

TELL
WHAT
GOD
HAS DONE



by Roy Pointer

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This booklet has been written to help Christians tell their story and share their faith. The booklet is designed for group study. Group leaders are requested to read the "Leader's Notes" before going any further.

Private Readers who use this booklet should also read the "Leader's Notes". The Bible studies and written exercises may be done alone but a Christian friend will be needed to help with the spoken exercises.

This booklet was originally produced by the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism & Church Growth. Their team of professional consultants and researchers are committed to helping churches grow and people learn what God has done through Jesus Christ. Located in Pasadena, California, the Institute is a joint ministry of Fuller Evangelical Association and Fuller Theological Seminary.

Roy Pointer



After his conversion to Christ, Roy Pointer left his work as a Hydrographic Surveyor to train for the ministry. Later he became Pastor of a multi-racial Baptist church in London. The rapid, steady growth of the church attracted the attention of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1979 they invited Roy to become their Church Growth Consultant. Since then he has lectured on Church Growth throughout Great Britain and in Germany.

This booklet, "Tell What God Has Done" was adopted as the training resource for people in the "Mission England" and "Mission London" outreaches led by evangelist Luis Palau.

Leader's Notes

1. This booklet may be used as a Training Course of five sessions for all who want to be better witnesses. It is therefore suitable as part of the training for any evangelistic outreach such as gospel distribution or door-to-door visitation.
2. Leaders should work through the whole booklet and thoroughly master the exercises before they present the material. The time allowed for each section of a session will depend on the nature of the group and the total time available. You may want to spend more than one meeting on any one session. Therefore plan your own time-table carefully to allow for the completion of each session.
3. STEP TWO, on personal testimony, is probably the most difficult for people to complete satisfactorily. Patiently insist on "down-to-earth" illustrations of Christian experience, or the testimony will be "so heavenly minded it will be of no earthly use."
4. Members of the group could be asked to complete the exercises STEPS TWO, THREE, FOUR, and FIVE before beginning each new session. This will produce a better study and discussion as many of the issues will have already been considered.
5. Additional passages and texts of Scripture have been included throughout the booklet. These are for further study at the Leader's discretion.
6. Group members will need encouragement to share freely and openly. Ask everyone to be constructive in their criticism of each other's attempts to tell their story and share their faith. Tell the group that no one who completes the sessions can fail to become a better witness, and even the most faltering testimony can be used by the Holy Spirit to help people discover that Jesus is really alive and able to help them today (see Mark 13:11).
7. Maintain a continuing interest in the training after the Course is finished by regularly asking how members are progressing through their list in STEP FIVE. A monthly or quarterly report might be appropriate.

BEING A WITNESS

God has given some Christians special gifts and abilities to share their faith and proclaim the Good News. These people are the evangelists of the church (Ephesians 4:11).

Not every Christian is an evangelist but all are called to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. Some Christians are good at it and some are not. This booklet will help everyone who wants to do better.

A witness is someone who has seen or experienced something and is able to talk about it. A Christian witness is someone who has come to know and follow Jesus Christ and is able to talk about him to others.

This personal testimony may be given boldly in front of many people, as Peter did at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-20). Or perhaps with hesitation under hostile questioning, as happened to the Man Born Blind (John 9:8-34). At the very least it will tell what has happened and the difference Jesus has made.

The Christian witness must also understand the content of the gospel message to be able to pass it on. There are certain essential things that have to be said about Jesus if people are to become his followers. The effective witness must therefore know the Good News in order to share it with others (Romans 10:14-17; 2 Timothy 1:11-13; 1 Peter 3:15-16).

And a witness has to have someone to witness to!

Those Christians who want to become better witnesses are invited to take FIVE STEPS:

STEP ONE: Start to Pray

STEP TWO: Tell your Story

STEP THREE: Know the Good News

STEP FOUR: Share the Good News

STEP FIVE: Find the People



STEP ONE: Start to Pray



If we are to become better witnesses the FIRST STEP is to acknowledge our dependence on Jesus and the Holy Spirit and recognize our need for prayer. We must start to pray for others and ourselves.

The first disciples knew they had to depend upon Jesus and the Holy Spirit to be effective witnesses. They were taught this by Jesus (John 15:4-5; 20:21-22) and they learned it through experience (Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-20).

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, and before he left his disciples to return to heaven, he gave them an order. They were to tell their story and share the Good News throughout the earth till the end of time. The command or “Great Commission” is found in five passages (Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19:23; Acts 1:1-11). Part of the passage from Acts is below. Ask one member of the group to read it aloud and then discuss the questions.

Acts 1:6-11

So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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.” After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

QUESTIONS

1. What should be the attitude of witnesses today who do not know when Jesus and the Kingdom will come?
2. What difference did the power of the Holy Spirit make to the disciple's lives? Is this power available today? Have you received it?
3. Why do you think Jesus said begin at Jerusalem? Included the half-Jew of Samaria? And mentioned the 'end of the earth'?
4. What difference did Jesus' departure make to the disciples?
5. How long did the disciples have for witnessing to all men everywhere? How long do you have?

In obedience to the "Great Commission" the early Christians witnessed throughout the Roman Empire and beyond its frontiers. Within decades of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost many thousands of Jews and Gentiles had become Christians and hundreds of churches had been established (Acts 2:41-42; 4:4; 6:1,7; 8:1,4; 9:31,35; 11:21; 16:5,10; 18:22,23; 21:20).

The early church grew rapidly despite great opposition. There were many obstacles to overcome in witnessing for Christ. See, for example, the beginning of opposition in the following account from Acts 4:13-31.

Acts 4:13-31(NIV)

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. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old. On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.' Indeed Herod and Pontius

Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 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.

Pause for Thought...

Let each member of the group read through the passage carefully and identify the obstacles to witnessing encountered by Peter and John. Think about how they were overcome.

Now try to write down *five obstacles* to witnessing that you find today.

OBSTACLE	SOLUTION
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

When everyone has finished writing talk about the solutions to your obstacles. Fill in the solutions as you talk about them.



Time to Pray...

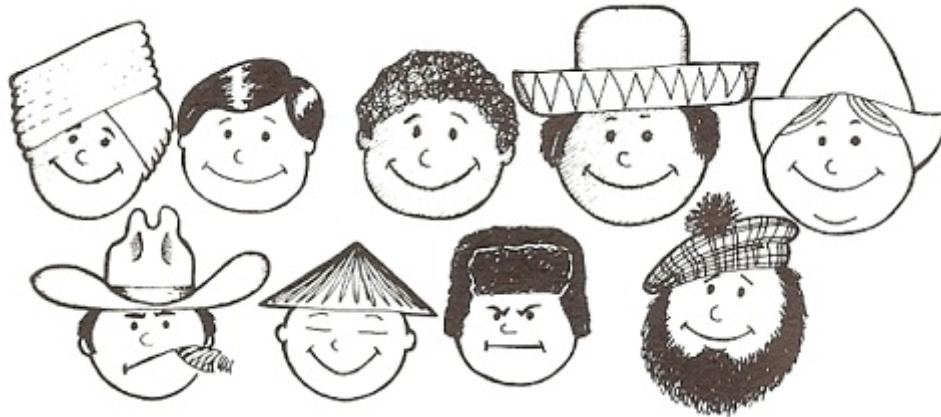
Pray about the obstacles to witnessing that have been mentioned. End your time of prayer by praying for each other to become better witnesses.



And next Time...

Prayer is the first step to becoming an effective witness. Later you will learn how to find people for your prayers. Next time you will take STEP TWO and learn to TELL YOUR STORY. Try to read through the session before you meet again.

STEP TWO: Tell Your Story



The Gospels are full of encounters between Jesus and the other people, many of whom became his followers. They represent a great variety of personalities from many different backgrounds. The one thing they all have in common is that Jesus changed their lives.

One of the most dramatic incidents that illustrates this fact is the meeting between Jesus and the man from Gerasa who had demons in him (Luke 8:26-39).

When he had been healed, he wanted to join the wandering band of disciples. Instead he was told go "Go back home and tell what God has done for you" (v.39). He obeyed and became a powerful witness for Jesus throughout the town.

He could tell people about the wretched life he lived *before* he met Jesus. About *how* Jesus met and healed him on the hillside. And about the changes in his life *since* that decisive day.

These three basic elements of BEFORE, HOW and SINCE are the essential parts of Christian testimony, the basic form of witness. They are clearly seen when Paul defends himself before King Agrippa and Governor Festu at Caesarea (Acts 26:1-29)

Acts 26:1-29

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defence: "King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defence against all the accusations of the Jews, and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently. "The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. Why should

any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them. "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles." At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defence. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane." "I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do." Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Paul replied, "Short time or long--I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

Something to do ...

Ask someone to read the passage aloud or have different members of the group read the various parts. You will need four readers: a narrator, Agrippa, Paul, and Festus. Each reader may also act his or her part. As the passage is being read, note the transition from one part of Paul's testimony to the other. The BEFORE, HOW, and SINCE elements are very distinct and may be marked on the passage.



Something talk about...

Talk about those things that characterized the life of Paul BEFORE and SINCE he met Jesus. Discuss the changes that must have taken place. Use your knowledge of the life of Paul; these extra passages may prove helpful: Acts 9:1-22; 22:3-21; Philippians 3:3-16.

And fill in...

Write down your discoveries as you talk.

PAUL'S STORY

BEFORE PAUL MET JESUS HIS LIFE WAS ...

HOW HE MET JESUS ...

SINCE HE MET JESUS...

NOW YOUR STORY...



Some of you may not have a dramatic BEFORE I MET JESUS story to tell. Perhaps you have grown up in a Christian home or went to church as a child and have known and loved Jesus for as long as you can remember. You know you are a Christian but cannot say when it all began. If this is your story then it begins with, "I met Jesus as a child" and continues with the third part, "Since I met Jesus".

REMEMBER THAT THIS THIRD SECTION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF A PERSONAL TESTIMONY- SO YOU STILL HAVE A STORY TO TELL!

Others will remember when they became followers of Jesus and what life was like *before* they came to know him. They will remember *how* they became committed to Christ and his Way. They also know the difference that their faith makes in daily living *since* they became Christians. Just like Paul they have a BEFORE, HOW, and SINCE story to tell.

Now TELL YOUR STORY, but think about and discuss each section before you fill it in. If you are in a large group this maybe be easier in groups of three or four.

1. Try to remember the things that you felt were wrong in your life before you decided to become a Christian. Or perhaps there was nothing really wrong, but yet you knew Jesus was not the Lord of your life, and you knew something was missing. Fill in this first part with some of those things you remember.

BEFORE I MET JESUS MY LIFE WAS...

2. How did you decide to follow Jesus? Through going to church, going to camp, attending a concert or crusade, reading the Bible, listening to a Christian film, your parents, etc.? Or in some other way? Fill in this second part with the way you decided to follow Jesus.

HOW I MET JESUS...

3. What are the benefits of being a Christian? You might think about such things as being in God's family, knowing forgiveness, having a purpose for living, going to heaven, receiving strength in difficult times, of the fellowship of other Christians. Can you think of others? Fill in the third and final part of YOUR STORY.

SINCE I MET JESUS...

When you have completed this section read the notes on HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY. In your smaller group talk about each section with your story in mind.

HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY

1. The first part of YOUR STORY is where people who do not know Jesus can relate to you. They might feel as you did too, but don't know the difference Jesus makes. When you tell your story talk about those things that your listener will know from his or her own experience. If talking to a lonely old lady you might mention how lonely you were before you met Jesus. Be sure you give a "for instance" a real life story, that illustrates the point. And remember it must be true!
2. The second part of YOUR STORY tells HOW you met Jesus, and should be brief and to the point. *Watch your religious language!* "Received a blessing", "accepted Jesus", "opened my heart", etc., do not help the non-Christian. These expressions may be very precious to you but they can be confusing to an unbeliever.
3. The third part of YOUR STORY should illustrate the benefits of being a Christian and stress the goodness and faithfulness of God. Try to illustrate how the problem or difficulty mentioned in the first part of your story has been dealt with since you met

Jesus. For example, loneliness has been overcome by Christian fellowship. Again you must remember to give a “for instance”, a story that illustrates the point....”I was at home sick, feeling depressed and lonely, when the door bell rang and two of my friends from church called with grapes and smiles! I knew they really cared, because we love each other in God’s family.”

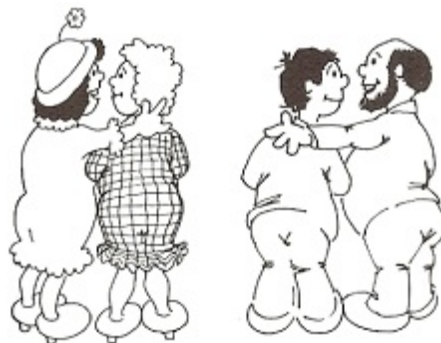


4. Be brief and interesting as you tell your story. If you know someone else’s story that is more likely to relate to or interest your listener, you can tell them that too. Not as your own story, of course.

Time to tell...

When you believe you can tell your story, move into pairs and briefly and interestingly tell your story to each other.

It is not easy to tell “down-to-earth” illustrations so try hard and encourage each other with helpful advice.



Time to pray...

Pray for each other before you pray in the group. Pray that you might be better witnesses as you tell your story to others.

Remember the steps...

STEP ONE: Start to Pray - for yourself and others.

STEP TWO: Tell your story - briefly about your life BEFORE, HOW, and SINCE you met Jesus.

Next time...

STEP THREE: Know the Good News - read it through before you meet again.

STEP THREE: Know the Good News



The third step to becoming a good witness is to know the message that is the Good News. We find it in the preaching of the apostles. For example, in such passages as Acts 2:14-40; 3:12-26; 7:2-53; 8:26-40; 10:34-48; 13:16-43; 17:22-31.

At the heart of the message of the Good News is Jesus. But what sort of things should we say about him? What is the significance of his words and deeds?

There have been many attempts to analyse and summarize the gospel message. The Rev. John Stott has identified a five-point outline of the Good News, which Luke in Acts tells us the apostles preached. This analysis is found in his book *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (pages 41-45) and is summarized as follows:

1. **WHAT JESUS DID** - *Gospel Events* - facts about Jesus Christ especially his death and resurrection.
2. **WHY JESUS CAME** - *Gospel Witness* - the Old Testament witness to Jesus Christ plus the apostolic witness that became the New Testament.
3. **WHO IS JESUS IS** - *Gospel Affirmation*- Jesus Christ is Lord and the only Saviour of mankind.
4. **WHAT JESUS OFFERS** - *Gospel Promises* - forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
5. **WHAT JESUS REQUIRES** - *Gospel Demands* - repentance, faith, and public baptism.

Something to do...

Ask the members of the group to number off, from 1 to 5, so that everyone except the leader has a number. Each person's number corresponds to one of the points in the gospel outline.



As the leader reads Peter's message following the miracle outside of the Temple, Acts 3:11-26, the members of the group must listen for references to those points they have adopted. All those who are number 1 will listen for the "Gospel Events", all those who are number 2 will listen for the "Gospel Witnesses", and so on through the list.

When the group members hear their point mentioned they must raise their hand and keep it up. For example, all who are number 2 should raise their hands at the reading of verse 13 where Peter refers to the Old Testament witness to Jesus.

When everyone is ready the leader may read the passage.

Acts 3:11-26

While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see. "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not

listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.’ “Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

(Peter’s message was interrupted and you may therefore want to look up Acts 4:8-12).

Are there any hands not raised?

Were there any points of the Gospel outline not mentioned?

Now repeat the exercise and ask the same questions for Peter’s speech to Cornelius and his household, Acts 10:34-48.

Acts 10:34-48

Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

If you have time you might repeat the exercise with any of the passages mentioned in the first paragraph of this session.

Something to talk about...

Now that you have read and listened to the passages do you agree with the summary and five-point outline?

Is there any part of the gospel message that you believe is missing or has been added?

Are you able as a group to agree on what the essential points of the Good News are?

When you agree on the message of the Good News answer the three questions below:

1. Which point of the Good News is most difficult to talk about to people today?
2. What ways of passing on the Good News are appropriate to the today?
3. How can you share the Good News with your friends and neighbours?



Time to pray...

Pray for each other to become better witnesses, and when you get home pray for your friends and neighbours.

Remember the steps...

STEP ONE: Start to Pray - for yourself and others

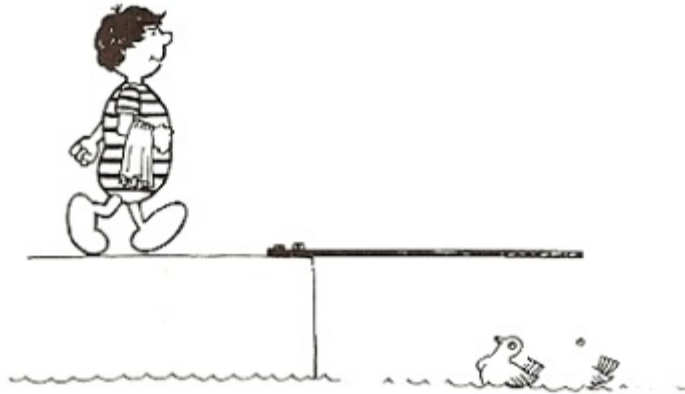
STEP TWO: Tell your Story - briefly about your life BEFORE, HOW, and SINCE you met Jesus.

STEP THREE: Know the Good News - the basic message about Jesus.

Next time...

STEP FOUR: Share the Good News - read it through before you meet again.

STEP FOUR: Share the Good News



The last time you met you got to KNOW THE GOOD NEWS and found a basic gospel message. Talk about your last meeting and remind yourselves of what you agreed upon. You may have further thoughts to share but don't take too long.

Now that you know the Gospel message you have the task of passing it on in a simple and sensitive manner. How can you SHARE THE GOOD NEWS?

It is not easy to remember lots of Bible verses. Even if you can, that is not necessarily the best way to present the gospel message. Unexplained Bible verses, especially with the references attached, sound unnatural and confusing, to say the least.

I suggest you attempt to use one Bible story, or one other passage of Scripture, as a guide to sharing the Good News. If you are able to find one passage, then this is all you have to remember to provide a "springboard" for your memory when passing on the gospel message. If you have a Bible, New Testament or Gospel with you, then *all you really have to remember is one page number!*

Of course, as you use this passage as your guide, you will remember much more about Jesus and the Bible, and include this when talking to others about your faith.

Two examples will illustrate how this may be done.

Something to talk about...

The first example is taken from Mark 1:14-18, about the early preaching of Jesus and the call of the first disciples.

Mark 1:14-18(NIV)

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him.

Read the passage through several times and talk about the following:

1. John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets (Matt 11:7-19) and the link between Jesus and the past. How was the way prepared for the coming of Jesus?
2. Before Jesus went to Galilee, many things had happened in his life. Beginning with his conception, identify what these events were.
3. Why did Jesus have *Good News* from God?
4. The substance of the Good News is the King and the Kingdom. The King has come, so the Kingdom is near, and people are called to live under the rule of God. What is involved in living under God's reign?
5. To enter the Kingdom people must turn away from their sins and believe the Good news. What do you think this means? (See also Matt 5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 19:23-26; 23:13-15; John 3:5).
6. Why did Jesus choose ordinary people to be his followers?
7. Jesus still invites people to follow him, and it is costly. Simon and Andrew followed Jesus to his death and beyond. How much did their discipleship cost them?

Pause for thought...

When the group have answered all the questions and finished talking about the passage everyone should be quiet and read the passage again to themselves.

Imagine you have the task of sharing the Good News with only this passage to help you. Remember all you have heard from the group and what you knew before, and underline or circle the key words or phrases you would want to talk about.

Do you have enough to say to cover the basic gospel message?

Something to do...

Move into pairs and practice sharing the Good News with each other. Use your marked passage and remember the essential points of the gospel outline. Relax and be natural and use your own words. Share briefly (about 3 minutes) in simple language.

When everyone has had an opportunity to share the gospel message return to the group and talk about what you have done.

Those who have found the exercise easy should be encouraged to share the Good news with the whole group to show how they did it.

And again...

The second example is Luke 24:36-49. When you have read the passage several times, underline or circle the key words or phrases you would like to talk about. Follow a similar pattern to the one you used for Mark 1:14-18 and share the Good News from this passage.

If you have time, practice in your pairs and in the group.

Luke 24:36-49(NIV)

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

You now have two passages that are "springboards" for you to SHARE THE GOOD NEWS. Of course there are many other stories and passages that are suitable and you may prefer to find your own.



Time to pray...

Pray for each other, especially for those who found this STEP difficult. Pray for all who share the Good News in this country and overseas.

Remember the Steps...

STEP ONE: Start to Pray - for yourself and others.

STEP TWO: Tell your Story -briefly about your life BEFORE, HOW and SINCE you met Jesus.

STEP THREE: Know the Good News - the basic message about Jesus

STEP FOUR: Share the Good News - briefly, yet fully in simple language.

Next time, and finally...

STEP FIVE: Find the People - is *very important* that you read it through before you meet again.

STEP FIVE: Find the People

We have our story to tell and the Good News to pass on. All we need now are people to listen!

It often comes as a surprise to learn how many people we have contact with in our daily lives. We all live in a network of relationships and it is helpful to try to identify those people around us.

Let's begin by examining the network of relationships and contacts around just one man who met Jesus - the Man Born Blind, John 9:1-41.

John 9:1-41(NIV)

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered, "I have told you already

and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him. Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

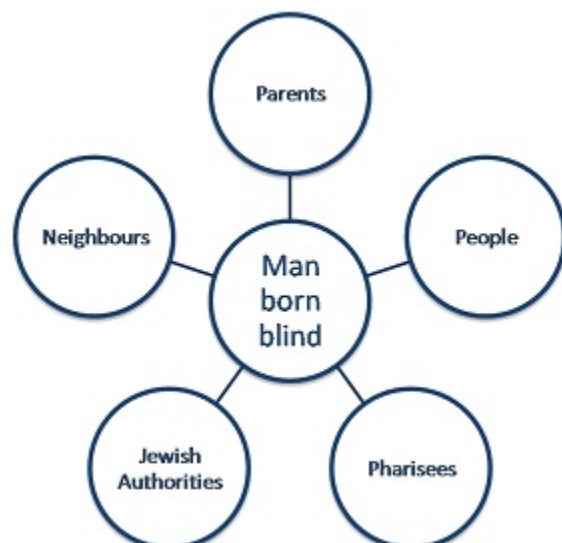
Read the passage. If you want to read it in parts you will need a number of readers. There is the narrator, the disciples (two voices), Jesus, neighbours and people (two voices), the man himself, the Pharisees (two voices), a Jewish leader and the man's parents.



As the passage is read, imagine the network of relationships around the man and all the people he could witness to.

Two things to do ...

1. Look at the diagram. Talk about the network and use your imagination and knowledge of the story to discover other people and groups.



2. Ask everyone to write down all the words that describe their relationships and activities. For example, a man might write: plumber, brother, father, son, friend, golfer, jogger, church member, and photographer. And a woman might write: bank teller, daughter, fiancée, tennis player, florist, and Sunday School teacher.

When everyone is finished writing ask the members of the group to read their lists aloud. Every list is a network similar to the one around the Man Born Blind. If you think about your own you will discover a number of people to witness to.

Pause for thought ...

Put your own name in the center of the network on page 25. In the outer boxes, fill in the names of the people who are not committed Christians. Try to identify people you know in each of the areas described. The specific groups and relationships listed under each heading are given as suggestions to help you complete the exercise.

SCHOOL

- Students
- School friends
- Night School Class
- Other parents
- Teachers

HOME

- Father
- Mother
- Wife
- Children
- Brother
- Sister

CHURCH

- Uncommitted People
- Children's Parents
- Occasional Worshippers
- Guests of special services
- Youth Groups

SCHOOL

HOME

CHURCH

PLAY

- Football team
- Golf partner
- Bowling team
- Tennis Club
- Cricket Club
- Yacht Club

WORK

- The Boss!
- Co-worker
- Foreman
- Manager
- Secretary
- Saturday Job

My name is

PLAY

WORK

Something to talk about ...

When everyone has filled in a network talk about your discoveries. Fill in other names as the discussion helps you think of new groups and people.

If you have time, talk about “Finding the people” and “Important things to remember”, but DO NOT fill in the list that follows until you have had time to prayer through your network at home and alone. Ask God to help you select ten people for the list.

Finding the people ...

Begin to select two or three from each group in the network and fill in (at home) the chart below. As you do this, pray about it. We have made room for ten. You might want to have more or less names.

The people on the list now become the focus of your prayers, especially the prayer that you might find an opportunity to witness or share with two or three every month. Pray for the opportunity to witness or share with two or three every month. This will depend on the nature of your relationship and on the frequency of contact.

Name	Heard me tell my story	Heard me share the good news	Became a Christian	Joined a Church

Important things to remember...

1. When you have added a name to the list pray regularly and specifically for that person.
2. Check each column as you have an opportunity to tell your story and share the Good News. This will probably happen on several occasions before your friend becomes a Christian. There are many stages that people pass through as the Holy Spirit convinces them of the truth, convicts them of their sin and draws them to the Son

and the Father, (John 15:26-16:15). All this will require time, patience, and faithful witnessing on your part. But never forget that you are not alone, and God is doing his part! (Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 3:5-9).

3. God alone draws people to himself through his Son (John 6:44). Your arguments or persuasiveness can never bring people to Christ. Therefore you must not argue with people or try to pressure them. Your responsibility is to tell your story and share the Good News in a simple and sensitive manner.



4. Try to appreciate your listener's knowledge of God and spiritual truth. Some people know a lot about the Christian faith, others may be ignorant of even the basic facts about Jesus Christ. Remember you must begin where people are.
5. If you asked a question you cannot answer, do not panic. If finding the answer is important to your listener the him or her that will find the answer and give it to them the next time you meet. Never be ashamed to say, "I don't know." The Man Born Blind did not have all the answers, but he told his story (John 9:25).
6. As you tell your story and share the Good News try to help your listener understand by talking in plain language and simple terms. Try to get the message across even though you realize that only the Holy is able to bring your listener to spiritual understanding and life (John 3:1-8).
7. Do not be frightened or ashamed of calling for repentance and faith at the climax of sharing the Good News. If your listener has heard the gospel and knows what it means to become a follower of Jesus, then you need to challenge him to ask for God's forgiveness and express his faith, in the same way that Jesus and the apostles did (Matthew 4:17; Acts 2:38; 17:30). He needs an opportunity to decide for Christ, and you have the privilege of giving him that opportunity.
8. Do not be surprised in your listener wants to ask for God's forgiveness and express his faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Romans 10:9). He may want you to lead him in a simple prayer of commitment. If you are unable to use your own words, use a suitable written prayer. Many are available and your minister or leader will advise you. Always keep a copy with you or learn it by heart. And remember, do not be surprised if you have to use it.

9. Sadly, not everyone will become a follower of Jesus. Those who do will need your help. Just as a baby learns to walk with the aid of its family, so you must help this new member of God's family to take his first steps as a Christian.
10. Remember that he will have many questions and much to learn. You can be his first teacher. Introduce him to a local church where others will welcome and care for him, and where he may worship regularly and grow as a follower of Jesus. If your church is suitable, it is obviously best, for you can continue to help him.
11. When you have witnessed to someone and he has become a follower of Jesus and joined a local church you will have completed the FIVE STEPS for him. This will be one of the most thrilling and exciting experiences of your Christian life and it is repeatable. Jesus wants you to do this again and again for the rest of your life on earth (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:1-11).

Time to pray ...

Pray for each other as you complete this course. Pray that this will be the beginning of a lifetime of Christian witness as you tell your story and share your faith with others.

And finally ...

Never forget the FIVE STEPS:

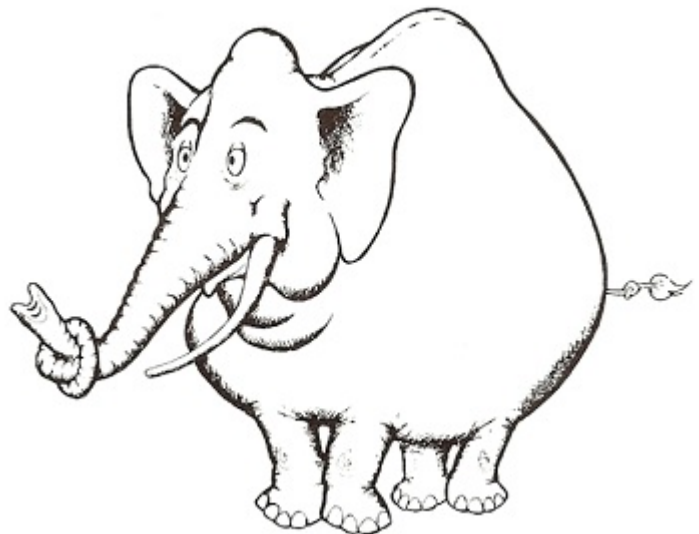
STEP ONE: Start to Pray

STEP TWO: Tell your Story

STEP THREE: Know the Good News

STEP FOUR: Share the Good News

STEP FIVE: Find the People



Now step out and believe that God will use the Good News and your story. May you have the joy of Jesus as you tell what God has done.