

This Each One Reach One Lenten Devotional is provided for your personal use in preparing your heart to understand God's calling for you to reach out with His Good News to those He sends to you.

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May God bless your use of this devotional and of the studies you find at [www.biblestoriesforadults.com](http://www.biblestoriesforadults.com).

In Christ,  
Kurt

The pages of this devotional are formatted for double-sided printing in Landscape mode on standard 8.5x11 paper.

They are further placed in an order designed for you to fold these double-sided pages into a book that will then have all of the days in correct order.

The first couple of pages are intended to be printed on a heavy-bond paper in order to serve as the devotional cover.

A separate version of this devotional is available with the days in sequential order for single-sided printing in Landscape mode on standard 8.5x11 paper.

# Devotions for Lent

*I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven;  
whatever doors you lock on earth shall be locked in heaven;  
and whatever doors you open on earth  
shall be opened in heaven!*

Matthew 16:19  
(Living Bible)



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## The “Each One Reach One” Logo

This logo was created by the Each One Reach One Task Force of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Nassau Bay, Texas in 1999.

### The Key

A symbol of entry, not by anyone but only by those who possess the key – entry into heaven. You possess the key and you can open that heavenly door for others.

### The Cross

Gloria Dei’s Worship Center is a recognizable landmark with a 118-ft cross in the center of brick wing walls. The cross stands as a beacon to those who are lost. Chosen by the Father, the Spirit holds us in His wings as we Lift High the Cross of Jesus to others.

### The Slogan

“Each One Reach One” is more than a catchy phrase. It is the purpose and direction we all share as a body of believers reaching out to the lost who surround us.

### The Heart

People matter to God. Every soul matters. God has given us compassion to touch other hearts. **Hell and heaven are real, and real people go there.**

## The Keys of the Kingdom

God has given the keys of the Kingdom to each one of us - not just to pastors and specially trained people. He has purposely placed each of us in the midst of people who need these keys - our families, our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers...

All we need to do is to share what our faith means to us and invite others to join us through the door Christ has opened. God takes the responsibility for opening hearts if we will only share the keys.  
(Acts 14:27)

The keys of the Kingdom can open the doors of heaven for those to whom we give them. Or, they can lock the doors of heaven for those to whom we withhold them.

God gives us opportunities to reach out to others every day. To whom will you hand your key?

### The Keys Give Us ...

1. Authority – We have the right and responsibility of being on a mission from God.  
(Matthew 28:18)
2. Mission – Our purpose as chosen ones of God is to reach out and bring others into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.  
(Matthew 28:19-20)
3. Empowerment – His presence enables us to be the means through which He does His work.  
(Matthew 28:20)

## Top Twelve Response Questions

1. What unique S.H.A.P.E.\* has God given **me** to enable and empower me to personally reach others with His gospel?
2. As Christ's fisher of men, do I go out and cast the net of the gospel or do I expect "fish" to just jump in the boat?
3. Am I willing to step back and allow the Spirit to speak through me? Or, do I feel I need to control what I say?
4. Who are the people in my life who do not have a living relationship with Jesus Christ?
5. What unique relationships has God placed me into that may be for the specific purpose of directing these people to Christ?
6. How can I better encourage opportunities to witness, recognize them and respond to them?
7. What are ways I can build my trust relationships with others which will eventually open doors to sharing the gospel?
8. What are ways I can begin the process of leading specific people in my Web of Influence to Jesus?
9. How can I help meet the needs of someone in my Web of Influence to use as a bridge towards meeting his deeper need of a spiritual relationship with Christ?
10. What opportunities has God prepared for me to witness to the people around me?
11. How can I gain the support of other Christians in my efforts to share the gospel?
12. Am I willing to take the opportunities God prepares for me, present the message that He gives to me and then allow Him to work on hearts and produce the results?

\* S.H.A.P.E.: Spiritual Gifts, **H**eart, **A**bilities, **P**ersonality, **E**xperience

## Each One Reach One Devotions for Lent

### Week

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

Holy Week

### Topics

#### **Is It a Sin Not to Reach Out?**

*Yes, But God Forgives Us When We Repent*

#### **Why Should We Care About Reaching Out?**

*'Cause God Said So — The Great Commission*

#### **Why Should We Care About Reaching Out?**

*'Cause You Care That Heaven and Hell Are Real and Real People Go There*

#### **How Should I Approach Reaching Out?**

*Pray and Just Do It*

#### **Who Should I Reach Out To?**

*Your Web of Influence*

#### **What If My Web Is Full of Christians?**

*Add to Your Web Using Natural and Special Bridges*

#### **Where Can I Get Help?**

*God Sets It Up, Provides Others and Is In Control*

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Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The practice of sprinkling ashes on the heads of repentant Christians on Ash Wednesday began over 1100 years ago in Gaul (Spain).

Where do we see an even earlier use of using dust and ashes to symbolize repentance before God?

Job 42:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Job repented when he considered his sinfulness in contrast to the holiness of God. And yet, God considered Job to be the most righteous and blameless man on earth:

Job 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Job feel he needed to repent despite a lifetime of “living right” with God?

Isaiah 64:6 \_\_\_\_\_

If even our best efforts fall short of meeting God’s standards, how can we hope to be acceptable in God’s sight?

1 John 1:8-2:2 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- What sins have I committed which I need to confess to God and ask for His forgiveness?
- What righteous acts have I done or do I do that I am most proud of?
- How do these righteous acts fall short of God’s standards?
- How does it feel to know that God loves me so much that He sent His Son to pay for my sins in order to purify me from all unrighteousness?

*O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended you and justly deserved your punishment now and forever. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray you of your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being. Amen.*

### **Each One Reach One**

Tomorrow is Easter — the day we rejoice and celebrate God’s demonstration of His immeasurable love for us by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to conquer sin, death and the power of the grave in order that we may live eternally with Him.

It’s a great story. In fact, it’s the greatest story ever. It’s a story that should fill us with such great joy that we are unable to contain ourselves and find we must shout it from the mountaintops:

Acts 4:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 42:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_

But we don’t have to go to the mountaintops to tell the world. God put the world around us so that we can simply share this great story with the people in our lives. What did the first people who learned about Jesus’ resurrection do in their joy?

Matthew 28:8 \_\_\_\_\_

We rejoice and share God’s message with others because of what it means for us and what it can mean for them. As we reach out and guide the lost to Christ, the heavens rejoice:

Luke 15:7, 10 \_\_\_\_\_

So what will you do in response to what God has done for you and to His call to go and share His message (Matthew 28:18-20)? Will you remain silent? Or, will you let Him open your mouth so you will be a sign to them?

Ezekiel 24:27 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- Am I filled with joy knowing that God loved me enough to send His Son to die for my sins and rise to give me eternal life with Him?
- When and how will I share this great message with those who need it?
- Will I allow God to open my mouth to present His message and be a sign to others that He is the Lord?

*Loving God, I rejoice as I remember the great plan you fulfilled through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus the Christ. You carried out that plan for the sake of Your great love for me. Forgive my past silence and open my mouth today that I may bring others to share in this great gift of salvation. In the name of He who conquered death for all. Amen.*

### **Each One Reach One**

We have seen so far in the story of Peter and Cornelius that God prepares opportunities for us to witness, He prepares the hearts of those He gives us, He prepares us to take the opportunities, He provides others to help us and He gives us the message to present.

He doesn't stop there. He also produces the results. How did God produce the results when Peter witnessed to Cornelius?

Acts 10:44 \_\_\_\_\_

We mentioned on Monday that God has a greater purpose in this situation in His intent to push the early Christians to take the gospel to Gentiles (non-Jews) also. How did God produce the results of His greater plan?

Acts 10:45-48 \_\_\_\_\_

How did the other Christians back in Jerusalem feel about the great step Peter had taken?

Acts 11:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Did they feel differently when Peter shared with them how God had worked through this experience?

Acts 11:4, 15-18 \_\_\_\_\_

How did God use this further to produce greater results?

Acts 11:19-24 \_\_\_\_\_

How did God build on this to produce even greater results?

Acts 11:25-26; 13:2-3 \_\_\_\_\_

What is, therefore, the important lesson for us?

1 Corinthians 3:6-9 \_\_\_\_\_

**My Response**

- Have I approached God's call to bring others into a living relationship with Him as if the results were up to me?
- Am I willing to take the opportunities God prepares for me, present the message that He gives to me and then allow Him to work on hearts and produce the results?
- When have I seen God produce results which are far greater than results for which I would have aimed?

*Almighty God, You are in control of all things. Forgive me when I have tried to take control of situations which are much better left in Your hands. Guide me as I work as Your instrument of outreach and build my patience so that I may trust You for the results. Amen.*

Yesterday we looked at our need to confess and repent of the sins we commit against God. Jesus gave us an everyday example of sinning and then turning from that sin (repenting):

Matthew 21:28-29 \_\_\_\_\_

The first son recognized his sin of refusing to do his father's will, repented of it and returned to obedience. How did his brother sin against his father's will after first accepting his command?

Matthew 21:30 \_\_\_\_\_

The second son was guilty of a sin of omission. In another example, how did Samuel recognize that by failing to do something he would be guilty of a sin of omission?

1 Samuel 12:23-24 \_\_\_\_\_

Is it really wrong to not do something when you can? Or, was Samuel's situation out of the ordinary?

James 4:17 \_\_\_\_\_

**My Response**

- How have I sinned recently by not doing the good that I know I ought to do?
- How have I sinned by not working in the Father's vineyard when He has made His will clear to me?
- How important is it to me that God not only forgives me when I confess and repent of sins which I commit, but also of sins which omit His will?

*Most merciful God, I confess that I am by nature sinful and unclean. I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what I have done and by what I have left undone. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved my neighbor as myself. I justly deserve your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. Forgive me, renew me, and lead me, so that I may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

Friday

## True Repentance

Week 1

God forgives us when we confess and repent of our sins of commission and our sins of omission.

What does it mean to repent of our sins? Does repenting mean that we are sorry for what we have done and what we have left undone?

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Being sorry for our sins leads us to repent of them. So, what does it mean to repent of our sins?

2 Chronicles 7:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Ezekiel 33:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Repenting of our sins means turning away from them and committing ourselves to not repeating and living in them. Jesus calls us to repent so that we can join Him in His kingdom:

Matthew 4:17 \_\_\_\_\_

How does God work through our repentance to refresh and bless us with life in His kingdom?

Acts 3:19-21, 26 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Am I truly sorry for the sins I have committed or omitted, including those I identified Wednesday and Thursday?
- Knowing that these sins disappoint and upset God, am I sorrowful as God intends? (Read through Psalm 51)
- Has this sorrow led me to true repentance?
- Do I intend to continue in these sins, or will I – with God’s help – separate myself from these sins from now on?

*Almighty and everlasting God, because you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent, create in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily repenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

Thursday

## God Provides the Message

Holy Week

God was active in a number of ways to place Peter in an opportunity to share his faith with Cornelius. How receptive were the people to whom Peter was taken?

Acts 10:24-27 \_\_\_\_\_

God had prepared Peter for this opportunity and had prepared receptive hearts in a large gathering. Did Peter immediately respond to the opportunity to share the gospel?

Acts 10:28-29 \_\_\_\_\_

Was Peter really that stupid? After being clearly presented with a God-give opportunity to share his faith, Peter still wouldn’t take it. Does this sound like you or me?

The mission God has given us is too important for us to miss His opportunities. How did God wake Peter up?

Acts 10:30-33 \_\_\_\_\_

Peter obviously had not prepared a message for these people. Besides, this dumb fisherman wouldn’t know how to explain that Jesus was the Messiah to a bunch of non-Jews. How did God provide Peter with the message?

Acts 10:34-43 \_\_\_\_\_

How was Peter able to give such a powerful and pertinent witness in such an impromptu and confusing opportunity?

Luke 19:39-40 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- What opportunities has God given me to share my faith which I didn’t recognize until they had passed?
- When has God give me witnessing opportunities which I didn’t recognize at first, but then did before they passed?
- How did I respond to these opportunities?
- Have I been able to trust God to give me His message, or have I tried to take control?
- When have I seen God provide His message through me or someone else?

*Father of truth, I praise You for revealing and entrusting to me the truth of Your mystery. Continue to present me with opportunities to share these truths with others and work through me to present your message, not mine. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

Wednesday

## God Provides Others

Holy Week

Just as God works through us to accomplish His will, He also works through others to support and assist us as we do His work. How did God use other people to help bring Peter to Cornelius?

Acts 10:4-5, 17-22 \_\_\_\_\_

God used these men to get Peter to Cornelius. How did God use others to support Peter in his controversial visit?

Acts 10:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Most importantly, God provides others to work together with us as we share His gospel with others. As Paul explained, we are fellow workers and co-ambassadors for Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Even Jesus enlisted the help of disciples during His ministry on earth. He also taught that we are intended to work together:

Matthew 18:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul understood this and worked with many others to bring people to Jesus. Many of his letters close with a listing of people working with him at the time. Look at an example of people who worked with Paul in Corinth:

Acts 18:1-5, 7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

None of us are perfect. If the only view your friend has of life in Christ is you, it will be a limited view. Bring other Christians into relationships with your friends and let God also work through your partners in the gospel:

Philippians 1:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- How can I support other Christians in their efforts to share the gospel?
- How can I gain the support of other Christians in my efforts to share the gospel?
- What Christians can I introduce to people in my Web of Influence to help as fellow workers?
- What specific needs or opportunities in my unchurched friend's life can be met with the help of other partners in the gospel?

*God my Father, thank you for placing other Christians around my life in Your Son's body, the Church. Thank you for the encouragement they provide as I grow spiritually in You. Help me to see them and use them as fellow workers as I reach out to others in Your need. Help me likewise to be an effective partner in the gospel for them. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

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Saturday

## The Fruit of Repentance

Week 1

The forgiveness Jesus gives us when we confess and repent of our sins sets us free from the guilt of our sin. This freedom sanctifies us (helps us to live more like Christ) and brings us the ultimate benefit. What is this ultimate benefit which God offers when we turn to Him?

Romans 6:20-23 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul says that we become slaves of God when we are set free from sin. As slaves of God we receive tremendous benefits, but we also are given responsibilities to do His work. How important is it that we take these responsibilities seriously?

Luke 3:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_

In John's vision, the church in Ephesus had become complacent and neglected to share Christ's love and salvation with those who needed it. How did God respond to their sins of omission from not sharing the gospel with others?

Revelations 2:4-5 \_\_\_\_\_

How has God intervened to help His people (us) remain faithful to the responsibility He has given us to share His ultimate benefit with others?

Ephesians 4:4-6, 11-13 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Do I produce fruit in keeping with repentance? How is it evident?
- Have I become complacent in my Christian walk and forsaken God's first love of bringing people to Him?
- Do I recognize the responsibilities God has given me as one of His chosen, or do I feel that sharing the gospel is the job of pastors, church staff or certain other Christians?
- What unique SHAPE has God given **me** to enable and empower me to personally reach others with His gospel?

*Loving Father, I praise and thank You for the tremendous benefits You offer to me through the saving work of Your Son. Forgive me for the times I have neglected opportunities You have provided for me to share these benefits with others. Empower me with the gifts of your Spirit to do Your work in the world in which You have placed me. Amen.*

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Sunday

## Fishers of Men

Week 2

Jesus spent three years preparing His disciples for the responsibilities they would be given after He was gone. Before He ascended, He left them with final instructions. Because these instructions were given not only to the apostles, but also the church at large and to each of us individually, we call them The Great Commission.

Each of the gospels, though they vary in wording, conclude with The Great Commission. Even the book of Acts begins on the same note. We will look at each of these this week. The most commonly quoted form of The Great Commission is from Matthew:

Matthew 28:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

The command to go and make disciples of every nation was far beyond what anyone could expect of this group of 11 simple men. Was this calling to bring people to Christ a new concept for these men?

Matthew 4:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that Jesus said He would **make** them fishers of men. Fishers of men are made, not born. How did Jesus make these regular men become fishers of men?

Matthew 10:5-7, 32-33 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Do I accept Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples as a command He has given to me personally?
- What does it mean to be a fisher of men? Do I go out and cast the net of the gospel or do I expect "fish" to just jump into the boat?
- Jesus taught His disciples how to fish for men. Do I read and study His "Fishing Manual" to understand how to cast and reel?
- Jesus sent out the apostles before the gospel message was complete and before they had a clear understanding of Jesus' purpose. What does this mean to me when I feel inadequate about sharing my faith?

*Father of our Savior, I thank You for calling me among all people on earth to be a fisher of men for You. Forgive me when I feel inadequate or use excuses for not sharing Your great message. Work Your Spirit through me to reach others despite my inadequacies. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

Tuesday

## God Prepares Us

Holy Week

Sometimes we plant. Sometimes we till. Sometimes we water.  
Sometimes we reap the harvest.

Only God knows the heart of people. So, how can we know whether we are to plant, till, water or reap?

Matthew 10:19b-20 \_\_\_\_\_

God not only prepares the opportunities and the hearts of our friends, but He also prepares us. How did God prepare Stephen for the great witness he would later make before the Sanhedrin?

Acts 6:3-5a, 8-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes God needs to hit us with His proverbial 2x4 to get us to do the work for which He has prepared us. How did God use His 2x4 on Paul?

Acts 22:3-16, 21 \_\_\_\_\_

We saw yesterday that God prepared the heart of Cornelius to receive the gospel from Peter. Peter would have a problem with this because, as an obedient Jew, he would have nothing to do with unclean Gentiles. How did God put His 2x4 to work on Peter?

Acts 10:9-16 \_\_\_\_\_

Did God's 2x4 do its job? Did Peter get the message? Or, did God have to work on him further?

Acts 10:17-20 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- When has God obviously prepared me to do His work?
- How did it turn out when I followed His direction?
- When has God had to use His 2x4 to get my attention?
- Will I recognize that God has prepared me to respond today to an opportunity to share my faith with someone whose heart He has prepared?

*God Almighty, You have prepared my life in many ways to do Your work. I give myself to You to be Your ambassador to those whose hearts You have prepared. Take me to them. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

Monday

## God Prepares Hearts

Holy Week

God not only sets things in place to give us opportunities to share His gospel with those who need it, He also prepares the hearts of those He places before us.

When God prepares hearts, he prepares them to receive the type of gardening needed at the time. We don't always get to harvest. Sometimes we need to plant seeds, water, cultivate, fertilize, etc. Jesus blessed His apostles by allowing them to participate in the harvest:

John 4:35-38 \_\_\_\_\_

An example of people whose hearts were prepared to receive witnessing at various points in their journey to Christ occurred when Paul first reached Ephesus. How did God specially prepare the hearts of these men to receive Paul's witness?

Acts 19:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_

Another example of God's preparations can be found when God pushed the early Christians beyond witnessing only to Jews so they would also reach out to Gentiles (non-Jews). How did God prepare the heart of a Roman soldier from Italy to receive the gospel?

Acts 10:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

How did God go further to prepare the opportunity for Peter to witness to Cornelius?

Acts 10:3-8 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Have I felt that my goal in responding to an opportunity to witness is to collect a harvest, even if the person is not ripe?
- When have I responded to an opportunity to share my faith only to be disappointed by an apparent lack of effect?
- Can I accept that these situations may have had significant impacts which I could not detect?
- Can I trust God that even when my efforts at witnessing seem to be failures, that He may be using them to provide the exact cultivation that the person needs at that time?

*Father, You know the hearts of all people. Make me aware of ways that You have prepared the hearts of people around me who need You. Help me to be satisfied that You will use my efforts to impact lives even when I am unable to detect an effect. In Christ's name. Amen.*

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Monday

## All My Authority

Week 2

Yesterday we saw that Jesus prepared His apostles before sending them to go and make disciples. We also saw that He put them in situations where they would have opportunities to share their faith.

Did Jesus send out anyone besides His core group of apostles while He was on earth?

Luke 10:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

The idea of sharing the gospel with others can be frightening. Did Jesus make it easier for the 72?

Luke 10:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_

The 72 were to go out under conditions which were guaranteed to fail if left to human effort. Did Jesus do anything at all to help these workers of the harvest?

Luke 10:17-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus also gives **us** His authority to do His work. Doing God's work of bringing others into a living relationship with Jesus Christ is what Satan hates the most. How important is it that we have His authority when we go and make disciples?

Matthew 28:18 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Have I recognized opportunities Christ has given me to work in the harvest?
- Have I seen evidence of Christ's authority over Satan at work when I have done His work and shared my faith with others?
- What scares me the most about sharing my faith with others?
- How can having the authority of Jesus help me overcome these fears?

*Almighty God, I praise You that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Your Son. I thank You that this authority has been given to me as I do His work of going and making disciples. Forgive me for shunning this authority when I have failed to respond to opportunities You have given me to share my faith. Help me remember that your power has authority over all my fears. In Christ's name. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

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Tuesday

## Obeying His Command

Week 2

Jesus gives His authority over everything in heaven and on earth to help us as we do His work. His authority is also over us and we are to obey His commands and teachings.

What command did Jesus give that is so important that He first reminded us of His authority to give it?

Matthew 28:18-20a \_\_\_\_\_

Was this command to go and make disciples intended specifically for Jesus' apostles? Or, was it also for others who love and follow Him?

John 14:15, 23-24 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus taught His apostles 2000 years ago with lessons given by the Father. How can we learn ways to share the gospel today when Jesus isn't here to teach us?

John 14:25-26 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus promised to send us His Spirit to teach us all things we need to be able to do His will. How else does He promise to help us as we go and make disciples?

Matthew 28:20b \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Do I recognize that Jesus specifically called me to go and make disciples?
- The Spirit speaks to us today through study of His Word (the Bible), through teachers, through pastors, through our experiences and through our worship and prayers. Do I listen for the Spirit's teaching and guidance in all of these areas?
- How does it help my fears of sharing the gospel to know that Jesus is with me always?

*Ever present God, I confess that I have not always obeyed your command and teaching to share Your gospel with those who need it. I am thankful that You have promised to always be with me. Keep me mindful of Your presence, especially when I follow Your calling to go and make disciples. In the name of Jesus who sends me. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

Sunday

## God's Prepares Opportunities

Holy Week

Today is Palm Sunday. On this day a couple thousand years ago Jesus came triumphantly as a King into Jerusalem, the capital of God's people. The events of this day occurred exactly as God had planned and exactly as His prophets foretold hundreds of years earlier.

God's preparations were not just concerned with Jesus riding into Jerusalem on this day. He involved Himself even in the details. What details did God take care of to prepare for this event?

Luke 19:28-35 \_\_\_\_\_

The Bible is full of examples of God's plan being fulfilled exactly as He prepared it. Even the growth of the early Christian church went as God had prepared it. How many opportunities did the first Christians get to share the gospel before God got involved at Pentecost?

Acts 1:4, 14 \_\_\_\_\_

How had God prepared opportunities for His outreach to begin and what was the result?

Acts 2:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:7-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:41 \_\_\_\_\_

How did God especially prepare an opportunity for Philip to witness in a way he didn't expect ?

Acts 8:26-40 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- What are examples in my life where God had obviously made preparations?
- How was God's attention to detail evident in these situations?
- How has God prepared and presented me with opportunities to be His witness?
- How did I respond?
- What opportunities has God prepared for me to witness to the people around me?

*Lord of my life, thank You for making a plan for my life and for preparing the path before me to accomplish Your will. Remove the blinders I place on my eyes so that I can see the opportunities You have prepared for me to be Your witness. Help me to respond to what You have made ready. Amen.*

People with hurts and needs are all around us. These can give us special opportunities to build bridges in relationships and reveal God's love.

People are also especially open to the message of the gospel during times of significant change (either positive or negative) and stress. Be sensitive to these times of transition in the lives of people you are befriending.

Transitions include situations such as

- death of a loved one
- divorce
- marital reconciliation
- marriage
- change in financial status
- change in residence
- retirement
- pregnancy
- illness or injury
- loss of employment
- child leaving home
- holidays

The most important factor to remember as your friends go through transitions is to model the unconditional love of Jesus.

An example in the Bible is the story of Onesimus. He was a slave who ran away from his master, Philemon. In his time of transition he met up with Paul who loved him and brought him into a living relationship with Jesus. Read some of the story in these verses:

Philemon 10-21 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Who in my Web of Influence is currently in the midst of a transition in their lives?
- What people do I know outside my Web of Influence who are going through a transition?
- How can I approach these people with God's love to help them during this time?
- How can I guide these people to Christ through these times of transition?

*Ever constant God, our lives are changing all of the time, but you never change. Point out the people around me who are going through significant changes in their lives. Guide me and give me Your words to approach these people with Your love and with Your message of salvation during their times of transition. Amen.*

Why should we care about reaching out to others? As we have been studying this week, because God said so.

Before He ascended, Jesus left us with final instructions we call The Great Commission. By now you should be familiar with the version of the Great Commission recorded by Matthew:

Matthew 28:16-20 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the first step we must take to obey this command?

Matthew 20:4a \_\_\_\_\_

Kevin Costner's *Field of Dreams* doesn't work in outreach. We must **GO** to the people who need to hear the good news of Jesus. We can't sit back and wait for them to come to us.

What does Mark's version of The Great Commission tell us we are to do once we go?

Mark 16:15 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew agrees and said that we are to teach what He has first taught us (see yesterday's devotion). Matthew also says that we are to welcome new disciples into God's chosen family through the sacrament of baptism. Does Mark agree?

Mark 16:16 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- To obey Christ's command to go and make disciples, I must first go. Who has God placed on my heart to bring to Him?
- When will I go to this person to begin the process of making a disciple?
- How can God use me to help bring this person into His company of believers?
- What resources has God provided that can help me teach this person about the salvation available to them through Christ?

*Empowering Savior, forgive me for being reluctant to go as You have commanded. Show me who You have placed near me who is in need of Your saving message. Then help me to rely upon Your strength to go to this person, teach them about You and welcome them into Your flock. Amen.*

Thursday

## The Peace Beyond All Understanding

Week 2

Being sent by Christ to share His message of salvation with others can be intimidating. How does Jesus show that He understands this in John's version of The Great Commission?

John 20:21 \_\_\_\_\_

How can an offer of peace calm the jitters we get when we are faced with the prospect of sharing our faith?

Philippians 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_

What specific ways did Jesus promise to give us peace in sharing the gospel?

Matthew 28:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

God's authority and presence is helpful and calms us with His security. But, how can we keep from being nervous about **what** we're going to say when we share our faith?

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 \_\_\_\_\_

We can take comfort in that the Spirit teaches us what to say when we do His work. While this helps, sometimes we still get nervous.

How did Paul explain that he, too, was nervous whenever he went to share the gospel, but found peace by stepping back and allowing the Spirit to speak through him?

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- When have I been nervous or troubled about something and then been given the peace of God once I turned the matter over to Him?
- How helpful is it to know that Jesus is with me to work through me as I share His message?
- Am I willing to step back and allow the Spirit to speak through me? Or, do I feel I need to control what I say?

*Spirit of Peace, come to me and make Yourself at home in my heart. Take control of my life and work through me to accomplish Your work, which is impossible for me to complete without You. Give me the words as I share Your gospel with others so that I may be an effective bearer of your peace. Amen.*

Friday

## Find a Need and Fill It

Week 6

Sharing activities and interests with a friend and being careful to knock down barriers are effective in preparing the way for your friend to receive the gospel.

Many times, though, your friends will have problems weighing them down which you as a friend can help. Your care will not only support them through their difficult circumstances, but can open the door to giving them the best help they could ever receive — an eternal relationship with Jesus Christ.

A unique example of this occurred early in Jesus' ministry. A disabled man had the opportunity to receive healing, but could not take it on his own. To what extent did his friends show their concern for this man in his need?

Mark 2:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_

The men were acting purely out of love for their friend when they brought him to Jesus. How did this care result in greater healing for the man than they expected?

Mark 2:5 \_\_\_\_\_

How did the disabled man receive a double gift as a result of his friends' concern?

Mark 2:8-12 \_\_\_\_\_

God will work through us to touch lives for Jesus as we share His love and concern for others. How did Jesus remind us to care for the needs of others?

Matthew 25:40 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- What real needs (mental, emotional, physical, social) exist in the lives of people in my Web of Influence?
- What can I specifically do or say to meet any of these needs?
- When will I go to this person to help meet his need?
- How can I use the meeting of this need as a bridge towards meeting his deeper need of a spiritual relationship with Christ?

*Loving Father, reveal to me the hurts and needs in the lives of people in my Web of Influence. Give me your compassion and show me how I can minister to them through these needs. Open a door through these situations to share the greatest help of all — salvation through faith in Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen*

Building friendships with people in your Web of Influence will take time. Find interests that you share and enjoy them together.

Don't try to be someone or something you're not. Be yourself. Be genuine. Even if you and your friend appear to have different interests, you will still have some in common. Remember, *you* are the one God has in mind to reach this person.

Likewise, don't force your friend to participate in activities or interests which present problems to him. Just as God's saving grace reaches you where you are, your friend can be reached where he is. What guidance did Paul give us regarding this?

1 Corinthians 10:32-33 \_\_\_\_\_

In the days of the early church, many people came from a Jewish background that forbade them to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul explained to Christians that meat is meat and idols are nothing, so eating such meat is okay (1 Corinthians 8:1-6). But doing so could be a stumbling block to a Jew considering the gospel. What did Paul say to do?

1 Corinthians 8:25-31 \_\_\_\_\_

Refusing to eat meat sacrificed to idols may be helpful when reaching out to Jews, but it could give a confusing message to other unbelievers who feel eating the meat is okay. What did Paul say to do?

1 Corinthians 8:25-31 \_\_\_\_\_

This all sounds confusing but it isn't. The bottom line is just to consider what you do from the perspective of those you befriend. How did Paul summarize it?

1 Corinthians 10:23-24 \_\_\_\_\_

**My Response**

- When have I hesitated befriending someone because I was afraid I would have to become something I'm not?
- When have I tried to push my likes or interests on a friend who didn't share them?
- What stumbling blocks have I placed in front of individuals outside Christ's body?
- What barriers can I remove to help my friends come to see Jesus?

*Lord of the straight and narrow, forgive me for building stumbling blocks which have interfered with people around me coming to know You. Show me where such barriers still exist and help me remove them for Your sake. Amen.*

We get nervous about sharing the gospel because we are afraid of what people might think. In the early days of the church, Christians were persecuted and could receive much more than embarrassment by witnessing to someone with a closed heart.

How did Peter encourage Christians to be bold in sharing the gospel despite dangers of doing so?

1 Peter 3:13-15 \_\_\_\_\_

To be prepared to give an answer for the hope we have in the gospel, we first need to understand the gospel. How did Paul summarize the story of the gospel for the Christians in Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 20-23 \_\_\_\_\_

How did Jesus summarize the story of the gospel in Luke's version of The Great Commission?

Luke 24:44-46 \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus say we are to do with this gospel?

Luke 24:47-48 \_\_\_\_\_

How would Christians be able to spread the gospel to all nations?

Luke 24:49 \_\_\_\_\_

**My Response**

- Am I prepared to explain the hope that I have in the gospel?
- Do I understand the gospel and my faith well enough to explain it to someone else?
- A witness is expected to share what he has seen and knows — nothing more, nothing less. What does it mean that Jesus has called me to be His witness?

*Dear Christ, the first fruits of the resurrection in which I have certain hope, reveal the truths of Your gospel to me that I may clearly share it with others. Help me, as Your witness, to focus on the truths You have made known to me rather than the mysteries that remain. Be with me as I share what you have shown. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

Saturday

## Start in Jerusalem

Week 2

Jesus called us to be witnesses of His gospel, sharing the truths He has revealed to us. How did He promise to help us?

Luke 24:45-49 \_\_\_\_\_

Right before He ascended from the Mount of Olives, Jesus repeated His promise to clothe us with power from on high so we may be empowered to be His witnesses. What is the source of this power?

Acts 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

The story of the early Christian Church in the Book of Acts shows the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria and to the known ends of the earth.

Jesus told His apostles to begin in Jerusalem because the gospel spreads most readily when it is shared with people we know. How effective were the early Christians in witnessing to their friends and neighbors in Jerusalem?

Acts 5:28 \_\_\_\_\_

The apostles stayed largely in Jerusalem. How did God get His message to Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth?

Acts 8:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 11:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 26:15-23 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- How have I experienced the power of the Spirit while doing the Lord's work?
- Who are the friends and neighbors God has placed in my "Jerusalem" for me to serve as a witness?
- As Christians go, witness and make disciples of people they know, God multiplies the effect on His Kingdom by sending these new disciples to people they know. How can God use my reaching out to one person to bring many others to Christ?

*My Power from on high, thank You for clothing me and working through me to take Your message to the world. Show me how you can work through natural relationships I have with others I know to impact the lives of many. Help me to identify and reach out to the family member, friend, coworker or acquaintance You have given me who is most ready to receive You. Amen*

### Each One Reach One

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Wednesday

## Be Homogeneous

Week 6

John and Mimi Soper's Bible Study, "Webs of Influence," introduces what they call the Homogeneous Unit Principle:

*People respond most easily to the gospel when they are not asked to cross cultural, social, linguistic or ethnic barriers to do so.*

This is why most of the people in your Web of Influence live in the same culture, run around in the same society circles, share the same language and have similar ethnic backgrounds as you. God placed these people in your web because you are able to impact their lives more effectively than someone without these things in common.

So what about the people in your Web of Influence who do not share all of these things in common with you? Are you to leave them alone and hope that someone more like them will reach out to them? Absolutely not! God has given you even these people because He wants to work through you to reach them.

Paul was constantly faced with building relationships and sharing the gospel with people different than him as he traveled the world. How did he handle this?

1 Corinthians 9:19-22 \_\_\_\_\_

Look how he put this into action when given the opportunity to witness to a bunch of Greeks who knew nothing about our God:

Acts 17:16, 22-23 \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Paul go to the effort to build bridges to those with different cultures, social positions, languages and ethnicities?

1 Corinthians 9:23 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Which people in my Web are most readily accessible to me because they are in the same cultural, social, linguistic and ethnic group?
- What barriers exist within my web?
- How can I build bridges to befriend and reach the people affected by these barriers?

*Father of all cultures, social standings, languages and ethnicities, show me how to lovingly build bridges across barriers that exist in my Web of Influence so I may more effectively reach Your people with Your saving message. Amen.*

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It has been said that *people don't care what you believe if they don't believe that you care.*

Demonstrating Christ's love and care for His people is a way of life. It isn't something that can simply be turned on when you are around unchurched people in your Web of Influence. Jesus gave some practical examples of what it means to demonstrate His love in your life:

Luke 6:27-36 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul understood that reaching out to people with the gospel does not involve deceiving others by acting as their friends to be able to witness. Nor does it involve twisting God's word or His gospel to make it more acceptable to those we are talking with. Rather it involves sharing God's truth plainly out of honest love and caring for the individual:

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul saw his calling of sharing Christ's gospel to be one that was built around a life of love and service to others:

1 Corinthians 9:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

How did Peter say that we can even be effective witnesses to those in our family by serving them? (Note: Peter's words reflect the culture in which he lived, but they apply to all of us — whether male or female.)

1 Peter 3:1-2,7 \_\_\_\_\_

Look back at the beginning sentence of this devotion. Its corollary is also true: *When people believe that you care, they care about what you believe!*

### **My Response**

- Do I demonstrate the love of Christ in my everyday life?
- Is the love of Christ evident in my life to my family? ... to my friends? ... to my coworkers? ... to strangers?
- In what ways can I "make myself a slave" to the lost people in my Web of Influence?
- Are my dealings with others built around a heart of service to them?

*My God and Master, You demonstrated true love and servanthood to me through the life of Your Son. Teach me to live in and demonstrate His love in service towards others. Use this service as an instrument for Your Spirit to reach those living outside Your family. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

It's easy to acknowledge that God wants us to share His message of salvation with those who need it, and even that He empowers and gifts His children for this purpose. It is often difficult, however, to recognize and accept that His calling to be His witness is directed at you and me, not just to the church at large.

Should the task of sharing the gospel be left to the wise and learned — the pastors and teachers who should know exactly what to say when?

Matthew 11:25-26 \_\_\_\_\_

God has placed us individually in the world to be His witnesses to those around us. Because of this, we can be much more effective in spreading His message than pastors and others who may be more isolated from the world.

So, if reaching out to others is the responsibility of you and I — regular people with so much to learn — how can we know what to say when?

Luke 21:13-15 \_\_\_\_\_

If God will give us the words, then what does 1 Peter 3:15 mean when we are told to always be prepared to give an answer for our hope (see last Friday's study)?

Colossians 4:5 \_\_\_\_\_

God has called you personally to be His witness. How will you respond to this call? How did Isaiah respond?

Isaiah 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- How has God made it clear that He has called me personally to be His witness?
- Do I accept the calling God has given me to bring others to Him?
- When have I experienced God giving me His words in a situation which I would have otherwise been unable to handle His way?
- Do I watch for opportunities to witness?
- Am I prepared to respond the next time God presents me with an opportunity?

*Father of mine, I confess that I have failed to personally accept Your calling to be Your chosen witness. Forgive me and send Your Spirit to make me bold in responding to the opportunities you place before me. Help me to trust in the words You give me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*



Last week we asked the question, “Why should we care about reaching out?” We found that one reason is that God said so — He commanded us to do it. We also saw that He promised to give us His power, His message, His teachings, His words and His presence to enable us to do this work.

Yesterday we saw that this command is not just to the church, to pastors, to teachers or to other specially trained people. It is specifically and personally to you and I.

Paul found it difficult to accept the calling God gave him to share the gospel (1 Cor. 2:1-5). What compelled him to obey the call?  
2 Corinthians 5:11, 14 \_\_\_\_\_

How does Christ’s love compel us to reach out to others?

John 13:34-35 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the greatest way that we can show love to someone else?

1 Thessalonians 2:8, 11-12 \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, we should reach out to others because God said so. We should also bring others to Christ because we love them. We love them so much that we will be delighted to share God’s gospel and our lives with them. We love them as a true friend:

Proverbs 17:17a; 18:24b \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- How have I experienced Christ’s unmeasurable love in my own life?
- Who do I know and love that does not experience Christ’s love daily?
- How can I reach out and reveal Christ’s love to them?
- What will happen if I don’t help them experience Christ’s love (John 3:18)?
- What will happen if I do (John 3:16)?

*Loving God, I praise you for showing Your love to me so much that You gave Your one and only Son so that as I believe in Him, I shall not perish but have eternal life. Work Your love through me that I may reveal this to others so that they also may believe and have eternal life. Amen.*

Many of us have been in Christ’s body, the church, for many years and have our strongest relationships with other Christians. While we have unchurched and lost people in our Webs of Influence, we may not have nurtured the relationships and the connections may not be very strong.

The Bible says a lot about how we should live our lives in order to cultivate and strengthen relationships in our Webs of Influence. First, Jesus tells us to live godly lives so that others will be drawn to Him through us:

Matthew 5:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul likewise told us to live honest, loving and productive lives. Why?

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 \_\_\_\_\_

The intent is not just to get close to someone in order to tackle them with the gospel. You are building relationships of genuine love and friendship. Through these relationships you can offer Christ’s love.

Jesus’ goal in life was obviously to bring people into living relationships with Himself, both on earth and in heaven. But He never tried to manipulate people to chalk up a score. He was and is always driven by love. He tells us that we are to do the same:

John 15:9-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul gave us some concrete examples of how to love others in order to offer them the greatest gift they can receive – an eternity in Jesus’ love:

Romans 12:9-18 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- Do I exhibit Christ’s love to those in my Web of Influence?
- How can I further demonstrate Jesus’ love to unchurched people in my web so that they might be attracted to Him?
- If my love for others is sincere, can I sit back quietly and allow them to head into hell without giving them an opportunity to join me in heaven?

*God of love, teach me to love those around me with Your love. Shine Your light of love through my life so that others may come to You through me. Strengthen my relationships with lost people in my Web of Influence so that I may be an effective witness for You. Amen.*

### **Each One Reach One**

Sunday

## Relationships in the Web

Week 6

Yesterday's story offered another good example of spiritual multiplication. Look again at John 1:35-42 and notice that as a result of John's witness of Jesus to Andrew in his Web of Influence, Andrew reached into his Web of Influence and brought Peter.

Did the Web of Influence principle stop there in this story?

John 1:43-44 \_\_\_\_\_

Philip was part of Peter's Web of Influence. Who did Philip invite from his Web of Influence?

John 1:45-51 \_\_\_\_\_

Notice the quickness at which spiritual multiplication can take place among Webs of Influence. Within two days, five separate Webs of Influence were impacted as John introduced Andrew who introduced Peter who introduced Philip who introduced Nathanael to Jesus.

Notice also the different relationships that were involved:

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| John/Andrew      | Teacher/Student  |
| Andrew/Peter     | Brother/Coworker |
| Peter/Philip     | Neighbor         |
| Philip/Nathanael | Friend           |

### My Response

- How can I effectively reach out to unchurched members of my family?
- How can I effectively reach out to unchurched friends?
- How can I effectively reach out to unchurched neighbors?
- How can I effectively reach out to unchurched coworkers?
- How can I effectively reach out to other unchurched acquaintances?
- How soon will I begin to reach out into my Web so that the process of spiritual multiplication can begin?

*Father in heaven, many people are lost in the world without a saving relationship with Your Son. A number of these are in the Web of Influence You have given to me. Encourage me to begin Your work today so that these people, and others they can reach, can begin to enjoy the same blessings I realize in Your loving arms. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

Tuesday

## Hell Is Real ... And Real People Go There

Week 3

God places people into your life who depend on you for the key to the kingdom of heaven. Why should you bother with showing them the path to heaven? Jesus told a parable which explains what happens if we don't pass on the Keys:

Luke 16:19-31 \_\_\_\_\_

What does this parable tell you about what will happen if you withhold the saving message of the gospel from your family, friends and acquaintances?

Luke 16:24 \_\_\_\_\_

Hell is real. Real people go there. Is it really too late if a friend dies before you gather up the guts to bring them to Jesus?

Luke 16:26 \_\_\_\_\_

Does God want people who have not accepted Christ to be eternally damned? Is that why there are no second chances?

Ezekiel 33:11 \_\_\_\_\_

God sent Jesus to save all people. He wants all people to spend eternity with Him. If His love for your friend is so great, why won't He use miracles and other supernatural means to reveal Himself?

Luke 16:27-31 \_\_\_\_\_

God loves His people too much to force them to take the gift He offers freely. He has, however, taken extraordinary means to reach your friend. He has put YOU into your friend's life and has given YOU His power, words and presence to use in saving your friend from hell.

### My Response

- Who are some of the people in my life who do not have a living relationship with Jesus Christ?
- What will happen to them if they die without hearing God's plan?
- Are there unique ways that led to these people coming into my life? If so, why might that be? (see Esther 4:14b)

*God of all and Judge of true justice, I praise You for saving me from the agonies of hell by the saving work of Your Son. Work through me to bring Your gift of grace to those in my life and save them from the damnation we all deserve. Amen.*

Wednesday

## Heaven Is Real ... And Real People Go There

Week 3

One reason that you should care about reaching out to the people in your life who don't have a living relationship with Jesus Christ is that you love them too much to allow them to spend an eternity in the agony of hell.

There's another, much more positive reason. By saving them from the fiery death of hell (Revelation 21:8), you can also pass on to them the greatest gift one can ever imagine (Luke 16:22). What is this gift?

John 14:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_

John is the only person we know of who was given a glimpse of heaven while he was still alive. What did he say things would be like in heaven?

Revelation 21:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_

The vision John was given of heaven was too magnificent to be adequately explained in ways we can understand as humans. How did John try to describe heaven by using the most precious, beautiful and awe-inspiring things we can conceive of on earth?

Revelation 21:15-23 \_\_\_\_\_

For whom has this terrific place been prepared?

Revelation 21:27 \_\_\_\_\_

How should we feel knowing that our names are written in the Lamb's book of life?

Luke 10:20 \_\_\_\_\_

We owe it to those we love to let them experience this same joy. What other joy is expressed when we lead our lost friends to Christ?

Luke 15:7, 10 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Why am I a Christian? Why is my faith important to me?
- How important is it to me that my name is in the Lamb's book of life?
- How exciting is it to me that Jesus has prepared a place for me in heaven?
- Who among my family, friends and acquaintances does not know the joy of knowing that a great eternity is waiting for them in heaven?
- How fantastic would it be if I were to help lead them to the Savior's waiting arms?

*God of mercy and grace, Your love for me is beyond what I can understand when I consider the great gift of heaven which You have promised, although I don't deserve it in the least. Use me in bringing this great joy of certain salvation to others. In our Savior's name. Amen.*

Saturday

## God Makes It Grow

Week 5

John the Baptist used the trust relationships he had with his disciples to gradually introduce them to Jesus, the Christ. How did his approach in progressively directing them to Jesus eventually get them to meet Him for themselves?

John 1:35-37 \_\_\_\_\_

Did Jesus immediately enroll them into His ministry, or did He patiently help them along in their understanding of Him until they were ready to take that step for themselves?

John 1:38-39 \_\_\_\_\_

Our goal is not to get people to join our church. Our goal is to bring people into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. Only God can do this as He works on their hearts. His job for us is to reveal Him to those who don't know Him and to invite them to learn more.

Paul, one of the most effective witnesses for Christ of all time, understood his role in the process. What does this mean to you?

1 Corinthians 3:5-9 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus also explained that the work of building faith is God's. We are to do the work of farmers:

Mark 4:26-29 \_\_\_\_\_

The disciples of John who went to Jesus understood this also. After spending a day with Jesus, how much did Andrew relay to his brother?

John 1:40-42 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- When I have shared my faith with others, have I said too much or too little?
- Have I been reluctant to share the gospel because I felt I needed to unload everything at once and I wasn't sure that I even had everything?
- What are ways I can build my trust relationships with others which will eventually open doors to sharing the gospel?
- What are ways I can begin the process of leading specific people in my Web of Influence to Jesus?

*Lamb of God, forgive me when I have approached outreach as if it were all up to me. Help me recognize my part in a witnessing opportunity — whether it be planting the seed, watering or fertilizing it, cultivating weeds or harvesting. Let me trust You to make it grow. Amen.*

As you study how the gospel has spread from its very beginning, it becomes clear that its most effective growth has not been from evangelical sermons or cold call evangelism but rather through personal Webs of Influence.

While God worked miraculously to reach 3000 men on Pentecost, He used their Webs of Influence to spread His gospel when they went home from the festival (Acts 2:5-12). He likewise used Webs of Influence to spread the gospel as people were scattered by persecution (Acts. 8:1; 11:19-21). We also see that Paul's ministry worked through Webs of Influence of people that he met on his journeys (Acts 18:1-3).

Let's look at a few other specific examples of God using Webs of Influence to bring people to Jesus. First, let's look at John the Baptist. What was John's relationship with Jesus?

John 1:14-19, 26-27 \_\_\_\_\_

John interacted with many people as he prepared the Jews for the coming of the Messiah. But God also blessed John with a Web of Influence. Seekers came to John. Some stayed with him and worked with him as disciples. How did John point people in his web to Jesus?

John 1:29-34 \_\_\_\_\_

John gave a little bit of information to those in his web through this initial introduction, but he didn't dump it all out at once. How did he continue to build on his earlier introductions as time went on?

John 3:26-36 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- If I were not a Christian, would church advertisements or Christian TV be effective in leading me to Jesus?
- If I were not a Christian, would mass mailers or signs on the side of the road be effective in leading me to Jesus?
- If I were not a Christian, would the existence of a super pastor, preacher or staff at a neighborhood church be effective in leading me to Jesus?
- If I were not a Christian, would being invited by a trusted neighbor or seeing the importance of faith in the life of a close friend be effective in leading me to Christ?
- Who in my Web of Influence can be reached most effectively by me?
- How can I begin introducing them to my Savior?

*Lord Jesus, thank You for placing me in special relationships with unchurched people where I have a unique opportunity to guide them to You. Work in me to help me build stronger trust relationships with these people and show me just what to say or do when — not too much and not too little. Amen.*

Why should YOU care about reaching out? Because hell is real and real people go there. And, because heaven is real and real people go there.

So, why should YOU care? Because God cares.

Because of His love, God does not abandon those who reject Him. He instead puts people like you in their lives in order to invite them to turn to Him. What will happen if we lead to God someone who has rejected Him for years?

Ezekiel 18:21-23 \_\_\_\_\_

God wants all people to be saved. This is why He wants us to share His truth with those around us. How did Paul explain this to Timothy?

1 Timothy 2:3-7 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus spoke many parables to make it clear to us that God takes great pleasure when the lost are found. Luke 15 contains three such parables. How does He make this point in the parable of the prodigal son?

Luke 15:20-24, 32 \_\_\_\_\_

God deeply loves the unsaved people in our lives. He demonstrates this in that even if someone who has rejected and even cursed God for years turns to God and becomes a Christian, they will receive the same great gift of heaven as those of us who have been faithful all our lives. How did Jesus reveal this love in a parable?

Matthew 20:1-16 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- How important is it to me that God does not abandon me even when I have rejected Him?
- Who in my life has rejected or ignored God and still has a place in God's heart?
- Who have I given up on, but for whom God is still longing?
- How can I bring these lost friends back into God's loving arms?

*Caring and compassionate Father, let Your love flow through me into the lives of those around me. Let me see the great love You have for all people and the desire You have for all to come to You. Through Your Son who opened the way for Your beloved people to come to You. Amen.*

### Each One Reach One

Friday

## Others Care

Week 3

God loves every person He created and cares deeply that they come into a living relationship with His Son and accept the gift of life He freely offers. He therefore places His chosen faithful, including you and me, among lost people to point the way home.

Many Christians before us have heard God's call and have responded in love for their friends by leading them to Christ. Their examples can help guide us to individuals God has placed in our lives.

What was the relationship between the bringer and the brought the first time someone was introduced to Jesus?

John 1:40-42 \_\_\_\_\_

What was the relationship between the bringer and the brought when Jesus was introduced by Philip the next day?

John 1:44-51 \_\_\_\_\_

What was the relationship between the sender and the sought in the situation which led Andrew to Jesus?

John 1:35-40 \_\_\_\_\_

What relationships were involved when Matthew held a party to introduce people to Jesus?

Luke 5:27-32 \_\_\_\_\_

Other Christians have shown their love for their family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and others in trust relationships by introducing them to the Savior – Jesus Christ. Who is in your Web of Influence who needs an introduction?

### My Response

- Who in my immediate family can I guide to Christ?
- Who in my extended family can I guide to Christ?
- Who among my friends can I guide to Christ?
- Who do I work with whom I can guide to Christ?
- Who lives near me whom I can guide to Christ?
- Who do I know whom I can guide to Christ?

*Father of all families, Friend of all friends, Source of all life, thank You for the loving and trusting relationships You have given me with others. Be with me as I share Your love with the people around me by guiding them to You. Amen*

**Each One Reach One**

[www.biblestoriesforadults.com](http://www.biblestoriesforadults.com)

Thursday

## Spiritual Multiplication

Week 5

Jesus referred to the principle of spiritual multiplication in His parable of the sower. Read this parable in Matthew 13:1-23.

How effective did Jesus say we could become through spiritual multiplication as we share the gospel with those in our Web of Influence?

Matthew 13:23 \_\_\_\_\_

A museum in Chicago had a fascinating display that demonstrated the power of spiritual multiplication. It showed a checkerboard with 1 grain of wheat on the first square, 2 on the second, 4 on the third, then 8, 16, 32, 64, and so on until they could no longer fit the seeds on the square. Then it asked the question, "At this rate of doubling each successive square, how much would you have on the checkerboard by the 64<sup>th</sup> square?"

You could punch a button at the bottom of the display to find out. The answer? "Nine sextillion — enough grain to cover the entire subcontinent of India 50 feet deep." Incredible!

Jesus understood spiritual multiplication when He told us to *go and make disciples of all nations*. There isn't one of us who can do this alone. But together, and with God's help, we can bear much fruit:

John 15:8 \_\_\_\_\_

If each of us leads just one person to Christ each year, and each of those persons leads one to Christ each year, the harvest would soon be enormous. It's happening in some parts of the world. It can happen here.

### My Response

- Have I hesitated in answering Jesus' call to make disciples of all nations because the job is too big and I wouldn't have much impact?
- Do I now recognize that God is not limited to growing His kingdom by spiritual addition (each one reach one) but uses the compounding of spiritual multiplication (each one reach one who can reach one who can...)?
- Do I realize that many lost people may be staying lost because I have not started the chain reaction of spiritual multiplication?
- Who has God placed in my life with an open and longing heart waiting for me to start with them?

*Lord of the hearts of all people, specially open the heart of a person close to me to receive the seed of faith which I can plant. Point me to this person so You can begin Your tremendous work of spiritual multiplication. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**

[www.biblestoriesforadults.com](http://www.biblestoriesforadults.com)

Wednesday

## Each One Reach One Who Can Reach One Who Can...

Week 5

How did Jesus use the Web of Influence principle with the Samaritan woman at the well and what was the impact?

John 4:28-30, 39-42 \_\_\_\_\_

How did Jesus use the Web of Influence with the demoniac in Gadara?

Mark 5:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Both the Samaritan woman and the Gadarene demoniac were outcasts. Yet, God gave them Webs of Influence through which they were able to bring people to Jesus, even though they themselves were not welcome.

Let's jump forward six weeks in the story of the Gadarene demoniac and see what happened when Jesus make a second trip to the same area. How effective was the man's witness to his Web of Influence?

Mark 4:31-8:10 \_\_\_\_\_

People flocked to Jesus by the thousands. Obviously, not all of these people were in the man's Web of Influence. You see here the results of spiritual multiplication. As you reach one, they can reach one, and so forth.

As you bring people in your Web of Influence into living relationships with Jesus Christ, God will work through them to reach others in their Webs of Influence. The impact of the ones you reach can have a tremendous impact on God's kingdom. It all begins with you.

### My Response

- Where have I seen examples of spiritual multiplication where someone has come to Christ through an introduction by someone who was brought to Jesus by someone else?
- Pick someone in your Web of Influence. Then respond to the following:
  - What is my relationship with this person in my Web of Influence?
  - What relationships do they have in their Webs of Influence that I cannot access?
  - How can my bringing this person to Christ result in others in their Web being reached for Jesus?
  - How can I begin today to lead this person to Jesus so that they can eventually reach people in their web?

*God of relationships, thank You for the people You have placed into my Web of Influence. Thank You for giving them their own webs so that many can eventually be reached for You by my sharing with those already close to me. Stay with me as I go forth in Your name. Let it begin with me. Amen.*

Saturday

## You Care

Week 3

God is saddened that some people reject Him and His free offer of eternal life. Many Christians have responded by reaching out to their family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others to bring them into living relationships with Jesus Christ.

What about you? Do you care? Do you care enough about those around you to lead them from an eternity of hell into a glorious and eternal life with God through faith in Jesus Christ?

You already know the answer. It is YES. God has made it so. As a child of God, He has placed His love in your heart. Read how John describes this:

1 John 4:7-13 \_\_\_\_\_

What does John say about our normal reason of not sharing the gospel because we are afraid?

1 John 4:18 \_\_\_\_\_

How do we respond in God's love to those around us who do not know Him?

1 John 4:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

The love of God working in our hearts towards people around us will help us overcome our fear and show our love by pointing them to Christ. What does John say to those who just don't care enough?

1 John 4:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_

Why should you care about reaching out to others? Because God cares ... and you care. Let your love for your family and friends shine to them by sharing what you have heard and seen. Your joy will be complete.

1 John 1:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Does the love of God live in my heart?
- How do I show God's love to the people in my life?
- How can I reveal God's love to them in the gift of salvation in Christ?
- Am I ready to go to God in prayer to ask for His love that will overcome my fear?
- How will my joy be made complete when I bring loved ones to Jesus?

*God of love, Your love to me is evident all around me every day of my life. Help me reflect Your love to others and to draw upon the power of Your love to overcome my fears in sharing Your good news. Build Your love in me for those around me so that I, too, care deeply about their relationships with You. Amen.*

Sunday

## For Such a Time As This

Week 4

Now that you recognize that it makes a big difference to God and to you whether the people you love will be saved to heaven or damned to hell, how will you respond? Will you accept God's call as Isaiah did?

Isaiah 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

You have the key to open the kingdom of heaven for those you love. Does this scare you, or does it excite you with the ability to give the greatest gift possible?

James 5:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

If you are hesitant to reach out to your friends, consider why God has given you the relationships you have with them. Mordecai's guidance to Esther when she hesitated in saying something that could save the lives of many could also apply to you:

Esther 4:14b \_\_\_\_\_

Okay, so God has called you to reach out. He has placed His love and care for your friend in your heart. And, He has given you unique opportunity to point your friend to Christ.

So how do you get started? What should you do? How should you approach your opportunity to reach out to your friend?

These are questions we will begin to answer this week. Paul put things together in his letter to the church in Colossae. He outlines two parts of reaching out and explains them both. What are these two key components of outreach?

Colossians 4:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 4:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- What unique relationships has God placed me into that may be for the specific purpose of directing these people to Christ?
- Have I hesitated and found excuses when God has given me clear opportunities to share His message with these people?
- How can I further devote myself to prayer for help in witnessing to these people?
- How will prayer help me make the most of every opportunity with these people?

*Director and Guide of my life, You continue to grant me relationships and opportunities to share the good news of Your salvation with people who are separated from You. Help me recognize that these come from You and that You might have placed me in these relationships for such a time as this. Forgive my hesitation and give me Your strength to make the most of every opportunity. Amen.*

Tuesday

## Your Web of Influence

Week 5

Read once more the story of the Gadarene demoniac in Mark 5:1-20. What did the man do when Jesus left right after healing him?

Mark 5:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus sent the man to his family. The Greek word *oikos* used here means not only his immediate family, but also his extended family including other trust relationships such as friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.

Jesus sent the man to witness to his Web of Influence. By doing so, Jesus reached people who He would otherwise have been unable to reach. John & Mimi Soper call this the Web of Influence principle:

*The gospel spreads most effectively and most rapidly across already existing lines of social communication.*

There are many examples of the Web of Influence principle at work around us. The Bible gives us many more as well. Look for example, at the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4-42). How excited was she about meeting Jesus and how did she tell her Web of Influence?

John 4:28-30 \_\_\_\_\_

The woman didn't try to explain the whole gospel or try to make them Christians in one setting. She simply invited them.

How effective was this woman's witness to her Web of Influence? How did her witness open the door to people in her web so that Jesus could be revealed to them more fully in other ways?

John 4:39-42 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Where have I seen examples of the Web of Influence principle at work?
- How does it make me feel to realize that God is not asking me to preach on a street corner or grab strangers on the street or make cold evangelism calls?
- Is it relieving to know that God has simply called me to share my faith with those already close to me who I care about anyway?
- Who are the people in my Web of Influence?
- Who are the non-Christians or effectively unchurched people in my Web of Influence?

*God of influence, reveal to me the individuals in my Web of Influence who You have placed there to receive Your invitation through me. Thank you for the relationships You have given me with these people and give me Your confidence to approach these people with Your message. Amen.*

Yesterday we began looking at the story of the demon-possessed man in Gadara. Read Mark 5:1-13 to remind yourself of the story so far.

Luke 8:27 tells us that this man had been demon-possessed for a long time. It is clear from the story that the people who lived in the area were well acquainted with his situation. How did they respond when they learned what Jesus had done for the man?

Mark 5:14-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes when we step out and share the gospel we will see rejection. What does Jesus want us to know and remember when this happens?

Luke 10:16 \_\_\_\_\_

How did the man respond to what Jesus had done?

Mark 5:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

The man was bold in going out and sharing his story with everyone he could find. He did so even after seeing how the people had rejected Jesus. How could it be so easy for him when it seems so difficult to us?

Acts 4:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that the man knew very little about Jesus and His purpose but was still called to share his witness. You don't need to know everything either. Just tell others what Jesus means to you.

**My Response**

- Have I experienced rejection when I have tried to share the gospel?
- Do I hesitate sharing the gospel in fear that I might be rejected?
- Do I recognize that the gospel I share is Jesus' gospel and that I am only the messenger?
- Do I realize that acceptance or rejection of my witness is acceptance or rejection of Jesus and not me?
- Am I excited by what the good news of Jesus means to my Christless friends so that I can join Peter and John in saying, "I cannot help speaking about what I have seen and heard"?

*Creator and Lover of all people, help me to recognize the immeasurable love You have for all people, even when we reject You. Show me the patience You have with Your people and that You long to receive the lost with open arms. Guide me in sharing with others what forth in Your Son means to me. In His name. Amen.*

What is the first step to reaching out to others with the gospel?

Colossians 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_

The reason the idea of sharing our faith scares us is that we try to do it on our own. Bringing others into a living relationship with Jesus Christ is a task too big, too important, too opposed by Satan and too impossible to do on our own. If this is the case, how can God expect us to do it?

1 John 5:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

God wants to help us as we do His work. He has plans for us as we serve as His witnesses to others. What does He promise when we seek His help in outreach by coming to Him in prayer?

Jeremiah 29:11-13 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul told us to be watchful and thankful as we devote ourselves to prayer for help in reaching out. For what are we to be watchful?

1 Peter 3:15b \_\_\_\_\_

As we watch for opportunities to share the gospel, we are also to be thankful when we see God's hand at work in the lives of our friends. Why does it please God when we do this?

1 Timothy 2:1, 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_

**My Response**

- Do I turn to God in prayer before I step out in doing what I think is His will?
- What are some examples of how my best efforts at something failed when I had not first taken it to the Lord in prayer?
- When have I begun a task with prayer and found that God gave better results than I expected in ways I could never imagine?
- Am I watchful for opportunities to share my faith and thankful when God works through me to bring others to Him?

*I pray to You, my Lord, to open my eyes and make me more watchful for opportunities to share You with others. I thank You for times when You have worked through me in the past — even when I haven't realized it. Amen.*

**Each One Reach One**



Yesterday we saw that the first step in reaching out to others is to devote ourselves to prayer. We should also be watchful and thankful as God answers our prayers.

For what should we pray?

Colossians 4:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Here Paul tells us to pray for two things. First, he says, “that God may open a door for our message.” We are to pray for opportunities to talk with people about Jesus.

Obviously, we are not to force ourselves or our message on people when there is no opportunity. We must be patient and watchful while we are waiting for God to give an opportunity. The Philippians learned this when they wanted to help Paul in his ministry:

Philippians 4:10 \_\_\_\_\_

Our problem, however, is usually not that we witness when there is no opportunity. It is typically just the opposite. That’s why Paul said we should also pray...“that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ.”

We are to pray that God will give us opportunities and, when He does, that we will respond to the opportunities by sharing the good news of Jesus. It’s easy to ignore opportunities. We need God’s help to reveal them to us and help us respond to them.

Opportunities do not always come at the most opportune time. We also need God’s help in keeping us prepared to respond at all times. Paul pointed this out to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- Am I ready and willing to truly ask God to send opportunities to share my faith?
- Am I ready and willing to watch and be thankful for these opportunities?
- Am I ready and willing to respond to opportunities that God sends?
- Am I ready and willing to respond in season and out of season?
- Am I ready and willing to entrust this to God by taking it to Him in prayer?

*God of all situations, I pray that You may open a door for Your message among the people You have placed around me. I also pray that as You open doors of opportunity, that You help me recognize them and respond to them. Give me Your strength and Your words that I may proclaim the mystery of Christ. Amen.*

As we have proceeded through this devotion series, we have talked about why we should reach out and how to do it. This week we’ll focus more on who God has given for us to bring to Him.

Let’s begin by looking at a situation that happened when Jesus first traveled to a remote, largely non-Jewish place on the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee from where He normally ministered.

Mark 5:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_

The demons in the man recognized Jesus immediately. Can unchurched people recognize Jesus in you?

Romans 8:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus do for the man? Did He preach to him and explain everything about salvation?

Mark 5:8-13 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus met the man’s needs as he was. He reached out to the man in an area which concerned him. Paul further explained that we should begin to communicate God’s love to people according to their interests, not ours:

Ephesians 4:29 \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- Can unchurched people see Jesus active in my life?
- Have I tried to share my faith with someone without first considering what might be concerning them?
- What needs do I know about in the lives of unchurched people around me?
- What can I do to learn more about the needs of these people?
- How can I respond to these needs in ways that can prepare their hearts for the gospel?

*Come into my life, Lord Jesus. Take control and become visible to others. Forgive me for pulling a curtain over my relationship with You that prevents others from seeing You at work in my life. Open my eyes that I may see needs of those around me and respond with Your love and with the message of Your salvation. Amen.*

### **Each One Reach One**

Yesterday we saw that as You share your faith with others, you are to let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt.” Why?

What is the purpose of taking such care in dealing with others?

Colossians 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that Paul says we are to be able “to answer everyone.” He didn’t say we should be prepared to spout off a sermon or jump into a planned script.

Sharing the gospel with another should be part of a two-way conversation. As with other conversations you have, there is no way to prepare beforehand exactly what you will say. Solomon warned against one-way conversations:

Proverbs 18:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Traps we can fall into while witnessing include saying too little or saying too much. People can be told that God loves them or that they are sinners, but neither is enough to save them.

Acts 2:36-37 \_\_\_\_\_

Conversely, meaty lessons in theology, doctrine and the like work best with Christians. Discuss with people only what they need to know from the Bible to be saved. Start with the milk:

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

How should you approach reaching out? First, turn control over to God in prayer. Then, let Him work through you as you convey His love to people.

### **My Response**

- Have I been hesitant in sharing my faith because I felt I needed to have an approach and a script nailed down?
- Have I dropped opportunities to bring someone to Christ by saying too little?
- Have I blown opportunities to bring someone to Christ by saying too much?
- What does it mean to me that God can still use the times I have dropped the ball or blown it to touch hearts (Isaiah 55:10-11)?

*God of the harvest, I confess that I too often try to take control of things when I should leave them in Your hands. Forgive me for dropping the ball by saying too little and for blowing it by saying too much. Help me to trust You to supply just the right words at just the right times. Amen.*

To share the gospel with others, we should first devote ourselves to prayer asking God for opportunities and that we will respond to these opportunities.

There’s one more thing for which we should pray. The most common reason Christians don’t respond to God-given opportunities is that we’re afraid that we won’t know what to say. We’re afraid we’ll either say the wrong thing, or not say the right thing. We’re afraid we’ll botch it up.

We’re in good company. Paul was afraid of this also. What did he say we should do about it?

Colossians 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

How will prayers help us proclaim the mystery of Christ clearly as we should?

Ephesians 6:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul knew that for him to be effective in reaching out with the gospel, he needed to use words given by God. Sometimes he did and was very effective. Sometimes he didn’t and problems resulted.

Who gave us an example of perfectly trusting God to give us the words?

John 12:49-50 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul and Jesus looked to God the Father for what to say when doing His work. So what happens when we pray to God for His guidance in what to say and what not to say?

Mark 13:11b \_\_\_\_\_

### **My Response**

- Do I feel that I know enough to respond to whatever comes up when I share my faith?
- Is there any way that I could ever know enough to respond to whatever comes up when I share my faith?
- Do I believe that God will give me the words needed to respond to whatever comes up when I share my faith?
- Can I trust God to give me the words to respond to whatever comes up when I share my faith (Exodus 4:13-15)?

*Word of life, thank You for the promise to not only provide me with opportunities to share my faith and the strength to respond to them, but also to give me the words to use. Forgive me when I try to speak out on my own. Help me trust You to speak through me. In Jesus name. Amen.*

After praying for opportunities, the courage to respond to opportunities and the words to use in responding, what is the next step in sharing God's message with others? As Nike says, "Just do it!"

As we trust God to answer our prayers, we need to do our part in helping to build opportunities, taking the opportunities and saying the words. Paul explains this in the remaining verses of our text in Colossians:

Colossians 4:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

First, he tells us to be wise in the way we act toward those outside the church. What does Paul mean by this? And why is it important?

Matthew 5:13-16 \_\_\_\_\_

We are to be wise in how we act toward others so that we will be given opportunities to witness. There are many things we do or ways we act that can prevent opportunities. What can we do if we need help in being wise in our interactions with others?

James 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

As God gives us opportunities to testify to our faith and we don't scare them off by our unwise actions, we next need to make the most of every opportunity. Why should we not be embarrassed or ashamed to share the gospel at every opportunity?

Mark 8:34-38 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 1:16 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- Is the way I act around non-Christians conducive to building opportunities to witness?
- What do I do in my actions around others that might interfere with getting effective opportunities?
- How can I better encourage opportunities, recognize them and respond to them?
- Am I embarrassed or ashamed of sharing the gospel with others?

*Lord of heaven and earth, forgive me for the times when I interfere with opportunities You give me to testify to Your goodness. Send Your Spirit to help me be wise in the way I act toward others and to prod me to make the most of every opportunity. Amen*

### Each One Reach One

Paul give us some pointers to remember as we respond to opportunities to share our faith:

Colossians 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

First, he says to "let your conversation be always full of grace." We have a gospel of grace and love and reconciliation. We must communicate it in a way that demonstrates this.

Our goal in sharing God's good news is not to force or dump out the message at any cost. Our goal is to communicate the grace and love of Christ to the person in a way that they hear it not only as words, but as gifts to them.

We are not to try to win debates. We are to reveal the love of Jesus. How did Paul explain it to the Christians in Ephesus?

Ephesians 4:29 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul also said that our conversation should be "seasoned with salt." Salt added to a meal brings out the flavor, while salt put on a wound stings but acts as an antiseptic. Our conversations should likewise demonstrate the true love that warns people of personal danger.

We saw last week that our purpose in bringing others to Jesus is to save them from the agonies of hell and to guide them to the blessings of heaven. Why should we communicate the warnings of the Law as well as the promises of the Gospel?

Ezekiel 3:17-21 \_\_\_\_\_

### My Response

- When I discuss my faith with others, do I approach it as a debate?
- When I discuss my faith with others, do I feel like I need to perform or to prove myself?
- When I discuss my faith with others, do I recognize the goal of reaching the person with Christ's love?
- When I discuss my faith with others, do I warn of the dangers of rejecting Jesus?
- When I discuss my faith with others, do I proclaim the promises and blessings of trusting in Jesus?

*God of grace, work through me not only Your words but also Your ways so that my conversations with others may be always full of grace. Guide my discussions with others so that I may properly and adequately communicate at the right times Your warnings of eternal danger as well as Your promises and blessings of eternal salvation. In my Savior's name. Amen.*