

SIMPLY
sharing **JESUS**



SIMPLY *sharing* JESUS

Before He ascended to Heaven, Jesus gave His followers a basic command for what to do next. These words have served as “marching orders” for generations of Christians: *“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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Many of us have taken these simple instructions, known as the Great Commission, and overcomplicated them. We’ve made sharing our faith an intimidating and daunting task. But it doesn’t have to be.

Whether you regularly share your faith with others or have always found reasons not to, this course is designed to get back to basics and ultimately help you simply share Jesus.

LAYING *the* GROUNDWORK

Maybe you're afraid to share your faith because you don't know what to say. Or maybe you're sharing the Gospel, but you aren't seeing any results; people aren't committing their lives to Christ. Are you wondering if you're doing something wrong?

Know your role

Remember this: You can't open someone's heart to the Gospel—only God can, by His Spirit. Our job isn't to save people. It's simply to point them to the Truth and let God do the rest.

The Apostle Paul wasn't eloquent, but God used him because he depended on the Holy Spirit for guidance (see 1 Corinthians 2:1-5). God guided many others in the Bible who felt unqualified, like Moses and Jonah. Often, God does not call the equipped; He equips the called. As Christians, we are all called to share what Christ has done for us. The Great Commission makes that clear. The good news is that we don't go into it alone. We have this encouragement from Jesus: *"Do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say"* (Luke 12:11-12).

Know your opportunity

So who should you share this message of hope with? God has placed you in a unique position—your very own mission field! Have you ever heard the expression "Bloom where you're planted"? That's what God wants us to do with the Gospel—make the most of our circumstances and reflect His love to everyone around us. You don't have to be a pastor or

missionary to tell people about Jesus, either; just think of all the people around you in need of hope.

Keep your eyes open for people you can talk to and listen for ways you can connect the conversation to Christ. Catch up with a family member by phone or text. Use social media to encourage a friend. Let a co-worker know you are praying for him or her. Take dinner to a neighbor in need. Ask a cashier how his or her day is going and really listen. Be intentional about forming relationships with people around you.

Know your audience

As you share with people, remember who you're talking to and use language they will understand. The words and phrases you often hear in church might seem like a foreign language to a non-Christian. Avoid clichés and stick with phrases you can explain using Bible verses. Try to keep it simple.

Your friends or loved ones may not tell you they don't understand, so look for visual clues that say they're confused. Feel free to ask if they understand what you're saying.

WHAT *do* I DO?

Live a godly life.

The Bible teaches that we should *"always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"* (1 Peter 3:15, NIV). People seldom come to faith in Christ through arguments and debates. Instead, they are often won by discovering who Jesus Christ really is and the difference He can make in their lives.

One of the best ways to share your faith and point others to Jesus is to live a godly life. Show those close to you that you care—spend time with them, help meet their needs, and offer to listen when they have problems. You might not be able to answer all of their questions, but they can't deny the reality of what Christ has done in your life. If you find this is hard to do, perhaps God is speaking to you about your own need to walk more closely with Him every day.

Also, make a habit of reading the Bible, praying, and going to church. These things should be done not for attention or for the sake of doing them, but to help you grow in your own faith. Your passion for Christ will help others see that there's something different about you, and they'll want to know what it is. You can also reflect Christ through kind words, patience, a gentle temperament, love, and respect. You can be evidence of God's love to those around you.

Pray for open hearts and open doors.

The most important part of sharing your faith is to pray for those you interact with. If you can't think of anyone who isn't a Christian, pray for God to place someone in your life who needs Him. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. As Billy Graham once said, "Prayer is crucial in evangelism: ... No matter how logical our arguments or how fervent our appeals, our words will accomplish nothing unless God's Spirit prepares the way." Pray for the opportunity to share, the words to speak, and open hearts for those who hear.

Speak.

Living a godly life is essential for sharing our faith. But people need to hear the Gospel—to hear that God loves them, Christ died for them, and they can have eternal life. Romans 10:13-14 says, "*Everyone who calls on the name*

of the Lord will be saved.' How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"

When you share the Gospel, be ready to also share true stories of God's power in your own life. No matter how ordinary your life may seem, you have a story to tell, and you never know what it can mean to someone until you share it. Jesus often talked in parables so people could better grasp God's plans, instructions, and power. In the same way, you can use personal experiences and stories to relate to others and tell them about Christ.

Keep in mind that you may only have a few minutes. Try writing down your story—and focus on a few key points. Then practice telling it so it comes naturally. These questions may help you narrow your story down to three minutes or so:

- **What was life like before you accepted Christ?**
- **How did you receive Christ?** What did you hear? How did you respond? Why did you choose to put your trust in Christ? Try to mention a Bible verse or two but be careful not to overwhelm your listener.
- **How has life changed since you accepted Christ?** It's OK if you stumbled or struggled in the past; in fact, your walk with Christ won't be free from setbacks until you see Him face-to-face in heaven. The important thing is to be honest and relatable. Scripture is filled with stories of God's people who stumbled along the way, and He still used them in powerful ways.

The GOSPEL in 4 SIMPLE STEPS

The Gospel itself isn't complicated. When you are explaining the facts, it may help to draw it on paper for your friend. On the top of your page, draw a graphic of God on one side of a chasm and us on the other. As you draw, share Bible verses that explain how the separation took place. Show how the cross bridges the chasm between God and us and how we can cross the bridge through faith in Christ. Talk to your friend about these four simple truths:

1. God's plan—peace and life.

God loves you and wants you to experience the peace and life He offers. The Bible says, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16, NKJV). He has a plan for you.

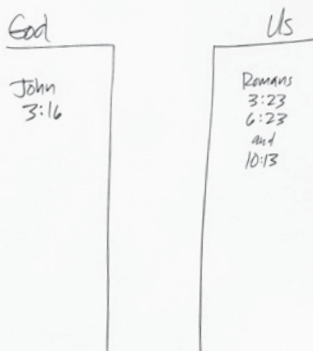
2. Our problem—separation

from God. By nature, we are all separated from God. The Bible says, "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23, NKJV). He is holy, but we are human and don't measure up to His perfect standard. We are sinful, and "*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23, NKJV).

1.

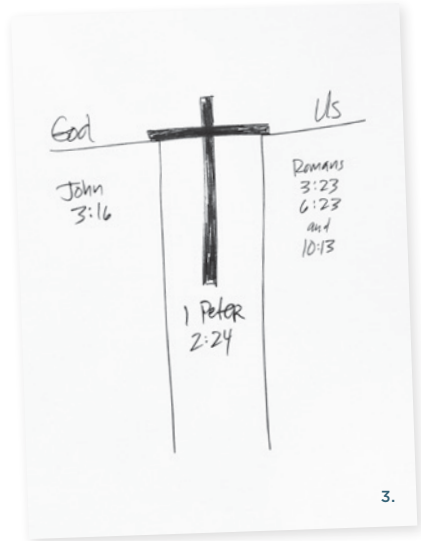


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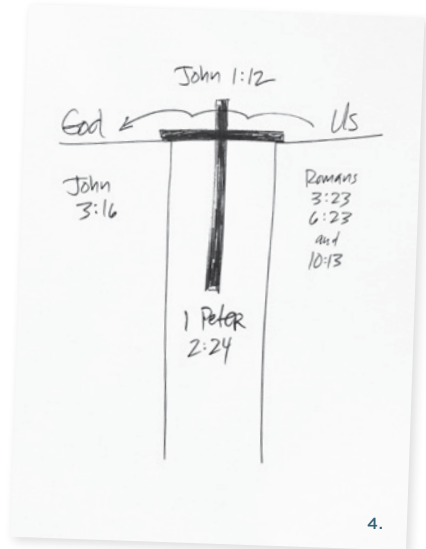
3. God's remedy—

the cross. God's love bridges the separation between you and Him. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the grave, He paid the penalty for your sins. The Bible says, *"He himself bore our sins' in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; 'by his wounds you have been healed'"* (1 Peter 2:24, NIV).



4. Our response—

receive Christ. You cross the bridge into God's family when you accept Christ's free gift of salvation. The Bible says, *"But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God"* (John 1:12).



To receive Christ, a person needs to do four things:

- Admit that you are a sinner and you need the Savior.
- Be willing to turn from your sins, and ask God to forgive you.
- Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.
- Invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit. Romans 10:13 says, *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

Here’s a prayer you can pray to receive Christ:

Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I want to turn from my sins, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe He died for my sins and that You raised Him to life. I want Him to come into my heart and to take control of my life. I want to trust Jesus as my Savior and follow Him as my Lord from this day forward. In Jesus’ Name, amen.

FOLLOW-UP

If your friend sincerely prays, he or she now has a new life in Jesus Christ! You will want to share some Bible verses (such as 1 John 5:12–13) to give your friend assurance of his or her new standing before God.

Finally, when you help a person in coming to faith in Christ, remember that this individual is a spiritual baby (1 Peter 2:2). In order to grow, an infant needs nurture and care. The same is true spiritually; encourage your friend to begin to read the Bible and pray regularly. Help him or her find a Bible-teaching church in order to have fellowship with other believers in Christ and continue to grow.

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