

LIVING AS
THE LIGHT OF
THE WORLD
Becoming A Lighthouse

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Galen W. TeSelle

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Self-Published by Light of the World Foundation

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First printing 2011

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PREFACE

Wouldn't it be nice to hear people talk about and help define Christians, as the ones who love their neighbors? Isn't that what Jesus' was emphasizing to His followers when He included it as part of the greatest commandment? Over 2000 years ago, Jesus eternally linked loving our neighbors with loving God and it seems we've been trying to de-couple and de-emphasize their relationship ever since ... hoping God would just us love Him and then keep to ourselves or stay within our church family. Jesus says if you love me, you will feed my sheep. Followers of Jesus Christ are called the light of the world; we are made to do good works. This set of lessons calls us into action and into a lifestyle of loving others.

The leader's guide and accompanying student workbook are designed for use in a discipleship group or small group setting. Allocate at least 90 minutes for each lesson. You may complete all 10 lessons in 10 sessions, however you may find you need more time on some lessons and break them up into 2 or more sessions.

The primary purpose of the lessons is to inspire followers of Jesus Christ be the light of the world ... to love our neighbors and commit to praying for them, caring for them, and as the Holy Spirit leads, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In addition to understanding what "Becoming A Lighthouse" means ...

- You will learn why knowing the Way is so much better than finding your way
- You will learn the theology of being a lighthouse from the great "You Are" verses.
- You will discover the many wonderful ways light is used as an analogy in Scripture.
- You will find out how to make the transition from theology to missiology as a working lighthouse.
- You will receive ideas and challenges for starting your lighthouse and living a lifestyle of prayer-care-share.
- You will learn how to develop and share your personal testimony and the Good News to those who don't know Jesus
- You will discover how to maintain and sustain your lighthouse and become a lighthouse keeper in your neighborhood.

I pray you will be blessed by this study. It is loaded with God's Word. Remember to shine wherever you are.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Galen TeSelle, better known as Gale is a lay-member of Mt. Oak United Methodist Church in Bowie, Maryland serving in evangelism, missions, men's ministry, and various leadership positions in his 30 years at that fellowship. Gale has been a follower of Jesus Christ since 1988 when he surrendered his life to God after years of pretending to be a Christian. His more complete testimony is printed as Appendix E on page 83.

Gale was in senior leadership at USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service before retiring in 1999. After spending most of his time coordinating and encouraging federal, state, and county agencies to work together on mapping and geographic information systems programs, the Lord called him into the lighthouse ministry at a Promise Keeper event in Philadelphia. Ever since, he has been working with local churches in the Bowie, MD area, encouraging them and followers of Jesus Christ to work together to love their neighbors, to be the light of the world where they live, work, or go to school, and to transform their communities.

Mr. TeSelle operates this ministry from a Christian non-profit entity called the Light of the World Foundation. Its founding documentation enables additional entities to affiliate with the Foundation without having to form their own non-profit company. Turn ON the Light-Bowie was formed as the first affiliate and it supports the Lighthouse Ministry in and around the City of Bowie. If you are interested in starting an affiliate ministry in your location, please contact Gale at (301) 262-9116 or write to Light of the World Foundation, 12427 Sadler Lane, Bowie, MD 20715.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many pastors who have greatly influenced my life as well as contributed in some way to this publication. I want to thank:

- 1) Pastor George Anderson of Mt. Oak Church who preached messages that brought me to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ
- 2) Pastor David Wentz of Mt. Oak who inspired much of what is written about life priorities in Lesson 5
- 3) Pastor Ramon McDonald of Mt. Oak for joining the first discipleship class and providing helpful comments and encouragement
- 4) Pastor James Schuppe of Belcroft Bible Church who provided wonderful insights into the power of storytelling
- 5) Assistant Pastor Charlie Brown of Mt. Oak for encouraging me to pull together all these materials into a workbook for teaching discipleship classes on sending out followers of Jesus Christ into our Jerusalem.
- 6) And to the many other pastors in Bowie that have been an encouragement in the various multi-church events sponsored by Turn ON the Light-Bowie.

I especially want to thank Tom Knorr who has been a faithful friend and colleague and leader of the Bowie Prayer Walk for more than a decade and to Al Goff for his theological wisdom and great communication/education skills and support. I thank my good friend Jim Tallon (now gone to be with the Lord), who reviewed and critiqued this ministry from its early days and encouraged me in so many ways. Lastly I thank the other members of the Board of Directors of the Light of the World Foundation without their support I could not have continued ... to Bill Hall, Bob Gilgunn, and KC White, thank you.

Gale W. TeSelle

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Lesson 1

THE WAY

I. How Do You See Yourself?

A. If you had to fill in the blank ... I am _____ ... what would you say? What comes to mind? You can write multiple answers if you like but try to think of your primary self-image?

B. The way you see your life, _____.

“Whatever image comes to your mind (self-image) becomes your life metaphor.” Rick Warren in his book Purpose Drive Life said *“Your unspoken life metaphor influences you more than you realize.”* Unfortunately many people see themselves as worthless, unlovable, rejected, and unwanted and those feelings or beliefs drive behavior that reinforces what is believed to be true.

“As a result of the fall, man lost his secure status with God and struggles with feelings of arrogance, inadequacy, and despair, valuing the opinions of others more than the truth of God.” Robert McGee – *The Search for Significance.*

II. How Does God See You?

A. Understanding our identity in Christ is _____ to our success at living the victorious Christian life. God doesn't take opinion polls of our family & friends, or our boss and co-workers to know who we are.

B. In the next two lessons, we will look at a number of passages in the Bible where God tells us “who we are.” When we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we receive the Holy Spirit. We are the temple of the living God as it says in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Our bodies house the Light of Christ. We become _____.

III. Introduction to Lessons and the Lighthouse Movement

This Discipleship Small Group or seminar is entitled ...“Becoming A Lighthouse” with a subtitle of _____.

We are going to use this image of the Lighthouse to help us understanding and remember _____ (Lesson 2) ... and _____ (Lesson 4). The balance of the lessons will help us learn more about the components of our mission and applying God’s word until it becomes a lifestyle of prayer-care-and share and until we think of ourselves as walking lighthouses shining the light of Christ.

A. The Lighthouse Movement

1. Early Beginnings

- a). The roots of the Lighthouse Movement and ministry are found in various ministries, going back to the 1970’s.
- b) In 1974, Pastor Jim Montgomery founded a ministry called _____ (Discipling A Whole Nation). The goal was to have a gathering of Christians or a local church reach out to those living nearby, into every neighborhood, every village, every class, every race, every age until you reach the whole country for Christ.
- c) In the 70’s Ed Silvoso started a ministry called _____ first launched in Argentina and then in North America and _____

other nations. It was primarily focused on praying for the lost, what he called “prayer evangelism.”

d) Donald McGavran described a vision that God had given him in the late 80’s. He envisioned _____ of Christians emerging on virtually every block in the city where at least one Christian would pray for his or her neighbors and then would reach out with acts of love and kindness and ultimately share a Christian witness with them.

e). Alvin VanderGriend teamed up with John DeVries in 1996 and began a ministry called HOPE, an acronym for _____. The rubric of “**prayer-care-share**” was developed out of the HOPE ministry and within a few years, the Lord used HOPE Ministries to initiate a Lighthouse Movement across America. A lighthouse became known as a person or group acting in Jesus name to pray for, care for, and share Christ with their neighbors.

f) Some Southern Baptist women were launching Lighthouses as part of a women’s prayer group. In 1998, one of their leaders, Mary Lance Sisk, wrote a wonderful workbook entitled, _____

g) Paul Cedar, Chairman of Mission America adopted the Lighthouse Movement as one of their primary ministries in 1998. Mission America continues to provide resource materials and encouragement to churches, organizations, and individuals to start and multiply Lighthouses of Prayer-Care-Share across America.

h) Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers partnered with Mission America to promote _____ and a December 31, 1999 event called “Light the Night” as part of America’s Lighthouse Movement.

2. Looking Closer at “Movement”

- a). The formula for movement (momentum) is _____ where P is momentum, M is mass and V is velocity squared.
- b). Many of the Lighthouse efforts in other countries gained momentum to be called a “movement.”
- c). Ervin McManus in his book “An Unstoppable Force” describes movement and momentum the following way.

“When there is no mass, even if there is much velocity, there is no momentum. The same is true of velocity. When there is much mass, but no velocity, there is no momentum. A church may have a thousand attendees every week (mass), but that does not mean there is any momentum. It may not be in motion. It may not be moving in a common direction. Velocity is motion and direction combined. Velocity is speed with a purpose. Velocity made human is action with direction. It is speed focused around a goal. Direction without movement is not velocity. God never intended the Bible to be studied for information or knowledge alone. The Bible was written so that we might respond to the truth and voice of God. Biblical interpretation must be missiological, not theological. The history of the first century church is called the Book of Acts not the book of truths. Speed is determined by one’s level of responsiveness to God’s commands. Obedience is the spiritual equivalent of speed. When you bring together the willingness to obey and the wisdom to know what God is saying, velocity emerges. As God brings light into your life through His Word, you accelerate.”

- f). When the church (or a collection of churches in the community) is

_____, mass is coupled with velocity, and momentum occurs. Church movement occurs. This is what being “On Mission” is all about.

B. Early Lighthouse History?

1. Can anyone name the seven wonders of the ancient world?
2. Does anyone know the last one that was built that made the list?
3. Only one had practical use ... which one was that?
4. Chronologically they are:
 - a). _____ 2700 BC – Present
 - b). _____ 600 BC
 - c). _____ 500 BC
 - d). _____ 350 BC
 - e). The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus 350 BC
 - f). The Colossus of Rhodes 280 BC
 - g). _____ 280 BC – 900 AD

IV. Finding Our Way

A. We _____

Deuteronomy 10:12 reads ... *“Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in _____ and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”*

Yet we have example after example of the Israelites (God’s chosen people) struggling to find God’s ways ... often they just ignored God’s ways and did what they thought wise in their own eyes.

On our own, we cannot _____ ... we cannot find _____ . The right paths in life are not clear to see or straight to follow. On our own, we will not end up at the proper destination.

Proverbs 14:12 says ... *“There is a way that appears to be right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”*

Jesus says in John 3:19-20 ... *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14 ... *“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

Finding our spiritual way is _____. We need _____ help.

Unless we are “born-again”, we do not have a built in navigation system. We wander.

B. We Get _____

Have you ever been physically lost ... as a child or as an adult? Did you wait to be found, ask for help, or find you way back on you own? It can be pretty scary. Isn't it great when you finally meet someone who says ... oh I know where you want to go, follow me, I will take you there ... I know the way?

Isaiah 53:6 says ... *“We all, like sheep, _____, each of us has turned to his own way.”*

C. We Need _____

Let's look at Scripture and how God guides.

1. Exodus 13:21 _____ the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and _____ in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

2. Psalm 23:3 *He restores my soul. He guides me in _____
for his name's sake.*
3. Psalm 43:3 *Send forth _____, let them guide me; let
them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.*
4. Psalm 48:14 *For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide
_____.*
5. Psalm 67:4 *May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples
justly and guide the _____.*
6. Psalm 73:24 *You guide me _____, and afterward you will
take me into glory.*
7. Psalm 107:30 *They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their
_____.*
8. Psalm 139:9-10 *If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of
the sea, _____ your hand will guide me, your right hand will
hold me fast.*
9. Proverbs 4:11 *I guide you in the _____ and lead you along
_____.*
10. Proverbs 6:22 *When you _____ they will guide you; when you
_____, they will watch over you; when you _____ they will speak to
you.*
11. Isaiah 58:11 *The Lord will guide you _____; he will satisfy your
needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like
a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*
12. Matthew 2:2 *“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We
_____ in the east and have come to worship him.”*
13. John 16:13 *But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into
_____. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what
he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

V. Knowing The Way

A. There is a great difference _____ and

The disciples has been following Jesus for some time, listening to His teachings, watching His miracles, learning His ways. Yet, they still had concerns about their life choices, their direction, and their destination. They wanted to know for sure the way to God.

In John 14:1-6 we read:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.

² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and

prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.”

⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus answered, “_____.

No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Because they knew The Way, the early believers in Jesus Christ were called

_____. (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 19:23, 24:14, 24:22)

The apostles, disciples, and early believers knew Jesus, they knew His teachings, and after His death and resurrection they believed in Him and received the Holy Spirit. They knew the way to God the Father, creator of the universe. They knew the way of salvation, the truth, and life eternal. Hallelujah!!

B. We Know The Way

If we know Jesus, we know _____, and we have the
_____ inside to guide us.

We were once lost, but now we are found. Hallelujah!

VI. Questions or Discussion Topics for the Small Groups

- A. What are the different ways the participants filled in the blank in the opening question? How might the answers and the way we see ourselves affect our lives?
- B. Discuss what it takes to gain momentum in the work world. What does it take in the church? Why do you think the Lighthouse Movement gained so much more momentum in third world countries than in North America and Europe?
- C. Read Luke Chapter 15 and discuss the importance of the lost in Jesus' parables.
- D. What are some of the ways we navigate and find our way around? What are some of the ways the world navigates through life? How does a follower of Jesus Christ navigate?
- E. What is the difference between "Finding Your Way" and Knowing The Way?
- F. Have a discussion of the history of the Navigators and how their name reflects their mission.

Lesson 2

THE THEOLOGY

I. Components of a Lighthouse

A. The word lighthouse is not found in the Bible. However, the word “light” is found in almost every book.

B. What are the components of a lighthouse?

1. The _____ supports the lighthouse.
2. The _____ holds the light.
3. The _____ shows the way.

II. Lighthouse Foundation

Let’s start building this lighthouse. Our first question is ... where do we build it?

A. **On Solid** _____

Among the many verses in the Old Testament about The Rock ... Let’s look at Deuteronomy 32:3-4, 2 Samuel 22:47, and Psalm 62:1-2.

1. Deuteronomy 32:3-4 “I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just.”

2. *2 Samuel 22:47 The LORD lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God, the Rock, my Savior!*

3. *Psalm 62:1-2 Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.² Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.*

We see in these last two verses, God becoming personal ... from God the Rock to God my Rock. So we are going to fill in the bottom line on our lighthouse illustration Appendix A _____

B. On A Firm _____

In Matthew 16:15-18 we read ... *“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*

And in Matthew 7:24-25 we read ... *Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.*

1 Corinthians 10:3-4 says ... *They all ate the same spiritual food⁴ and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.*

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 3:11 ... *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

Now we can fill in the second line from the bottom of our lighthouse illustration

... _____

III. The Structure of a Lighthouse

We are ready to begin laying some blocks of our structure (the body), our walking lighthouse, and we will start at the base.

A. You Are _____

John 1:12-13 says ... *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*

Romans 8:16-17 says ... *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

Believing and knowing we belong to God because we are one of His children comes from the _____ indwelling in us.

We can fill in the bottom dark section of the lighthouse structure Appendix A with

B. You Are _____

In 2 Corinthians 5:16-20 we read ... *So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone,*

the new has come! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

We have a whole new worldview... now from God's point of view ... as Christ's Ambassador! The creator of this universe wants you and me on his behalf, to be His Ambassador? What a privilege. I get to proclaim the good news of reconciliation!

What is the message of reconciliation?

We are all created in _____ but not born as God's children. We are born with _____ but due to the fall of Adam and Eve, we are not born with _____. Without Spirit, we cannot commune with God. Instead of inheriting Spirit, we inherited a _____ and became _____ from God. We sin and offend our Creator and Holy God. We deserved His wrath.

But God ...

Romans 5:8-11 says ... _____ *God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

Ephesians 2:3-5 says ... *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.* ⁴ _____ *because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,* ⁵ *made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

And Colossians 1:21-22 says ... *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.* ²² _____ *now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.*

What an honor He gives us to be His ambassador and deliver such a great message of reconciliation. What a job title. Write that title in the lighthouse illustration.

C. You Are _____

In Matthew 5:13 we read ... *You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.*

Why would Jesus use salt as a metaphor?

Salt brings about _____

Salt is _____

And salt is a _____

Let's re-look at the later part of Matthew 5:13 again and the question Jesus raises and his answer. "*But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.*"

Is Jesus really talking to His followers here? Is He talking about us?

Salt can't stay in the salt shaker, we need to sprinkle it around.

Remember that great book “Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World” by Rebecca Pippert? Rebecca says ... *“He still sends men and women – before he sends tracts and techniques – to change the world. Jesus’ lifestyle arose out of the simple truth of loving God, our neighbors, and ourselves. Jesus proclaimed the primary way to please God was through proper relationships.*

D. You are _____

In Matthew 5:14-16 we read ... *You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵ *Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.* ¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

What is the power source of this Light? It is not what but who, right?

Jesus said in John 8:12 ... *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*

How did you get “The Light” in you? Ephesians 1:13 says ... *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.*

Ephesians 5:8 says ... *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.*

Isaiah 60:1 says ... *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.*

E. Transforming from “You Are” to _____

We have completed the “You Are Theology” of our lighthouse.

We have built our living lighthouse on the solid rock and the firm foundation of God Almighty and Jesus our Lord and Savior. We have been adopted into the family of God, now children of the Kingdom of God. We are given the title of Christ’s Ambassador and sent back into Satan’s the kingdom of darkness. We are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

HOW GOD SEES THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR
I AM ACCEPTED
John 1:12 I am God's child.
John 15:15 I am a friend of Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 6:17 I am united with the Lord, and I am one with him in spirit.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20 I have been bought with a price, and I belong to God.
1 Corinthians 12:27 I am a member of Christ's body.
Ephesians 1:3-8 I have been chosen by God and adopted as his child.
John 15:5 I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of his life.
Colossians 2:9-10 I am complete in Christ.
Philippians 3:20 I am a citizen of Heaven.
Ephesians 2:6 I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm.
I AM JUSTIFIED
Romans 5:1 I have been justified.
Colossians 1:13-14 I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
Romans 8:1 I am free from condemnation.
Romans 8:28 I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances.
Romans 8:38-39 I cannot be separated from the love of God.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22 I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God.
Colossians 3:1-4 I am hidden with Christ in God.
Philippians 1:6 I am confident that God will complete the good work he started in me.
2 Timothy 1:7 I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and sound mind.
1 John 5:18 I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me.
I AM SIGNIFICANT
Ephesians 2:10 I am God's workmanship.
Hebrews 4:14-16 I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 3:12 I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
John 15:16 I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.
2 Corinthians 6: 16 I am the temple of the Living God
2 Corinthians 5:18 I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
2 Corinthians 5:20 I am Christ's Ambassador
Matthew 5:13 I am the salt of the earth
Mathew 5:14 I am the light of the world

From Jesus is Lord Ministries of Monroe

Now the big question ... Can I move from the intellectual theological knowledge of “You Are” to the personal belonging understanding of “I Am”?

The table shows how God sees those who believe and follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It not only reminds us of some of the scripture passages we have just covered but even more our position in Christ. I am accepted. I am justified. I am significant.

Chip Ingram, a pastor in Atlanta who has an excellent radio ministry preached a great series of messages a few years ago called “Morphing – the Miracle of Life Change” and I want us to read a story he shared in this sermon series. It’s about what might be going through the mind of a butterfly when he/she has been transformed from the cocoon. Let’s read this and see which one of these butterflies we might be.

“Once upon a time there were these two little butterflies. One is named Barbara Butterfly and the other is named Benny Butterfly. And they are sitting on a twig and their wings are out and they are still a little bit wet and there’s a gentle breeze coming through drying their wings. They haven’t taken off yet, they haven’t flown. They will give it a whirl here in just a minute And Benny’s on the left and Barbara’s on the right. And Barbara says ...Oh isn’t it great. Do you feel the sunlight? Oh the joy! It’s so good to be out of that cocoon. I can’t wait to try the new adventure and... and ...look down there. There’s flowers and there’s trees. Oh, I think we get to smell them and everything.

And Benny turns to her and says ...Yeah, it is nice to be out of the cocoon but I knew what I was doing in the cocoon. And I know it’s dark and I know it’s cold, but it sure felt secure. And by the way it looks like a pretty good drop. How do you know these wings are really going to work?

And so Barbara said ... watch. And so she jumps off the leaf and amazingly God created them in such a way that a few dips and a breeze here and she checks out a flower here and checks out another flower and she takes a big left turn and gets a gush of wind and right back next to Benny.

She says ... Benny there’s a beautiful world out there and in fact Benny the sunlight is coming through your wings. You are wonderful ... you are beautiful. I wish you could see yourself. There’s a whole world out there. There’s a brand new life. We

are not worms anymore. We're butterflies. We're new creations. Oh, it's going to be so exciting.

And Benny turns to Barbara and says ... you know Barbara, I'm afraid of heights. And I don't think I'd be a good flier. And what are all my worm buddies going to think when I start flying around. I'm won't really have the same kind of relationships with them. Barbara kind of nods and says ... well Benny you're a butterfly. You're not a worm anymore.

And Benny says ... well true but just you and I can know that. And then Benny folds his wings as much as he can and tries to get as far back into the cocoon as he can. But by now a few little maggots have taken up residence so it's a little crowded. And Barbara says ... Benny you weren't made to be in a cocoon. You were made to fly. And Benny says ... well I know that and you know that and I know it's dark and I know it's filled with worms but at least it's home. And Barbara jumps off and takes flight ... to a brand new way of life. And every time she uses her wings they get stronger and stronger and stronger. And life is an adventure.

We have the light of Jesus Christ. Let's Turn On Our Light and Live Who We Are.

IV. Questions or Discussion Topics for Small Groups

- A. Has anyone had an experience where the foundation has cracked or crumbled under his or her home or some other structure? If so, what was the impact on the structure? How does that relate to life?
- B. What "You Are" verses were most meaningful to you and why?
- C. Discuss Rebecca Pipperts' book title and quote and possible applications.
- D. Review the "I Am" verses and the difficulty we may have in transforming from "You Are" to "I Am."

Lesson 3

THE LIGHT

I. Characteristics of Light

A. Definition - a form of electromagnetic radiant energy that is visible to the human eye.

B. Characteristics – It exists in tiny packets called photons and has the characteristics of both wave and particle. It varies in intensity, color, and direction but always travels fast at _____

It shines, glows, brightens, beams, illuminates, exposes, reveals, warms, heats, and energizes. It sustains life and makes vision possible. Sadly you can run from it and hide from it. Where light shines, _____

II. Light in the Bible

As mentioned before, there are over 200 occurrences of the word “light” in the Bible and most are used as a metaphor for truth, spiritual guidance, and righteousness.

Let’s look at some of the ways it is used.

A. Light and _____

GE 1:3 PS 36:9 1PE 2:9 1JN 1:5 REV 21:23 PS118:27 2SA 22:20

B. Light and _____

ISA 9:2 JN 8:12 JN 12:46 HE 1:3 EPH 5:14

C. Light and _____

PS 43:3 JN 3:21 EPH 5:9

D. Light and _____

JOB 33:30 PS 27:1 PS 36:9 PR 6:23 JN 1:4

E. Light and _____

PS 119:105 ISA 8:20 2PE 1:19

F. Light and _____

PS 56:13 PS 89:15 ISA 2:5 IJN 1:7

II. Magnifying the Light

What are some of the ways we can enhance the light and magnify our light so we have more impact in the dark world?

A. See to it our light is not _____

Luke 11:35 says ... See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness.

2 Samuel 22:29 says ... You are my lamp, O Lord; the Lord turns my darkness into light.

Ephesians 5:11 says ... Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

I John 1:6 says ... If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.

Romans 13:12 says ...The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

I John 2:11 says ... But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

B. Fill us with the _____

Luke 11:36 says ... *Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you.*"

Acts 4:8 says ... *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!*

Acts 4:31 says ... *After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*

Acts 13:45 says ... *And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*

Ephesians 5:38 says ... *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*

2 Corinthians 4:6 says ... *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.*

C. Spend time abiding in God's _____

Exodus 34:29 says ... *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD.*

John 15:9 says ... *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain (abide) in my love.*

Acts 4:13 says ... *When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.*

D. Make sure our light can be _____

Let's look at Matthew 5:14-15 again ... *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.*

E. Increase the _____ of our light

1 Thessalonians 3:12 says ... *May the Lord make your _____ and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.*

John 17:20-23 says ... *"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to _____ to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*

Without love and without unity, our theology is _____

“The Living Sermon” by Edgar Guest, best illustrates this point.

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day.
 I'd rather one would walk with me than merely tell the way.
 The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear.
 Fine counsel is confusing but example's always clear.
 The best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds.
 For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.
 I soon can learn to do it, if you'll let me see it done.
 I can watch your hands in action, your tongue too fast may run.
 The lectures you deliver may be very wise and true.
 But I'd rather get my lessons by observing what you do.
 For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give.
 But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

E. Remain _____

“In 1822, a French Physicist named Augustin Fresnel invented a lens that would make his name commonplace along the seacoasts of Europe and North America. It looked like a giant glass beehive, with a light at the center. The lens could be as tall as twelve feet, with concentric rings of glass prisms above and below to bend the light into a narrow beam. At the center the lens was shaped like a magnifying glass, so the concentrated beam was even more powerful. Tests showed that while an open flame lost nearly 97% of its light, and a flame with reflectors behind it still lost 83% of its light, the fresnel lens was able to capture all but 17% of its light. Because of its amazing efficiency, a fresnel lens could easily throw its light 20 or more miles to the horizon.”



The Fresnel Lens

“Note the enormous "bull's-eyes" in the original Cape Canaveral first-order lens, which is on display at Ponce Inlet, Florida. The bull's-eyes bend the light into a round beam to create a flashing effect. “

Above quoted paragraphs from <http://lighthousegetaway.com/lights/fresnel.html>

Just as the Fresnel lens multiples and intensifies the light, but also captures and resends a high percentage of the light source it receives, we must do the same. How? By ridding ourselves of sin, filling ourselves with the Holy Spirit, being in the presence of God, hearing his voice, placing our light in plain view for all to see, and bathing our every action in love and in unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Let's pray Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:16-19 to the Lord, replacing the "you" and "your" with me and my and I.

*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen ~~you~~ **me** with power through his Spirit in ~~you're~~ **my** inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in ~~your~~ **my** heart through faith. And I pray that ~~you~~ **I**, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that ~~you~~ **I** may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

III. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

- A. Discuss the way light is used in the Bible and why it is such a good metaphor.

- B. What are some of things that get in the way of our light being turned on and shining brightly?

- C. Can anyone give an example of how God helped him or her to shine more brightly?

Lesson 4

THE MISSION

I. Review and Reflect

A. Let's Do a Quick Review.

B. Let's Do a Quick Reflection.

Proverbs 27:19 says ... *As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart.*

Luke 6:45 says ... *A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.*

Remember, whatever we build inside this lighthouse from now on will have _____ unless it is done with love, in humility, considering others more than ourselves.

In Matthew 23:27 Jesus says ... *Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the _____ but on the _____ are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.*

II. God's Great Commissions

There are many great verses in the Bible, however a few have taken on “greatness.” Let’s look at some of these great verses and see how they apply to our mission as a lighthouse.

A. The Great _____

1 Timothy 2:1-4 says ... *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made _____—² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior,⁴ who wants _____ to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

Colossians 4:2-6 says ... *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

We can write at the white space at bottom of our lighthouse diagram Appendix A,

Remember the verses shortly after John 3:16? Verses 19 & 20... *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

We are called to shine our light so it can be seen, but that does not mean it will be seen. Some may even look at your light and still be blind to it.

2 Corinthians 4:4 say ... *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

We need to be prayer evangelist. “Prayer Evangelism is talking to God about our neighbors before we talk to our neighbors about God.” (Ed Silvano)

B. The Great _____

Mark 12:30-31 says ... *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: _____ as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*

Galatians 5:14 says ... *The entire law is summed up in a single command ... Love your neighbor as yourself.*

James 2:8 says ... *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right.*

Romans 13:8 says ... *Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt of loving one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

We find plenty of guidance about who is our neighbor and what does it mean to love him or her in the parable of the _____

Luke 10:25-37 says ... *On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*²⁶ *"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"*²⁷ *He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"*²⁸ *"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."*²⁹ *But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*³⁰ *In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead."*³¹ *A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.*³² *So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.*³³ *But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.*³⁴ *He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.*³⁵ *The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'*³⁶ *"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"*³⁷ *The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."* *Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

What do we find in this familiar passage?

1) We find that loving our neighbor starts with _____ for our neighbor. (v. 33)

2) We find that loving our neighbor is _____ from what we are doing. (v. 34-35)

3) We find that loving our neighbor is _____ as best we can. (v. 34)

4) We find that loving our neighbor is _____
as best we can. (v. 35)

5) We find that our neighbor is _____ that happens to
cross our path. (v. 33)

6) We find out how this story applies to us. Jesus said _____
(v. 37)

So the words for the center white section of our lighthouse are _____

C. The Great _____

Matthew 28:16-20 says ... *Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.*¹⁷ *When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.*¹⁸ *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*¹⁹ *Therefore _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*²⁰ *and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Acts 13:47 says ... *For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."*

Jesus tells us to _____. We can write that at the top right section of our lighthouse.

Bill Hybels & Mark Mittelberg said in their "Becoming a Contagious Christian" book ... *"Only a few of us will actually be asked to leave our nets and abandon our professions. The vast majority of Christians will be asked to function within their*

present environment, but with a whole new mindset, one that reflects God's perspective on the eternal importance of people."

Rick Warren said in his "Purpose Driven Life" book ... *"God wants you to share the Good News where you are. There are people on this planet whom only you will be able to reach, because of where you live and what God has made you to be."*

You can now also fill in the right center section of the lighthouse drawing with the Lighthouse Movement rubric we talked about in the opening lesson as part of our introduction ... _____ .

III. You are God's _____

Tony Evans gave a sermon a few years ago in which he describes how our lives should be a promotion clip for the world to see a glimpse of heaven to come.

Here is what he said:

"In closing in radio and television they show you clips of next weeks program. They will let you see the clips. Clips are always the hot part of the show ... the fight scene, chase scene, or love scene ... because they want you to tune in next week. And so they rearrange them, re-edit them so it looks like it is just one hot thing after another. Now ... now when you look at the show it may not look nearly as good as advertised by the clips but you would never know it by the clips. Clips are always designed to pull you in.

One day ladies and gentlemen there is a big show coming to town. God is the producer, the Holy Spirit is the director, Jesus is the superstar, and it will be a worldwide production. It's called the Kingdom of God. But in the meantime he has left behind previews of coming attractions ... and that's you and you and you. You and me ... we are suppose to be the hot clips so that when people see us they decide

the big show is worth getting in on. When they see how we talk, and how we walk, and how we function, and how we come together ... cross-racially, cross-culturally, cross-denominationally. When they say this clip is hot ... where can we purchase a ticket to the show? We can tell them they don't have to purchase a ticket ... the price has already been paid."

Jim Montgomery says in his book *I'm Gonna Let It Shine* ... "Regarding revival, we are waiting for God to show up and do the miraculous while God is waiting for us to show and do the obvious."

IV. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

- A. Discuss someone's experience with intercessory prayer and how God brought about a marvelous result.
- B. How much do you think Christians are known for loving their neighbors? Discuss why or why not this might be true.
- C. Who was Jesus talking to in Matthew 28:16-20 when he told them to "go and make disciples"? Does that apply to us and why? How do you like the way Jesus ends the passage?
- D. What do you think of Tony Evan's story that we are God's promotion clip?

Lesson 5

STARTING MY LIGHTHOUSE

I. My New Life

The Bible says “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”

Romans 6:4 says ... *We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

A new life in Christ calls for a new _____

Living as a lighthouse ... a child of God, an ambassador for Christ, the salt of the earth, the light of the world ... is not a program, it's a lifestyle; it's living who you are.

A. My Life Purposes (Priorities)

Proverbs 19:21 says ... *Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's _____ that prevails.*

Colossians 1:16 says ... *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*

We can only find purpose through Jesus Christ for all things were created by Him and for His purpose.

Ephesians 2:10 says ... *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Ephesians 5:15-17 goes on to say ... *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

Living as a wise child of God, our priorities must be aligned to God's purpose and priorities for our life.

1. Reaching up _____

Mark 12:30 says ... *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*'

God loves you and wants to have a living, growing two-way relationship with you.

2. Reaching in _____

2 Peter 1:5-8 says ... *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being _____ and _____ in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 13:5 says ... *Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?*

Besides self-examination, we need to ask our brothers and sisters in Christ to help us see what we cannot see. Periodically we need to ask our closest friends to be your fruit inspectors and give us their report. And of course, we need to ask God to show us how we can be more like Jesus.

3. Reaching over _____

Ephesians 5:33 says ... *However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

Ephesians 6:1-4 says ... *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*² *“Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—*³ *“that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”*⁴ *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Luke 18:16 says ... *Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

1 Timothy 5:8 says ... *If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Healthy, growing personal relationships with others start with family and are a vital part of life the Christian life. Marriage, children, and family are divine

4. Reaching across _____

John 13:34-35 says ... *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”*³⁵ *By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

Acts 2:42 says ... *They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

1 John 3:16-19 says ... *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.*¹⁷ *If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?*¹⁸ *Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*¹⁹ *This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence*

James 5:16 says ... *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*

Hebrews 10:25 says ... *Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Christians need each other for fellowship, care, encouragement, accountability, and growth.

5. Reaching out _____

Matthew 28:19 says ... *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*

John 17:15-18 says ... *My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.* ¹⁶ *They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.* ¹⁷ *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.* ¹⁸ *As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.*

Acts 13:47 says ... *For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."*

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

Mark 12:31 says ... *The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.*

So, there you have it. Our Christian priorities for life ... loving God, loving yourself, loving family, loving one another, and loving others.

There are only two things that really matter in life ... God and people. They are the only things that last forever.

B. My Prayer _____

If we are ready to start our lighthouse, we could and probably should pray a commitment prayer to the Lord ... something like this sample prayer:

God, I know that my neighbors matter very much to you and that you have commanded me to love them and to pray for them. I commit myself to be your ambassador of reconciliation, and to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world to my neighbors. I will pray at least weekly with prayers of blessings and that you draw them close to You. Help me care for them as needs become known. As the Holy Spirit leads, help me share with my neighbors the way to heaven and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

II. Where is My Lighthouse - Who Are My Neighbors?

A. Shine Where You Are

God has _____ us to help others find their way and to find The Way.

Acts 17:26-27 says ... From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

Most of us will not need to leave our family, friends, job or home to accept the call to be a lighthouse. We can shine right where we are.

Remember the old hymn “Brighten the Corner Where You Are.” *Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do; Do not wait to shed your light afar. To the many duties ever near you now be true. Brighten the corner where you are.* The refrain goes ... *Brighten the corner where you are. Brighten the corner where you are. Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar; Brighten the corner where you are.* Ina Ogden in 1913

It may be your corner, a group of homes near you, your street, your block, your neighborhood ... and/or your work and school location. You can brighten their lives with the light of Jesus.

B. Home Ownership Locators

Most States and Counties have automated land records and they provide public Internet access to those records. In case you are new to the neighborhood, a simple query by street can provide the names of all the homeowners near you. The record also often tells you whether they are living in the home or renting it and living elsewhere. It is usually more difficult to find names associated with homes being rented.

C. Map of Homes and Names

Develop a small map of homes and the names of everyone living in each home. It might be just a few homes ... three to the left, three to the right, and the six across. It might be a map of your street or cul-de-sac. If you live on a corner, it could be the other corner homes and the one next door.

If we are not already doing so, let's start praying for our neighbors by name and home address.

D. Formula for Impacting the World

In the book "Becoming a Contagious Christian, the authors suggest there is a formula for impacting the world for Christ.

$$HP + CP + CC = MI$$

High potency plus _____ plus clear communication equals maximum impact.

We have a natural close proximity to our neighbors, our co-workers, and our classmates. God asks us to make the most of every opportunity.

III. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

- A. How do the five life priorities in this lesson match with your own life priorities? How do you maintain the proper balance?
- B. Being a lighthouse is not a program but a lifestyle. What is the difference and what does that mean to you?
- C. Where are the places and what are the circumstances in which we are in close proximity to others who are not followers of Jesus Christ? What percent of our time do we spend there?

Lesson 6

PRAYING FOR MY NEIGHBORS

I. Introduction

A. Reviewing Our Key Verse

The primary purpose for intercessory prayer for non-believers is so all men _____ and come to know _____ .

I Timothy 2:1-4 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

B. Pray for _____

Colossians 4:2-4 says ... Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:18-19 says ... And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for

all the saints. ¹⁹ *Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.*

C. Praying for _____

2 Corinthian 4:4 says ... *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

And we know also from John 3:19 and 20 that men love darkness instead of light because they don't want to evil deeds to be exposed.

Let's look up some verses relating to God opening the eyes of the blind.

Numbers 22:30-32

2 Kings 6:16-17

Isaiah 42: 6-7

D. Pray for _____

2 Corinthians 4:6 says ... *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

Acts 28:26-28 says ... *"Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." ²⁷ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' ²⁸ "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!"*

II. Intercessory Prayer in the Bible

A. _____ Pleads for Sodom

Genesis 18:16-33

B. _____ Sought the Lords favor of the Israelites in the desert

Exodus 32:11-14

C. _____ To save his people from Sennacherib

Isaiah 37: 14-22

D. _____ To rebuild the walls and the city of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 1

E. _____ For His disciples and for all believers

John 17:6-26

F. _____ For those stoning him

Acts 7:55-60

G. _____ For struggling churches

Colossians 1:9-12 Ephesians 1:16-17

III. Intercessory Prayer Applications

A. Praying for Specific People

The class assignment from the last lesson was to develop a specific list of neighbors and homes ... classmates or co-workers that we are committed to pray for. Let's look at those lists and pray over them.

B. My Neighborhood Map

We also had a homework assignment to make a sketch map of the street and homes we would be praying for. Let's take a look at those maps and pray over them.

C. Pray Walking

Prayer walking is praying in your areas of influence: neighborhood, school, or at work. Walk and pray in front of each home or apartment building for the potential believers who live there. Walk and pray at your school or business as you walk by classrooms or offices. As we see our neighbors, classmates, or co-workers along the way ... stop, visit, and ask ... Is there anything I can pray about for you? As we get to know our neighbors names and needs better, we can pray specifically by name and for specific needs. God wants us to pray in detail for He answers in detail.

D. "BLESS" Prayer

Pray a **BLESS** type prayer at least once a week for your neighbors. HOPE Ministries offers this acrostic as a guideline.

B _____ ... physical needs, health, protection, strength

L _____ ... work, income, job satisfaction and security

E _____ ... joy, peace, hope

S _____ ... family relationships, marriage, friends

S _____ ... salvation, faith, holiness, grace

E. Pray with _____

We can pray alone, but many find we stay more focused by praying with a friend. Praying together was one of the hallmarks of the early church. The primary

model for prayer is the Lord's Prayer and it is a corporate prayer. Connecting with a prayer partner in the same neighborhood and praying together on a weekly basis will add even more focus to our prayer life and increase our compassion for our neighbors.

Acts 1:14 says ...*They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

F. Intercede According to _____

1 John 5:14-15 says ... *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*¹⁵ *And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

G. Pray with _____

Matthew 6:1-8 says ... *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*² *He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men."*³ *And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'*

⁴ *"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men,*⁵ *yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"*

⁶ *And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says."*⁷ *And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?*⁸ *I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"*

H. Quotes about Prayer

“There is no other activity in life so important as that of prayer. Every other activity depends upon prayer for its best efficiency.” M.E. Andross

"Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but they are helpless against our prayers." Sidlow Baxter

“I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.” Charles Spurgeon

“To make intercession for men is the most powerful and practical way in which we can express our love for them." John Calvin

"Intercession is truly universal work for the Christian. No place is closed to intercessory prayer. No continent - no nation - no organization - no city - no office. There is no power on earth that can keep intercession out." Richard Halverson

IV. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

1. What does intercessory prayer mean to you? How can intercessory prayer affect us?
2. When you were ill or in serious trouble, did you ever feel the prayers of others? What was that like? What were you getting from those prayers?
3. Do any of the Biblical examples of intercessory prayer tell you something about how it works?
4. Talk about the difference it might make in our time of prayer for our neighbors if we teamed-up with a neighborhood prayer partner?

Lesson 7

CARING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

I. Loving Our Neighbor and Loving One Another

Our key verse for this lesson is Mark 12:31 *The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.*"

Let's look at Scripture and see how often God tells us to love our neighbor and love one another.

A. Love Your Neighbor Bible Verses

Leviticus 19:18 says ... *"Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.*

Matthew 5:43-44 says ... *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*

Matthew 19:16-22 says ... *Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"¹⁷ "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,*

¹⁹ *honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”* ²⁰ *“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”* ²¹ *Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”* ²² *When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

Matthew 22:38-40 says ... *This is the first and greatest commandment.* ³⁹ *And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’* ⁴⁰ *All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”*

Luke 10:26-28 says ... *“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”* ²⁷ *He answered: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* ²⁸ *“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”*

Romans 13:9-10 says ... *The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”* ¹⁰ *Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

Galatians 5:14 says ... *The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

James 2:8 says ... *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right.*

B. Loving One Another Bible Verses

John 13:34-35	Romans 12:10	Romans 13:8	Galatians 5:13
Ephesians 4:2	Hebrews 10:24	1 Peter 1:22	1 Peter 3:8
1 Peter 5:14	1 John 3:11	1 John 3:23	1 John 4:7
1 John 4:11-12	2 John 1:5		

1 John 4:19-21 *We love because he first loved us.* ²⁰ *If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.* ²¹ *And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

The bottom line after reading these verses about loving our neighbor and loving one another seems to be ... we can't be loving God unless we are loving our neighbor and loving one another.

II. Caring Starts with _____

A. Compassion is Part of God's _____

Psalm 86:15 says ... *But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.*

Psalm 116:5 says ... *The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.*

Psalm 145:9 says ... *The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.*

Jonah 3:10 says ... *When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.*

Zechariah 7:9 says *“This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.*

B. Jesus is _____ of Compassion

Matthew 9:36 says ... *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

Matthew 14:14 says ... *When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.*

Matthew 20:34 says ... *Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.*

Mark 1:14 says ... *Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!”*

Luke 15:20 says ... *So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

2 Corinthians 1:3 says ... *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.*

Remember, Jesus' example in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The immediate difference between the Priest and Levite in the story and the Samaritan was the Samaritan felt compassion and stopped. Unlike the comic strip characters below, the Good Samaritan took time out from his priorities to deal with God's priority of loving his neighbor.



Luke 8:14 says ... *The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.*

1 John 3:17 and 18 says ... *If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

C. We Must Be _____ in Compassion

Colossians 3:12 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

Ephesians 4:32 *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

1 Peter 3:8 says ... *Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.*

Matthew 7:12 says ... *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

1 Corinthians 10:24 says ... *Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.*

“When action-oriented compassion is absent, it’s a tell-tale sign that something’s spiritually amiss. But a clear and consistent demonstration of Christ-like love is a powerful magnet that pulls people toward Him.” From Bill Hybels book *Contagious Christian* and a chapter called “The Pull of Compassion.”

III. Caring in the Bible

A. Care for the _____

Exodus 22:25	Deuteronomy 15:11	Deuteronomy 24:14	1 Samuel 2:7-9
Psalms 12:5	Psalms 35:10	Psalms 69:33	Psalms 72:12-14
Psalms 109:31	Psalms 140:	Proverbs 14:21	Proverbs 14:31
Proverbs 21:13	Proverbs 22:22	Proverbs 31:9	Proverbs 31:20
Isaiah 25:4	Isaiah 41:17	Isaiah 55:10	Jeremiah 22:16
Ezekiel 16:48-50	Amos 4:1-3	Amos 8:1-14	Matthew 6:1-3
Matthew 25:31-46	Romans 12:13	Ephesians 4:28	James 2:16
John 3:17			

B. Care for the _____

Deuteronomy 8:14-16

Psalm 107:4-6

Psalm 146:4-8

Proverbs 25:20

Matthew 15:32

Isaiah 58:6-10

C. Care for the _____

Exodus 22:22

Acts 6:1-4

1 Timothy 5:3

1 Timothy 5:16

James 1:27

D. Care that Brings Glory and Honor to _____

Matthew 5:16 says ... *In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

1 Peter 2:12 says ... *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

We must not look for personal recognition, praise, and rewards on earth. If we do, that is all we receive. We will miss out on God's praise and the rewards received later as we lay up treasures in heaven.

Matthew 6:1-4 says ... *“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.”³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

Philippians 2:3-5 says ... *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.* ⁴ *Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.* ⁵ *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

1 Timothy 6:17-19 says ... *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.* ¹⁸ *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.* ¹⁹ *In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

IV. Ideas for Caring in Our Neighborhood

Take time to review Appendix B – Lighthouse Ideas for Caring

V. Guiding Your Neighbors to Christian Care Groups and Care Services

Take time to review your communities' Christian care groups and care services so you are better prepared to help others and point them in the right direction for continuing care.

VI. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

1. Discuss the premise ... we cannot be loving God unless we are loving our neighbors and loving one another?
2. How important is compassion as a Christian character trait?
3. Discuss how some of the Bible verses about the poor, the needy, the hungry, the thirsty, the widows, or the orphans affected your understanding of God's love for them.
4. What "lighthouse care ideas" might you consider using in your neighborhood?
5. How easy is it to get caught up desiring and receiving man's praise for our good deeds? How do we best give God all the glory and honor?

Lesson 8

SHARING MY STORY

I. Be _____ to Share Your Story

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

Acts 1:8 says ... *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*”

We need to be ready to share our story with an individual or group, with a non-religious person or religious person, in a short amount of time or with plenty of time.

Apostle Paul was ready to share his testimony even in the most difficult of circumstances. In Acts 21:37 thru Acts 22:21 Paul shares his testimony with the ruling authorities.

Acts 23:11 says ... *The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”*

II. Our Story is _____ and _____ to God's grace.

The Old Testament and the New Testament are full of real life stories of God's love and grace. Our Story, our testimony of becoming a "born-again" follower of Jesus Christ is an extension of the New Testament to those who witness our life. If our life has changed and others see we bear the fruit of the Spirit, than we have personal, real, and firsthand evidence that God's power and grace are at work today.

Acts 11:19-24 says ... *Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.*²⁰ *Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.*²¹ *The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.*²² *News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.*²³ *When he arrived and saw the _____ of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.*²⁴ *He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 says ... *When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the _____ about God.*² *For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*³ *I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling.*⁴ *My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration [_____] of the Spirit's power,*⁵ *so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.*

Our testimony does not have to be written or spoken in fancy words and in theological terms. But rather a heartfelt description of what happened, what we saw and heard, what we experienced, and the changes that occurred after accepting Jesus Christ into our life and surrendering to His will. See 1 John 1:1-3 and 2 Peter 1:16-18.

III. The Power of Storytelling

Jesus was a master storyteller. The Gospel's record at least 46 parable stories told by Jesus. (See Appendix C for a chronological listing of the parables)

Matthew 13:35 says ... *Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables [_____]; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.*³⁵ *So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."*

People don't just want the naked truth, they want it surrounded by character, plot, emotion, and culture. They want the story to unfold; they want to be immersed and even transported to that place and time.

The power of the story is the story behind the story. There is a point, deep meaning, a moral question to ponder. Stories organize and link information. Stories help us hear the truth, understand the truth, and apply the truth.

Stories reveal truth surrounding life experiences. Let's review the real life story of the two men on the Road to Emmaus and identify the characteristics of a good story.

A. Stories Take Us On a _____

Luke 24: 13-16 says ... *Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.*¹⁴ *They were talking with each other about everything that had happened.*¹⁵ *As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them;*¹⁶ *but they were kept from recognizing him.*

B. Stories Create _____

Luke 24: 17-19 says ... *He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast.*¹⁸ *One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?"*¹⁹ *"What things?" he asked.*

C. Stories Tell About _____

Luke 24: 19-31 says ... *"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.*²⁰ *The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;*²¹ *but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.*²² *In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning*²³ *but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.*²⁴ *Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."*²⁵ *He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"*²⁶ *Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"*²⁷ *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*²⁸ *As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther.*²⁹ *But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over."* *So he went in to stay with them.*³⁰ *When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.*³¹ *Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.*

D. Stories Stir Our _____

Luke 24: 32 says ... *Later these two followers said, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

E. Stories Have Meaning and Bring _____

Luke 24: 33-35 says ... *They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.*

IV. Writing and Sharing My Testimony

A. Review Appendix D

How to Share the Good News through Your Testimony by Rick Warren

B. Additional Writing Tips

1) Write it as casual one-on-one conversation.

Start by writing your testimony as a personal conversation with one individual.

Use some of the components of a good story discussed in the previous section.

2) Include before, how, and since.

Simply tell what your life was like before you surrendered to Christ. How were you converted? How has your life in Christ made a difference?

Review Act 26 for Apostle Paul's example.

3) Avoid churchy words.

Christian vocabulary such as born again, saved, lost, Gospel, justified, sanctified, or even sin can easily be misunderstood and alienate listeners and readers of our testimony.

4) Leave the listener with a challenging thought at the end.

Apostle Paul asked King Agrippa at the end ... Do you believe the prophets? If we have a theme to our testimony such as “trying to be good enough for God” then you might consider closing with something like ... “are you trying to be good enough?”

C. Review Appendix E

Testimony of the author as an example

D. Practice Sharing Your Testimony

Share your written testimony with others in your group. Practice sharing your testimony orally. You may want to critique each other’s testimonies.

E. Remember there is _____ in Our Testimony

Revelations 12:11 says ... *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.*

VI. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

1. How important were stories and testimonies in Biblical times? How important are they now?
2. Why is storytelling a good skill to have in sharing our testimony and Christian experiences?
3. Why is our testimony potentially more important to share with a non-believer than our Christian theology?
4. Do you feel prepared to share your testimony in most any circumstance? If not, why not?

Lesson 9

SHARING GOD'S STORY

I. God's Story is _____

Acts 5:42 says ... *Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.*

John 3:16 says ... *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

John 14:1-3 says ... *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

Romans 1:16 says ... *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

Gospel means the Good News of the New Testament.

1 Corinthians 15:1-7 says ... *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you*

have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,

Ephesians 2:1-9 says ... As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

The Bible says we were all once objects of wrath, but now made alive in Christ. That is Good News.

Now it is up to us to go tell the Good News to others.

Mark 16: 15-16 says ... He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

II. God's Story is _____

Let's review the story of the Samaritan women at the well and see how Jesus brings in a harvest of souls.

A. Sharing God's Story Starts By _____

John 4:1-6 says ... *The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John,² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.³ When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.*

B. _____ is Important

John 4:6-7a says ... *Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water,*

C. Asking a _____ is a Good Approach

John 4:7-8 says ... *When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)*

D. Create Some _____ in Your Answer

John 4:9-10 says ... *The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."*

E. Create a _____ for More

John 4:11-20-25 says ... *“Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?” ¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” ¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”*

F. Gently Help Them See Their _____

John 4: 16-25 says ... *He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” ¹⁷ “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”*

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” ²¹ Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” ²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

G. Tell About _____

John 4:26 says ... *Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”*

H. Be Ready for the _____

John 4:27-42 says ... *Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"*²⁸ *Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,*²⁹ *"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"*³⁰ *They came out of the town and made their way toward him.*³¹ *Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."*³² *But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."*³³ *Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"*³⁴ *"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."*³⁵ *Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.*³⁶ *Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.*³⁷ *Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.*³⁸ *I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."*³⁹ *Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."*⁴⁰ *So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.*⁴¹ *And because of his words many more became believers.*⁴² *They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."*

III. God's Story is _____

Review Appendix F

Take time to discuss and practice the various methods of sharing the Good News.

IV. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

1. How important is it for people to understand the bad news before receiving the Good News?
2. What important lessons did you learn from Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan Women at the well?
3. After reviewing Appendix F on Ways of Sharing the Good News, do you have a favorite method? If so, why?
4. How might you revise Your Story to better transition into sharing God's Story?

Lesson 10

A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER

A Lighthouse Keeper is someone who _____ and _____ their light and lighthouse over time ... 24/7, week after week, month after month, year after year. It is a life priority, a passion, and a calling.

I. Maintaining My Lighthouse

A. We Must _____

Hebrews 10:32 says ... *Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering.*³³ *Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.*³⁴ *You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.*

Ephesians 2:11-13 says ... *Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*

1. Remember ... we can help those who are lost because we know _____
2. Remember ... you are a child of God, Christ' ambassador of reconciliation, the salt of the earth, the _____
3. Remember ... we can magnify our light by removing any _____, being filled with the _____, spending time in God's _____, placing our light on a stand to be clearly seen, and remaining focused.
4. Remember ... to intercede in prayer, love your neighbors, and _____
5. Remember ... being a lighthouse is a _____. Our life priorities must include reaching out to our neighbors and the lost.
6. Remember ... to pray for _____.
Find a neighborhood prayer partner to pray with.
7. Remember ... we cannot be loving God unless we are _____
_____. To be more caring we must grow in compassion.
8. Remember ... to share _____. Your story is evidence and testimony to God's grace.
9. Remember ... to share _____. God's story is the Good News, it is ripe for the harvest, and it is waiting for us to tell.

B. We Must Be _____

Hebrews 10:19 says ... *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.*

Hebrews 10:35 says ... *So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.*

1 John 3:21 says ... *Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God.*

Hebrews 4:16 says ... *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

Romans 1:16 says ... *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

C. We Must Be _____

Luke 12:35 says ... *Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning*

Colossians 4:2 says ... *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

D. We Must _____

Hebrews 10:36 says ... *You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.* ³⁷ *For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay.* ³⁸ *But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.”* ³⁹ *But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.*

James 1:12 says ... *Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

Philippians 3:13-14 ... *Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

II. Sustaining My Lighthouse

Zechariah 4:6b says ... *‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.*

Psalms 3:5 says ... *I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.*

Psalms 18:34 says ... *You give me your shield of victory, and your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great.*

Psalms 55:22 says ... *Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.*

2 Corinthians 9:6 says ... *Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also _____.*

2 Corinthians 9:10-15 says ... *Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and _____ your store of seed and will _____ the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. ¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!*

Philippians 3:13-14 ... *Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

III. Local Lighthouse Movement Support

See Appendix G and review the Light of the World vision and mission slides in the presentation. Review other local Lighthouse Movement activities, support groups, newsletters, and websites if available.

IV. Questions and Discussion Topics for Small Groups

1. Discuss how this set of lessons may have affected you. What were the most impactful to you?
2. How important is it to make time for God's priority of loving our neighbors?
3. What steps will you take or have you already taken to "Be A Lighthouse"?
4. Share testimonies of how God has used His Word and this time together to bless us and build His kingdom.

Lighthouse Ideas For Caring

By Missions America

The best way to attract people to Jesus is to be like Him - showing love and concern. As you consider your neighbors' needs, ask God to show you ways to reach out to them through warm-hearted, genuine acts of kindness. You can build personal relationships and even get people together for coffee or a barbecue. This offers a great opportunity to reclaim a sense of community within our neighborhoods. Everyone responds to an act of kindness: a kind word, a meal, or a favor. As you pray for your neighbors, begin expressing acts of kindness to let them know you care about them. Being hospitable and generous with your time will help you develop relationships serving to build bridges to your neighbors. Cultivate common activities like sporting events, picnics; or anything to draw the people in your neighborhood together. Taking the lead with simple things like these will help demonstrate that you care for people. As you demonstrate caring, it can lead to opportunities to share God's love, in addition to your own.

The Lighthouse Movement of Mission America has put together some simple ideas on how to begin caring for your neighbors. Some of these ideas take a little planning while others are a matter of becoming aware of opportunities to show you care.

1. Put together a neighborhood directory of names, addresses and phone numbers. This helps you pray more specifically for your neighbors and assists everyone in getting to know each other.
2. Learn people's names, as well as the names of their children and pets.
3. Meet new (just moved in) neighbors with a plate of cookies, a warm welcome and a 3X5 card with your name, address and phone number. Suggest they call you with any questions about the neighborhood such as garbage collection, shopping, post office, etc.
4. Take dinner to new parents. Use disposable containers so the clean up is quick and easy.
5. Plan a neighborhood baby shower for a new baby. Invite several neighbors to assist you.
6. Baby-sit for your neighbors. In many cases, families don't have grandparents or relatives in the area who might be able to help. Many young parents rarely have extra time or money to go on a "date." Make sure they - and you - are comfortable with the arrangements and that you know how to contact them should an emergency arise. Can you organize a baby-sitting co-op?
7. Call on housebound neighbors. They might enjoy a personal visit or may just want to talk with you on the telephone. If you do visit, take a little something such as a desert, fruit or a book.
8. If you have children or grandchildren, consider taking them with you when you visit housebound neighbors. What joy for an older person to just see and watch the children play! Or if the children visit you, let the neighbor know they're welcome to come over and "play."
9. Do your neighbors love to read? Consider buying an extra copy of a good Christian novel and sharing it with them. Or, as you finish the books you're reading, start a "lending library" to your neighbors. It's best to do this with the thought that the books might not be returned.
10. Take a neighbor who has difficulty driving to his/her favorite store, dry cleaner, or the post office with you, when you're going that way. Then, "splurge" and go to a fast food restaurant for a meal or an ice cream cone as a special treat.

11. Take a spaghetti dinner to someone recuperating from surgery. Include a simple garden bouquet and a get-well card.
12. Plan a "spur of the moment" or next day coffee/tea or lemonade times and invite two to four neighbors to get better acquainted.
13. Does it get windy in your area? When the wind blows, take the time to pick up trash off neighbors lawns and garbage cans that have blown all over. They'll learn who rescues their garbage cans and recyclable containers. You may get a reputation for being the helpful neighbor!
14. When you're baking, consider preparing a few extra cupcakes, cookies, pies, etc. Save them to give to a neighbor the Lord may lay on your heart.
15. A friendly wave and "Hi" to someone who drives or walks by helps them see Jesus' warmth and love in you.
16. Do you live in a neighborhood with an Association? Consider regularly attending the meeting and being involved in what you can, including pancake breakfasts or potlucks. This gives you an opportunity to meet your neighbors in a very informal setting.
17. Don't be snoopy, but try to notice a new car or a new hairstyle, etc. People love to be given an honest compliment, even about the new tree they planted in their front yard.
18. Change your walking or exercising schedule if needed, to walk with a neighbor. As you're walking, listen to them. It's probably one of the greatest ways to serve a neighbor or friend.
19. Begin a Neighborhood Bible Study. Invite the neighbors who are most interested over for dinner as an introduction.
20. Invite two couples in for a simple pizza carry out dinner in your home. Nothing fancy - just a time of getting to know them.
21. Are you taking items to the Salvation Army or another donation center? As you get ready to load up your vehicle, ask your neighbors if they have anything they want to donate. That helps the donation center too!
22. Host a neighborhood BBQ or block party along with one or two other families in the area. Choose a special holiday time or theme for the party.
23. Be the coordinator for a neighborhood gathering in connection with crime prevention and fire safety.
24. When a neighbor stops by invite them in. This will usually be when the house is not very clean or when you have company - however, this openness will make you a real friend!
25. Mow the lawn or rake the yard of a neighbor who is traveling or is ill. Get your children into the act!

A Lighthouse from California writes, "One thing the Lord has taught us is that it is easy to be busy, too busy, for the most important things in life." She adds, "We need to always be aware when we are rushing off to that meeting or church thing. Often this is when a neighbor needs that I-o-o-n-n-g hello and time to share with you. Don't allow our enemy to make anyone think you don't have time for them. People need time and God has a way of stretching our time when we are sensitive to what HE wants us to do." Take time, make time, to be the caring person – and Lighthouse - God has called you to be! **Remember, prayer opens the doors, care let's you walk through them, and sharing opens the doors to eternity in the life of another.**

Appendix C

Parables of Jesus in Chronological Order

By David Ahl

	Parable	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1	New cloth on an old coat	9:16	2:21	5:36
2	New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37-38
3	Lamp on a stand (also see #6)	5:14-15		
4	Wise and foolish builders	7:24-27		6:47-49
5	Moneylender forgives unequal debts			7:41-43
6	Lamp on a stand (2 nd time, see #3)		4:21-22	8:16, 11:33
7	Rich man foolishly builds bigger barns			12:16-21
8	Servants must remain watchful (also see #44)			12:35-40
9	Wise and foolish servants (also see #42)			12:42-48
10	Unfruitful fig tree			13:6-9
11	Sower and four types of soil	13:3-8, 18-23	4:3-8, 14-20	8:5-8, 11-15
12	Weeds among good plants(Kingdom of Heaven)	13:24-30, 36-43		
13	Growing seed (Kingdom of Heaven)		4:26-29	
14	Mustard seed (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
15	Yeast (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:33		13:20-21
16	Hidden treasure (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:44		
17	Valuable pearl (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:45-46		
18	Fishing net (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:47-50		
19	Owner of a house (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:52		
20	Lost sheep (sheep as children, also see #29)	18:12-14		
21	The sheep, gate, and shepherd		John 10:1-5, 7-18	
22	Master and his servant			17:7-1
23	Unmerciful servant (Kingdom of Heaven)	18:23-34		
24	Good Samaritan			10:30-37
25	Friend in need			11:5-8
26	Lowest seat at the feast			14:7-14
27	Invitation to a great banquet			14:16-24
28	Cost of discipleship			14:28-33
29	Lost sheep (sheep as sinners, also see #20)			15:4-7
30	Lost coin			15:8-10
31	Lost (prodigal) son			15:11-32
32	Shrewd manager			16:1-8
33	Rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31
34	Workers in the vineyard, early and late	20:1-16		
35	Persistent widow and crooked judge			18:2-8
36	Pharisee and tax collector			18:10-14
37	King's ten servants given minas (also see #45)			19:12-27
38	Two sons, one obeys one does not	21:28-32		
39	Wicked tenants	21:33-44	12:1-11	20:9-18
40	Invitation to a wedding banquet	22:2-14		
41	Signs of the future from a fig tree	24:32-35	13:28-29	21:29-31
42	Wise and foolish servants (2 nd time, see #9)	24:45-51		
43	Wise and foolish virgins	25:1-13		
44	Servants must remain watchful (2 nd time, see #8)		13:35-37	
45	Three servants given talents (also see #37)	25:14-30		
46	Sheep and goats will be separated	25:31-46		

Appendix D

How to Share the Good News through Your Testimony
by Rick Warren

God has put a life message within you. When you became a believer you also became God's messenger. God wants to speak to the world through you. Paul said, " ... we speak the truth before God, as messengers of God." *"Your lives are echoing the Master's Word ... The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore -" you're the message!* (1 Thessalonians 1:8 MSG)

You may feel you don't have anything to share, but that's the Devil trying to keep you silent. You have a storehouse of experiences that God wants to use to bring others into his family. The Bible says, "Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony of God in them." (1 John 5:10a GW)

Your testimony is the story of how Christ has made a difference in your life. Peter tells us that we were chosen by God *"to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you."* (1 Peter 2:9 MSG)

This is the essence of witnessing - simply reporting your personal experiences with the Lord. In a courtroom, a witness isn't expected to argue the case, prove the truth, or press for a verdict; that is the job of attorneys. Witnesses just tell what happened to them. Jesus said, *"You will be my witnesses."* (Acts 1:8 NIV)

He did not say, "You must be my attorney." He wants you to tell your story to others. Sharing your testimony is an essential part of your mission on Earth. First, it is unique. There's no other story just like yours, so only you can share it, and if you don't, it will be lost forever. You may not be a Bible scholar, but you are the authority on your life, and it's hard to argue with personal experience. Actually, your personal testimony is more effective than a sermon because unbelievers see pastors as paid salesmen but see you as a satisfied customer, so they give you more credibility.

Personal stories are also easier to relate to than principles, and people love to hear them; they capture our attention, and we remember them longer. Unbelievers would probably lose interest if you started quoting theologians, but they have a natural curiosity about experiences they've never had. Shared stories build a relational bridge that Jesus can walk across from your heart to theirs.

Another value of your testimony is that it bypasses intellectual defenses. Many people who won't accept the authority of the Bible will listen to a humble, personal story. That's why on six different occasions Paul used his testimony to share the Gospel instead of quoting Scripture. (Acts 22 to Acts 26)

The Bible says, *"Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect."* (1 Peter 3: 1. 5-16 TEV) The best way to "be ready" is to write out your testimony and then memorize the main points.

Divide it into four parts:

- What my life was like before I met Jesus?
- How did I realize I needed Jesus?
- How did I commit my life to Jesus?
- What difference has Jesus made in my life?

Of course, you have many other testimonies besides your salvation story. You have a story for every experience where God has helped you. You should make list of all the problems, circumstances, and crises that God has brought you through. Then be sensitive and use the story that your unbelieving friend will best relate to.

Questions To Consider (Ideas for sharing a brief testimony)

1. **The Story Of Your Life** – Tell us a little bit about yourself (birthplace, parents/siblings, interests, etc.).
2. **The Story Of Your Faith** – What was your life like before knowing God personally? How did you come to know Jesus in your life? How are things different today?
3. **Coming To Grace** – When you moved into this area, how you ended up at this new church, what you like best, why you stayed, got involved, etc
4. **Stories Of Grace** – What has God been teaching you through his Word? How has He been providing for you, your family, etc? What have you learned about serving God, living out your faith in daily life, or loving others? How do you hope to continuing growing in faith and serving God in the future? What plans or desires do you have?

Appendix E

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Gale W. TeSelle

My testimony is not one of a life of rebellion, of lawlessness, of drugs or alcohol, of hitting bottom and then looking to God for help. I was raised in a Christian home, in a small farming community in Nebraska. We went to church three times on Sunday, on Wednesday night we went to prayer meeting, and on Saturday morning we went to Bible classes, and on Saturday evening, we went to choir. I attended confirmation class and joined the church by public profession of faith at age 14. Unfortunately, it didn't mean that much to me. I was just a pretend Christian. As a young married man and member of my church, I taught Sunday school and regularly sang in the choir and in a gospel quartet. But, I didn't have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

After having children and moving to Bowie, Maryland in 1971, I started drifting further away from church. Satan had me convinced I was a pretty good guy. I thought my job was good, my family was doing fine ... What did I need Jesus for? But nonetheless, there was a hollow spot inside, a nagging feeling of having no anchor in my life, no real purpose.

In 1979 our family moved to a new home and my wife and I started checking out nearby churches. We thought the kids should be involved in a Sunday school or youth program. We joined Mt. Oak United Methodist in 1981. Everyone was warm and friendly to us. The pastor was preaching a clear message about how we offend God through our selfishness and how surrendering our life to Jesus Christ can change us from pleasing ourselves to pleasing God, bringing joy and peace and purpose. Men of the church were sharing their testimonies about how they received a new and transformed life in Jesus.

For six years, I wrestled with making a commitment to Jesus Christ. I was afraid of giving up control but I knew pretending was painful. I knew there were only two places to go after death and I was not on the path to heaven. I was convicted by a passage in the Bible that talked about pretenders, how Jesus said ... not everyone who says Lord, Lord and preaches and teaches in my name will get into heaven. A voice inside of me, which I now know as the Holy Spirit, kept pulling me closer to God and encouraging me to fall on my knees and surrender control. Someone from my church pulled me aside and said ... Gale you seem to have a nice family and a nice job, but I'm not sure where you are spiritually. Somehow he knew I was pretending.

Finally, on Monday, October 10, 1988 at 1:00 a.m. in the morning, praise-be-to-God, I got down on my knees and prayed this pray. "Father forgive me. I am a sinner, you know my sins, please forgive me. I surrender my will to yours. Jesus, be the center and focus of my life". At that moment, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said ... You are forgiven. Go downstairs and get your Bible and read John chapter 3. So I did. A great weight of anxiety was lifted from my shoulders, as I clearly knew I was forgiven and now a child of God.

I confessed specific sins to God and to my family and to those I sinned against and asked their forgiveness. I didn't have to hide anything in my life anymore and I didn't have to pretend anymore. I no longer looked for ways to please myself but ways to please God. I prayed and heard God speaking to me more clearly through his Word and his quiet voice. My priority at work changed from the managing programs to leading and caring for people. At home my wife and children could see the change, spending less time at work and more time with them.

Since becoming a believer, I have gone through many difficult trials ... at work and in my personal and church family. Only by the grace of God and drawing on His strength have I been able to persevere and grow stronger in my spiritual walk. Shortly after retiring from federal service, I accepted God's call on my life to encourage churches to work together to better love their neighbor and formed a non-profit Christian ministry called the Light of the World Foundation. I continue to lead that ministry as well as being active in my local church.

The pain of pretending is over. I now have the joy of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and assurance of being with God my Creator for eternity.

Ways of Sharing the Good News

By Al Goff and Gale TeSelle

A. The ABCs of Salvation

The ABCs of Salvation have been included in every issue of *Today's Pentecostal Evangel* for many years. They are probably the simplest presentation of the plan of salvation the author, Richard Champion, has ever found.

To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:

Admit you are a sinner. "There is no one righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3: 10,23).

Ask God's forgiveness. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10: 13).

Believe in Jesus. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3: 16).

Become a child of God by receiving Christ. "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Confess that Jesus is your Lord. "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

B. The "Romans Road" to Salvation

Of Paul's epistles, Romans offers the most complete presentation of the saving work of Christ. This is probably because Paul had never been to Rome at the time the epistle was written, and, consequently, because Roman believers had never been exposed to Paul's teaching, he composed an epistle that was especially complete in its presentation concerning salvation through Jesus Christ.

"The Romans Road," whose author is unknown, progressively highlights certain key verses in the book of Romans to establish essential truths concerning receiving Christ as Savior.

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

Romans 6:23a -"*...The wages of sin is death...*"

Romans 6:23b -"*...But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

Romans 10:9,10 -"*...if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*"

Romans 10:13 -"*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*"

C. Three Story Evangelism (Response Evangelism)

"Three Story Evangelism" is a witnessing method that Campus Life teaches its student leaders concerning how to witness. The three stories are:

- 1) Their Story (the friend you're trying to bring to Christ)
- 2) Your Story (Your life before and after Christ)
- 3) His Story (Jesus' Story - The Gospel)

First, listen to a nonbeliever, learning as much as you can about them, than share your personal testimony, bringing in how your life was totally changed because of Jesus Christ. Than share the Good News of how Jesus died for all and paid the price for our sins.

D. Evangelism Explosion

For several decades, "Evangelism Explosion," by Dr. James Kennedy had been used by thousands of churches. The basic approach to explaining salvation begins with a couple of simple questions:

- 1) Do you know for sure that you are going to be with God in heaven?
- 2) If God were to ask you, "Why should I let you into my heaven?" what would you say?

The Bible tells how you can know for sure that you have eternal life and will go to be with God in heaven (1 John 5: 13).

- a) Heaven ... eternal life ...is a free gift. (Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8,9)
- b) Man is a sinner. (Romans 3:23, Matthew 5:48, James 2: 10)
- c) God is merciful, and therefore doesn't want to punish us. (1 John 4:8, Jeremiah 31:3, Exodus 34:7, Ezekiel 18:4)
- d) God solved this problem for us in the person of Jesus Christ. (John 1:1,14, Isaiah 53:6)
- e) This gift is received by faith. (Acts 16:31)

E. The Four Spiritual Laws

Possibly the single most distributed plan of salvation is "The Four Spiritual Laws," written by Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. Just as there are physical laws that govern the physical universe, so are there spiritual laws which govern your relationship with God.

Law 1: **God loves you**, and offers a wonderful plan for your life. John 3:16, John 10:10

Law 2: **Man is sinful** and separated from God. Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23

Law 3: **Jesus Christ is God's only provision** for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life. Romans 5:8, I Corinthians 15:3-6, John 14:6

Law 4: **We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord**; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives. John 1: 12, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:1-8

F. The Way of the Master

Ray Comfort and Kirk Cameron developed an evangelism ministry called The Way of the Master in 2002. They chose this name because of the way Jesus responded to those who asked him ... how can I received eternal life? In Luke 10:25-26 and Luke 18:18, Jesus pointed them to the law ... obey the Ten Commandments.

Galatians 3:24 *So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.* The Way of the Master method teaches that people are not ready to hear the Good News until they become conscious of their sin and the consequences of their sin. They must understand the bad news before they can repent and receive the Good News. Sinners are not fleeing the wrath of God to come because no one mentions there is a wrath to come. Potential converts show no genuine repentance because they haven't been given a reason to repent.

Suggested steps in a discussion with a non-believer:

- 1) **Relate** – the need to relate to the sinner on the natural level, before speaking of spiritual things.
- 2) **Create** – the necessity of creating an opportunity to witness by deliberately swinging from the natural to the spiritual.
- 3) **Convict** – the importance of using the Law of God to make judgment reasonable to the sinner. The purpose of God's law is:
 - a) To show the world its guilt before God
 - b) To give us the knowledge of sin
 - c) To show us the depth of our sin
 - d) To be a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ

Walk through a few of the Ten Commandments ... lying, stealing, adultery. Confirm that if any of those have been broken, they are a liar, thief, and an adulterer. Indicate that the Bible says, liars, thieves, and adulterer do not get into heaven because God is holy.

4) **Reveal** – the Good News about Jesus Christ and His finished work of the cross ... that He was the perfect sacrifice and paid the price for our sins. Repent, believe in Jesus, and receive His gift of eternal life.

5) **Ask** – if they convicted of their sins, believe in Jesus, and would like to receive the gift of eternal life with Jesus in heaven ... than ask them to pray a prayer something like:

“I acknowledge that You are holy, righteous, and just. I confess my sinfulness to You; I have repeatedly broken Your Law and deserve eternal punishment. Forgive me for my sin and give me the grace to turn from my selfishness and rebellion. Thank you for taking my place on the cross as punishment for my sin. I receive You as Lord and Savior. Please give me the grace to live the kind of life that will glorify You in all that I say and do. In Jesus' name. Amen.”

G. Two Great Questions

Two Great Questions is a simple analysis of the apostolic preaching of Peter, which always answers two questions:

- 1) Who was Jesus?
- 2) Why did He give His life?

Being prepared to discuss these two questions will equip a person to clearly and simply share the message of Christ with nonbelievers.

Who was Jesus?

Accounts of Christ's life by secular media almost always present Jesus as just a fictional character or, even when He is shown as a historical person, he is depicted as a great teacher or even a prophet-but only a man.

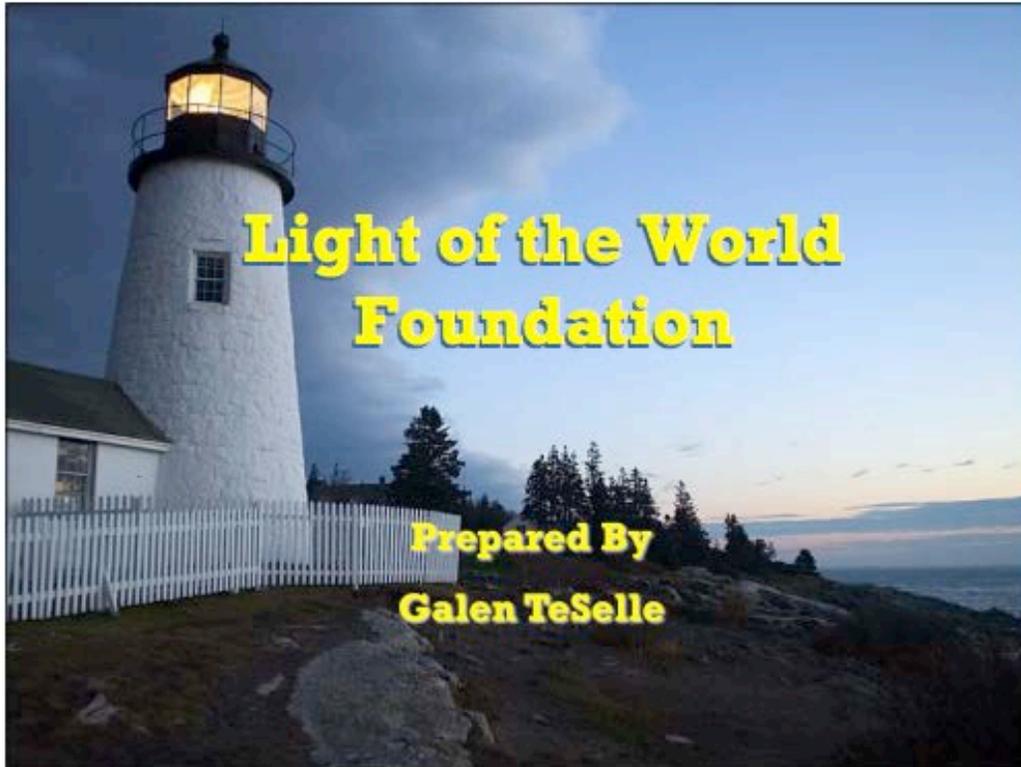
Jesus was much more. He was God in human form. He died for our sins and conquered death by rising again to offer us forgiveness of sin and the gift of everlasting life. He ascended to heaven and will return to Earth again for all His followers. This is the essence of the gospel message. Paul wrote, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5, NIV).

Why did Jesus give His life?

Jesus said, "The Father loves Me because I give My life, so I can receive it again. No person takes it away from Me, but I give it because I choose to give it. I have the authority to give it, and I have the authority to take it again" (John 10: 17,18) Jesus gave his life for two essential reasons: First, because we're sinners. Second, because there was nothing we could do about it.

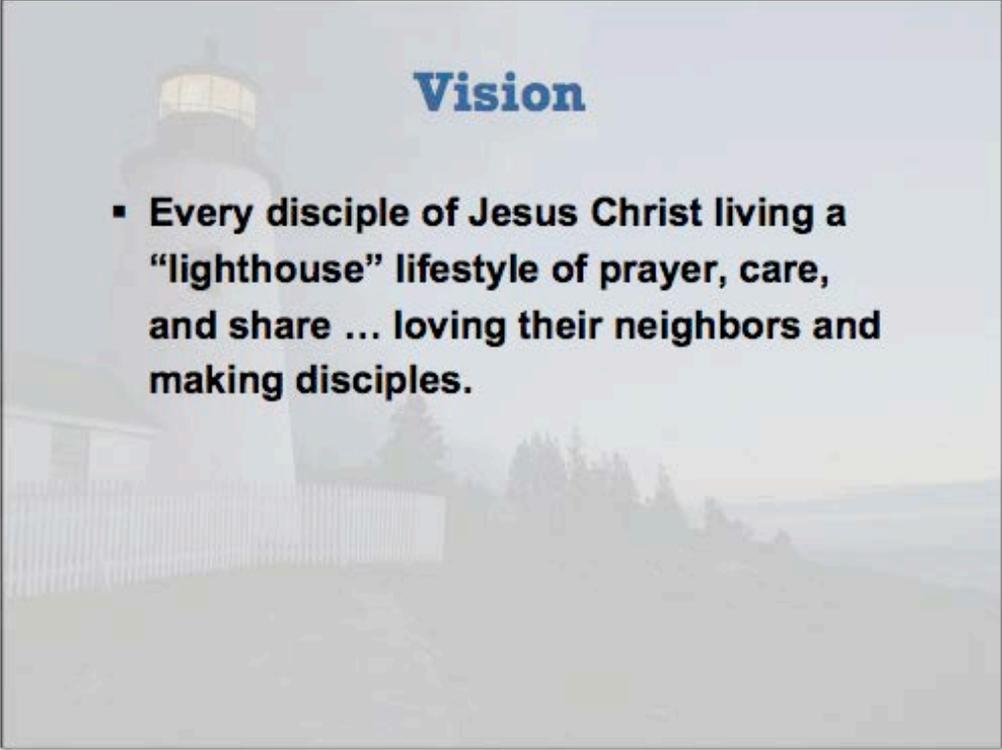
Each of us has sinned and is separated from God. The punishment for sin is death (Romans 6:23). The death about which the Bible speaks is not just physical death. It means a person's spirit will be in everlasting punishment in hell. Jesus explained that hell is like a "lake of fire," and that everyone who goes there is separated from God forever and burns in fire that never ends (Mark 9:47,48; Revelation 20: 15).

But God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sins. Jesus was born as a man, but He lived His life without sin. Jesus never sinned, but He was punished for sin. So death had no power over Him, and He came back to life after three days. Now He gives everlasting life to anyone who calls upon His name (Romans 10: 13) and receives Him as Savior and Lord.



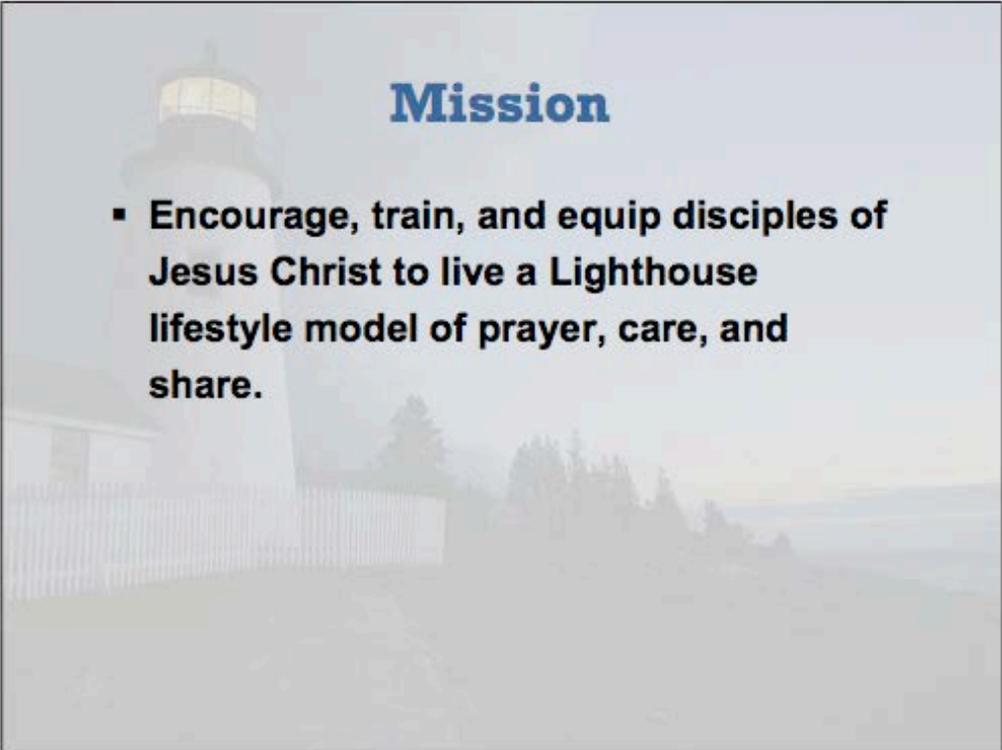
We Believe

- **The Gospel Message of Jesus Christ is the only hope for the cities of the world.**
- **Cities are transformed when people are transformed.**
- **People are transformed when they become followers of Jesus Christ.**
- **God transforms people when His church prays for and cares for their neighbors and then shares the Good News of Jesus Christ.**

A lighthouse with a glowing lantern room sits atop a hill. The lighthouse is white with a dark top section. The background shows a misty or foggy landscape with trees and a distant horizon. The text is overlaid on this image.

Vision

- **Every disciple of Jesus Christ living a “lighthouse” lifestyle of prayer, care, and share ... loving their neighbors and making disciples.**

A lighthouse with a glowing lantern room sits atop a hill. The lighthouse is white with a dark top section. The background shows a misty or foggy landscape with trees and a distant horizon. The text is overlaid on this image.

Mission

- **Encourage, train, and equip disciples of Jesus Christ to live a Lighthouse lifestyle model of prayer, care, and share.**

The Biblical Charge

- "You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:14 16*
- "Love your neighbor as yourself." *Mark 12:31*
- "Go and make disciples of all nations." *Matthew 28:19*
- "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. *2 Chronicles 7:14*
- "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." *John 17:23*

Key Questions

Are followers of Jesus Christ in our local churches, schools and businesses ...

- Being the light of the world, reflecting the Light of Jesus Christ ... or are we putting it under a bowl?
- Faithfully carrying out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission; loving our neighbors, sharing our faith, and making disciples ... or are we too busy with other priorities?
- On our knees before the Lord in humility asking God to forgive our sins and bring healing ... or do we act and look like the world around us, content who we are?
- In unity within the church and with other Christian churches ... or are we diluted by division?

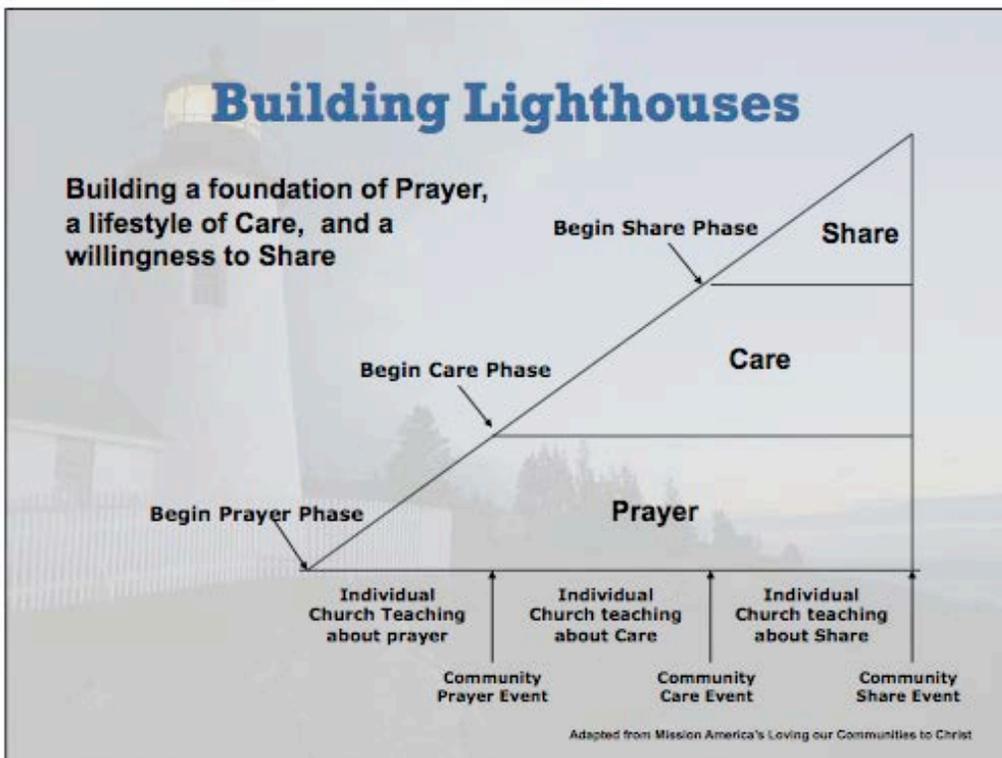
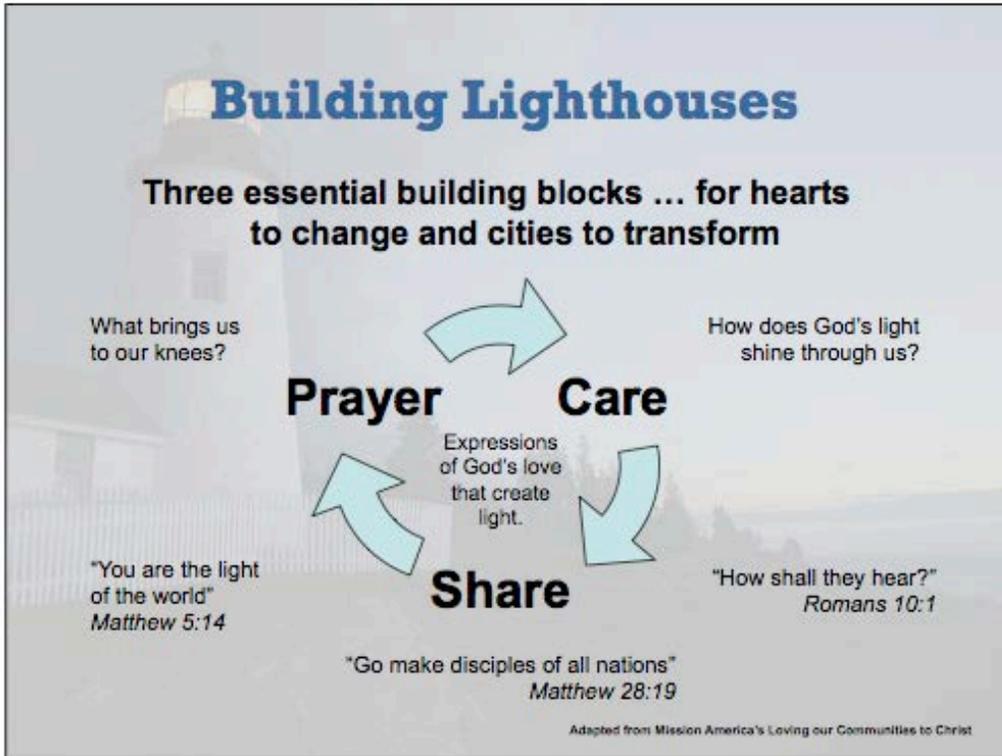
Our Strategy

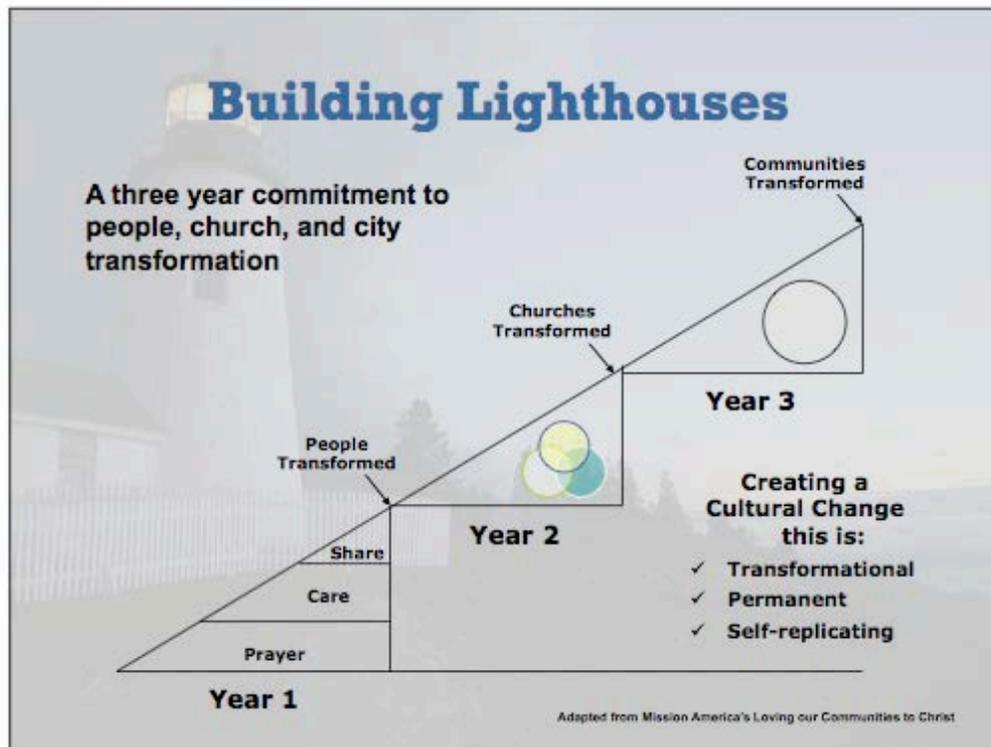
- **Foster and build a city model...**
Turn ON the Light–Bowie in the City of Bowie, Maryland
- **Expand to other cities as God leads**
- **Collaborate with ...**
 - “Loving our Communities to Christ” and “Lighthouse Movement” initiatives supported by Mission America
 - “Lighthouse Report” supported by Campus Crusade for Christ
- **Form coalitions ...** with Christian churches, Christian schools, and other ministries

Our Strategy

- **Form partnerships**
... with Christian businesses and city government
- **Provide prayer-care-share materials**
... to churches, schools, and business leaders
- **Share testimonies**
... about how God is moving to bring about brokenness, repentance, reconciliation, healing, and transformation
- **Stay in prayer**
... asking the Holy Spirit to lead this initiative; hear and follow His leading







Turn ON the LIGHT -Bowie

STRATEGIES

- **Bowie Prayer Walk** – Kick-Off the annual Bowie Prayer Walk April to October. Distribute bookmarks to homes and encourage residences who are believers to join the Prayer Walk.
- **Lighthouses of Prayer-Care-Share** – Develop and send an Email Newsletter, develop a “Becoming A Lighthouse” Workbook and offer discipleship classes, and develop and implement a Google Earth display locating confirmed lighthouses
- **Events** – Organize several multi-church events including: Bowie National Day of Prayer, Charity Golf Tournament, Bowie Street Reach, Bowie Baysox Family Night Out, and the Man on Fire Dinner & Breakfast

Turn ON the LIGHT -Bowie

STRATEGIES... continued:

- **Bowie Pastor's Forum** – Establish a Forum for Pastors in the Bowie area which facilitates prayer and joint planning of community outreach
- **Bowie Christian Business Owners** – Form a chapter of CBMC International in Bowie
- **Leadership Team** – Fill various leadership positions in the Turn ON the Light-Bowie organization
- **Partnerships** –Pursue partnerships with other Christian organizations such as the Bowie Crofton Pregnancy Clinic, Kingdom Investors, Mid-Atlantic Cancer Support Group, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Bowie Young Life.

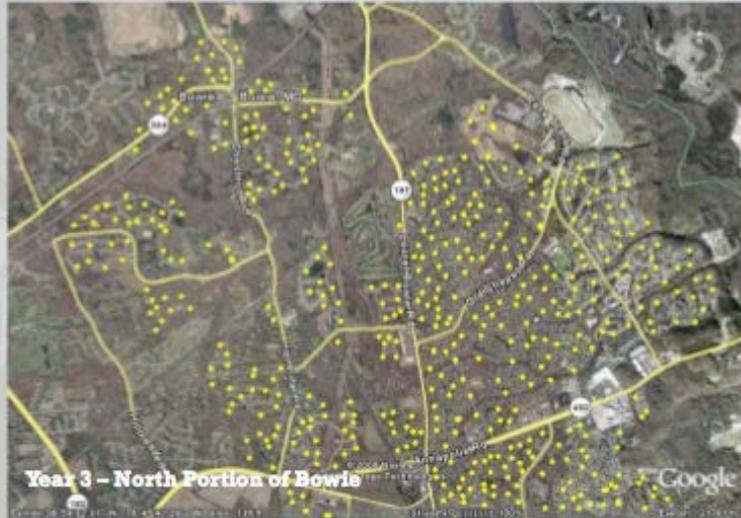
We Have a City

... with Christians living in each neighborhood



Can You Imagine a City

... where the Christians are committed Lighthouses, letting their lights shine on one person, one street, one neighborhood at a time until the whole city is transformed?



Light of the World Foundation

When it comes to revival, we are often waiting for God to show up and do the miraculous while God is waiting for us to show up and do the obvious.

From Jim Montgomery's book "I'm Gonna Let It Shine"

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