but if you seek to meet the opposition with an argument you will only multiply it, and that you cannot afford to do. Hold to the affirmative. Angels of God are watching you, and they understand how to impress those whose opposition you refuse to meet with argument.”⁷

“Never argue—you may win the argument, but lose an interest. ... We strengthen arguments when we repeat them.”⁸



Instead, deal with obstacles in the following way.

- “I’m glad you told me how you feel about this. It is important to you, and I believe the Lord has the answer. Let us ask him to help us.”
- Then pray, asking the Lord for wisdom and an answer to the problem.
- Afterward, meet the objection with the word of God (if appropriate).

⁵ Idem, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 190.

⁶ Finley, *Light Your World for God*, 87.

⁷ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press (1855–1909), 9:147–148.

⁸ Finley, *Light Your World for God*, 88.

4. Avoid _____.

“The natural tendency is to meet an objection head-on, defending ourselves and attacking the questioner. Avoid at all costs the atmosphere of conflict, giving the individual the impression you desire to prove him or her wrong.”⁹

5. Expect _____ and do not be surprised by them.

We should expect questions. Whenever someone is exposed to something new there are always questions. Simply have patience with them and create an affirming atmosphere. Welcome questions and objections gracefully.¹⁰

Objections may indicate the following.

- “The person has genuine questions that loom large in his/her mind.”¹¹
- “The person has not yet fully made up his/her mind on the topic.”¹²
- “The person may be using an objection to defend himself/herself.”¹³

6. Keep your heart uplifted in _____.

“If the worker keeps his heart uplifted in prayer, God will help him to speak the right word at the right time.”¹⁴

“The Holy Spirit will lead you to give the right answers to the questions you are asked. Sometimes you will be amazed at what comes out of your mouth. You will give answers that you did not realize you could give. Texts you have stored in your mind will be brought to your memory. Truths you have learned through the years will come back to your mind. God will give you answers.”¹⁵

7. Give _____, _____ answers.

Bonus: Try to answer objections _____ they are even raised.

You can do that by dealing with common objections through the Bible study.

“Once an individual has made a statement or offered an objection, he [or she] likes to defend that point.”¹⁶

⁹ Ibid., 89.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ White, *Gospel Workers*, 120.

¹⁵ Finley, *Light Your World for God*, 92.

¹⁶ Ibid., 90.

D. AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR RESPONDING TO OBJECTIONS

The F-F-F Principle

F = _____: “I understand how you *feel*.”

“People want to know that you understand their feelings. They don’t want to feel odd or strange when they express themselves.”¹⁷

F = _____: “Many others in your present situation have *felt* exactly the same way.”

“People also want to know they are not alone with their question or in their feelings. You may want to briefly tell a story or use an example of how you or someone close to you had the same questions.”¹⁸

F = _____: “But they have *found* ...”

“Share concrete, practical solutions others have found” from the Bible.¹⁹

E. SEVEN STEPS FOR RESPONDING TO OBJECTIONS

Step 1: _____ carefully to each objection.

a. Active Listening with EAR

“How do you listen? The obvious answer is with your ears. The word **EAR** provides an acronym that can be helpful in remembering what makes effective listening.”²⁰

E = _____ (i.e., body language)

A = _____ (i.e., focus)

R = _____ (i.e., reflection)

“In a world where so few listen with sincere interest in one another, what a rare and welcome find a genuine listener would be. For a Christian seeking entrance into another’s life, here is the key. Sincere listening says eloquently I care about you. It’s a matter of

¹⁷ Ibid., 89.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Mark A. Finley, *Persuasion: How to Help People Decide for Jesus* (), 61.

deliberately switching channels to guide the conversation into other people's interest. It means forfeiting the right to talk about yourself. It means cultivating listening skills—looking your friend in the eye, paying attention to what he says, asking pertinent questions, nodding, smiling, and commenting briefly.”²¹

b. LUV Them

L = _____ actively

U = _____ reflectively

V = _____ empathetically

Step 2: Ask for the _____ for the objection.

Step 3: Show the person you understand the objection by _____ it in your own words (i.e., paraphrasing).

Step 4: Get a _____ that, if the objection could be removed, he/she would make a decision immediately.

Step 5: _____ to God for the answer.

Step 6: Meet objections with relevant _____.

Step 7: Invite the individual to make a _____.

F. CONCLUSION

“Remember, not all will surrender and turn their lives over to the Lord. Our Saviour Himself suffered grief because of those who, though they were called, still chose to turn away (John 6:66). Nevertheless, this did not keep Him from continuing His efforts to reach those who might eventually respond and accept Him as Lord of their lives.”²²

²¹ Wayne McDill, *Making Friends for Christ: A Practical Approach to Relational Evangelism* (n.p.: Baptist Sunday School Board, 1980), 59.

²² Louis R. Torres, *Gaining Decisions for Christ A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2001), 109.

PRACTICE 1

Practice answering the common objections below.

Objection 1: “I will lose my job if I choose to keep the Sabbath.”

Objection 2: “I can’t leave the church at which I’m currently a member. I’m too involved there.”

Objection 3: “There’s no way Christ will forgive me. I’m too great of a sinner.”

PRACTICE 2

Practice answering the doctrinal objections below.

Doctrinal Objection 1: “Why should we keep the Ten Commandments? Doesn’t Col 2:14 tell us that the law of God was nailed to the cross?”

Doctrinal Objection 1: “Didn’t the Sabbath change to Sunday in the New Testament? After all, we find the disciples worship on the first day of the week in 1 Cor 16:1–4.”

*Much of the material in this session has been compiled from Ernestine and Mark A. Finley’s book, *Light Your World for God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church into a Powerful Bible Study Ministry* (n.p.: Hart Research Center, 2002) and Louis R. Torres’s book, *Gaining Decisions for Christ: A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2001). These books are excellent resources for any soul-winner and may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com.

~SUPPLEMENT VIII~

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., MDiv

A. ECONOMIC OBSTACLES

“I can’t make a living if I keep the Sabbath.”

- Matt 6:25–26, 33
- Ps 37:3
- Isa 65:13–14
- Ps 37:25
- Ps 34:10
- Deut 30:19–20
- Job 23:10–12

“My husband has threatened to withdraw his support if I unite with you.”

- Ps 27:10
- Matt 10:37–39

“I will lose my job if I keep the Sabbath.”

- Matt 16:25–26
- 1 Tim 4:8
- Ps 119:72
- Deut 8:18; 28:3–6

“If I have to pay tithe in order to join your church, I don’t believe I would make it financially.”

- Mal 3:6–8

B. SOCIAL OBSTACLES

“I don’t believe I need to join a church.”

- Acts 2:47
- 1 Cor 12:12–13
- Eph 1:22–23
- 1 John 2:15
- Heb 10:25
- Lev 23:1, 3
- Luke 4:16

“I can’t leave my church.”

- John 12:26–27, 42–43
- Rev 18:4
- Matt 7:21–27
- John 10:14–16, 27
- Acts 2:37–41
- Matt 24:1; 16:18

“I’ll wait for my husband (wife, friend, etc.) so we can accept it together.”

- Ezek 14:20; 18:20
- Rom 14:2

“It will cause division in my home if I stand for this teaching.”

- Luke 12:49–53
- 1 Kgs 18:17–18

“People will talk about me.”

- John 17:14
- Luke 6:22–23, 26
- Prov 29:25
- Prov 18:24

“My preacher and my friends advise me against this.”

- 1 Kgs 13:1–26
- Acts 4:19; 5:29

“My friends will ridicule me.”

- John 15:19
- Mark 8:34
- Jas 4:4

“My husband (or wife, father, mother, brother, sister, etc.) will oppose me.”

- Matt 10:34–37
- Luke 14:25–27
- Luke 12:49–53
- Matt 19:2

C. SPIRITUAL OBSTACLES

“It is inconvenient to follow the doctrine of Sabbath-keeping.”

- Matt 16:24; 10:38
- Heb 7:25
- Isa 1:18

“I am too great a sinner.”

- 1 Tim 1:15–17
- 1 John 1:9
- John 8:11
- Rom 6:3–7
- Rom 3:23
- Isa 44:22
- Prov 28:13

“I am afraid I can’t hold out.”

- Jude 24
- Phil 1:6
- Rom 8:37–39
- 1 Pet 1:7

“I can’t live up to the truth.”

- 1 Cor 10:13
- 2 Cor 8:12
- John 1:12

“There is one thing (jewelry, tobacco, etc.) I cannot give up.”

- Matt 6:24; 19:16–22
- Luke 14:33
- Matt 13:45, 46
- 1 Cor 8:13

“No, not now.”

- Prov 27:1
- 2 Cor 6:2
- Heb 3:13
- Gen 6:3
- Isa 55:6
- Acts 22:16

“I will wait until I have the right kind of feeling.”

- Isa 48:18
- 1 John 2:3

“This step will cost me too much.”

- Luke 18:28–30
- Matt 16:24–27

“I am afraid.”

- Isa 41:10
- Ps 119:57–60

“God is love. He will save me anyway.”

- John 14:15
- John 8:31–32
- 1 John 5:2–3

“I am too old to change my ways.”

- Matt 20:6–7
- Gen 6:3

“I will wait until the Spirit convinces me.”

- Acts 5:32
- John 16:13
- Ps 119:14

“Some things are not clear yet.”

- John 12:35
- Ps 119:60, 105
- John 13:6–8

*Much of the material in this supplement has been compiled from Louis R. Torres’ book, *Gaining Decisions for Christ: A How-to Manual* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2001). This book is an excellent resource for any soul-winner and may be purchased at your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or online at www.adventistbookcenter.com.

Do you desire to be a soul-winner but feel unprepared and anxious? In this *Sharing Your Faith* workbook, you will learn how to become an effective witness for God with Jesus uplifted as the model evangelist. During this seminar, you will discover how to awaken spiritual interest in others, plug into the power of the Holy Spirit, share your personal testimony, prepare and present Bible studies, and lead people to accept biblical truth and make decisions for eternity. Your fears of inadequacy, failure, and rejection will be replaced with the courage needed to confidently share Christ and his Word with others.

MATTHEW L. TINKHAM, JR., MDiv (ANDREWS UNIVERSITY)

is a pastor in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® who is currently pursuing a PhD in Religion, Theological Studies, at the Seventh-day Adventist® Theological Seminary, Andrews University. His areas of specialty are systematic and historical theology and New Testament studies. He has traveled nationally and internationally, presenting on the doctrines of God and salvation. Matthew has been sharing his faith with others in personal and public evangelism settings since his conversion as a teenager. He enjoys equipping and empowering others to be witnesses for God and his love. His greatest passion is leading people to embrace the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ and the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12. He is proudly a native of southeastern Tennessee and is married to Mariesa (Swisher) Tinkham, MSW (Southern Adventist University), a talented musician and licensed clinical social worker, who is currently pursuing a PhD in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences at Western Michigan University. In their free time, Matthew and Mariesa enjoy international travel and outdoor recreational activities, such as hiking, backpacking, and kayaking, especially in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

