

A close-up photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly. She is holding a white ceramic mug filled with a dark beverage, likely coffee. The background is softly blurred, focusing attention on her face and the mug.

# Ministry Resources For Women

Creative Interactive Events  
Bible Studies for Every Book of the Bible  
Discipleship Materials & More

Laura Krokos

Ministry Resources for Women

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## Getting Real About Ministry

Our Purpose, the reason you and I exist is to glorify God. That can sound pretty fluffy and impractical. So let's say it in a more understandable way. The glory of God is interchangeable with the character of God. So to say we exist to glorify God means we exist to display God's heart and character to the world. It is to show and tell the world what God is like. It is to make the invisible God visible to a lost and dying world.

Let me tell you my oldest son Asher's story as an example. Our two little boys are both adopted. I prayed for 2 years for God to give us a little boy. Through His word and some neat circumstances, God was clearly leading us to pursue looking into adoption. The day after our first information meeting we got an email from a supporter, who had no clue we were looking into adoption, asking if we would consider adopting this girl's baby. Wow! 2 weeks later we met her and heard her story of why adoption was the best option but the birth dad said that if she did it he would take her to court and get custody. So, we thought there is no way this is going to happen. 2 weeks later, he called us up and had a total change of heart. He knew there was no way he could raise this baby and said he wanted to meet us. Every 2 weeks there is some amazing thing how God came through. When you adopt there is a 4-7 day period where there is a loop-hole that if the birth mom changes her mind she can come and take the baby back. They say the chances of that happening are 5-10%. So the question we had to think about is if we were willing to put our heart out there and love the baby even if there was a chance he may never love us back. We decided to dive in... we decided to do it, that it would display God's heart of putting His heart out there to adopt us as His child. And what kept me going was remembering what was true of Him. That He came to earth in flesh, giving up all the rights of heaven and died the most horrible death possible for something He didn't do for people that may never choose to love Him back.

Asher's story reveals God's heart of willing to put it all out there even at the cost of rejection.

Let me tell you another example,

Our friends Dave and Amy had the worst day of their life on July 6th of last year. Amy was giving the kids a bath. She took little 2 year old Gore out the tub and put his pajama shirt and diaper on. She went to go grab his pajama pants, when she returned he was gone. She looked around the house and then went to the back door where he had learned to unlatch the screen door a few days earlier, it was open. She frantically looked for him, after 25 min. ran toward the irrigation ditch 200 yards away and heard screams. She saw her cousin walking toward her with little Gore in his pajama shirt and diaper, white and life-less in his arms. They had found him submerged under a log in the fast moving irrigation ditch. Amy thought he was dead.

They got him to the hospital where the doctors said he had 1% chance of survival and even if they managed to restart his heart, they feared Gore had suffered irreparable brain damage. After 1 hour, His heart restarted and they did therapeutic hypothermia, an experimental treatment in which the

body temperature is lowered — in Gore’s case, to 90 degrees — in order to protect the brain and allow healing. For 48 hours, Amy and Dave waited and prayed. “Is he going to be brain dead?” Dave wondered. “Is he ever going to wake up? All I really ever hoped for was to be able to hold him again.”

When doctors slowly warmed Gore back up to normal body temperature, they all watched for purposeful movement, any sort of sign that Gore still had some brain activity. Immediately, Gore started moving and opened his eyes. He used the sign his parents had taught him to tell them he was hungry.

An MRI scan of Gore’s brain came back with astonishing results: Perfectly normal.

“It came back no abnormalities. Not one single thing in his brain MRI that was wrong,” A few days later, Gore walked out of the hospital on his own.

Doctors can’t fully explain how this little boy came back to life after being underwater and without a heartbeat for so long.

Gore’s story shouts that our God is truly the Resurrection and the Life. He is the Restorer and able to take us from death to life to moment we put our trust in Him.

We exist, our stories are to give people a glimpse of what God is like. In Ezekiel there is a phrase repeated over and over and over. *“That they will know I am the Lord”* said 48 times. If we don’t get this, if we put anything else first, we function as though we are the center of the universe and this life is about us. But when we have a clear understanding that life is truly not about us but about making the invisible God visible to a lost world, when we have our gaze fixed on Him, we become what we are gazing at and thrive b/c we are living for what we were created to live for.

Jonathan and his armor-bearer in the OT got this. Jonathan dreamt big of how He could glorify God, dug in to get wisdom and dove in to get it done, taking initiative to be a good steward with what the Lord had given him.

Ok, so here is what happens. Jonathan, a super cool guy who stands up for what is right no matter the cost, wins this battle against the huge army of the Philistines with 1,000 men. Then, King Saul, his dad takes the credit. The Philistines get mad and start making a bigger army to retaliate... here they are coming at you, far as your eyes can see. Chariots, soldiers, intent on destroying you. The people had a sliver of hope though b/c the prophet of their day Samuel was coming and was going to offer a sacrifice and pray for God to be on their side. Day after day goes by and I imagine people start getting a bit fearful and discouragement as they are staring at this army who knows how many times bigger than them and the prophet is nowhere in sight. Perhaps then worry starts to set in. Why is Samuel not coming? Maybe they are wondering is it because the Lord will not support us? Is it because the Lord is not on our side? After an entire week, there is still no sign of Samuel so

in direct disobedience Saul makes the offering in Samuel's place. Sure enough, after the offering was made, Samuel walks up saying to Saul "You have done a foolish thing." "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure..." Ok, if they weren't scared before, they have got to be now thinking, my leader has not brought God's favor on us but rather brought His judgment by being so stupid. I would think "this is it, we are going to die". But then it gets worse. Their weapons are taken and there is no way to get any others so they take off for the cliffs and scratch in the rocks Oh God, please save me.

Ok, this is where it gets really good. Jonathan, a person just like you and me with insecurities and fears and weaknesses totally steps out and acts in faith. I am sure he was scared wit-less, but in his fear, he acts. He takes his armor-bearer (carrier of the military equipment and likely Jonathan's apprentice) to scope out the situation. He gathers information and makes a decision to step out and see what God does. Why? He believes what is true about God and decides to trust Him. He recognized that "Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few." So he decides to give God an opportunity to show His greatness. He says "Come, let's go over to the outpost... perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf." The two of them scale a cliff and take on 20 soldiers by themselves (after climbing a cliff no less) and then God comes through for them and causes an earthquake and the rest of the army starts to panic and start fighting each other. Then the other guys hiding in the caves hear this they come running to the scene. "So on that day the Lord saved Israel."

Jonathan's actions were based on His understanding of the Lord. He understood life was about God and His name and character being made known. No one else was doing what needed to be done, so rather than sitting back complaining and pointing fingers, he is moved to action. He recognized the circumstances, the mission, knew what he had and recognized God's ability to accomplish it. And then he went for it.

From what I have experienced in 12 years of ministry the majority of students in college have been trained to live the common, status quo life. They were told (perhaps you're in this boat) that they have to go to college because that is what we do as Americans. You have to get hired somewhere to make money to support the kind of comfortable lifestyle we've dreamed about. And it will be icing on the cake if you actually get to enjoy what you do. Without God intervention, this inevitably leads to a wasted life. To looking back on life saying I wish I would have experienced what I was built for, seeing and displaying the character of God. I wish I would have lived for the mission He gave me of making multiplying disciples instead of the one the world gave me.

All throughout scripture it is easy to see God's passion for us to know Him. And as we really see Him, we can't help but be changed from the inside out by the Holy Spirit. Andy Stanley says "Granted, this world offers a truckload of options when it comes to possible visions to pursue. But you were tailor-made, carefully crafted, minutely detailed for a divine agenda. It is what you were created and re-created for. God's visions for your life are the things that will give your life impact

beyond this life. For, as we will see, God's visions always have an eternal element. His individual vision for your life is a small part of a plan he envisioned and put in motion long before you or I came on the scene."

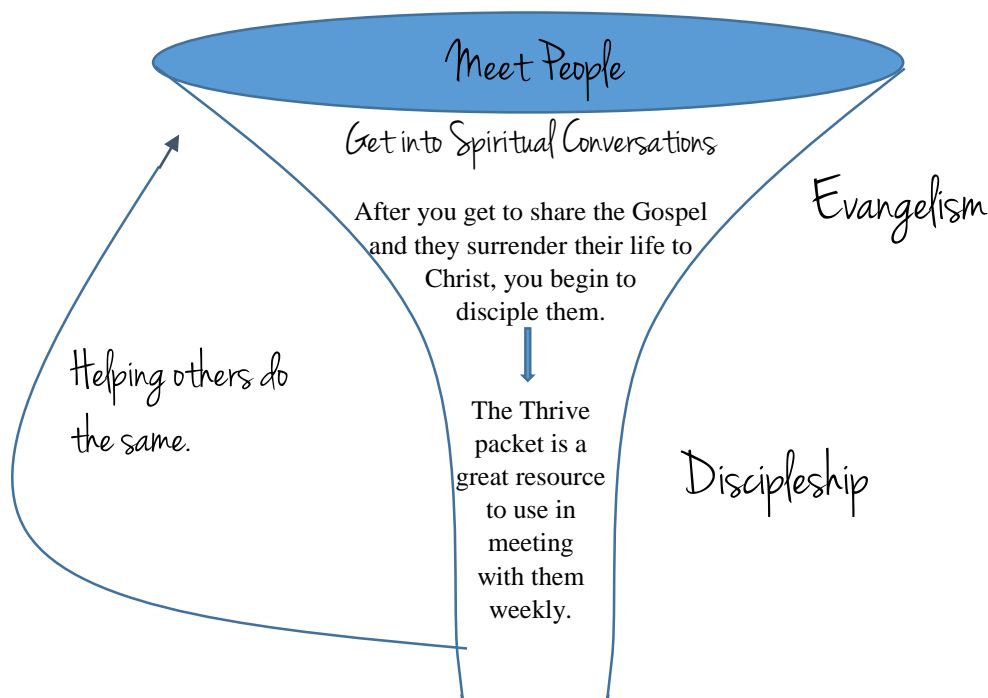
Our purpose is to glorify God, to make Him known. You cannot remove God's means of the way He wants to make that happen. You can't remove the show from the tell. Our purpose, reason for existing is to glorify God. And our mission is to make multiplying disciples through the process of evangelism and discipleship.

The Great Commission is the multiplication of evangelism and discipleship, it is making multiplying disciples. Evangelism is defined as telling a non-Christian about Jesus. Discipleship is defined as helping a Christian walk by faith, communicate their faith and multiply their faith.

Let's say for example that a gifted evangelist is able to lead 1,000 people to Christ every day. Each year she will have reached 365,000 people. Compare her with a disciple who leads not 1,000 people a day to Christ, but only one person a year. At the end of one year, the disciple has led one person to Christ, the evangelist 365,000. But suppose the disciple has not only led another person to Christ, but has also discipled her. She has prayed with her, taught her how to feed herself from the Word of God, helped her get connected with other believers, shown her what it means to live the Spirit-filled life and shown her how to present the gospel to other people. At the end of that first year, this new believer is able to lead another lady to Christ and disciple her as she was discipled. At the start of the second year, the disciple has doubled her ministry. The one has become two. During the second year, both ladies leads not 1,000 people per day to Christ, but one person per year. At the end of the second year, we have four people. You can see how slow the process is. But note too that we do not have only converts, but disciples who are able to reproduce themselves. At this rate of doubling every year, the disciple, leading one lady per year to Christ, will overtake the evangelist numerically early in the 24th year. From then on, the disciple and her multiplying ministry will be propagating faster than the combined ministry of dozens of gifted evangelists. But multiplication stops when training how to do the Great Commission stops.

So the Great Commission, God's designed way of bringing the whole world to hear about Him is split into four basic parts. Taking the initiative to go and meet people. Getting into spiritual conversations and sharing the Gospel with those who are ready to hear. Discipling those who put their faith in Christ. And helping the new believer be able to live out the Great Commission (funnel diagram below) themselves. This process is a simple way to help visualize the Great Commission.



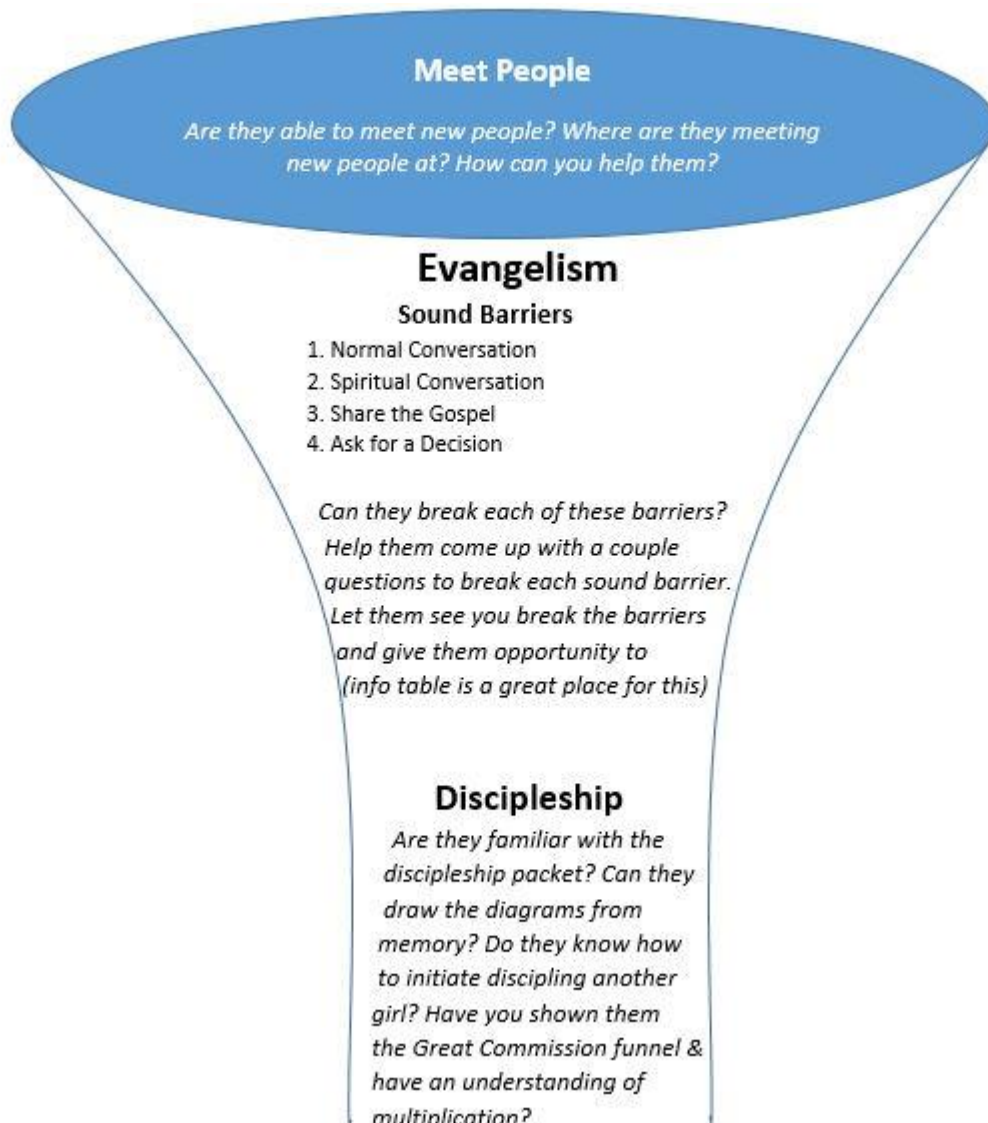


We need to open up the funnel by sowing broadly. The more people you meet the more people you'll talk to who are ready to hear and the more people you'll get to share the Gospel with. The more ripe fruit who gets to hear the gospel, the more people you get to lead to Jesus and the more people you get to see God develop into disciple makers. God has called and entrusted you with what is most dear to His heart. Seeking and saving the lost and training them to do the same.

In order to multiply you need to disciple someone who will in turn reach and disciple others. Therefore you need to use "filters" to identify potential disciples. A filter is an activity or event that exposes characteristics of a person's heart and life. This is super important because there is going to be people you like a whole lot and want to pour your life and wisdom into but they will not be willing or able to be about the mission God has given them. Your time and energy is valuable and God wants you to be a good steward with it, therefore you want to invest in (what Mk 4) good soiled people. And if you invest your time in someone who is not willing or able to multiply, the multiplication line ends with you.

The following diagram is an illustration to help think through for the ladies you disciple and how to help them live on mission for the glory of God.





Soldiers in the battle want training. Steve Shadrach in the Fuel and the Flame puts it this way, "Picture some soldiers at an army base in west Texas during peacetime, and an instructor comes into their class to teach them how to use an M-16 rifle. Chances are, he would have a very difficult time getting the details across to the bored, yawning privates. These soldiers are just in the military to do their stint and get out, and besides, who need to know how to take apart and put together the rifle when none of them will ever use it in battle? Their teachability quotient is very low because they don't see their need.

On the other hand, if the US was suddenly thrust into a ground war in a foreign country and these men parachuted into enemy territory, they would have a completely different attitude. If they were in some hastily dug foxholes with a dwindling weapons supply and an army truck pulled up and a sergeant jumped out and started throwing M-16's into each soldier's hands with only three minutes to teach them how to load and shoot, do you think the men would be a bit more teachable? Of

course! Because now they are in the thick of the battle, and their lives depend upon carefully listening to an immediately applying their training.

Equipping someone to become a disciple maker is more than knowledge. It is also skills, character and vision. So as you disciple, make sure to emphasize all four components. Knowledge (firm understanding of the basics and who God is) and skill (how to's of the Christian life) can be taught over a relatively short amount of time. But character and vision are primarily caught and can take years. So each week spend time praying and thinking about each student you meet with. Don't just wing it, but come prepared, after asking yourself a couple questions for their personal, spiritual and ministry life: What is his/her greatest need? What is the next step for them to get there?"

Your weaknesses, inabilities and failures present no challenge to God's plan for your life, but your willingness does. I like how Andy Stanley puts it, *"How is never a problem with God. When He puts something in your heart to do, He goes to work behind the scenes to ensure that it happens. In the meantime, we are to remain faithful to Him and focused on the vision."*

There is a statistic taken of what people at the age 95 wished they could have changed about their life. The top 3 things were, they wish they could have reflected more, did more that outlived them and risked more.

This lady, my hero, I am confident did not say these things. One of the first Bible handbooks I got was written by her and a lot I was struck by her insights. She is not someone many people know. Actually, I have met not one person who actually knew of her but her influence is mind blowing. Here is an article Bill Bright, the founder of the largest missions sending organization in the world wrote about this lady Henrietta Mears. Here is Bill Bright talking about the influence she had in his life.

"I had come to Southern California in 1944, where I began my own business. At First Presbyterian Church, I met several dynamic Christians after attending a number of meetings. I began to study the Bible for myself. I was at that time an agnostic, but very open to truth. Though I was a seeker after truth, I pursued my quest privately for the most part. When I did go to church, I would usually sit in the back row so I could slip out before anybody had a chance to talk to me.

One evening Dr. Mears was speaking to the college group about Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. By this time I had become convinced that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and Savior of men. Dr. Mears quoted Paul's words: "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

She challenged us to go home, get on our knees and say, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" I did exactly that, and I trace my conversion experience to that evening. Alone on my knees in my home, I prayed a prayer similar to the apostle Paul's and I chose to dedicate the rest of my life to serving God.

For whatever reason, Dr. Mears felt that I had some potential for the Lord, so she encouraged me to become one of a handful who met with her regularly for prayer and study of the Scripture. Every Saturday we met at 6 a.m. for most of the morning to read the Bible and pray. Without my realizing

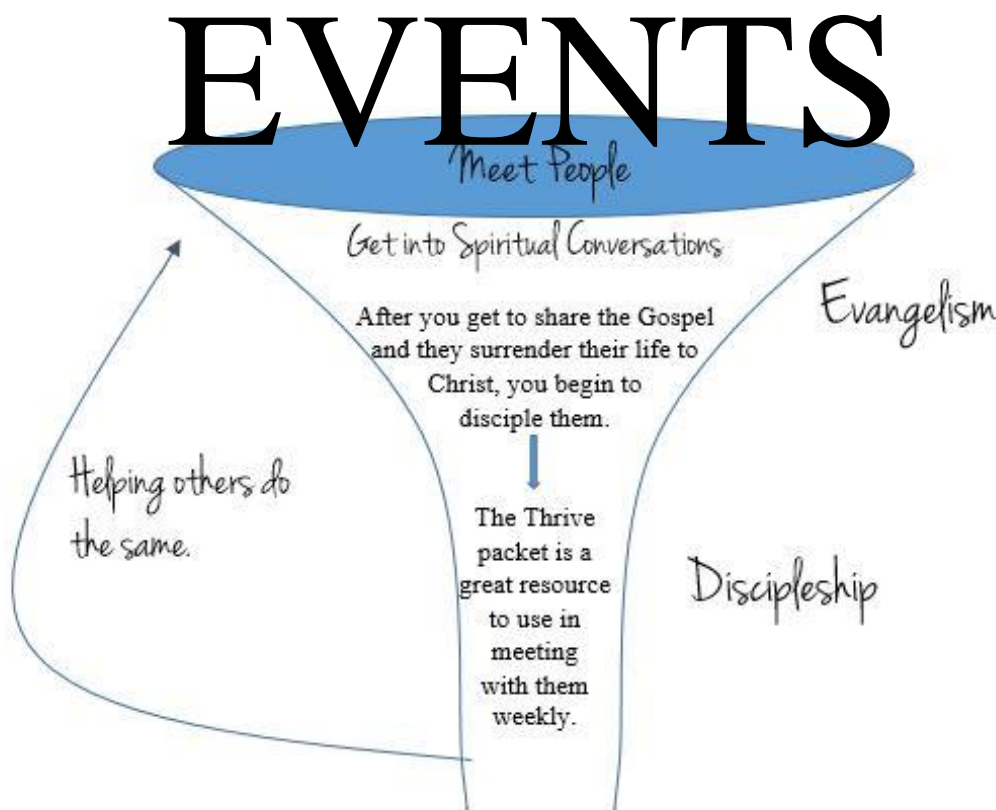
it, I was being introduced to a kind of Christianity that was rare. I discovered a vital, dynamic, personal walk with the Lord.

Though I can never remember her teaching a class in soul winning, Dr. Mears led many people to Christ in my presence. When witnessing opportunities did come for me, it was only natural to do it the way I had observed her do it.

Dr. Mears also introduced Vonette to Christ and played an important part in discipling her. Dr. Mears had a phenomenal impact on Vonette's and my spiritual growth... Many were attracted to her as she challenged them to big things. She was a master at motivating and inspiring people to do great things for God.

At the time of her death, more than 400 people had gone into Christian service as a result of her influence. The lives she touched included Billy Graham, Young Life founder Jim Rayburn, Navigators founder Dawson Trotman, U.S. Senate Chaplain Richard Halverson and many, many others.

When thinking about women's ministry, it can be easy to get stuck in a rut of what Christian women do together for an official ministry event. It's also easy to organize a ministry event without the mission in mind. And it's easy to create an event for ladies for the purpose of getting people together or just to do something. But really the purpose of women's ministry events are to be a place where the Great Commission can happen. Events create an environment where you can meet new people and get into spiritual conversations. They also can be a place where younger Christians are given the essentials of their faith. Or it can be a place where ladies are trained to live as sent ones. The following diagram illustrates this. And below that are some events that provide a good context for the Great Commission to happen (or to be trained in) in some form.

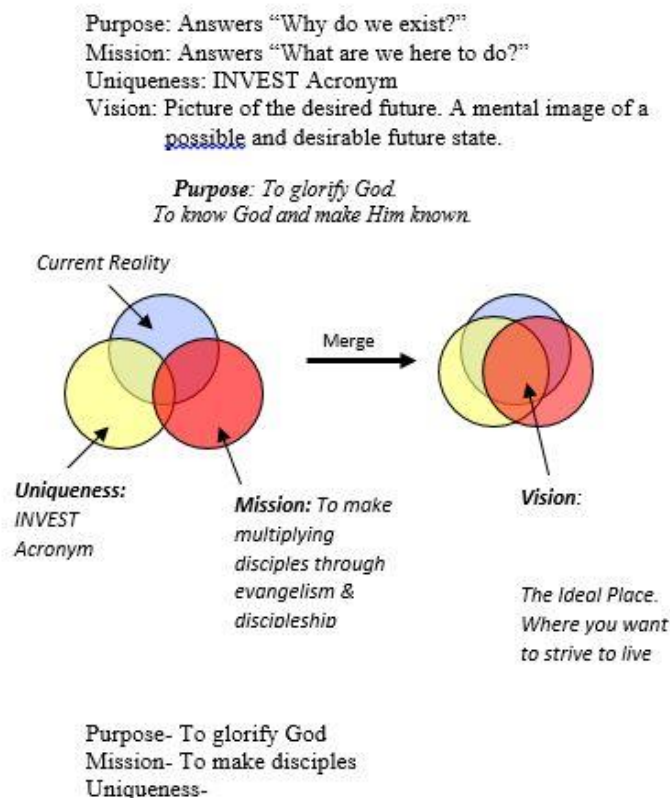


## Creative, Interactive Event Ideas

1. *Prayer Mosaic*. Last month I shared what the [Prayer Mosaic](#) is. Jump on over to check out the details and get the free printable. Basically you set up stations for women to go to at any pace they want. Each station has a way for them to connect with the Lord and pray about the things He is passionate about. It's Awesome!

2. *WAR Jewelry party*. This is so fun and the organization Women at Risk does all the hard work for you. They send you boxes of jewelry (you help decide which kind would be the best fit for your group based on age and price range) which has been made by women either rescued from the sex trade or in programs preventing them from being sold into the sex trade. Then you have a fun little party and buy gifts for friends. After the party you package it up (in the boxes they provide) and send it back, shipping on them. All the money goes to a great mission-minded organization and it's so fun and easy to pull off. [Check out the details.](#)

3. *Life Direction lunch*. One of the most important things for a woman to know is how her unique giftings and abilities and how she can use them to make Jesus known. There is a great tool that brings great insight to this question. You can host a lunch where the ladies can process through this question. [Here is a video explaining the tool.](#)



Here's a helpful acronym to help identify your unique blend God has given you to steward. Take some time with the Lord thinking through these questions more in depth but as we read them if something immediately comes to mind, you might want to make a note of it.

The acronym is INVEST. Interests, Nature, Vision, Experiences, Spiritual Gifts and Treasure. You can download a free printable worksheet [here](#).

### Interests-

- \* What (types of things) and who (could be a people group, age group etc.) do you enjoy?

### Nature/Personality-

- \* What are some strengths and weaknesses mentally, emotionally and socially?

### Vision-

- \* What is something you would do in your lifetime for the glory of God if you knew you would not fail?

Your vision will never be bigger than your view of God. Jesus loved asking this question. "What do you want me to do for you?" Mk 10:36

- \*What are you passionate about? What would others describe you as passionate about?

### Experiences-

- \* What do you see going on around you and every time you experience it or think about it, it deeply affects you?

- \* What is happening that you desperately want to see different?

### Spiritual Gifts-

- \* What comes natural for you to do?

- \*What do you enjoy doing? What thing(s) really refresh and encourage you after you do them?

- \*What have others noticed you were good at?

- \*What have spiritual gift inventory tests said your spiritual gift(s) were?

\*What are some things you are confident in doing because of the ability God has given you?

### Treasure-

\* What has God entrusted to you? What resources are you a steward of?

And finally, the most important question:

How can you use your uniqueness to carry out the mission Jesus gave you of making multiplying disciples through the process of evangelism and discipleship?

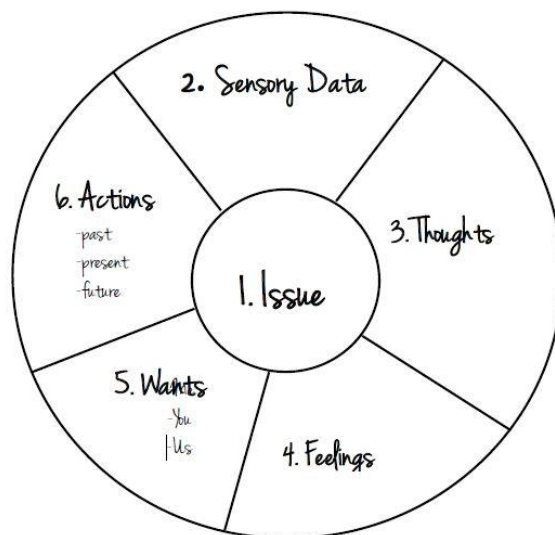
### Current Reality

Where do you live and what are the realities that surround that?

Where do you spend the majority of your time?

Write down some ideas of how your **mission** can tie together with your **uniqueness** and your **current reality**.

4. *Communication Wheel Coffee*. What woman is perfect at communicating and never has issues with conflict? None right. This tool has been so incredibly helpful to my husband and me as well as in our relationships with friends, family and people we work with. This tool (*which I've researched who originally came up with it and I can't find out. Sorry*) is something we teach as often as we can because it hits on all the main problems and common pitfalls in communicating. Host a simple coffee and cupcakes time and print a copy of the communication wheel for each of the ladies. Go over the sheet and then you can give them pretend scenarios they have to walk the wheel with each other (in groups of 2).



## Definitions

**Issue-** What is the heart of the issue? Using I statements share the one main issue. Stick to one issue at a time.

**Sensory Data-** This is everything you took in from your senses. *"I saw..." "I heard..."* etc.

**Thoughts-** When you saw or heard (sensory data) what did you think? How did you interpret the things you took in from your senses?

**Feelings-** When you saw and heard (sensory data) what did you feel? Take ownership of, and share your feelings. i.e. *"When I heard you say \_\_\_\_\_ I felt sad and frustrated because \_\_\_\_\_"*

**Wants-** Share what you want for yourself, for them, for your relationship etc. i.e., *"I want us to be able to \_\_\_\_\_"*

**Actions-** What actions do you want to take place now between you two? This could possibly be the most important part. Without sharing the solution, the situation can easily feel hopeless and dissolve into defending rights and proving points. 127 Master Plan Ministries

## Helpful Hints

### Seek to Understand

*"A fool does not delight in understanding, only in revealing his own mind."* Proverbs 18:2

Most conflicts are resolved when you understand one another which takes supernatural power to put your needs on hold and try to understand the other person. Ask the Lord for strength to truly hear and understand where the other person is coming from.

Try not to assume their motives of why they have done things. Instead of assuming, ask questions.

### Speak for Self

Use I statements. Try not to accuse or blame for your feelings but rather take responsibility for how you feel. Try not to clam up but be willing to share your motives, thoughts and feelings to enable the other person to understand where you're coming from. If you don't share your thoughts, feelings, wants and actions you're not giving them the ability to move forward in love.

If possible, write out a wheel ahead of time.

### Listen

Asking leading questions

Do not try to jump in and fix them or relate your autobiography. Just listen.



Invite them to tell you more. Don't stop inviting until they say there is nothing else. Usually, the third time you invite you strike gold and get to the heart. Then they know you really want to know.

Establish eye contact and use healthy non verbals like nodding your head yes and not giving dirty looks.

Acknowledge them and show you're listening, "*uh huh, yeah, ok...*" etc.

Summarize what you think they've said. Capture the essence in an empathetic way. "*Let me see if I understand. So when I \_\_\_\_\_ you thought \_\_\_\_\_ and felt \_\_\_\_\_. You'd like for us to \_\_\_\_\_ and want \_\_\_\_\_. Is that right?*"

5. *Global Dinner.* This is a dinner event that is more than meets the eye and gives vision for taking the gospel to the nations.

"Not long after this outpouring of worldwide harmony has begun, as you sheepishly wander toward the Indian table with half of your remaining potato peel, your eyes drift to a door lefts lightly ajar. You make out something beyond it. Moving closer people sitting silently. No food graces their tables, and they only gaze at you in sad silence.

Filled with sudden compassion, you turn back to the cafeteria and yell, "*Hey! Everyone! There are more people over here, and they need food too!*" All movement stops as everyone's attention turns to you After split second, a wav of recognition seems to sweep across the room , as though everyone were together grasping both the symbolism of the evening and the urgency to get food to the hungry. Chaos ensues. Groups of people hurriedly grab plates and pans and rush into the side room, doling out handfuls of lukewarm meat and vegetables. As the crowd floods this small room, someone recognizes that there are still others hidden in another adjacent room nearby. Another frantic party moves quickly toward them with whatever food scraps are left, and soon after this the entire crowd is started and silenced by a loud, screeching noise. It is a trumpet blast, and before the blaring has stopped the full recognition of what has just happened hits you. *I get it. This isn't about food.*"

*The trumpet blast is Christ's return, the food is the gospel, we are the Christians of the world; and I, an American indulged while others starved. I do this spiritually. I indulge as others perish. I'm blessed abundantly, and I hoard it. I'm indifferent to, or ignore, the people in the world who don't know Christ, nor have the ability to know Him. Why don't I give nearly as much effort to take Him to them as I did in getting these cold green beans to my friends?* Roger Hershey & Jason Weimer, The Finishers

## Purpose

A learning exercise to show the spiritual needs around the world. Some people have access to the Gospel more readily than others.

## Logistics

Make invitations to an international dinner but do not explain what the real event is. Give each guest a passport of (or put it on the invitation) what country they will be at. Each table will represent a different country and food will represent the gospel (Do not tell them that last detail).

## The Tables

### *Europe:*

Serve them a cold plate of a full meal to represent Europe has access to the gospel with its cold and stale. Europeans are often distracted by a variety of things, so you could have lots of activities to do at the table like painting, philosophy books etc.

### *Africa:*

Serve baby food and milk in baby bottles. They have some minor form of protein but are pretty immature, spiritually speaking. It might be good to have them sit on the ground and occasionally “kill” one or two people (to represent the reality of AIDS, famine, war, etc.). Once they are “killed” they can no longer participate but have to sit there.

### *Middle East:*

Serve 3-4 boxes of plain popcorn. One of the boxes has some cold ham pieces in it. While there’s some truth in the M.E., it’s minimal.

### *Asia:*

Cram many people at this table. Serve one large bowl of rice and a pitcher of water, with no utensils. This represents the general lack of knowledge of the Gospel.

### *Korea:*

Seat people with this passport within Asia’s borders but instead of sitting on the ground, they will sit on pillows and each receive a plate of hot food because they do have the Gospel and it’s edible.

### *South America:*

Serve all the potato chips, candy and sugary snacks they can handle along with room temperature pop/soda (as much as they can drink). This table can be loud and fun. They have the Gospel but it’s not in a nutritious form, not substantive.

### *North America:*

Give incredible fanfare, play games, get sparkling juice, massages, pamper them. Parade into the dinner and give them chicken, steak, ham, sides, and desserts. Also have many things to do at the table. Ipads, games, anything fun and loud as a distraction you can think of. This represents the overabundance of resources and access to the Gospel.

### *Hidden People*

Do not serve these people any food and have them sit in a side room the whole time. This represents the reality that they are unreached with the Gospel and are often forgotten.

### **Rules:**

Half/two-thirds of the way through the exercise leaders can begin to ask attendees (if they're not catching on), *"Do you think everyone's here? Do you know anyone who said they were coming who isn't here?"*

Give hints by asking questions like these if they're not catching on. The goal is to get them to take their food to others and realize that not everyone is present. You can have a trumpet sound at the end, signifying the rapture and no more time to share the gospel. The whole dinner lasts about 1-1.5 hours followed by 30-45 minutes of debrief discussion. Have food ready at the end for all who are hungry and didn't get to eat.

### **Debrief Questions**

At each table discuss the following questions:

1. Observation. Just tell us about what it was like where you were at. What did you see? What was your experience like? Who first noticed people were missing? What did you do?
2. Interpretation. How were you feeling in your country? What were you thinking? What did you think about the other countries? About the Americans? How about the hidden people – what were they experiencing?
3. Application. What kind of ah-ha's did you experience? How is the Lord speaking to you?

### **Sharing**

Have someone from each table share in front of the entire group their table's insights.

6. *Cards or Journals Affirmation Time.* Host a time together where every woman gets a journal or a card with their name on it. Then pass around the journals (or cards) and each of the ladies writes something affirming or encouraging verses to the person it belongs to. (Have verses and a list of good qualities like the ones found [here](#) to help people think of things to write.)

In the background you could have nice music playing and offer some yummy snacks. After all the journals have been passed you can go around and brag on each of the ladies having only a couple women share for each lady.

7. *Beautiful Feet Night.* Give pedicures to the women while there is a teaching on how to share the gospel ([here's a great resource](#)) since *"Beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news"*. While you are washing feet and painting nails, use the time to pray for that lady.

8. *Bema Seat.* The Bema seat is the reward ceremony for believers described in 2 Cor. 5:10. This video is seriously amazing! It is so inspiring and encouraging and often times shifts people's perspective of what they are doing with their life. All you have to do is set up a TV or screen and order the DVD and hit play. You can get as extravagant or as simple as you'd like. You can put out some snacks and turn on the movie or you could plan to have worship during the times they have it in the movie and decorate in theme with the video. Here's where you [order the Bema Video](#).

9. *Hot Seat.* Hot seat is a game where each lady takes a turn being "it". The group can ask her any question they want and the goal is for her to answer the questions. (She doesn't have to but the more you let people know you, the more intimate a group can be.) After 5 minutes (or the time allotted for questions) you move on to the next lady.

10. *Soul to Soul.* Soul to Soul helps to create an environment of safety and confidentiality as quickly and naturally as possible. For you, the group leader, it will hopefully accelerate your relationship and discipleship with the students by helping you to be aware of individual needs, accountability, and emotional and spiritual growth areas.

## Basic Flow of a "Soul to Soul"

The individual whose turn it is begins with 20-30 minute life story that incorporates their family background, spiritual background and basically anything they feel is important to letting the group get to know them better.

After the lady has shared, the group can ask her questions. They might be related to what they had just shared in their life story, or something that you might be interested in about their spiritual life, or a question that stems from something previously spoken of.

The time is wrapped up by asking the person for prayer requests and having the group members pray for them. This should be a time when prayers of affirmation for the individual are also given.

## Ground Rules

1. Total group confidentiality. What is shared in the group must be all means be kept in the group. In order for people to feel free to share their hearts, this is an absolute must.
2. Everyone participates. Try to encourage everyone to ask questions so that the person feels cared for by all.
3. Don't be overly concerned with the length, esp. if an emotional or serious issue is being shared. It is much more important that the person feel cared for than you finish in time. However, if the time becomes quite lengthy, the group leader should draw the time to a close by establishing a time limit.
4. Set the tone by explaining that this is a time to care for this individual not to put them on the hot seat for their lifestyle, theology or struggles.
5. A group member can ask any question they want but the individual has the option to not answer it – and the same question can be asked of that person later.
6. Full attention should be given to the person who is sharing the entire time. Questions should not be asked until the person is finished.
7. Try to make sure you are in a place with as few distractions as possible and where everyone is eye level.

The key element to the success of a "Soul to Soul" is vulnerability. Whoever goes first needs to be as absolutely open as possible. Their ability to share openly, from their heart, will set the tone for the rest of the group. It may be helpful to ask a student to go first that you know will set the stage well for the rest of the evening.

## Bible Studies by Book of the Bible

### Old Testament

Genesis- BSF International: [Genesis](#)

Exodus- Priscilla Shirer: [One: Journey to your Promise Land](#)

Leviticus- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Holy](#)

Numbers- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Counted](#)

Deuteronomy- Beth Moore- [The Law of Love: DVD Kit](#)

Joshua- Lenya Heitzig: [Joshua](#)

Judges- Laura Krokos: [A Devotional Journey through Judges](#)

Ruth- Liz Curtis Higgs: [Ruth](#)

Ruth- Kelly Minter: [Ruth: loss, love & legacy \(The Living Room Series\)](#)

1 Samuel- Laura Krokos: [Beholding Him, Becoming Missional](#)

2 Samuel- Laura Krokos: [Beholding Him, Remaining Faithful](#) (Coming soon)

1 Kings Navigators: [Life Change, 1 & 2 Kings](#)

2 Kings- Kelly Minter: [No Other Gods](#)

1 Chronicles Kay Arthur: [Walking Faithfully with God 1 & 2 Kings/Chronicles](#)

2 Chronicles- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Distinct](#)

Ezra Charlotte Travis: [Ezra and Nehemiah](#)

Nehemiah- Kelly Minter: [Nehemiah: A Heart That Can Break DVD Leader Kit \(The Living Room Series\)](#)

Esther- Beth Moore- [Esther: It's Tough Being a Woman \(DVD Leader Kit\)](#)

Job- Navigators: [Life Change, Job](#)

Psalms- Beth Moore: [Stepping Up: A Journey Through the Psalms of Ascent](#)

Proverbs- William E. Mouser: [Proverbs; Learning to Live Wisely](#)

Ecclesiastes Stephanie Shott: [Ecclesiastes](#)

Song of Solomon- Lisa Harper: [What Every Girl Wants- A Portrait of Love and Intimacy in the Song of Solomon](#)

Isaiah- BSF International: [Isaiah](#)

Jeremiah- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Decisive; Taking a Stand for the Truth](#)

Lamentations- Walter Kaiser [Grief and Pain in the Plan of God](#)

Ezekiel- Kay Arthur: [What Is Yet To Come](#)

Daniel- Beth Moore: [Daniel](#)

Hosea- BSF International: [Minor Prophets](#)

Joel- Kay Artur: [Discovering the God of Second Chances; Jonah, Joel, Amos & Obadiah](#)

Amos- See Above

Obadiah- See Above

Jonah- Priscilla Shirer: [Jonah: Navigating a Life Interrupted – Member Book](#)

Micah-Kay Arthur: [Finding Hope When Life Seems Dark; Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah](#)

Nahum- See Above

Habakkuk- See Above

Zephaniah- See Above

Haggai- Barry E. Morgan: [Haggai & Malachi](#)

Zechariah- Kay Arthur: [Opening the Windows of Blessing; Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi](#)

Malachi- Lisa Harper: [Malachi; A Love that Never Lets Go](#)

## New Testament

Matthew- BSF International: [Matthew](#)

Mark- Max Lucado: [Mark](#)

Luke- Good Morning Girls: [Luke](#)

John- BSF International: [John](#)

Acts- BSF International: [Acts](#)

Romans- BSF International: [Romans](#)

1 Corinthians- Max Lucado: [1 Corinthians](#)

2 Corinthians- Max Lucado: [2 Corinthians](#)

Galatians- Max Lucado: [Galatians](#)

Ephesians- Good Morning Girls- [Ephesians](#)

Philippians-Darlene Schacht: [FREE download](#)

Colossians- Charlotte Travis: [Colossians](#)

1 Thessalonians Warren Wiersbe: [Be Ready; 1 & 2 Thessalonians](#)

2 Thessalonians- See Above

1 Timothy- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Faithful; 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon](#)

2 Timothy- [Max Lucado: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus](#)

Titus John Stott: [Fighting the Good Fight; 1 Timothy & Titus](#)

Philemon- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Faithful](#)

Hebrews Lisa Harper: [Holding Out for a Hero; Hebrews](#)

James- Beth Moore: [James: Mercy Triumphs \(DVD Leader Kit\)](#)

1 Peter- John MacArthur: [1 & 2 Peter](#)

2 Peter- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Alert](#)

1 John- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Real](#)

2 John- Max Lucado: [1, 2 & 3 John, Jude](#)

3 John- See Above

Jude- Warren Wiersbe: [Be Alert](#)

Revelation- Beth Moore: [Here and Now, There and Then DVD Series \(Revelation\)](#)

Revelation- BSF International: [Revelation](#)



## Topical Bible Studies

Seeking Him

God; Discover His Character: Bill Bright

Chase: Jennie Allen

Fearless: Max Lucado

Made to Crave: Lisa TerKeurst

Follow Me: David Platt

God's Story, Your Story: Max Lucado

Heaven: Randy Alcorn

Let It Go: Karen Ehman

Discovering God's Will: Andy Stanley

Not a Fan: Kyle Idleman

Radical: David Platt

Seeking Him: Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Stuck: Jennie Allen

Unglued: Lysa TerKeurst

## People of the Bible Studies

Peter: Mindy Ferguson

Daniel: Beth Moore

Esther: Beth Moore

Gideon: Priscilla Shirer

David: Beth Moore

Joseph: Mary E. Murphy. Michelle McKinney Hammond.

Jesus: Beth Moore

Paul: Jack Kuhatschek

## Top 10 Characteristics Needed in Leaders to Lead Today

After twelve years of ministry to college students, I have seen common values surface. And in order to lead well you have to understand the values of those you lead, which leads to them whole-heartedly committing to something to the point of sacrificial commitment.

**1. Communicate your heart.** Being “real” and “transparent” are one of the greatest values of young people. This requires sharing your thoughts and feelings and allowing room for others to share theirs. It means being open with your fears, hopes and motives which earns the respect and trust of others in a social media saturated culture.

**2. Cast vision often.** When you paint a picture of the end result it aligns affections to the mission. At a recent conference of 45,000 students ended up giving over 3.3 million dollars to help end slavery all over the world. College students were moved to give to the point of standing in line for two hours to do so because they saw what could be if the ministries fighting this injustice had the money they needed. When someone *wants* to do something, the quality of work that results is recognizably different than someone who is doing it because they have to.

**3. Have an honest view of your abilities and your limitations.** Tim Tebow is an example of someone who has an honest view of himself and his need for others. After every game he points to Jesus Christ, the One who enables him to play football and acknowledges other players who did well. Overconfidence repels, and humility attracts.

**4. Show respect.** Affection for and a desire to follow you grows when you treat people as though they have God-given value and significance. Young people lose respect for people who talk down to others. But when you show respect and offer dignity to others you might not agree with or who doesn't deserve it, it wins the heart and confidence of a young person.

**5. Go Big.** Don't be afraid to take risks. When you take risks it shows you care about something enough to put your faith in it. Students want to know that you believe in what you are asking them to do. Going big is an opportunity to model how to trust the Lord and leave room for Him to show up and show off. And even if things don't turn out as you'd hope, even that is worthy of praise in a young person's mind if you fail well, something just as important to model as how to succeed.

**6. Give ownership.** Let them contribute and have freedom to fail. Give them opportunities to use their unique gifts and abilities toward the mission. Students are at a point where they are discovering their uniqueness and need opportunity to flesh it out.

When given the opportunity they are able to learn and grow. But when there is pressure to fit into a box or cookie cutter, I have found they generally resist.

**7. Persevere.** Push through adversity, press into conflict and communicate. With over half of this young generation coming from broken homes, their examples of people who stick things out when it gets tough are few. Therefore, they not only have a real need but also a felt need of seeing people model pushing through in the face of adversity. Most students want to run from conflict and haven't learned how to communicate. So when you take them by the hand and walk through the issue, their thoughts, feelings, wants and actions, they overcome and their respect for you goes through the roof. Use the conflict that could stale mate your relationship as an opportunity.

**8. Be generous.** Generosity ignites generosity. When you are generous with your resources, praise, patience and support for a young person's benefit they take notice. Even something as little as bringing them coffee or a little note of encouragement many times is the motivator to be and give more.

**9. Honor others.** Twice I have seen ministries almost completely fall apart because of dishonor. Because of gossip and talking down about people especially the leadership. But in Scripture we see Jesus honoring people, speaking highly of people. Even people who don't deserve it. Like the sinner who pours oil on His feet and washes them with her tears. A sinner, someone who deserves no honor, Jesus thinks is worthy to praise and speaks highly of in front of a crowd of "important" people. Surely if the King of the universe can speak highly of people, so can we even if we don't agree with everything about them or the way they do things.

**10. Admit when you're wrong.** It's ok to not always know the answer. Admitting when you're wrong or asking for someone's opinion communicates humility and respect which are some of the deepest desires of a young person's heart.

## Helpful Websites, Blogs & Tools

[MissionalWomen.com](http://MissionalWomen.com)

[CruPressGreen.com](http://CruPressGreen.com)

A [video where I draw out a diagram](#) to explain what it means to live the Spirit-filled life.

[KidsonMission.com](http://KidsonMission.com)

[HiveResources.com](http://HiveResources.com)

Video where I share [helpful tips for spending time with the Lord](#).

Video about [how to put together a talk](#).

<http://www.cmmppress.org/>

<http://www.radical.net/>

[BibleStudyTools.com](http://BibleStudyTools.com)

<http://www.relevantmagazine.com/>

<http://www.vergenetwork.org/>

<http://eternityimpact.blogspot.com/>

[145 Creative, Fun Evangelism Ideas](#)

[Compassion.com](http://Compassion.com)

[MissionalKids.com](http://MissionalKids.com)

<http://thegospelcoalition.org/>

[DesiringGod.org](http://DesiringGod.org)

[Reachebook.com](http://Reachebook.com)

<http://globalmediaoutreach.com/>

[ViewtheStory.com](http://ViewtheStory.com)

[JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net)

<http://www.perspectives.org/>

<http://harvestministry.org/>

<http://www.epm.org/>

## Great Reading

**It's Not About Me** – Answers the question of why exist.

**Master Plan of Evangelism** – Practically talks about how to make disciples.

**The Unexpected Adventure** – Extremely visionary stories of fruit born from sharing the gospel.

**Radical** – A passionate encouragement to not live for the American dream.

**The Finishers** – Casts vision for being a generation that finishes the Great Commission.

**Changes that Heal** – Helping students work out emotional issues related to making disciples. (Boundaries, Bonding, Grace & Truth etc.)

**Hell's Best Kept Secret** – Helping people really understand the gospel and the importance of talking about sin in evangelism.

**Disciples are Made Not Born** – A handbook on discipleship.

**Unlocking the Scriptures** – How to study the Bible.

**Operation World** – A book that describes every country and where it's at in terms of the gospel.

**Reach; How to Use your Social Media Influence for the Glory of God** by Laura and Angi.

**The Treasure Principle** – A tiny book that talks about how to look at finances in a godly way.

**Heaven** by Randy Alcorn

**Discipling Women** by Lori Joiner (addresses eating disorders, comparing, sexual abuse, abortion, lesbianism, depression, STD's etc.)

**The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make** by Hans Finzel

**Objects of His Affection** by Scotty Smith

**Made to Crave & Unglued** by Lysa Terkeurst

**Mission Minded Family & Mission Minded Child** by Ann Dunagan

## How to Lead and Effective Bible Study

My free ebook. [Download here.](#)

Here's the Table of Contents

*How to lead an effective small group*

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## Here's the Deal with Evangelism

God is at work in the lives of people around us, but it seems so often that our fears keep us from even getting into conversations with them to find out. Bill Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade says “Successful witnessing is taking initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results up to Him.” And really that is all we can do. God is the one that changes hearts, but He has called us to be part of the adventure of telling them His story.

For ten years I did not share my faith. I would invite my friends to church and youth group hoping someone else would share the actual gospel with them. Ten years is a long time to not be obedient to what God calls us to do. And like Romans 1 talks about, when we disobey God, our hearts become hardened. This is what happened to me.

I went to college wanting to be involved in ministry. I liked the idea of girls coming to know Jesus and I wanted to be the one that would help them grow into strong disciples after they had given their lives to Him. Whenever the topic of evangelism would come up, I had a very arrogant attitude and would get angry at anyone who disagreed with me. I distorted the verse Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have (1 Pet. 3:15) and made that to mean that you don't go to people, you let them come to you. As a result I would get very angry at people who were taking initiative to share the gospel. I honestly thought, “They are just making my job harder. Cause now the non-believer is offended and I have to win them back.” When I think about this, I am embarrassed of my self-centeredness and sad about all the opportunities wasted because of my arrogance. But praise God that He is able to soften even the hardest of hearts.

I hope you are wondering what happened. How did God change my hard heart? Well, God blessed me with Austin. We met after I had returned from a missions trip and we hit it off. (It's an incredible story of God orchestrating divine appointment after divine appointment). Austin and I were both student leaders for Master Plan Ministries in Durango. (The ministry we now lead in Denver) Austin and our friend John were constantly sharing their faith. At first it bothered me, but I couldn't argue with the fruit they were seeing, people were giving their lives to Christ. I couldn't believe it! When I looked back on my Christian life, not one person had ever come up to me and asked me to share the gospel with them. Who knew? Sure, there were people that came to Christ because I invited them somewhere, but it was not because I took the initiative to start the conversation with them. So one day I said to Austin, “Ok, walk through with me what you say to people when you are sharing the gospel.” I was going to see if it would be something I would get offended at if I were a non-believer. God used that conversation to change my heart and attitude for life. Austin used the Four Spiritual Laws developed by Bill Bright in a conversational way. He was not cramming anything, it wasn't a canned presentation, just a simple conversation. I thought, “I can do this.” So I tried it out. It felt totally normal (once I could get enough guts up to get into the conversation) and God blessed me with being able to see eternal fruit born for His kingdom by girls surrendering their life to Christ because of our conversation.



I am not sure where your heart attitude is with sharing your faith, but I am pretty sure that you are probably not as hard hearted about it as I was. And even if you are, will you be willing to let God shape your opinions about it today?

To help us talk about many of the different aspects of evangelism, lets us a MAP.

M.A.P. stands for Methods, Avenues, and Point

## The Method

There are numerous means available to communicate the unchanging gospel message. Some tools are better fit for different situations. So we need to have a well-supplied toolbox so we can pull out what is needed in the time we need it. I recommend working with one tool until you are completely confident with it and then move on to another.

Shoot for mastery.

Some methods of sharing the gospel:

### Biblical presentations

- \* Romans Road (Walking through Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10)
- \* The Four Spiritual Laws/Would You Like to Know God Personally? Booklet. (Ordered at <http://www.campuscrusade.com>)
- \* The Bridge illustration (Training to draw it at <http://www.evangelismcoach.org/2008/how-to-use-the-bridge-illustration> or order booklet at <http://www.navpress.com>)

### Testimonial presentations

- \* The story of how you came to surrender your life to Christ.
- \* Stories of how God came through for you and how you better saw His character (with the gospel (the why you needed Jesus to forgive you and the how you surrendered to Him put in the story)

### Philosophical arguments

- \* Apologetics
- \* Who is Jesus Bible Study
- \* Trilema (Explanation found at <http://www.greatcom.org/resources/areadydefense/ch21/default.htm> )

But in order to use these tools, you have to break **four Sound Barriers** which were developed by Campus Crusade.

1. Getting into a simple conversation. What's your name, how are you etc.
2. Swinging the conversation to spiritual things.
3. Sharing the Gospel.
4. Asking them to respond to the Gospel/asking for a decision.

Questions are a great tool to help you break through each sound barrier. Here are a couple of examples.

- Do you have any kind of spiritual beliefs?

- If you died right now and were standing before God and He said, “Why should I let you into heaven” What would you say?
- If what you were believing is not true, would you want to know

## The Avenues

As God works through believers in seeking to save the lost, there are three different types of relational avenues which give us opportunity to use our tools. These avenues are determined by the nature of the relationship between the believer and the unbeliever.

**1. Organic:** Getting into conversations with others in the normal course of life.

Read the examples below and write down a few key words or a sentence reminding you what it says.

John 1:40-51

John 4:1-42

Colossians 4:5-6

1 Peter 3:15

\* Describe a modern day example.

\* What are some pro’s and cons of this avenue?

**2. Communal:** Inviting non-believers to be part of your believing community. Letting them see how believers interact and using this to get into a spiritual conversation with them.

Read the examples below and write down a few key words or a sentence reminding you what it says.

John 17:21-23

John 13:34-35

Acts 2:42-47

\* Describe a modern day example.

\* What are some pro’s and cons of this avenue?

**3. Missional:** Intentionally taking the gospel to an individual you have not met.

Read the examples below and write down a few key words or a sentence reminding you what it says.

2 Timothy 4:2

Mark 1:38-39

Luke 9:1-6, 10:1-17

Acts 8

Acts 11:19-24

\* Describe a modern day example.

\* What are some pro’s and cons of this avenue?

\* Through which of these avenues did you come to Christ?

\* Which of these does your community emphasize?

\* Which one of these avenues is the most challenging for you personally? Why?

\* Are all three of these avenues necessary to saturate our culture? Why?

#### **4. Social:** Using your social media influence to share the gospel.

##### **The Point**

The way of Salvation.

\* This might seem elementary, but if we get this wrong, we totally miss it. So, what is the gospel message? What things does someone have to understand to be transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light?

\* What does Colossians 1:21-23 say the gospel is? What key points does someone need to understand the full gospel?

\* What would be the result if someone trying to understand the gospel did not understand each of the following truths?

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23

Romans 5:8

Romans 10:9-10, 13

*“Each time I am with someone for five minutes or more, I consider it a God-given opportunity to testify of God’s mercy and grace in my life. You may be thinking: Bill Bright is the president of a worldwide organization dedicated to introducing people to Christ. Surely, proclaiming the gospel is easier for him than for me. I could never witness like that. I am naturally a shy and reserved person, so sharing my faith is sometimes difficult for me. I must continually rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to be a fruitful witness.” (Bill Bright Discover God pg. 58)*

You are in the most strategic time in your entire life for setting yourself up for courageously living for God’s kingdom. The decisions you are making right now are becoming the foundation stones your life is going to be built on. The habits you are making now are the very things that will make you who you are, and the people you are allowing to influence you (whether real or fictional) are the very people you will become like, and what you are neglecting now is being set up in your life as a lifelong habit. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philemon 6) When we share our faith we get to experience God and see His mighty hand working in people’s lives and “What’s done in this life echoes for eternity.” Russell Crowe, Gladiator.

*Taken from my study, Beholding Him Becoming Missional; Awakening to the Mission through the Study of First Samuel*

## Ways to Introduce the Gospel

*“...praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ...in order that I may make it clear in the way that I ought to speak. Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.”*

*Colossians 4:3-5*

1. “It seems like most people aren’t really interested in religion (with its do’s and don’ts), but they are interested in the idea of knowing God in a personal way. Would you say that’s true for you? I’d love to share with you a booklet that explains how you can have a personal relationship with God?...”
2. “Do you think much about spiritual things?”
3. “Do you go to church? Why/why not?”
4. “We’ve been friends for a long time, and I’ve never really talked to you about the most important thing in my life. May I take a few minutes to share that with you?”
5. “If I were to ask you how a person becomes a Christian, what would you say? I have a booklet that helps clarify what the Bible says about that. May I share it with you?”
6. “It seems like a lot of people have misconceptions about what it really means to be a Christian. I’ve got a little booklet that explains what the Bible says about what makes a person a Christian. Can I highlight some of it with you?”
7. “Most people in America say that they believe in God. What does believing in God mean to you?”
8. “Are you from any kind of religious background? Was it a positive experience for you growing up? How would you describe your relationship with God now?”
9. “If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you’d go to heaven? Why? Has anyone ever explained how you can know for sure?”

## Transitions to the Knowing God Personally Booklet

1. “I’ve got this little booklet that’s a summary of the main themes of the whole Bible. It explains how you can know God in a personal way. Can I share it with you?”
2. “I’d love to get your opinion on this short ‘four point outline’ of the Bible.”
3. “The truths in this little booklet have changed my life; may I share them with you?”

## Discipleship

Disciple – (Gr.Mathetes) A learner who learns by practice. A person in process, who is eager to learn and apply the truths that Jesus Christ teaches him, which will result in ever-deepening commitments to a Christ-like lifestyle.

**Biblical discipleship is helping your disciple to walk by faith, communicate their faith and multiply their faith.**

**G.R.O.W.T.H.** Acronym: Focus of discipleship times

**G** – GO TO GOD: Praying for them. John 17 (example of Jesus)

**R** – RELATE: Spending time getting to know them personally.  
Mark 6:30-32(example of Jesus) 1 Thes.2:7-12(example of Paul)

**O** – OUTREACH:

3 Modes:

\***Natural witness:** Influencing others in the normal course of life.  
Jn.4:1-42 (example of Jesus and the women at the well).

\***Body witness:** Unbelievers spending time with and interacting with believers who are actively loving each other.  
Acts 2:42-47 (example of the early church).

\***Ministry witness:** Doing the ministry of evangelism. II Tim.4:2,  
Acts 8 (example of the early church).

**W** WORD: Get into the Word. Matt.5-7 (example of Jesus.) Get a “grip” on the Word principle. (Read/Study, Share, Meditate, Memorize, Apply)

**T** – TESTIMONY: Teaching how to communicate how they personally received forgiveness for their sin and how Christ came into their life and changed them. To be used as an evangelical tool.  
Acts 22:3-10, Acts 26:10-18 (example of Paul)

**H** – HOLY SPIRIT: Relying on the Holy Spirit’s power and teaching others to do the same. Luke 4:14 (example of Jesus) Gal.5:16, 22-23, 25.

Here is another acronym.

**D.I.S.C.I.P.L.E.**

**D– Dive into Scripture.** Get into the Word together.

**I– Involvement in life.** Spending time getting to know them personally.  
Mk 6:30-32 (example of Jesus.) 1 Thes. 2:7-12(example of Paul.)

**S– Spirit-filled life.** Relying on the Holy Spirit's enablement and teaching others to do the same.  
Lk. 4:14 (example of Jesus) Gal. 5:16, 22-23, 25, 1 Cor. 3:1-3.

**C– Creatively dream about how they can uniquely live out their purpose and mission.**  
Purpose: To glorify God (know God and make Him known). Mission: To make multiplying disciples through the process of evangelism and discipleship.

**I– Initiate sharing the gospel.**

3 Modes:

\***Natural witness:** Taking initiative to share the gospel with those in your normal course of life. Jn 4:1-42 (ex. of Jesus and the women at the well.)

\***Body witness:** Inviting unbelievers to spend time with you and your believing community and letting them see everyone interact. Then initiating conversation about the gospel. Acts 2:42-(example of the early church.)

\***Ministry witness:** Taking initiative to share the gospel at an or as an organized event. 2 Tim. 4:2, Acts 8 (example of the early church.)

**P– Pray.** Pray for them.  
John 17 (example of Jesus)

**L– Lead by example.** Things are better caught than they are taught. What you want to teach them, show them.  
Mk 1:35-38 (One of many examples of Jesus)

**E– Evaluate skills and character in light of the Great Commission.** Identify strengths and weaknesses in skill and character and make and action plan to help them develop.

## Good Questions

1. What are you looking forward to?
2. What is the biggest thing you are asking God to build into your life right now?
3. What do you see as some of your strengths? How do you get to use them?
4. What are some of your needs or areas you would like to see God change or continue to develop?
5. What areas in your personal character have you seen God work the most in the past year?
6. How do you feel about your walk with the Lord right now?
7. How do you feel about your ability and desire to study the Bible?
8. How is your prayer life?
9. What are your times with the Lord like? What does your time with Him consist of?
10. How do you honestly feel about evangelism?
11. What is your understanding of spiritual multiplication?
12. What encourages you?
13. What motivates you?
14. Is there anything in your personal life I can help you with? Walk with the Lord? Ministry skills? Development?
15. How would you describe your relationship with God?
16. What makes you feel the most satisfied?
17. What causes the most stress in your life?
18. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
19. Describe your relationship with your family
20. Where do you see yourself in 5/10 years?
21. What has been the most significant spiritual experience in your life since you became a Christian?
22. What has God been teaching you lately?
23. Where are you feeling the greatest spiritual challenge?
24. What are your expectations for discipleship?
25. Do you feel valuable in the ministry?
26. Do you consider yourself a leader in general? Why or why not?
27. What do you think a successful ministry looks like?
28. What make you feel loved and accepted?
29. What do you enjoy doing?
30. Do you put more pressure on yourself or others?
31. Are you the type of person who is willing to step out in faith and do what you know you ought to do even when you don't feel like it?
32. How are you best motivated?
33. How are you emotionally?
34. How has your self-talk/thought been?
35. How do you respond to new people?
36. How have you evidenced good boundaries? Bad boundaries?
37. How are you doing with the good/bad split? How have you shown grace to yourself?



**Questions to ask the ladies you disciple who disciple others**

38. What do you want God to do in your ministry this year?
39. Where do you want your ministry to be in May? What will you pray for? How will you get there?
40. How do your disciples respond to new people?
41. What is your disciple's next step of faith? Do they know what their next step of faith is?
42. How can you motivate your disciples?
43. How can you impart vision?
44. How is your disciple's heart for the lost?
45. How is your disciple's involvement in outreach?
46. Can your disciple explain to you the principle of multiplication?
47. How does your disciple feel about discipling someone else? What are their fears?
48. How well is your disciple doing at living out the essentials of the Christian life?
49. What does your disciple need to become a multiplier?
50. What does your disciple need from you?

## 100 Identity Truths

1. I am born again (I Peter 1:23)
2. I am a child of God (John 1:12)
3. I am a saint (I Cor.1:2)
4. I am the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13)
5. I am the light of the world (Matt 5:14)
6. I am a disciple because I have love for others (John 13:34-35)
7. I am protected by the power of His name (John 17:11)
8. I am set free by the truth (John 8:31-33)
9. I am eternally secure in Christ (John 10:27-31)
10. I am kept from the evil one (John 17:15)
11. I am one with God the Father and Jesus the Son (John 17:23)
12. I am God's gift to Christ (John 17:24)
13. I have peace with God (Rom.5:1)
14. I have been justified by faith (Rom 5:1)
15. I have access into the sphere of God's grace (Rom 5:2)
16. I can rejoice in trouble. (Rom.5:3)
17. The love of God has been poured out in my heart. (Rom 5:5)
18. I am reigning in life with Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:17)
19. I have been reconciled to God through the death of Jesus (Rom.5:10)
20. I am being saved by the life of Jesus (Rom 5:10b)
21. I have been baptized into Christ's death (Rom 6:3)
22. I have been raised to walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:4)
23. I have been united with Christ through His death and resurrection (Rom 6:5)
24. My old self was crucified with Christ (Rom 6:6)
25. I am alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11)
26. I am yielded to God (Rom. 6:13)
27. I am not under the law, but under grace (Rom 6:14)
28. I have eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23)
29. I am freed from the power of sin (Rom 6:18)
30. I am free from condemnation (Rom 8:1)
31. I am a servant of God (Rom 6:22)
32. I am free from the power of sin and am a servant of righteousness (Rom 6:18)
33. I am free from the vicious cycle of sin and death (Rom 8:2)
34. I am indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9)
35. I am led by the Spirit of God (Rom.8:14)
36. I am a joint heir with Christ (Rom 8:17)
37. I am confident that all things work together for good (Rom 8:28)
38. I am being conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29)
39. The Holy Spirit helps my infirmities (Rom 8:26)
40. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for me (Rom 8:26)
41. God foreknew me (Rom 8:29)
42. I have been given all things (Rom 8:32)
43. I am inseparable from the love of God (Rom 8:35)
44. I am more than a conqueror through Christ (Rom 8:37)
45. I am God's temple (I Cor.3:16-17)
46. I am washed, sanctified, and justified by the blood of Jesus (I Cor.6:11)
47. I have been bought with a price (I Cor.6:20)
48. I am the image and glory of God (I Cor.11:7)
49. I am triumphant in Christ (II Cor.2:14)
50. I am a sweet aroma manifesting the presence of God wherever I go (II Cor.2:14-15)

51. I am adequate for anything because my adequacy comes from God (II Cor.3:5)
52. I am a new creation in Christ (II Cor.5:17)
53. I am an ambassador for Christ (II Cor.5:20)
54. I am strongest when I am weakest (II Cor.12:10)
55. I am crucified with Christ and the life I now live is His (Gal.2:20)
56. I am redeemed from the curse of the Law (Gal 3:13)
57. I am filled with the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal 5:22-23)
58. I am in Christ Jesus (Eph.1:1)
59. I am blessed with every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3)
60. I am chosen by God to be holy and blameless (Eph 1:4)
61. I am predestined to adoption through Jesus (Eph 1:5)
62. I am accepted in the beloved (Eph 1:6)
63. I have redemption through His blood (Eph 1:7)
64. I am forgiven of all my sins (Eph 1:7)
65. He has made known to me the mystery of His will (Eph 1:9)
66. I have wisdom as I try to know His will (Eph 1:8)
67. I am predestined according to His purpose (Eph 1:11)
68. I have obtained an inheritance (Eph 1:11)
69. I am filled with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph 1:13)
70. I have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in His knowledge (Eph 1:17)
71. My eyes have been enlightened (Eph 1:18)
72. I know the hope of my calling (Eph 1:18)
73. I know the exceeding greatness of His power to me (Eph 1:19)
74. I know the riches of His inheritance in the saints (Eph 1:18)
75. I am made alive with Christ (Eph 2:1)
76. I am raised with Christ and seated in the heavenlies (Eph 2:6)
77. I have been saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8)
78. I am God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph 2:10)
79. Once afar off, I am now made near by the blood of Christ (Eph 2:13)
80. I have access through Jesus to the Father (Eph 2:18)
81. I am a fellow citizen with the saints in God's household (Eph 2:19)
82. I am built upon the foundation of the apostles and Christ the cornerstone (Eph 2:20)
83. I am able to walk boldly into Christ's presence (Eph 3:12)
84. I am strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man (Eph 3:16)
85. I am receiving exceeding abundantly above all that I ask or think (Eph 3:20)
86. I can speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15)
87. I can grow up in all things under Him (Eph 4:15)
88. I have been renewed in the spirit of my mind (Eph 4:23)
89. I have put off the old man (Eph 4:22)
90. I once was darkness, but now I am light in the Lord (Eph 5:8)
91. I am able to walk as a child of light (Eph 5:8)
92. I am strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Eph 6:10)
93. I choose to put on the whole armor of God and stand (Eph 6:13)
94. I am able to quench all of Satan's darts (Eph 6:16)
95. He who started a good work in me will finish it (Phil 1:6)
96. I will be ashamed of nothing; with boldness, Christ will be magnified (Phil 1:20)
97. The mind which was in Christ is in me (Phil 2:5)
98. God is working in me both to desire and to do His good pleasure (Phil 2:13)
99. My citizenship is in heaven from which I eagerly await His coming (Phil 3:20)
100. I can rejoice in the Lord always (Phil 4:4)

## Attributes of God

Holy (I Peter 1:16)  
Just (Romans 3:25-26)  
Righteous (Psalm 7:9; Psalm 119:172; Romans 3:21-22)  
Faithful (Lamentations 3:21; Deut. 7:9; I Corinthians 1:9)  
The One who will never fail you (Deut.31:6; Joshua 1:5)  
The One who will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5)  
Sovereign (I Tim.1:17); Jeremiah 10:10)  
The One who has the authority to control all things (Matt. 28:18)  
The One who has the power to control all things (Rom 9:19; Matt.19:16)  
The One who is able to make you adequate (John 15:5; II Tim.3:17)  
The One who made you (Gen 1:26-31)  
The One who provides (Gen.22:9-14; Matt.6:33)  
The One who protects (Ps.62:2; Ps. 60:12)  
The giver of wisdom (James 1:5)  
The source of knowledge and truth (Jn 17:17; Jn 14:26; 1 Sam.2:3; 2 Chronicles 1:11-12)  
The One who can turn the King's heart where He wants (Prov.21:1)  
Consistent (Rom 3:22, Rom 10:11-13)  
Never changing (James 1:17; Heb.13:8)  
The One who can and will make you complete (Col. 2:10; 1 Thes.5:23-24)  
All knowing (Heb.4:13; I Jn. 3:20; Ps. 139:1-4)  
Everywhere, always (Ps. 139:7-12; Jeremiah 23:23-24)  
The One who created everything (Col.1:16; Gen. 1; Acts 17:24)  
The One who holds all things together (Col.1:17)  
The One who forgives (1 Jn.1:9; Ps. 103:12; Col.2:13)  
The One who gives second chances (1 Jn.1:9; Acts 9:1-6, 15; Jeremiah 29:12-14; Hosea 14:1-7)  
The One who makes success possible (2 Cor.3:5; 2 Cor.9:8; Phil.4:11)  
The One who changes hearts not just actions (2 Cor.5:16-17; Gal. 5:22-23)  
True Love (1 Jn. 4:16)  
The One who accepts/approves you (1 Jn 4:19; Romans 12:1)  
The Authority over even evil (Job 1; Col.2:10; Rom.3:37-39; Jn 16:33; 1 Jn. 4:4)  
The One who cares (1 Peter 5:7; Ps. 8:4)  
The One who wants what is best for you (Jeremiah 29:11; Rom 8:28)  
The One who has authority over death (Jn 11:21-45)

## How to Know God's Will & 3 Warning Signs

There can be so much worry involved in knowing God's will. *What if I'm wrong? What if I missed it?* We either blame ourselves or blame God, both scenarios expose a small view of God. But God doesn't want His desires to be a secret. He wants us to know what's best and that is why He gives us a lamp to our feet and tells us to ask for wisdom. So practically how does God reveal His desires, His will to us?

### Prerequisite to Knowing God's Will

[Romans 12:1-3](#) talks about giving ourselves entirely to the Lord. Having our minds (*thoughts, hopes, dreams, and aspirations*) transformed by Christ. Then we will know and be an example of what God's will is. So the question is not "*What is God's will for my life*" but "*How does my life fit into God's will*". This is saying, "*I've surrendered all I have, where do I go to fit into God's work*" rather than saying, "*What does God have for me to make me happy.*"

### So before knowing God's will you have to ask yourself:

\* Is He really [Lord of your life](#)? Are you willing to go anywhere or do anything He might want for you? (Mt. 16:24-25) Are you being fully [controlled by the Holy Spirit](#) through faith? (Gal. 5:16, Rom 12:1-2)

\* Is there any unconfessed sin that has broken your fellowship with Him? (Isa. 59:2)

### 3 Ways to Discern & Know God's Will

As we seek God's will, we ought to actually ask Him for wisdom. Wisdom is the right application of knowledge, not a special revelation. However if we don't ask in faith (acting on what you know to be true) we might as well not expect anything from God. We must be committed to act on the understanding that He gives us. Jam. 1:5-6

**G.A.S. acronym** Gives the "fuel" (or confidence) to walk out what God has for us.

**God's Word.** God's written word is our ultimate source of authority in all areas of life. What decisions has God already given us clear direction based on the Bible? Ask God to lead you to specific passages of how you fit into His plan.

**Ask Mature Believers-** Ask for advice from mature Christians who are viewed by many as mature, who are informed about what God is doing around the world, someone who knows you well, someone who will be objective with you and someone who knows and walks with God and knows His ways.

Prov. 11:14 *"For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure."*

Prov. 15:22 *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."*

Prov. 15:31-33 *"He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise. He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding. The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor."*

Prov. 12:15 *"The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice."*

**Spirit-filled Reasoning** with Christ on the throne think strategic. God has given us a sound and sanctified mind He expects us to love Him with and be a good steward using. Using wisdom and reason we will follow the examples of the apostles:

1 Thes. 3:1-2 *"we thought it best..."*

Phil. 2:25, 26 *"I thought it was necessary..."*

1 Cor. 16:3-4 *"if it is fitting..."*

Acts 6:2-4 *"it is not desirable..."*

Acts 15:22, 28 *"it seemed good..."*

### **Ask yourself:**

\*How does it fit in the overall plan of God? What would be the most strategic choice as an investment of my life? How much \_\_\_\_\_ will it take? Is there a need? Is there a way? Are there enough people, finances, materials? What would prepare and develop me in the future? What are my motives? Is it to gain approval or acceptance from someone, money, power or to stay comfortable?

## **3 Warnings in Discerning God's Will**

*Be careful of authoritative reliance on subjective means:*

**1. Be cautious of "the open door policy".** Saying that God's will is whatever opportunity works out for you. When Moses was leading the Israelites out of Egypt and ran into the Red Sea, which very well could have looked like a "closed door". Or when Paul and Silas were in jail and an earthquake opened the jail doors but they stayed put. Because they didn't interpret the literal "open door" as God wanting them to go through it, the jailer and his household came to put their faith in Christ. ([Acts 16:22-40](#))

Sometimes a "closed door" may just be an opportunity to give God more glory. Just because an opportunity comes up, doesn't mean it is the best option for your time and resources.

**2. Be careful to not judge God's will by your "feelings of peace".** This is not scriptural (*and when it says God will give us peace that passes understanding it is not talking about decision making but worry*). If our feelings were the authority of God's will, Jesus would not have died on the cross. (Lk 22:42-44, Heb. 12:1-4) God can use our feelings and often times our desires can be in line with His desire, but when making decisions, it is unwise to use them alone.

Another example is in Acts 21:10-14, 20:22-23 when the Christians let their feelings try to govern Paul's decision, but Paul would not let the fear of hard times change his decision.

Faith is established on truth, and truth is not relative but established on fact, not hunches, feelings, impressions, looking for signs, or mystical experiences.

### **3. Be cautious of listening to ungodly counsel.**

Everyone has an opinion and most people will share it with you. But just because someone is a good friend does not mean the advice they are giving you is godly. Before taking someone's

advice make sure to weigh what they are saying against scripture. Does what they are saying match up with God's Word or contradict? It might even be best to not talk about important decisions with friends who will encourage you to do the wrong thing.

And finally, step out in faith. Faith is not waiting until you know 100%. Genuine faith is moving in that direction, putting confidence more in God's ability to guide or re-direct than in your ability to decide. It means putting your trust ultimately in God and not in self, circumstances, or others.

The more we grow as Christians the more decisions we will make by faith in God, from seemingly big ones like who you'll marry, to seemingly small ones like what should you watch on TV. It is important to be ready to trust God in your decision whether it turns out the way you expected or not. And remember that with God the process is as important as the product.

## How to Find a Mentor

Probably just like you, I want to grow in wisdom. I want to be a godly old lady who is full of wisdom. But the law of entropy says things go from order to disorder. So naturally, you and I will not automatically become wise, godly old ladies. Naturally, we will become less patient, less kind, less wise unless... Unless we continually walk with and desperately depend on Jesus who renews our Spirit inwardly day by day. And unless we feed our souls with good things. Not the junk food of society, being disciplined by Hollywood and its sitcoms. But by the pure milk of the Word of God and by wisdom of strong believers.

The Lord is very clear in scripture that wisdom is something that comes through intentionally searching for it. It's not something we are born with or that happens to fall in our lap. We have to be diligent to seek it out. Finding a mentor is a good way to grow in wisdom and fill our souls with truth.

*"Counsel is like deep water and a man of understanding draws it out."*

### 4 Benefits of Having a Mentor

**1. They see differently than you.** The Lord gives each person different experiences in life which enables each to experience the Lord and His character in different ways. Because of everyone's different filter of how the Lord has revealed Himself, often times others can see your circumstances through a different lens. They are able to see outside of your desires, perspective and emotions. Therefore they are able to offer you non-bias counsel.

**2. They can encourage and affirm you, seeing more in you than you see yourself.** At times it can be hard to see our own strengths. A good mentor is able to see the strengths and gifts the Lord has put in you and is able to encourage, affirm and draw those out.

**3. They can push you more than you would push yourself.** Because a mentor can see your strengths and has affirmed those in you, they also have vision of what you're capable of that perhaps you don't think you are. They can call you to greatness and hold you accountable in your areas of weakness.

**4. He who walks with the wise grows wise.** You become like who you spend time with. Enough said.

*So, it's a good thing to have a mentor, but how do we go about getting or finding one?*



## 7 Tips for Choosing a Mentor

**1. Pray for the Lord to lead you.** Pretty obvious, but we honestly can do nothing eternally significant apart from the Lord.

**2. Don't choose right away.** Something you don't want is to be stuck meeting with someone on a regular basis that you later find out doesn't even spend time with God or value something you really value. Then you're stuck in a hard place of telling her you don't want to meet with her anymore.

**3. Write down characteristics you'd like to be true of you in the future.** Look for a lady who evidences the qualities you'd like to grow in.

**4. Look for someone who loves and lives for Jesus.** *How will you know?* She will spend time with the Lord. When you love someone, you make an effort to be with them. She will manifest the fruit of the Spirit and will discipline herself for the purpose of godliness and will make sacrifices to live out His mission.

**5. Ask her to lunch or coffee and ask questions.** If she is someone you'd like to spend time with regularly, share specifically what you want from her. Proverbs says a wise person draws counsel out of people. When you get together with her, don't expect her to do all the work. Come with questions for her. Questions about her relationship with God, questions about Scripture, questions about life experiences. Ask her things like, *"When you were my age, what do you wish you would have known?" "What are the biggest ways the Lord has revealed Himself to you and how?" "What are the biggest things the Lord has taught you?"* Draw wisdom out of her instead of expecting her to read your mind.

**6. Don't settle for just one mentor.** I strongly believe The Lord wants us to be influenced by many different women. What one lady can teach you, another can't. So depending on how much time you have, pursue more than one. There is wisdom in the multitude of counselors.

**7. Don't be limited by time or space.** The Lord has allowed us to live in a time where we can communicate with each other whether we live in the same city *or state or not, or even the same time period.* (Don't forget you can learn from women through books they've written). If you can not get your schedules to line up, try using email or facebook messaging. If you can't get together in person, try using skype. Be willing to think outside the box.

## How to Become a Mentor

Imagine standing in heaven with the people whose lives you directly and indirectly influenced for Christ. Mentoring/discipling/helping someone grow in their faith has rewards that far exceed this lifetime. The reward of mentoring/discipling people for Christ was a great hope that kept Paul pushing forward even in the face of adversity.

And just like Paul often felt un-qualified, so can we. But God reminds us that our adequacy doesn't come from ourselves, it comes from Him (2 Cor. 3:5) and He gives us all we need for every good work. After all, we do have the Holy Spirit, who helped create the world and raise Christ from the dead, living inside of us. And where He calls, He equips. So has He called you? Yes! He even [wrote it down for you](#) just so you wouldn't doubt it. How awesome of Him! He didn't call you and assign you to be part of His working in people's lives because you're so great or because you know it all. He assigned you because you don't know it all and *that* gives Him opportunity to show how Great He is, Able to use broken vessels. So the lie you might believe of not measuring up, of never being able to mentor/disciple someone, well, throw that out the window. Rather than trying to gather confidence in your flesh, know that all your confidence can be in the Lord, the One Able to use you.

### 3 Benefits of Being a Mentor

**1. Being a mentor allows you to store up treasure in heaven.** There are 5 crowns mentioned in Scripture that will be given to believers. One of which is the Crown of Shepherding (1 Pet. 5:4, 1 Thes. 2:9) When we come along side other believers and *help them walk by faith, communicate their faith and multiply their faith*, we are taking on the role of a shepherd in their life. And the great thing about being given a beautiful crown in heaven is that we will have something to lay at Jesus' feet during the ultimate worship service (Rev. 4). What a joy that will be to be able to give our King a tiny gift of love and thanks.

**2. Being a mentor will be challenge you.** It is so easy to remain comfortable, which leads to stagnation. Yet when we invest our lives in other people it causes us to think of them and get outside ourselves. It also helps us cling to the Lord, since He ultimately is the only One who knows what they need.

**3. Being a mentor will bless you.** Sometimes when I meet with women I have absolutely no idea what to say or do which forces me to turn to the Lord and ask for His direction. Then as the Lord puts ideas and thoughts in my mind of what to share, I am so encouraged that God can actually use flawed me to influence another for His glory. In Philemon 7, Paul prays that we would be active in sharing our faith so we would know God more. The same goes with any type of ministry, as we step out and depend on God we get to see God come through and we are blessed by getting to know (*experientially*) Him more.

## 7 Tips for Choosing a Mentee

*Mentor/disciple someone who is:*

**1. Faithful.** Your time is valuable. You have plenty of things in your life the Lord has called you to, therefore you need to meet with someone who is actually going to be able to have enough discipline to be faithful to meet with you. It's frustrating and honestly a waste of your time if you set aside time to meet with someone week after week who doesn't show up. After all, *he who is faithful with much will be given more, but he who is unfaithful with little, even what he has will be taken from him.* (Lk 16:10)

**2. Available.** When you are looking for someone to pour your life into, you want them to have a heart that is available to the Lord as well as to you. If someone's schedule is so packed with activities and interests of their own and the Lord led them to do something else, they would be unable to say yes. The Lord's desire for your intentional time with another lady is that she would become a multiplying disciple herself. And if she is not available to let the Lord use her in that way it can be compared to your lineage stopping.

**3. Initiative taker.** When I was growing up, I probably was the most shy kid you knew. I would NEVER actually talk to someone, let alone initiate a conversation with someone because I was terrified. If someone is not able to take initiative to talk to people and start spiritual conversations, they are not going to be able to multiply their faith. It's not that they are a bad person or don't love the Lord, it just may be they have some personal areas to grow in before it would be good for you to help them walk by faith, communicate their faith and multiply their faith. You can pray the Lord would grow them in taking initiative and till then, you can meet with someone who will take initiative to multiply their faith.

**4. Teachable.** The Pharisee's were the most hard-hearted, unteachable people there were in Jesus' day and therefore Jesus spoke to them very differently than He did anyone else. Notice that none of them were included in his discipleship group. Until someone is receptive to truth, it's not a wise use of your time to invest significant time in them.

**5. Heart for God.** Do they really have a heart for the Lord and want to live for Him? Or do they just want someone to meet with to talk about their problems? Sometimes ladies will want to meet with you for the purpose of having a weekly counseling appointment rather than to grow in their relationship with God. Unless you are a trained counselor, be careful of taking on that role for people. You can turn them back to the Word of God and help them get Christian counseling if that is what is needed.

*Did you notice the handy little acronym Master Plan Staff, Nate who blogs at [Eternity Impact](#) came up with?* **FAITH.** When your looking for someone to mentor, look for a FAITH filled lady.

**6. Initiate with her.** Ask her to coffee, ask questions; (*In part three of this series I have have a printable of good questions you can ask*) how she would like to grow, find out what she is passionate about, what makes her tick, what she wants to see God do in her life, her hopes, dreams etc.

**7. Cast vision and be clear with your hopes and expectations of your time together.** If you

decide after getting together with her (*and find out she is full of FAITH*) that you want to invest in her, ask her to get together again. When you get together again, affirm what you see in her and share with her that if she would be up for it, you'd like to get together with her regularly and share some affirming reasons of why. Ask if she would like to meet (however often your thinking) for (however long you are thinking) to (what you are thinking) for (amount of time you are thinking- ex. till the summer). Also ask her what she would want from you and encourage her to ask you questions during your time together.

## Thrive Discipleship Material {Great for one on one Mentoring}

Download a free copy of the [Foundational Discipleship Packet here](#).

## Developing a Personal Bible Study

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Tim. 2:15*

**\*\*Bible study causes us to know God deeper and serve Him more genuinely.**

What should our heart condition be in Bible study?

Ps. 42:1-2

1 Pet. 2:2

Ps. 25:9

Luke 8:16-18

Jam. 1:22-25

What are some benefits of personal Bible study?

Josh. 1:8

Ps. 119:9-11

Ps. 119:105

Mt. 4:1-11

John 15:5-7

2 Tim. 3:16-17

1 John 5:13

## Bible Study Tips

**\*Read it daily.** It is better to set aside fifteen minutes every day to let the Bible affect you, than to try to manage an hour a day but to fail most of the time. Start with an amount that you can live up to consistently, every day.

**\*Read it systematically.** If you read at random, you will tend to read only the parts you like and miss large portions that are unfamiliar or seem uninteresting. If you read at random you

will get an unbalanced view of God. Instead, read straight through whole books. Alternate between the New and Old Testament.

\*Avoid treating the Bible as magic. God will sometimes guide you to the passage that speaks to the specific situations you are wrestling with. But beware of using the Bible like an Ouija board: opening at random and dipping your finger in, hoping to find that answer to a question. Instead, read systematically, and read today's passage for what God is saying through it. Write down and pray about what you learn. Let it sink in. If you want God's guidance on a specific issue, look back through your notebook and search through the Bible. Use a concordance or a topical Bible to research and issue.

\*There are a few different ways to study the Bible for all its worth. We will look at one of the ways called the inductive study method.

*Inductive- reasoning that proceeds from basic facts to conclusions.*

There are three steps in the inductive method of Bible study. Observation, which gathers all the facts of who, what, when, and where. Interpretation, which draws conclusions based on the facts. Application, which is the goal of Bible study and is where you move from the original context to our contemporary one.

It is not enough for us to understand scripture; God wants us to be changed by it.

Learning how to study the Bible:

Is Christ on the throne?

Repent- Agree with God about any unconfessed sin, to restore fellowship.

Receive- Ask Christ to have control.

**Observation**-When observing the facts of scripture, there are three stages to progress through:

1. The whole- Seeing the big picture or overview.
2. The parts- Seeing the grammatical structures that make the text fit together.
3. The details- Making note of the tiny pieces.

### **How to Observe-**

1. Read the passage with care- Read repeatedly to become familiar with the general message.
2. Record you initial overall impression.
3. Record the major facts.

**Who-** Who is speaking, listening, who are the characters and what can we see about them.

**What-** What is happening, what are important words, what is the atmosphere, the main subject, what took place before and after and what are the figures of speech.

**Where-**Where was it written, where is it written to, are there important geographical landmarks, locations or cities.

**When-** Is the timing significant, is it talking of past, present, future, in what point in history is it.

In summary of how to observe scripture, look and study your selected portion of scripture as a whole asking who, what, when and where. Then look at how the grammatical parts fit

together (how ideas flow into each other) and then lastly in observation, make note of the small details that you see.

## Interpretation-

Interpretation- to arrive at the original meaning the writer intended when they penned the words.

Whether you are focusing on a work of art, a poem, a sermon, or a passage of scripture, there is a logical demand for meaning; there is a need to answer the question “what is the author trying to say”.

{The question of what a text means for us today is a separate question and is reserved for the last stage of application.}

Interpretation is the work of trying to get inside the author’s head and heart to determine what he intended his readers to understand. This involves trying to reconstruct the historical context in which he wrote.

### Principles of interpretation

The process and principles of interpretation is known as hermeneutics. Here’s some tips.

1. Let scripture interpret scripture.
2. Interpret the Bible literally- The most accurate answer is generally the most obvious one. The Bible is literature, and therefore, its words should first be understood in their historical context, having the intended meaning in the usage of that day.
3. Interpret scripture grammatically- In the natural sense, according to ordinary rules of grammar.

Generally:

- \*A word has only one meaning when used in a sentence.
- \*A words meaning is tied to the sentence by rules of grammar.
- \*The meaning of a word must be derived from its context.

4. Interpret scripture in its historical setting- Many things have changed since Bible times, so the more we learn of the author’s setting, lifestyle and culture, the more accurate our interpretation.

### How to interpret:

1. Ask-

\*What additional research do I need to do in order to find out more about the meaning and significance of who, what, where and when?

\*What was the readers need, the central concern or problem and what was the writers answers or solutions?

2. Then for each question of who, what, when, where and why, write out the five C’s of interpretation. Content, Context, Comparison, Consultation and Conclusion.

- \* Content- State an initial proposal based on the facts.
- \* Context- State the historical and historical background.
- \* Comparison- Seek biblical comparisons. Cross-references, different

translations, concordances and other aids.

\* Consultation- Consult secondary sources. Commentaries, sermon notes, bible handbooks and bible dictionaries. (, biblestudytools.com, biblos.com, blueletterbible.com, bibleworks.com wordsearchbible.com logos.com biblesoft.com)

\* Conclusion- State your conclusions.

## Application-

During the observation and interpretation stages, you study the Word of God; in application, the Word of God studies you.

Which of the following verses do you think applies to you? If they do apply, would you apply them literally or generally?

Gen. 12:1

Mt. 28:18-20

Acts 4:32

1 Cor. 7:8

1 Jn. 4:7

For some, the thought of questioning whether or not a passage of the Bible applies to us today is unsettling. After all, doesn't 2 Tim. 3:16 say that *"all scripture is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."* All scripture is profitable in all of these areas, but not all is specifically applicable.

How can we know what to apply to our situations? To determine, you must answer five questions about the scripture studied. (The first three questions we have already answered.)

1. Who said it?
2. What did they say?
3. What did they mean?
4. For whom is it intended?
5. What response does God desire?

To determine the answer to number 4, finding the intended audience, you must answer three questions.

1. Is the teaching local or universal? Is it for a specific group at a special location or is it intended for everyone always?
2. Is it temporary or timeless?
3. In what areas of our lives should we apply the truths?

To summarize, the basic principle of application is that every teaching of scripture should be received universally unless the Bible itself limits the audience, either in the context of the passage or other biblical teachings.

## How does the Bible sometimes limit itself?

### 1. Context-

- a. In the book of Job, Elihu's "wisdom" is clearly not meant to be applied because it is contrary to the wisdom of God expressed later in the same book.

b. The author may limit the application by addressing a specific group.  
1 Cor. 7:7-8 limits the application to those who have this “gift from God.”

c. A requirement that is clearly bound by the culture of that day, may limit the application. Rom. 14:21, 1 Cor. 8:13, 10:28.

Although history and culture may limit how we obey certain commands (Gen. 12:1), there is a place for applying universal principles within the passage. Ex: We should follow Abraham’s example of obeying God no matter what the cost.

2. Additional Revelation- NT revelation may limit how we are to apply some OT scriptures. Ex: Heb. 9-10 teaches levitical laws of the old covenant are no longer valid since the coming of Christ.

Many specific principles of application are also revealed in the genre or type of literature.

### **How to apply:**

Four general guidelines-

1. Know yourself- The better you know your own strengths and weaknesses, the more sensitive you will be to the scriptures that speak to your area of need.

2. Relate the passage to your life- Look for areas in your life where the principles you discover apply the most.

Ex: Is there...

- \*a command to obey
- \*a promise to trust
- \*a challenge to heed
- \*an example to follow
- \*an error to avoid
- \*an attitude to change or guard against
- \*a priority to change

3. Meditate on the passage- Pick one key verse or major point to focus on and memorize.

4. Practice what you have learned- Discipline yourself to put the principles you have learned into practice by making a plan.

Material taken from “Unlocking the Scriptures” by Hans Fitzel



## Memorizing Scripture

*The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. Psalm 19:7-8*

This is what God tells us about His Word. It gives us freedom, strength, and purity, it leads us to obedience, produces fruit, gives us health, guidance, confidence, comfort, revival, understanding, discernment, insight, and restoration, it makes us wise, enlightens our eyes, warns us, leads us to trust God, motivates us to worship, gives us an eternal perspective, it is the best light for the past, present, and future, it reveals the origin, nature and purpose of man, it sets straight, clarifies right and wrong, directs, encourages, reveals God's heart and handiwork, shows us what pleases Him, makes us complete, provides spiritual nourishment, teaches us patience, courage, perseverance and joy, it gives us hope, is the best marriage manual, teaches us how to forgive and how to be forgiven, how to find relief, how to love and be loved, it reveals God's goodness and His justice, His standards and His mind, without it we are deceived, it keeps us from sin, it sanctifies us, gives us instruction, success, prosperity, it provides us with all our needs in the spiritual realm, reveals what is to be learned, taught and obeyed, gives us adequacy and makes us equipped for doing good, it convicts, and convinces, and is the standard by which we will be judged.

- Jesus knew the word of God and was able to drive away Satan when tempted. Mt 4:1-11
- King David clearly saw that knowing the word of God was the key to purity. Ps 119:9-11
- Paul says that the word is a sword in your armour against the devil's schemes. Eph 6:13-18 and was able to reason with non-Christians because of a knowledge of the word. (Acts 17:1-4)

Other good reasons to memorize God's Word:

1. We are told to be prepared to answer questions concerning our faith in Christ. (1 Pet 3:15)
2. Having the word in our hearts allows us to encourage and teach others. (Col 3:16; 2 Tim 2:14-17)
3. Knowing and using the Word teaches us right from wrong.
4. It can increase our ability to distinguish truth from error in doctrine
5. It will help our prayer life (John 15:7)
6. Knowing God's word allows us to study the Bible more effectively
7. If we know the scriptures we can meditate on it anytime wherever we are. (Ps 119:97; Ps 16:7)
8. Trash in = Trash out, Truth in = transformation out. (Rom 12:1-2)

### Practical How To's:

- \*Topical is generally most useful since it will be most usable.
- \*Use 3x5 cards
- \*Take them with you and review in line.
- \* You could also use a Bible memory app on your phone {Scripture Typer is good and allows you to add your own verses, organize topically, review, quiz yourself etc.
- \*REVIEW

>whenever get a minute

>at least once a week.

\*Schedule time to memorize new verses and review others.

\*Push yourself realistically (S.M.A.R.T. goal)

\*Use your verses to pray for people. (Combining your prayer time and review)

### **Memorizing tips:**

\*Put it to a song or jingle

\*Handwrite it

\*Associate it with something or someone

\*Repeat it out loud

\*Stick it in your face where you'll see it often. Move it around.

\*Quizzing self

\*USE IT!

### 5. What does it take?

1. Discipline (1 Cor. 4:7, Heb. 12:11, Gal. 5:23)

2. Endurance (Heb. 12:1, 2 Tim. 1:7)

*"You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up." Dt. 11:18-20*

*"Even at night my heart instructs me" (Ps. 16:7)*

## Free Printables

[Topical Memory Verse Ideas](#)

[How to Memorize Scripture](#)

[How to Put Together your Personal Testimony Worksheet](#)

[25 Missional Activities for Kids](#)

[Benefits of reading God's Word](#)

[70 Verses to Pray from Scripture](#)

[Quiet Time Worksheet & Bookmark](#)

[Verse of the Day Monthly Prayer List](#)

[Weekly Prayer List](#)

[Reasons to Believe the Bible is Reliable](#)

## Heaven

When you think of heaven, what do you think of? It is common for people to think of a place in the clouds where you sing all day long. Last week we looked at the hope that gets us through suffering. That hope is heaven. If we have a distorted or small view of it, it will probably make it pretty hard to look to as a source of hope.

“He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander His name and His dwelling place and those who live in heaven” (Revelation 13:6). Satan, the father of lies, wants to get us to believe lies not only about God, but also about heaven. If Christians aren’t sure if they want to go there, how much more difficult it will be to encourage someone else to go there.

Maybe you have been told to not ask too many questions about what heaven will be like because *“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him”* (1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV). But look at the very next **verse “But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God”** (vs. 10).

*“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first earth had passed away”* (Revelation 21:1). If the word earth in this passage means anything, it means that we can expect to find earthly things there, including atmosphere, mountains, water, trees, people, houses, even buildings and streets. All of these features are mentioned in Revelation 21 and 22.

For each of the following verses describe what heaven is described as Hebrews 11:10  
When we hear the word city, we don’t need to scratch our heads and think *I wonder what that means*. We understand cities. They have buildings, culture, arts, goods and services. They are filled with all kinds of events, people who are engaged in activities, gathering, conversations and work.

Hebrews 11:16

Countries have territories, rulers, national interests, pride in their identity, citizens who are diverse and unified.

1 Corinthians 15:42-43

Again when God speaks of our having bodies, we don’t need to shrug and say “I just can’t imagine what having a new body would be like”. We’ve had bodies our entire lives and even longed for a better one. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He told His disciples, “Touch Me and see, a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have” (Luke 24:38). The Bible has a lot to say about heaven, but we tend to overlook it. When we start to think about heaven in tangible terms, our desire for it grows. The more we desire it, the more we will be motivated to walk out the things God is calling us to do like Abraham’s descendants who were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. (Hebrews 11:16) The earth as we know it now has been damaged by our sin and is now under a curse. You and I have never known a world without sin, suffering and death, yet we yearn for that very world.

*“Look! I am creating a new heavens and a new earth and no one will even think about the old ones anymore. Be glad; rejoice forever in My creation! And look! I will create Jerusalem as a place of happiness. Her people will be a source of joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and delight in My people. And the sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more. No longer will babies die when only a few days old... In those days people will live in the houses they build and eat the fruit of their own vineyards... They will not work in vain, and their children will not be doomed to misfortune... I will answer them before they even call to Me. While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers! The wolf and the lamb will feed together. The lion will eat hay like a cow” (Isaiah 65:17-25). Do you get the sense like I do that God is pretty psyched about the new place and wants us to see it, understand it, long for it and enjoy it?*

Randy Alcorn is the man who is leading the charge for expanding our view of heaven. He wrote a great book on heaven and even paints a clear picture of heaven in his fictions books that increases your desire for it.

Here are 21 brief observations he made about heaven from Revelation 6:9-11:

*“When [the Lamb] opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until You judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’ Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed” (Revelation 6:9-11).*

1. When these people died on Earth, they relocated to Heaven (v. 9).
2. These people in Heaven were the same ones killed for Christ while on earth (v. 9). This demonstrates direct continuity between our identity on earth and our identity in heaven. The martyrs’ personal history extends directly back to their lives on earth. Those in the intermediate heaven are not different people; they are the same people relocated—”righteous men made perfect” (Hebrews 12:23).
3. People in heaven will be remembered for their lives on earth. These were known and identified as ones slain “because of...the testimony they had maintained” (v. 9).
4. “They called out” (v. 10) means they are able to express themselves audibly. This could suggest they exist in physical form, with vocal cords or other tangible means to express themselves.
5. People in the intermediate heaven can raise their voices (v. 10). This indicates that they are rational, communicative, and emotional—even passionate—beings, like people on earth.
6. They called out in “a loud voice,” not “loud voices.” Individuals speaking with one voice indicate that heaven is a place of unity and shared perspective.
7. The martyrs are fully conscious, rational, and aware of each other, God, and the situation on earth.

8. They ask God to intervene on earth and to act on their behalf: “How long...until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”(v. 10).
9. Those in heaven are free to ask God questions, which means they have an audience with God. It also means they need to learn. In heaven, people desire understanding and pursue it.
10. People in the intermediate heaven know what’s happening on earth (v. 10). The martyrs know enough to realize that those who killed them have not yet been judged.
11. Heaven dwellers have a deep concern for justice and retribution (v. 10). When we go to heaven, we won’t adopt a passive disinterest in what happens on the earth. On the contrary, our concerns will be more passionate and our thirst for justice greater. Neither God nor we will be satisfied until His enemies are judged, our bodies raised, sin and Satan defeated, earth restored, and Christ exalted over all.
12. The martyrs clearly remember their lives on earth (v. 10). They remember at least some of the bad things from earth, since they even remember that they were murdered. (Heaven’s joys are not rooted in ignorance, but perspective.)
13. The martyrs in heaven pray for judgment on their persecutors who are still at work hurting others. They are acting in solidarity with, and in effect interceding for, the suffering saints on earth. This suggests that saints in heaven are both seeing and praying for saints on earth.
14. Those in heaven see God’s attributes (“Sovereign...holy and true”) in a way that makes his judgment of sin more understandable.
15. Those in heaven are distinct individuals: “Then each of them was given a white robe” (v. 11). There isn’t one merged identity (aka Nirvana) that obliterates uniqueness, but a distinct “each of them.”
16. The martyrs’ wearing white robes suggests the possibility of actual physical forms, because disembodied spirits presumably don’t wear robes. The robes may well have symbolic meaning, but it doesn’t mean they couldn’t also be physical. The martyrs appear to have physical forms that John could actually see.
17. God answers their question (v. 11), indicating communication and process in heaven. It also demonstrates that we won’t know everything in heaven—if we did, we would have no questions. The martyrs knew more after God answered their question than before they asked it. There is learning in the present heaven.
18. God promises to fulfill the martyrs’ requests, but says they will have to “wait a little longer” (v. 11). Those in the intermediate heaven live in anticipation of the future fulfillment of God’s promises. Unlike the eternal heaven—where there will be no more sin, curse, or suffering on the new Earth (Revelation 21:4)—the present heaven coexists with and watches over an earth under sin, the Curse, and suffering.

19. There is time in the intermediate heaven (vv. 10-11). The white-robed martyrs ask God a time-dependent question: “How long, Sovereign Lord...until You judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” (v. 10). They are aware of time’s passing and are eager for the coming day of the Lord’s judgment. God answers that they must “wait a little longer” until certain events transpire on earth. Waiting requires the passing of time. (This seems to refute the “no time in heaven/ instantaneous resurrection” theory, as well as soul sleep.)

20. The people of God in heaven have a strong familial connection with those on earth, who are called their “fellow servants and brothers” (v. 11). We share the same Father, “from Whom every family in heaven and on earth is named” (Ephesians 3:15, ESV). There is not a wall of separation within the bride of Christ. We are one family with those who’ve gone to heaven ahead of us. After we go to heaven, we’ll still be one family with those yet on earth. These verses demonstrate a vital connection between the events and people in heaven and the events and people on earth.

21. Our sovereign God knows down to the last detail all that is happening and will happen on earth (v. 11), including every drop of blood shed and every bit of suffering undergone by His children. Voice of the Martyrs estimates that more than 150,000 people die for Christ each year, an average of more than four hundred per day. God knows the name and story of each one.

If the universe will be renewed and the heavens will be in existence, why would we not continue to explore them for all eternity, to the glory of God? If under the curse we landed on the moon, and have the capabilities to land on Mars, what would keep us from really seeing what is across our galaxy?

*“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place for God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’ ...Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal... The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass... Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be it, and His*

*servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever” (Revelation 21-22 TNIV)*

Since this doesn't say "like" or "as," we know this city that will be brought down from heaven will be a literal Jerusalem. Jesus will come dwell on earth, the new earth, with man. Generally, when I read this I skip over the whole ruby, topaz, jasper stuff since I can't picture it. But, recently I was again reminded of how insufficient and uninspiring a view of heaven people have. Really, if our view of heaven is singing all the time or sitting in a church service or being alone on fluffy clouds, how can we set our hearts and minds on something and actually long for and greatly anticipate if it seems dull? Like 1 Corinthians 2:10 says, we can think about the reality of heaven and its awesome-ness because God's Spirit actually leads us into understanding. Awesome.

While thinking about these buildings. I was wondering, 'Why in the world would God have these details written down about architecture and not about any other part of the new earth culture?'. But this is so cool! From what I can think of, everything that is created is made of the natural resources we have. But what if there were different natural resources, or maybe just a little different, better. What if someone used their gifts to glorify God by discovering out how to build things out of jasper and gold and other precious metals? So, instead of seeing the buildings we have now made out of steel, how beautiful would it be if the actual material the building was made out of was beautiful. Everything we make comes from our natural resources, cars, musical instruments, pictures, everything. So perhaps in describing the details of what the buildings are made of gives us a glimpse of everything else that is there. How beautiful heaven is going to be. Not only will the natural setting be beautiful but everything created by us will be beautiful. No cement! Woohoo. I bet the people in Russia are going to be thrilled

"Satan came to steal, kill, and destroy; and since he can't destroy you, [Christians] he will discourage you, take away your courage. If he can't discourage you, he'll distract you!"<sup>64</sup> Therefore, "Our greatest fear as individuals and as a church should not be of failure but of succeeding at the things in life that don't really matter," because, like G.K. Chesterton says, *"Meaninglessness doesn't come from being weary with pain; meaninglessness comes from being weary with pleasure."*

One second before you die, if you could look back over your life, would you be satisfied with what you did with it? Here are the three most common things people at age 95 people say they would change about their lives, if they could:

1. They would have risked more
2. They would have reflected more
3. They would have done more that outlived them.

A.W. Tozer said that "The reason why many are still troubled, still seeking making little forward progress is because they haven't yet come to the end of themselves. We're still trying to give orders, and interfering with God's work within us." Surrender is not passive resignation, fatalism or an excuse for laziness. It is not accepting the status quo, giving up rational thinking or repressing your personality. God wants to use your unique personality for investing in eternity!

Fully surrendering to God is best demonstrated in obedience. Everybody eventually surrenders to something or someone. If not to God, you will surrender to the opinions or expectations of others, to money, resentment, fear or your own pride, lusts or ego. The greatest hindrance to God's blessing in your life is not others; it is yourself, your self-will, stubborn pride, and personal ambition. You cannot fulfill God's purposes for your life while focusing on your own plans. We are called to live as investors in eternity. Your task if you choose to accept it and continue to walk in it, is to actively love God by surrendering your life to a life of obedience, investing in eternity through evangelism and discipleship. Your Christian life will never be an exciting adventure unless you are actively willing to get out on a limb of faith and humbly watch God fulfill His promises to guide, protect, and use you in His kingdom expansion efforts. In response to His love, work as though it is all up to you, but trust knowing that it really is all up to Him. Make a great commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission and then at the age of 95 (or however long you have left) look back and see you had a life that was full and satisfying, that you risked all that you had for His glory, and that you did things that outlived you having an impact on eternity.



## About Laura



[Laura](#), the creator and host of Missional Women is married and has four kids, two of whom are adopted. Laura and her husband have been missionaries to college students for 11 years serving with [Master Plan Ministries](#). Laura is the Staff Women's Development Coordinator and has discipled over 150 girls, led over 30 Bible studies and speaks to college and women's groups. Laura has authored 5 books, including an award winning 12 week Bible Study on First Samuel, [Beholding Him, Becoming Missional, Reach; How to Use Your Social Media Influence for the Glory of God](#), and [A Devotional Journey through Judges](#), a devotional to accompany the free online Bible study at [TheBookofJudges.com](#). You can find her on [facebook](#), [twitter](#), [pinterest](#), [youtube](#), [instagram](#) and her [author site](#).