



LIVING AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Become A Lighthouse

LEADER'S GUIDE

Galen W. TeSelle

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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. 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 our neighbors.

The leader's guide and accompanying student workbook are designed for use in a discipleship group or small group setting. Allocate approximately 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. [Answers to the blanks in the Student Workbook as well as suggested additional narratives to help explain certain sections are shown in navy blue in the Leaders Guide only.](#)

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 "Become 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 mission 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 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.

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- 1) Pastor George Anderson of Mt. Oak Church who preached messages that brought me to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ
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- 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.
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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?

(Take time to listen to answers from the group. Some people may say ... I am a father or mother. Men most often will provide their job title such as a carpenter or teacher or CEO. If you are younger, you might say ... I am a child of so and so and give their parent's names).

B. The way you see your life, shapes 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 absolutely essential 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 walking lighthouses.

III. Introduction to Lessons and the Lighthouse Movement

This Discipleship Small Group or seminar is entitled ...“Living as the Light of the World with a subtitle of [Become A Lighthouse](#). We are going to use this image of the Lighthouse to help us understanding and remember [The Theology of A Lighthouse](#) which is Lesson 2 ... and [The Missiology or Mission of A Lighthouse](#) which is Lesson 3. 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.

(Walk through the Table of Contents and highlight what is coming up in future lessons)

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 [DAWN – 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 Silvos started a ministry called [Lighthouses of Prayer](#), 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 (who is known as the father of the Church Growth Movement) described a vision that God had given him in the late 80’s. He envisioned [little outposts](#) 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 [“Houses of Prayer Elsewhere.”](#) 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, ["Love Your Neighbor."](#)

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 [Turn On the Light – America](#) 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 $P = MV^2$ 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." In Jim Montgomery's book "I'm Gonna Let It Shine" Paul Cedar writes ... The Philippines increased the number of churches by 10 fold in a 25 year period; Zimbabwe double the number of churches in ten years with 1.6 million new members coming to Christ. Latin America churches increases over 500,000 using the Lighthouses Movement principles and increases in China and India are huge as well.

No large movement has occurred in the USA.

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 *moving together, on mission with God*, mass is coupled with velocity, and momentum occurs. Church movement occurs. This is what "On Mission" is all about.

B. Early Lighthouse History?

There is no mention of the word lighthouse in the Bible. Were there any actual lighthouses during Bible times?

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). *The Great Pyramid of Giza* – 2700 BC
 - b). *The Hanging Gardens of Babylon* – 600 BC
 - c). *The Statue of Zeus at Olympia* – 500 BC
 - d). *The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus* – 350 BC
 - e). The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus – 350 BC
 - f). The Colossus of Rhodes – 280 BC
 - g). *The Lighthouse (Pharos) of Alexandria* – 280 BC – 900 AD
 - This lighthouse was conceived and initiated by Alexander the Great's commander Ptolemy Soter and completed by Sostratus. It was 40 stories high (384 ft.) built out of granite stone and covered with white marble. It had a huge mirror that reflected the sun during the day and the fire that burned within by night.
 - It was located on an island called Pharos at the mouth of the Nile River near the city of Alexandria. Pharos is the word for lighthouse in many languages. It served as a beacon to guide many ships of the Mediterranean into the ports of Alexandria for centuries up to 900 AD.

IV. Finding Our Way

A. We *Wander*

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 *all His ways* 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 find our way ... we cannot find God's ways. 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 not natural. We need supernatural help. Unless we are "born-again", we do not have a built in navigation system. We wander.

B. We Get Lost

Have you ever been physically lost ... as a child or as an adult? Did you wait to be found, ask for help, or find your way back on your 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?

If we do not know the way, we can easily get lost. We must rely on various methods and tools to help us get to where we want to go.

How about Lewis and Clark finding their way to the Pacific Ocean and back across the Rockies in uncharted territory? Their journey was not only courageous, but how they found their way (even parted company and found each other again), seemed nothing short of miraculous.

Does anyone have experience navigating a ship at night or late evening, using the light of a lighthouse for guidance? Reflect on your own experience.

(From the author ... I have done very little travel on a boat or ship in large bodies of water ... in need of a lighthouse to point the way. I grew up in the farm country of Nebraska where all the roads are laid out in a nice one-mile grid system running true north, south, east, or west. All you had to do to give someone directions is

say ... go 10 miles north and 6 miles east. Follow the path of the road ... you should arrive at your destination. You can see horizon to horizon for miles and miles. Navigation wasn't much of a problem. However, I spiritually being lost? Perhaps some of you have a similar experience).

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

C. We Need Guidance

Let's look at Scripture and how God guides. Ask each participate to look up a passage and read it to the group ... perhaps rotating around the room.

1. Exodus 13:21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night 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 paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
3. Psalm 43:3 Send forth your light and your truth, 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 even to the end.
5. Psalm 67:4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth.
6. Psalm 73:24 You guide me with your counsel, 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 desired haven.
8. Psalm 139:9-10 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.
9. Proverbs 4:11 I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.
10. Proverbs 6:22 When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you.
11. Isaiah 58:11 The Lord will guide you always; 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 saw his star 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 all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

God loves us. He knows we are prone to wander; we easily get lost.

He provides guidance for us, day or night, awake or sleeping, walking nearby or far away, to wisdom and the paths of righteousness, into all truth, for me and for all nations, always and forever to the end, to our desired haven.

V. Knowing The Way

A. There is a great difference between finding our way and knowing The Way.

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.

Jesus knew what was on their minds when he said these reassuring and most profound exchange in the Gospel of John:

John 14:1-6 “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, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Because they knew The Way, the early believers in Jesus Christ were called “The Way”. (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 19:23, 24:14, 24:22)

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

B. We Know The Way

If we know Jesus, we know The Way, and we have the Light of Christ inside to guide us.

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

I have (you have) an internal moral compass (the Holy Spirit), a road map (God’s Word, the Holy Scriptures), and the goal of going to heaven and taking as many people with us as we can.

VI. Questions or Discussion Topics for the Small Group

- 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.

Possible homework assignment ... Next week we are going to start building our lighthouse. Find Scripture about building on rock.

Lesson 2

THE THEOLOGY

Review Lesson 1 before starting Lesson 2.

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. It occurs 205 times in the New International Version, 129 in the Old Testament and 76 in the New Testament. So we can see the concepts and theology of a spiritual lighthouse in the Bible.

B. What are the components of a lighthouse?

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

Many of the Bible verses used to build the structure of the lighthouse come from the great “YOU ARE” verses in the New Testament. But first we want to look at a number of verses in the Old Testament the help us form the base or the foundation.

II. Lighthouse Foundation

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

A. On Solid Rock

Our homework assignment was to find passages in the Bible about building on rock or The Rock. Does anyone have a verse or set of passages they would like to share? There are at least 25 references to God the Rock in Psalms alone.

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 **God – The Rock & My Rock**

B. On A Firm Foundation

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.*

What else does Corinthians say about our building project?

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.*

So we know from Scripture ... God is our rock and Jesus is not only our rock but our foundation as well. We can build on no other foundation. If we build our life ... if we build our lighthouse on Him ... it will not fall.

Now we can fill in the second line from the bottom of our lighthouse illustration ... **Jesus – My Rock & My Foundation**

III. The Structure of a Lighthouse

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

A. You Are ... [A Child of God](#)

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 [Holy Spirit](#) indwelling in us.

Anyone who does not know they are a “child of God” ... does not feel this ... does not know the position we have in Christ with God ... will have a hard time being a lighthouse. Even if we have received Him and believed in his name ... yet we struggle with believing and really knowing we are a “child of God” ... then we won't be anchored properly as a lighthouse on the rock and foundation of Jesus Christ. We if do not know for sure we are on the Solid Rock and the Firm Foundation, we will find it difficult to shine our light.

We can fill in the bottom dark section of the lighthouse structure Appendix A with [A Child of God](#)

Again, understanding our identity in Christ is absolutely essential to our success at living the victorious Christian lighthouse life.

Let's move up to the center dark section.

B. You Are ... [Christ's Ambassador of Reconciliation](#)

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 world view... 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? Wow! What a privilege. I get to proclaim the good news of reconciliation!

What is the message of reconciliation?

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

Romans 5:8-11 says ... But 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 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.

And Colossians 1:21-22 says ... Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But 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. Wow! What a job title. Write that title in the lighthouse illustration.

C. You Are ... the Salt of the Earth

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.*

So what is this "SALT" Jesus is referring to? You are a child of God; you have experienced His grace in your life through repentance and forgiveness. He has redeemed you. God now wants you to be His ambassador, telling His story of

death and resurrection, redemption, and reconciliation. Now Jesus tells us ... You are the Salt of the Earth.

Why would Jesus use salt as a metaphor? Three things come to mind.

Salt brings about thirst. When we eat salt, we get thirsty.

Salt is flavorful. Without salt, many foods taste bland.

And salt is a preservative. Often salt represented purity to the Israelites ... it is a preserving agent.

Which one of those three do we believe Jesus wants us to be as Christians in the world? Probably all three ... right? We want lost people to feel thirsty for God and for His Word when they see us. We want them to see the joy of life, the spice of life in our Christian walk, and we want them to know what we have lasts forever. God's work on earth may not pay all that well, but He sure has a great retirement plan.

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?

Yeah ... He is! Is this getting our attention? It should! What happens if we don't get rid of the old and put on the new? What if our life looks similar to the world? What if our joy is robbed by feelings of hopelessness or inadequacy? What if we water down the message about Jesus being the way, the truth, and the life? Would if we don't tell the lost about the law of sin and death? What if we don't get out of our cocoon and fly? We get trampled on.

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? She just updated it and came out with a new edition. Pick up a copy and read it. It's a classic. 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 ... the Light of the World

Now we are ready for the verses that make it clear, we are lighthouses.

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.

Wow! What a passage in Scripture. *You are the Light of the World.* It's one of my favorite passages.

We are at the top of our lighthouse. We have this light. In next week's lesson we are going to look into these verses in more depth. For now I have a question.

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. This is where we get ... "rise and shine."*

So fill in the top of your lighthouse illustration with *The Light of the World.*

E. Transforming from "You Are" to "I Am"

We have completed the "You Are Theology" of our lighthouse. But we haven't quite got to be where we want to be yet.

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.

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.

As we stated earlier, understanding our identity in Christ is absolutely essential to our success at living the victorious Christian lighthouse life. We are accepted by God; justified by God, and we receive our significance from God.

You might wonder ... why I am spending so much time on knowing and understanding our position in Christ. It is that so many of us have deep wounds from our past that are difficult to heal. The scars are not so easy to shed. We may have been abused physically and sexually; we may have grown up with disabilities or deformities; we may not like how we look; or maybe we were neglected and rejected by our parents and loved ones. A large percentage of society suffers from insecurity and low self-esteem. Followers of Jesus Christ still struggle to overcome insecurity and getting back into a secure status with God.

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.
Matthew 5:14	I am the light of the world.

From Jesus is Lord Ministries of Monroe

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. And 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.

Chip Ingram ends his story by saying ... “A new life demands a new lifestyle.”

Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 ... *if any man or any women is in Christ, you are a new creation.*

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 of 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 or some 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 186,000 miles per second.

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, darkness flees.

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 God

GE 1:3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.

IPE 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

IJN 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

REV 21:23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

PS118:27(a) The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us.

2SA 22:29 You are my lamp, O LORD; the LORD turns my darkness into light.

B. Light and Christ

ISA 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

JN 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."

JN 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

HE 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

EPH 5:14 for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

C. Light and Truth

PS 43:3 Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

JN 3:21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

EPH 5:9 for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth

D. Light and Life

JOB 33:29-30 to turn back his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him.

PS 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?

PS 36:9 For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

PR 6:23 For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life,

JN 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

E. Light and Word

PS 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

ISA 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

2PE 1:19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

F. Light and Walk

PS 56:13 For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

PS 89:15 Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD.

ISA 2:5 Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

IJN 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

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 darkness

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.*

John 12:35 says ... *Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going."*

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.*

Unfortunately we Christians too often have a dark side don't we. We try not to let it out, but those closest to us see it. Sometimes those we work with will see it. Jesus exhorts us to see to it our light is not darkness or our words and witness will be useless.

B. Fill us with the *Holy Spirit*

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.*

This verse relates to the story of the best way to get the air out of a jar half full of water ... fill the jar up with water and the water will push the air out naturally. The same is true of our old sin nature. If we fill our life up with our new nature, the Holy Spirit will naturally push out the sin and enhance our ability to resist sin.

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 *presence*.

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 loves me, so have I love you. Now remain (abide) in my love.*

Just a few verses earlier Jesus says ... *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

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.*

If we want to walk in the light of the Lord, then we need to practice being in the presences of God ... abiding in Jesus.

D. Make sure our light can be clearly seen

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 intensity of our light

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

1 Corinthians chapter 13 tells us that using our gifts to minister to people, if done without extending love, if not done with the motive of genuine love, means nothing.

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 complete unity 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 dead.

"Sermons We See" 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.

Edgar Guest was born in Birmingham, England in 1888, migrated to the United States when he was 10 years old, spending most of his life living in Detroit. He was a newspaper reporter how became one of American's prolific poets, writing over 11,000 poems. He was called "the poet of the people" because of his simple way with words.

E. Remain ***focused***.

“In 1822, a French Physicist named Augustin Fresnel (*pronounced Frey’nel*) 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 “bulls-eyes” in the original Cape Canaveral first-order lens, which is on display at Ponce Inlet, Florida. The bulls-eyes bend the light into a round beam to create a flashing effect.”

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

There are six orders of lens based on the focal length of the lens

1st Order – over 36” focal length
6th Order – 2-6” focal length.

The 1st Order can be over 8 feet across and weight as much as 7 tons.

The Luxor Hotel light in Las Vegas is the strongest beam of light in the world coming from 39 xenon lamps. It can be seen from 250 miles away.

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 ~~you~~ **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.

Our first lesson was about the difficulty of finding our way in life and how much better it is when we know The Way. In lesson two, we started building our lighthouse on God – The Rock and My Rock and Jesus – My Rock and My Foundation. We began building our lighthouse on the theology of the great “You Are” verses in the Bible. You are a child of God, Christ’s ambassador of reconciliation, the salt of the earth, the light of the world. We talked about how important it is to make the transformation in our life from intellectually knowing the “You Are” verses in the Bible to believing “I Am” ... I am a child of God, I am justified, I am redeemed, I am Christ’s ambassador, I am the salt of the earth, I am the light of the world ... I am significant.

We paused our building project to study the light at the top of our lighthouse and how the Bible uses light as a metaphor to encourage us in the way of truth, righteousness, and holy living. We talked about how we can increase the intensity of our light and magnify our light (the same way the Fresnel lens did in the 1800’s making lighthouses around the world much more effective), by replacing our darkness with the fullness of Holy Spirit, by not hiding our light but putting our light out in the open so it can be clearly seen, by increasing our love for others for without love nothing we do is of any value, and by being in unity with our brothers in sisters in Christ, for it is by unity the world will see we love Jesus.

B. Let's Do a Quick Reflection.

Now we are ready to resume building our lighthouse with the mission of our lighthouse. This will be like finishing and furnishing the inside of our lighthouse.

However, before we start, let’s reflect on our lighthouse. How strongly is it standing? How close is our heart to God’s heart? How much of the world’s forces of rejection, disappointment, pain, suffering, financial loss, loss of loved ones, broken trust, and broken dreams can you stand? Are we secure in God’s love?

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

Our motives and our attitudes become visible when others watch our life. When we get bumped with life's trials, sometimes darkness spills out. John Ortberg wrote a book called "Everyone's Normal till You Get to Know Them" in which he describes how different the outward appearance can be from the inner self.

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, whatever the mission we carry out with our lighthouse, will have no value 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 outside but on the inside 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 Prayer of Intercession

1 Timothy 2:1-4 is sometimes called the Great Prayer of Intercession.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 says ... *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—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 all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

There is rejoicing in heaven when a lost sinner repents and comes to know Jesus. 2 Peter 3:9 says ... *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

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.*

Pray for the lost, pray God opens doors for our message, pray your conversation is seasoned with salt, and intercede in prayer for those in authority and for others.

We can write at the white space at bottom of our lighthouse, *Intercede in Prayer*

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.*

It is God who prompts people to ask spiritual questions. It is God who changes hearts. It is God who opens eyes so the blind can see and who opens ears for the deaf to hear. It is God who enables people to see that your good deeds are from God and to give Him the glory.

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)

We are going to talk more about interceding in prayer in Lesson 6, so we are going to move on for now.

B. The Great Commandment

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: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.*"

I do not want to diminish the importance of the first part of this. We are going to talk more about that in our next lesson. However, do we really comprehend how important it is to love our neighbor as ourselves?

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

The entire law is summed by this command! Eight times in the Bible we are told to love our neighbor. It is one of the Bible's more repeated commands.

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 [Good Samaritan](#).

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.”*

Just in case we didn't quite get the message about loving our neighbor and knowing the meaning of neighbor we get this parable for extra punch.

What do we find in this familiar passage?

- 1) We find that loving our neighbor starts with [compassion](#) for our neighbor. (v. 33)
- 2) We find that loving our neighbor is [taking time out](#) from what we are doing. (v. 34-35)
- 3) We find that loving our neighbor is [providing immediate assistance](#) as best we can. (v. 34)

4) We find that loving our neighbor is providing some future assistance as best we can. (v. 35)

5) We find that our neighbor is anyone who needs help that happens to cross our path. (v. 33)

6) We find out how this story applies to us. Jesus said go and do likewise. (v. 37)

Is there any doubt that God is serious about the command to love our neighbor? Philippians 2:4 says ... *Each of you should look not only at your own interests but also to the interest of others.* And then there is the verse we know so well as the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12 ... *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

So the words for the center white section of our lighthouse diagram Appendix A are Love Your Neighbor

C. The Great Commission

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 go and make disciples 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.' "*

This command actually came from the Old Testament ... Isaiah 49:6 and is sometimes called the great commission of the Old Testament.

So, do we have a calling to share the good news about Jesus Christ? Most definitely! This is our Great Commission. This is why ... as followers of Jesus Christ and now members of the Kingdom of Heaven, we are still left here on earth.

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

Spread out and multiply into all nations, into all people groups. The mission field is everywhere.

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 ... [Prayer-Care-Share](#).

III. You are God's [Promotion Clip](#)

You are a child of God, Christ's ambassador of reconciliation, the salt of the earth and the light of the world. You are a new creation. A new life demands a new lifestyle. Intercede in prayer, live who you are and love your neighbor. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ and go make disciples. Be a lighthouse of prayer-care-and share. Let your light shine that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

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."

Let's be the hot clips to this dying world. Let's be that glimpse of heaven to come.

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."

So, I invite you to do the obvious ... to Become A Lighthouse and help transform your community into a spirit of caring for each others needs, loving one another and loving God; transforming one home, one neighborhood, one church, one school, and one business at a time.

(Hand out copies of the lighthouse with the light shining and blanks filled in with the scriptures printed on the backside. Indicate the three lines on the right are filled in ... ***I Am A Lighthouse.*** The line below is for you to sign and date).

Please take it home, pray about it. Ask the Lord what you should do.

Come back next week, whether God asks you to sign it or not. Next week our lesson is titled "Starting My Lighthouse" and following session will be equipping and teaching you lessons on how to operate your lighthouse ... how to be a lighthouse keeper.

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 [lifestyle](#).

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 [purpose](#) 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 – to God

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 – to yourself

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 ineffective and unproductive 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?*

We have tremendous potential – we were created to be like Jesus! – and God wants to help us reach our potential, but it takes perseverance and work on our part.

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 – to family

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 – to one another

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, support, accountability, and growth.

5. Reaching out – to others and the world

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.

These are the five primary purposes for living life with God. As they become our focus and we live them out at home, at work, at school, at church, at play ... we develop a new lifestyle. But as John 15:5 says, we must remain in Christ because apart from Him, we can do nothing.

Having the right balance amongst these different purposes is not easy. Depending on our station in life, some might require more emphasis than others. However, none should be neglected.

B. My Prayer of Commitment

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.

For those prayed that prayer and made a commitment to be a lighthouse, you may hand out "I Am A Lighthouse" cards with lapel pin, and the lighthouse bookmark. Or you may choose to do this at the last session as a thank you for participating.

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

A. Shine Where You Are

God has strategically placed 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.*

There are numerous examples in the Bible and especially in the book of Acts where people are just in the right place at the right time to do God's work, building the God's kingdom together. Just look at Apostle Paul's interactions after his conversion. Ananias was there to anoint him; he spent time with disciples in Damascus; Barnabas took him in and opened doors with the apostles in Jerusalem; Paul meeting Timothy in Lystra; Paul connecting with Luke at Troas; Paul chooses Silas at Antioch; Lydia responding to Paul's message at Thyatira; Paul meeting Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth working together as tentmakers; Apollos meeting Paul in Ephesus; Paul's encounters with Felix, Fesus, and Agrippa.

These are not chance meetings. They are divine encounters. God has us strategically placed to serve, to build, to equip, to join forces, to show hospitality, to do what God calls us to do.

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.

(You may want to show examples of a few Internet home ownership searches).

C. Map of Homes and Names

Before our next lesson, there is a homework assignment. 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. Please bring it with you for the next lesson.

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

Our next lesson is about prayer. We will discuss much more about how we can intercede in prayer for our neighbors.

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 close proximity 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 will be saved and come to know truth.

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.

This is the Great Prayer of Intercession. Pray for everyone, kings and those in authority included (who often might even be are tyrants and persecutor), that all men might be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

Evangelist Ed Silvoso said ... “We must talk to God about our neighbors before we talk to our neighbors about God,”

B. Pray for Open Doors

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.

The primary purpose for intercessory prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ is for God to *open doors* for our story and God’s story about Jesus Christ and that we might *proclaim it clearly*. God winks at these divine appointments.

We need to be wise in the way we act toward non-believers, making the most of every opportunity as Paul goes on to say.

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 Open Eyes

Remember we talked about the verse from 2 Corinthians

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 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 blinded.

Numbers 22:30-32 *The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he said.* ³¹ *Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown.* ³² *The angel of the LORD asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me.*

2 Kings 6:16-17 *"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."* ¹⁷ *And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

Isaiah 42: 6-7 *"I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, ⁷ to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.*

D. Pray for Open Hearts

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!”

We must always remember it is the Lord God who opens doors. It is God Almighty who opens eyes. It is our Lord Jesus who prompts people to ask spiritual questions and prepares their hearts so spiritual seeds can take root and grow. That is why intercessory prayer is so important.

II. Intercessory Prayer in the Bible

A. Abraham - Pleads for Sodom

Genesis 18:16-33 says ... *When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way.¹⁷ Then the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?¹⁸ Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.¹⁹ For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.”²⁰ Then the LORD said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous²¹ that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.”²² The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD.²³ Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?²⁴ What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it?²⁵ Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”²⁶ The LORD said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”²⁷ Then Abraham spoke up again: “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes,²⁸ what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?” “If I find forty-five there,” he said, “I will not destroy it.”²⁹ Once again he spoke to him, “What if only forty are found there?” He said, “For the sake of forty, I will not do it.”³⁰ Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?” He answered, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”³¹ Abraham said, “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?” He said, “For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it.”³² Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?” He answered, “For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.”³³ When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.*

B. Moses – Sought the Lords favor of the Israelites in the desert

Exodus 32:11-14 says ... *But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “O LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’” ¹⁴ Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.*

C. Hezekiah - To save his people from Sennacherib

Isaiah 37: 14-22 says ... *Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵ And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: ¹⁶ “O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁷ Give ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God. ¹⁸ “It is true, O LORD, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste all these peoples and their lands. ¹⁹ They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. ²⁰ Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O LORD, are God.”*

²¹ Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, ²² this is the word the LORD has spoken against him: “The Virgin Daughter of Zion despises and mocks you. The Daughter of Jerusalem tosses her head as you flee.

D. Nehemiah – To rebuild the walls and the city of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 1 says ... *The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:*

In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. ³ They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.” ⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said: “O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is

praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you.⁷ We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.⁸ "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations,⁹ but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

¹⁰ "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.¹¹ O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man." I was cupbearer to the king.

E. Jesus – For His disciples and for all believers

John 17:6-26 says ... "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one.¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.¹⁵ 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.¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

²⁰ "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 complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.²⁵ "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you,

I know you, and they know that you have sent me.²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

F. Stephen – For those stoning him

Acts 7:55-60 says ... *But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.⁵⁶ “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him,⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

G. Paul – For struggling churches

Colossians 1:9-12 says ... *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.*

Ephesians 1:16-17 says ... *I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.*

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.

Body ... physical needs, health, protection, strength
Labor ... work, income, job satisfaction and security
Emotional ... joy, peace, hope
Social ... family relationships, marriage, friends
Spiritual ... salvation, faith, holiness, grace

E. Pray with Partners

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 God’s Will

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.*

Intercessory prayer does not work by our own power, as if we were the Almighty. When prayer is answered, it is answered in God's way, and it may not be at all like the 'victory' we are 'claiming'. Much of the time, the Spirit's main work is to change *us*, to make *us* care more, and to get *us* to focus on what others are going through instead of only seeing life from where you are.

G. Pray with Perseverance

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,' 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?"*

Being the light of the world and a lighthouse in our neighborhood never stops. It is our lifestyle, so we must never stop praying for them. It may take months or years to see change. It is our task and God's timing.

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 much of your prayer time is intercessory?
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 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

Assign passages for participants to read.

John 13:34-35 *“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.”*

Romans 12:10 *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.*

Romans 13:8 *Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.*

Galatians 5:13 *You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature ; rather, serve one another in love.*

Ephesians 4:2 *Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

Hebrews 10:24 *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*

1 Peter 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

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

1 Peter 5:14 *Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.*

1 John 3:11 *This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.*

1 John 3:23 *And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.*

1 John 4:7 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.*

1 John 4:11-12 *Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.* ¹² *No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

2 John 1:5 *And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.*

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 Compassion

A. Compassion is Part of God's Character

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 Full 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 below, The Good Samaritan took time out from his priorities to deal with God’s priority of loving our 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 Clothed 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.*

Our compassion must be big enough, great enough, spirit-filled enough to stop us so we can take the next step and provide care, not only for their physical needs, but emotional and spiritual as well. We need to be able to see beyond the outward appearances and sense the inner emotional and spiritual hurts and pains of others.

Make reference to the You Tube video about seeing with special glasses the needs of others.

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 Poor and Needy

Exodus 22:25 *“If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest.*

Deuteronomy 15:11 *There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.*

Deuteronomy 24:14 *Do not take advantage of a hired man who is poor and needy, whether he is a brother Israelite or an alien living in one of your towns.*

1 Samuel 2:7-9 *The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts.⁸ He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor. “For the foundations of the earth are the LORD’s; upon them he has set the world.*

Psalm 12:5 *Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise,” says the LORD. “I will protect them from those who malign them.”*

Psalm 35:10 *My whole being will exclaim, “Who is like you, O LORD? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them.”*

Psalms 69:33 *The LORD hears the needy and does not despise his captive people.*

Psalms 72:12-14 *For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.¹³ He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy*

from death.¹⁴ He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

Psalm 109:31 For he stands at the right hand of the needy one, to save his life from those who condemn him.

Psalms 140:12 I know that the LORD secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy.

Proverbs 14:21 He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.

Proverbs 14:31 He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Proverbs 21:13 If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.

Proverbs 22:22 Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court,

Proverbs 31:9 Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

Proverbs 31:20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

Isaiah 25:4 You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat.

Isaiah 41:17 “The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

Isaiah 55:10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

Jeremiah 22:16 He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?” declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 16:48-50 As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done.

⁴⁹ *“Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. ⁵⁰ They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.*

Amos 4:1-3 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy and say to your husbands, “Bring us some drinks!”² The Sovereign LORD has sworn by his holiness: “The time will surely come when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks.³ You will each go straight out through breaks in the wall, and you will be cast out toward Harmon,” declares the LORD.

Amos 8:1-14 This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: a basket of ripe fruit.² “What do you see, Amos?” he asked. “A basket of ripe fruit,” I answered. Then the LORD said to me, “The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.³ “In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies—flung everywhere! Silence!”⁴ Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land,⁵ saying, “When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?”—skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales,⁶ buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.⁷ The LORD has sworn by the Pride of Jacob: “I will never forget anything they have done.⁸ “Will not the land tremble for this, and all who live in it mourn? The whole land will rise like the Nile; it will be stirred up and then sink like the river of Egypt.⁹ “In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.¹⁰ I will turn your religious feasts into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.¹¹ “The days are coming,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “when I will send a famine through the land— not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.¹² Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.¹³ “In that day “the lovely young women and strong young men will faint because of thirst.¹⁴ They who swear by the shame of Samaria, or say, ‘As surely as your god lives, O Dan,’ or, ‘As surely as the god of Beersheba lives’— they will fall, never to rise again.”

Matthew 6:1-3 “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,

Matthew 25:31-46 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come,

you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,* ³⁶ *I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.* ³⁷ *“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’* ³⁸ *When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?’* ³⁹ *When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’* ⁴⁰ *“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’* ⁴¹ *“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.* ⁴² *For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,* ⁴³ *I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’* ⁴⁴ *“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’* ⁴⁵ *“He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’* ⁴⁶ *“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”*

Romans 12:13 *Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

Ephesians 4:28 *He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.*

James 2:16 *If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?*

1 John 3:17 *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?*

B. Care for the Hungry and Thirsty

Deuteronomy 8:14-16 *then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.* ¹⁵ *He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.* ¹⁶ *He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you.*

Psalms 107:4-6 *They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.* ⁶ *Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.*

Psalm 146:4-8 *the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—the LORD, who remains faithful forever.* ⁷ *He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free,* ⁸ *the LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.*

Proverbs 25:20 *If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.*

Matthew 15:32 *Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”*

Isaiah 58:6-10 *“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ⁸ Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, ¹⁰ and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.*

C. Care for the Widows and Orphans

Exodus 22:22 *“Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan.*

Acts 6:1-4 *In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”*

1 Timothy 5:3 *Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.*

1 Timothy 5:16 *If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.*

James 1:27 *Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

D. Care that Brings Glory and Honor to God the Father

Our care and good deeds, if done with a Godly motive, will not bring honor to ourselves, but instead bring glory to our God the Father in heaven.

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.*

Phillipians 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.*

By world's standards for wealth, almost every one of us who live in the USA is rich. 2010 World Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated at \$61 trillion of which the USA has \$15 trillion or approximately ¼ of the world GDP. The USA

average is approximately \$47,000 GDP per person, while over half of the countries average less than \$4000.

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 thirty, 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 Prepared 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 Testimony and Evidence 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, then 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 evidence 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 testimony 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 [evidence] 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.

1 John 1:1-3 says ... *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*² *The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.*³ *We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

2 Peter 1:16-18 says ... *We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*¹⁷ *For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*¹⁸ *We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.*

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 [stories]; 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 Journey

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.

Often a good story will begin with ... once upon a time. A personal story might start with ... I grew up in a small town in Nebraska.

B. Stories Create Expectations

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 Real Life Experiences

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 morning²³ 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 Emotions

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 Understanding

Luke 24: 33-35 says ... *They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ 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 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 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 Power in Our Testimony

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

V. 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 be 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 Good News

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.

Gospel comes from the Old English god-spell meaning “good news” or “glad tidings”. Gospel originally meant the saving work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection ... Jesus the perfect sacrifice who redeemed His chosen people. Later the term Gospel referred also to the book of Mark, and then Matthew, Luke, and John and their eyewitness accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus.

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,

To the Apostle Paul, the centerpiece of the Good News Gospel is that Jesus died for our sins; our sins can be forgiven by the risen Christ. Believing this work of Jesus can save you from eternal separation from God.

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.

This Good News is the main point behind the Bible. It's what Jesus was explaining to the two men on the Road to Emmaus from Moses and all the prophets about himself.

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 *Ripe for the Harvest*

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 *Going*

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.

We must never forget that we must be GO out in the world ...mingling, interacting, and sharing our story and God's story with the lost. No location or class of people is off limits.

B. Timing 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,*

We don't have coincidences but rather divine appointments. We pray for divine appointments and God creates them for us. However we must be proactive and wise in our ways knowing that timing is important. You might time your neighborhood walk in the morning at about the same time your neighbors are putting out their trash so you could interact with them.

C. Asking a Question 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.)*

How many times do we see Jesus asking a question of someone or of a group of people as a teaching technique? Ask participants to name several ... such as "Who do you say that I am" ... "Do you love me" ... "Who do you think was a neighbor" ...

D. Create Some Intrigue 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."*

Almost everyone would have found this reply intriguing at the very least. It draws the listener into a conversation. This is the longest single conversation Jesus has with anyone recorded in the Bible.

E. Create a Thirst 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.”*

Jesus tells the women there is a way to receive eternal life and she confirms she wants it. Most people when asked ... do you want to go to heaven when you die say yes and they want to know how to get there.

F. Gently Help Them See Their Sin

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.”*

Notice how gently Jesus helps her see her sin? It’s just a confirmation of fact that she is living with someone who is not her husband and has done this many times before. She knows this is adultery or fornication. What about the second sin Jesus is pointing out? What is that about? The Samaritan woman has a false understanding of worship believing the right location is somehow a requirement. Jesus tells her no ... God is spirit; location does not matter. Worshipping location instead of “in spirit and in truth” is a form of idolatry.

G. Tell About Jesus

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

In Acts 2:14-40, the Apostle Peter, when asked if the people were drunk on that early Pentecost morning, took the opportunity to tell about Jesus.

In Luke, chapter 10, Jesus sends out the seventy-two. In verse two he says ... *He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.* And what did Jesus tell them to preach? The Kingdom of God is near you. What does mean? Jesus has come as Messiah. Jesus has come as the King of our heavenly Kingdom.

H. Be Ready for the Harvest

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."*

We know the woman was changed as she left her water jar. Her focus now was on Jesus. She began to tell others and they came to find out about Jesus too. His disciples seemed unaware of what was going on so Jesus urged them to open their eyes. I have sowed some seeds here while you were gone and the fields are ready for reaping. We must be aware of our surroundings. Other may have sowed seeds before us. Be ready for the harvest of souls.

III. God's Story is Waiting for Us to Tell

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 [maintains](#) and [sustains](#) 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

To maintain our lighthouse and keep our light shining, we need to focus our efforts in least three areas.

A. We Must [Remember](#)

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.*

God told the Israelites many times to remember ... remember how they were once slaves yet brought out of Egypt ... how they were 40 years in the dessert yet brought into the promise land. The Israelites placed memorial stones near the Jordan River to remember how we crossed over at flood stage by the hand of God. Passover and many of the other Jewish celebrations were in remembrance of what God had done. Jesus said ... do this (Holy Communion) in remembrance of me. We must remember what is what like before we knew Jesus as Savior and Lord,

without hope, without God ... but how we were rescued and brought near through the blood of Christ.

Look up and read some of the remember verses in the Bible.

What are some of the important things to remember from this set of lessons?

1. Remember ... we can help those who are lost because we know *The Way*.
2. Remember ... you are a child of God, Christ' ambassador of reconciliation, the salt of the earth, the *Light of the World*.
3. Remember ... we can magnify our light by removing any *darkness*, being filled with the *Holy Spirit*, spending time in God's *presence*, placing our light on a stand to be clearly seen, and remaining focused.
4. Remember ... to intercede in prayer, love your neighbors, and *go make disciples*.
5. Remember ... being a lighthouse is a *lifestyle*. Our life priorities must include reaching out to our neighbors and the lost.
6. Remember ... to pray for *open doors, open eyes, and open hearts*. Find a neighborhood prayer partner to pray with.
7. Remember ... we cannot be loving God unless we are *loving our neighbors*. To be more caring we must grow in compassion.
8. Remember ... to share *your story*. Your story is evidence and testimony to God's grace.
9. Remember ... to share *God's story*. 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 *Confident*

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 Watchful

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 Persevere

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.*

So to maintain our lighthouse, we must always **remember** we are a child of God, an ambassador for Christ, the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. We must be **watchful** and **confident** and bold in what God has called us to do to love our neighbors and go make disciples, and we must **persevere**.

II. Sustaining My Lighthouse

When we are in the flow of His will, it is God who sustains us.

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

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

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

Psalm 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 reap generously.*

2 Corinthians 9:10-15 says ... *Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge 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!*

III. Local Lighthouse Movement Support

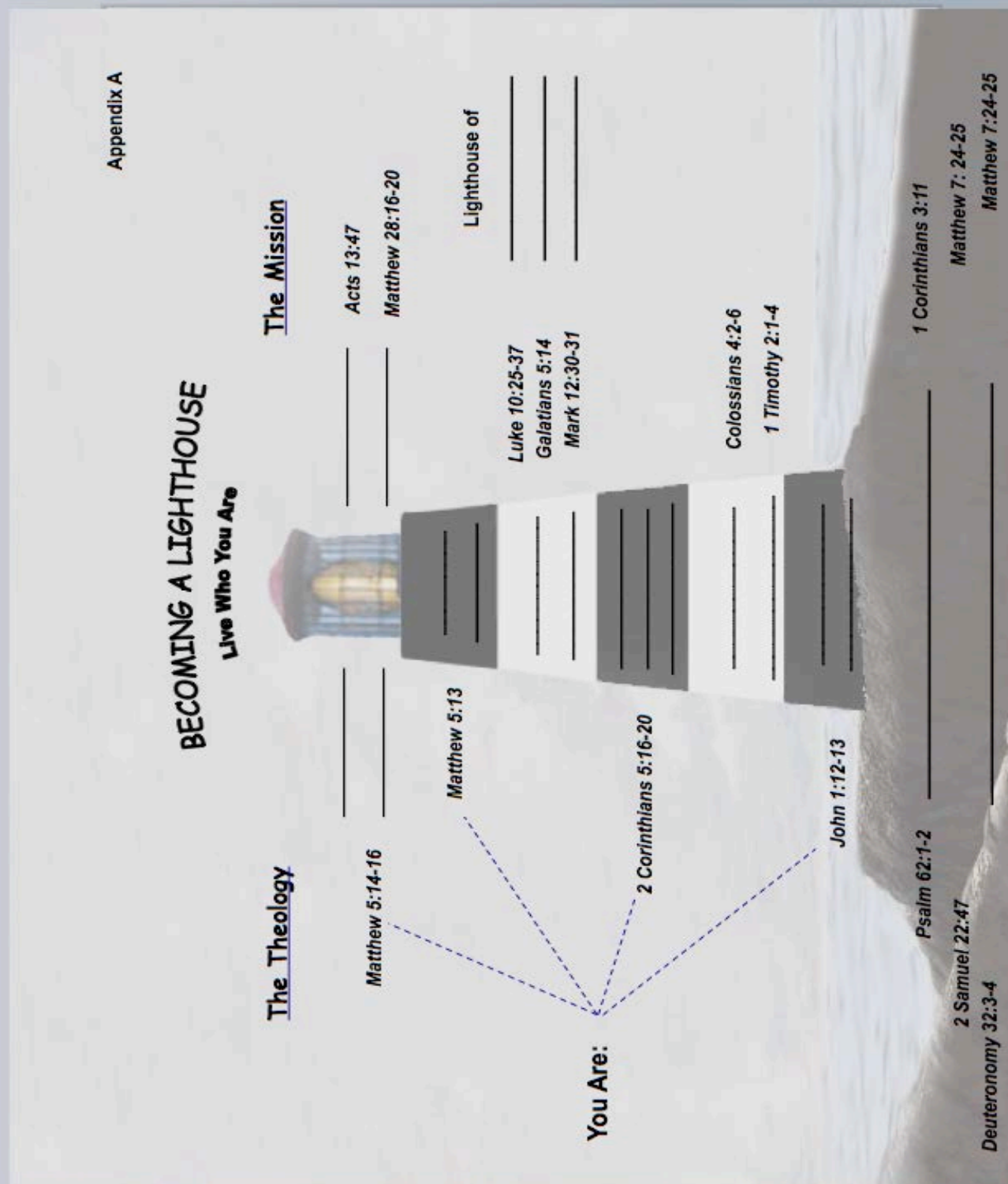
See Appendix G and review the Light of the World vision and mission slides in the presentation. Review other local Lighthouse Movement activities, support groups, newsletters, and websites if available.

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.

You may want to hold a graduation celebration and hand out Lighthouse Lapel Pins, Be A Lighthouse Buttons, Light of the World Foundation Pens, Be A Lighthouse Bookmarks, and Love Your Neighbor Bumper Stickers available from Light of the World Foundation.

Appendix A



Appendix B

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 l-o-o-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.

Appendix F

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.

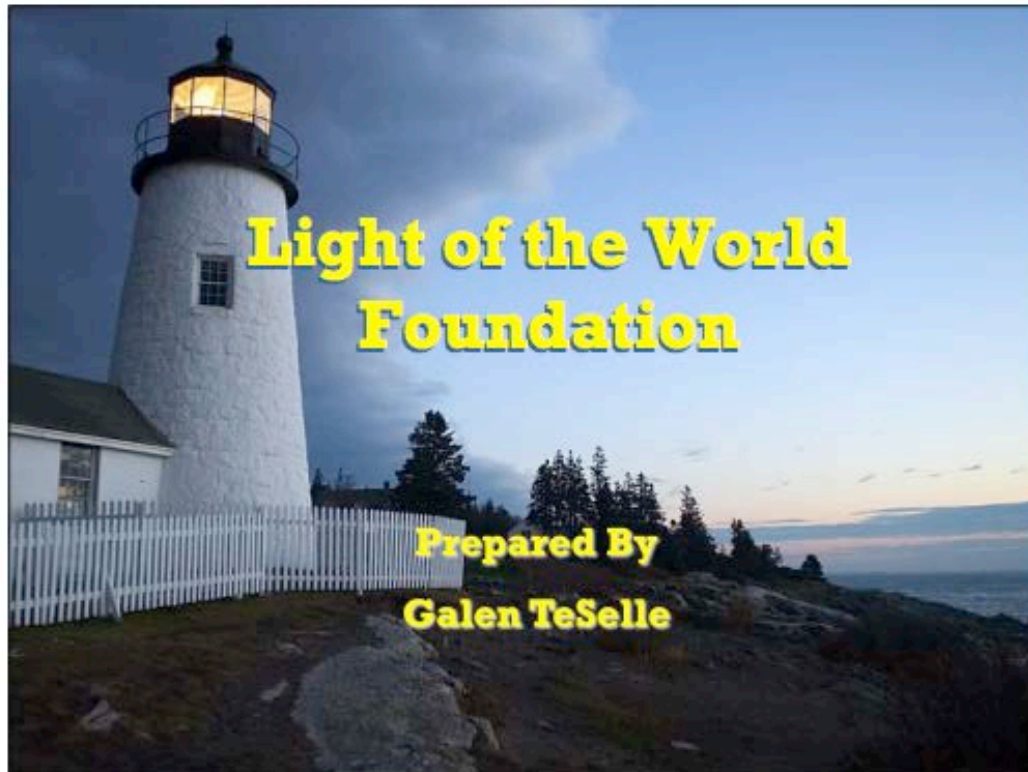
Jesus was much more. He was God in human form. He died for our sins and conquered death by rising again to offer us forgiveness of sin and the gift of everlasting life. He ascended to heaven and will return to Earth again for all His followers. This is the essence of the gospel message. Paul wrote, "There 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.



Vision

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



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?

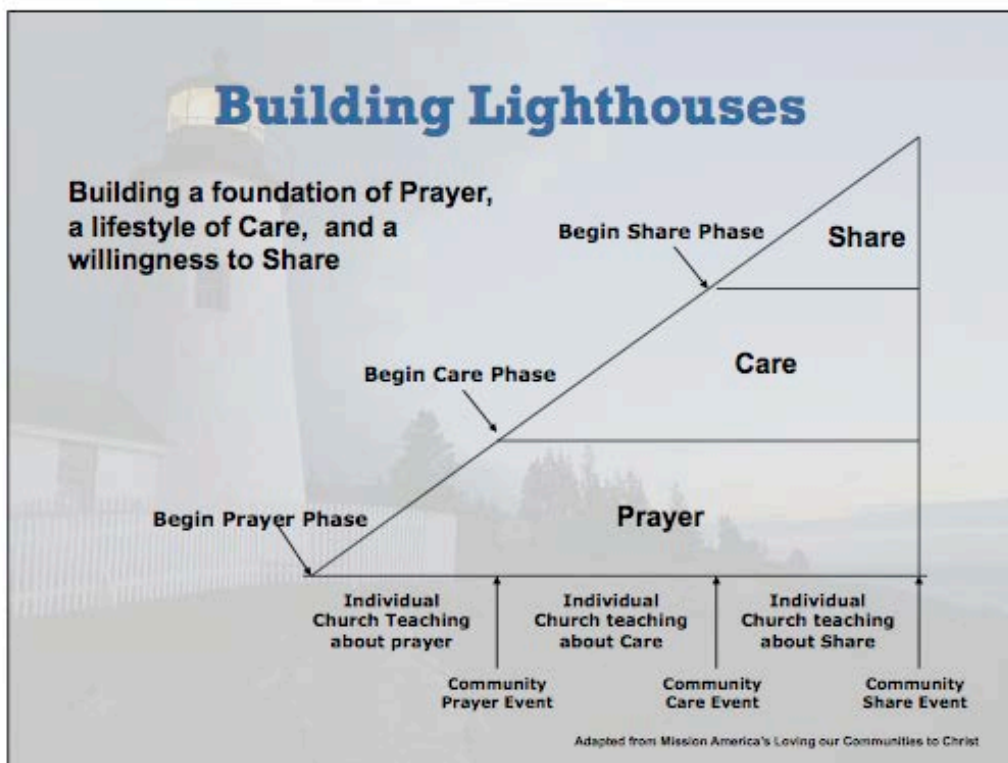
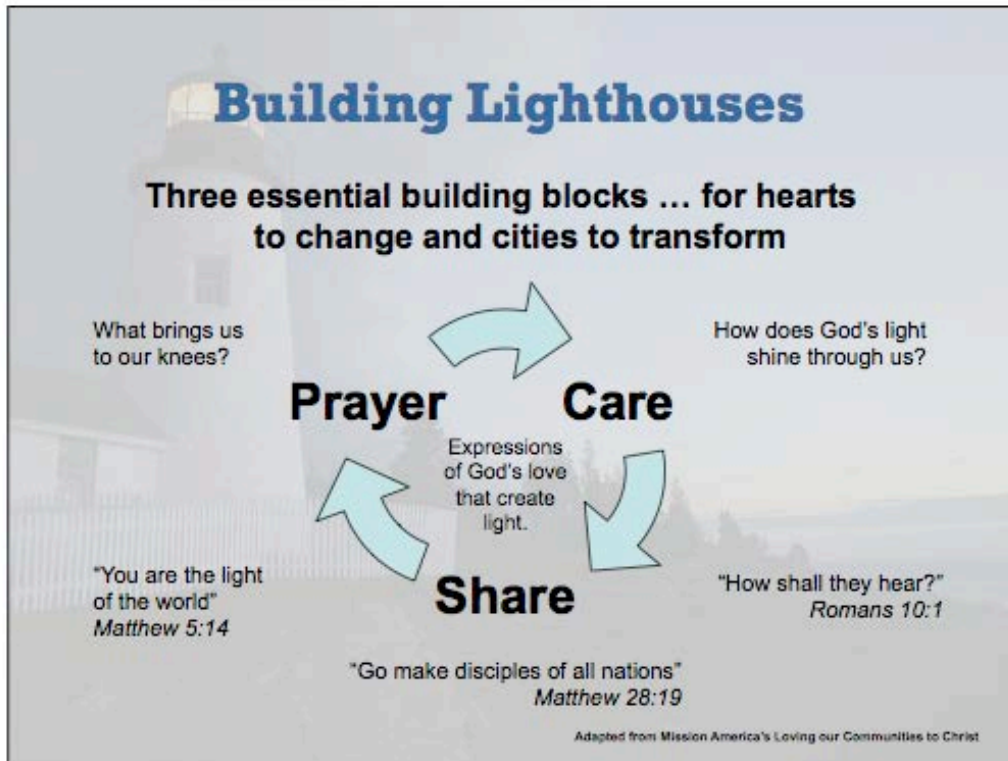
Our Strategy

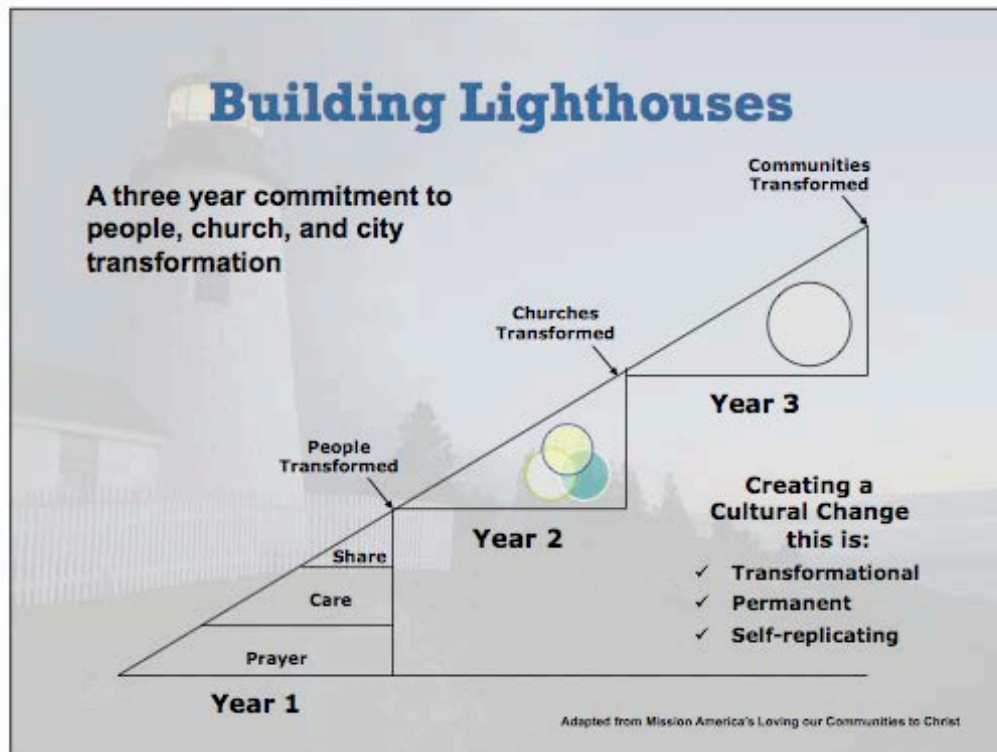
- **Foster and build a city model...**
Turn ON the Light–Bowie in the City of Bowie, Maryland
- **Expand to other cities as God leads**
- **Collaborate with ...**
 - “Loving our Communities to Christ” and “Lighthouse Movement” initiatives supported by Mission America
 - “Lighthouse Report” supported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

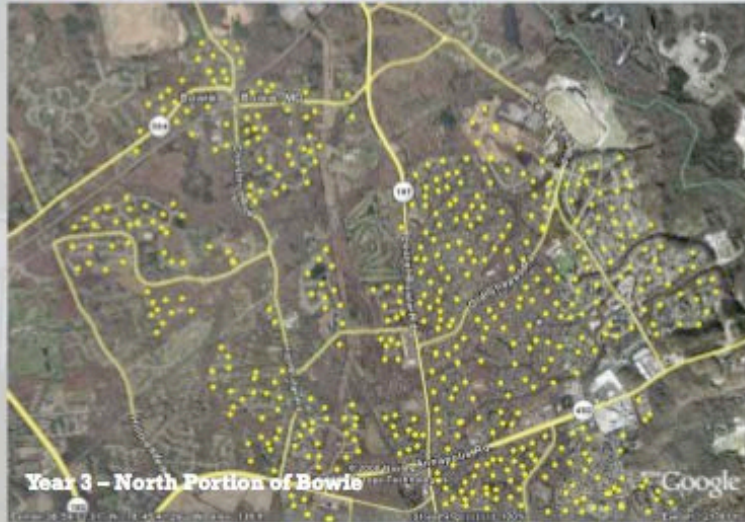
We Have a City

... 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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