



THE CONFIDENT WITNESS

YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES... ACTS 1:8

THE CONFIDENT WITNESS

A Word from Your Pastor:

"You will be my witnesses . . ." (Acts 1:8)

This is a series about evangelism. But it's not intended for us to just talk about evangelism. Christians respond in different ways when they hear the "E" word. Some are filled with excitement, some with guilt. Some are exasperated and others, fearful. But the heart of evangelism is simply bearing witness to the good news of Jesus. When Jesus ascended into heaven, he told his followers, "You will be my witnesses..." and they went...and they changed the world.

Our task is not the change the world—or to save it, but to faithfully and boldly bear witness to the life-changing person of Jesus as God works in people's hearts. Over the next seven weeks, we will learn about and train ourselves in evangelism, but most importantly, we will make a plan to practice sharing the good news. We're excited to see what God will do through a church full of confident witnesses.

Focus Seasons are critical seasons in the life of Waite Park Church. So, we ask that you be fully-engaged over the next seven weeks.

- Make plans to be in worship service (either in person or online).
- Get into a Small Group.
- Do the practices with your Group.

We hope you find this season to be life-changing and life-giving. We are excited you're joining us!

-Pastor Kory

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This Focus Season, we want to become confident witnesses and de-mystify sharing our faith. It can be easy to get distracted by life or feel ill equipped to tackle the tough questions.

In the book, *I Once Was Lost* by Don Everts, he describes the Five Thresholds of Postmodern conversion. Let's walk through each threshold briefly.

Threshold #1: From distrust to trust. Building trust in the relationship with a non-Christian helps them begin to have trust in Christianity.

Threshold #2: From indifference to curiosity. A person needs to become curious about Jesus or faith before interest in a relationship with Jesus.

Threshold #3: From being closed to change to becoming open to change. A person becomes willing to change and move forward towards a relationship.

Threshold #4: From meandering to seeking. A person can have knowledge

about Jesus or even recognize Jesus as a source of wisdom, but they are not truly a seeker until they become intentional about finding answers.

Threshold #5: From lost to saved. This is a time to celebrate saying yes to Jesus and a relationship with Him.

These thresholds provide a framework for how people move towards a deeper understanding of God. When we see where people are in this journey, we can build greater trust in our relationships with them.

Each week, the book provides prayers, resources, and application to equip you with the skills to love people well at each one of these thresholds. Set aside time each week to pray that God would strengthen your relationships in order to share the incredible gift of eternal life.

PRAYER: One key aspect of our role as witnesses comes in prayer. Romans 12:12 says, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Let's be filled with hope, patience, and prayer for people. Each week contains verses to pray for the people you would like to come to know Jesus.

RESPOND: These exercises are designed to help you walk with someone in each threshold. Allow these practices to stretch you beyond your comfort zone. Your Small

Group will be doing it right along with you.

DISCUSS: This section includes a debrief of each week's Respond section. Don't skip it! The feedback we receive from others in our group will be invaluable in building our confidence in sharing with others. The rest of the questions dive deeper into walking alongside someone in each threshold.

TOOLS: Most thresholds have Tools to equip you build relationships or grow in knowledge of how to engage with unbelievers.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

In addition to the sermon and book, we will have additional resources--videos, podcasts, and books if you would like to dive deeper. One word of caution, use the content as a resource but do not use the study as a way to avoid doing the work. Incorporate these skills into your life. For The Confident Witness focus season, we have a resource page on our website. Use the QR code below for quick access to <https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 8 WEEK 1 – TAKEN BY THE GOSPEL
- 16 WEEK 2 – BUILDING TRUST
- 26 WEEK 3 – SPARKING CURIOSITY
- 36 WEEK 4 – BECOMING OPEN TO CHANGE
- 44 WEEK 5 – MEANDERING TO SEEKING
- 54 WEEK 6 – ENTERING THE KINGDOM
- 64 WEEK 7 – LIVING IN THE KINGDOM
- 74 APPENDIX // SMALL GROUP HEALTH CHECK

WEEK 1 //

TAKEN BY THE GOSPEL

INTRO:

You might not realize it, but are all, already evangelists. We are evangelists because when we have good news, we want to be the first to share it. Isaiah 52:7 says, "How beautiful...are the feet of those who bring good news!" Do we really believe the Gospel is good news? Then why do we so often keep it to ourselves? Could it be that we have forgotten how much it means to us? This week we'll go back to the basics to remember why the Gospel is such good news to us.

*“How beautiful on
the mountains are
the feet of those who
bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good
tidings, who proclaim
salvation, who say
to Zion, ‘Your God
reigns!’”*

(Isaiah 52:7)

// PRAYER //

- *Remember God's faithfulness and heart for the lost.*

[2 Peter 3:9 NIV] The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

- *Pray for people to grow to maturity and invest in expanding the kingdom of God.*

[Luke 10:2 NIV] 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.

- *Pray that as believers we will boldly share the gospel and become ambassadors for Jesus.*

[Ephesians 6:19-20 NIV] Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Spend time in prayer:

// RESPOND //

Jesus said, "I have come to seek and save that which is lost." (Luke 19:10)

First, prayerfully consider three people you would like to share with this Focus Season. Ask God to show you people he might already be pursuing. It could be a fellow parent at your child's sporting event, a neighbor or a co-worker.

Second, commit to praying for these three people. Ask God for compassion for each one to see them as He does. On Sunday, add the first names of your list to the prayer wall in the back of the Sanctuary so others can join you in praying for them. Use the space to write prayers for them.

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Review Small Group Health Check with your Group. (see appendix) Pick two values to invest in together. How can we take steps toward that goal?

2. If someone asked me why life with Jesus is better, what would I say?

- It frees me from my past (sins, etc.)
- It gives me wisdom for life (purpose, direction, etc.)
- It gives me a community to care for me. (the church)
- It gives me power for life in the Holy Spirit
- It gives me eternal life later.

3. Spend time in prayer for the Focus Season.
 - Pray for your heart to expand for the lost and boldness in relationships.
 - Pray for people to become ready to hear and enter into relationship with Jesus.

WEEK 2 //

BUILDING TRUST

INTRO:

Today, trust is perhaps the most valuable commodity of all. Even in our impersonal world, building trust is how things get done. Unfortunately, there are many people today who do not trust Christians or the Church. It may be because of how Christians are often portrayed in the media along with the fact that they don't know any genuine Christians. Or the reason might be deeply personal—like an abusive spiritual leader or a bad experience with judgmental Christians. In any case, for many people, this is the first threshold we must cross before they will open themselves up to the gospel. This week we will learn how we can build trust with those who are skeptical of Christians.

"Trust is always a gift of the heart, and therefore it just may be the most precious thing in life, next to love."

*I Once Was Lost,
pg. 30*

// PRAYER //

- *Pray for people to trust in the Lord and turn to follow Him.*

[Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV] Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

- *Pray for God to guide your words and provide wisdom to show His love.*

[Psalm 19:14 NIV] May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

- *Pray for people to grow in reverence to God, and their hearts would be softened.*

[Proverbs 28:14 ESV] Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

God works through our efforts. How can we be intentional to connect with the three people we are praying to reach?

Create a plan to connect with them on a regular basis. The plan will likely be different for each person based on your relationship with them.

As you build the friendship, pray for wisdom in what to share about your life. Let the Holy Spirit guide you as you seek to build trust.

- What might need to change in your life to be a witness?
- How will you be more intentional about what you are already doing?
- Think about the people on your prayer list. What do you have in common?
- How will you be intentional about deepening relationships?

Write your plan to connect with those on your prayer list:

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Debrief on Week 1 Respond Section:** Share the three people on your prayer list. Share a little about how you know them.

2. How have you seen people show distrust for Christians and Christianity?

Automatic Responses to Distrust:

- **Defensive** – starts close our hearts to a person who distrusts us.
- **Bruise** – feel offended, reluctant to put our heart on the line
- **Avoid** – distance ourselves, gravitate towards those who get me
- **Judge** – naturally turn the assumptions back at them
- **Argue** – get into a competitive mindset, not helpful

Source: *I Once Was Lost*, pg. 34-35

3. What is your default response to distrust?
How have you found ways to retrain an
unhealthy default response?

4. When people trust Christians they are likely
to trust Christianity. Why is that?

TOOLS // TRUST INVENTORY

This Trust Inventory helps you evaluate the level of trust in a relationship. Building trust gives credibility to Jesus and the Gospel.

Consider the questions below to help you identify opportunities to build trust in the relationship. For example, if giving advice has not been part of your relationship, ask your friend to give you advice in a situation you are facing. See how that provides an opportunity to build trust in your relationship.

- Have they ever called me when they had a problem?
- Have I ever called them for help in anything?
- Have they ever been real with me when they were angry or sad?
- Do I hide my honest emotions or moods from them?
- Have they ever asked me for advice?
- Do we ever just have fun together?
- When do I feel most connected with them—and what are we doing then?

How can you build greater trust in the relationships on your prayer list?

Use the QR code for quick access to additional resources:
<https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



WEEK 3 //

SPARKING IN CURIOSITY

INTRO:

While some people mistrust the Church or Christians, others know and like us. However, just because someone knows and even trusts Christians doesn't mean they are interested in Jesus. The philosopher, Charles Taylor says that 500 years ago, people live in a world haunted by transcendence. In other words, it was almost impossible not to believe in God. Today, not only is it plausible for most people, it's the default. Many people seldom, if ever, contemplate their eternity or standing before God. They have too many other things to worry about to think much about it. So, what can we do with people who just don't seem interested in God? That's the task for this week.

“One of the greatest acts of love we can give is to ask good questions and help our friends learn to ask more questions for themselves.”

*I Once Was Lost,
pg. 55*

// PRAYER //

- *Pray for God to prepare hearts to know and understand the truth in the life of Jesus.*

[Luke 8:8 NLT] 'Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!' When he had said this, he called out, 'Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.'

- *Pray for people to receive forgiveness and turn from sin and strongholds in their lives.*

[Acts 26:18 NIV] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

- *Pray for people to embrace the questions about Jesus and Christian faith.*

[Luke 11:9-10 NIV] So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

Select a person to have a spiritual conversation with this week. Ideally, someone on your prayer list, however, they might not be ready for a spiritual conversation yet.

The goal for the week is to practice having spiritual conversations, even if it is with someone “safe” like a spouse or a Christian friend.

- Ask for their thoughts/opinion first. Be curious about why they answer the way they do.
- Be ready to contribute, but not necessarily as the expert.
- How does your faith/view of God influence how you answer the question?

Identify a song, movie, TV show, book, or podcast that made you think more deeply about God or life in general. If it’s one you know your friend likes (or has seen/heard), even better. Bring it up and ponder the mystery together. Don’t feel the need to give “the answer.” Offer your thoughts, humbly.

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Debrief on Week 2 Respond Section:**

Share your plan to connect with your prayer list people.

2. Share a time when you got into a deep conversation about life with a non-believer. What was the topic? Did you initiate the conversation or did it just “come up?”

3. What about your everyday life is different from the general population that would naturally make people curious about you? Is this uniqueness the result of your faith in Jesus?

4. As a group, brainstorm some questions that could pique curiosity in your non-believing friends. Spiritual questions are better. Here are some examples from *I Once Was Lost*:

- “Have you ever had what you would consider a spiritual experience?” (be ready to share one of yours)
- “I keep hearing that many people have a negative view of Christians or Christianity. Do you think that’s how a lot of people think?”
- “I was just thinking the other day about...do you ever think about that?”
- “What is the thing that puzzles you most about God?”
- “I don’t know if you’ve ever read the Bible, but the other day I was reading _____ and I was wondering what you think about that.”
- “If you could change one thing about your life, what would it be?”
- “When was the last time you were in a church? What did you think of it?”
- “I’ve started something new—making a daily prayer list. I wonder if there’s anything I can pray for you about?”

TOOLS // PRAYER LIST SKETCH

Use the questions below to help you identify opportunities to build deeper connections with those on your prayer list. Let these questions refresh your memory as you pray for them.

NAME:

PLAN TO CONNECT (WEEK 2 RESPOND):

WHAT INTERESTS DO YOU HAVE IN COMMON?

WHAT INTERESTS DO THEY HAVE?

HOW CAN YOU CHEER THEM ON IN AN AREA OF THEIR LIFE?

HOW CAN YOU BE PRAYING FOR THEM? (LET THIS BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW UP.)

WHAT HAVE THEY SHARED ABOUT FAITH IF ANYTHING?

WHICH OF THE FIVE THRESHOLDS COULD THEY BE IN?

WHAT BARRIERS COULD BE HOLDING THEM BACK FROM FAITH?

Use the QR code for quick access to additional resources:
<https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



WEEK 4 //

BECOMING OPEN TO CHANGE

INTRO:

For many, the greatest barrier to following Jesus isn't an intellectual one; it's that they know they would have to change something about how they live. Who can blame them? Few of us really like change when we have something that's working for us. Too often, we're afraid we'll lose people if we're upfront about the cost of following Jesus, so many Christians hide the need for change under the guise of "free grace." But while there is nothing we can do to earn God's forgiveness—grace is unmerited. Jesus was never afraid to challenge people's way of life and call them to follow him at all costs. This week, we'll learn how we can challenge and inspire people to take on the way of Jesus, even if it means they have to change something. Living under God's wisdom is not burdensome and, in the end, is life-giving.

“One reason this part of the journey is so difficult is that it dawns on our friends that they need to see the world in a new light. Questioning your own worldview and contemplating the Christian perspective for yourself is revolutionary. It can mean coming to terms with deep-seated dissatisfactions and unanswered questions and disappointments.”

I Once Was Lost,

pg. 69

// PRAYER //

- *Pray for hearts to understand the hope we have and God's mighty power.*

[Ephesians 1:18-20 NLT] I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called--his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.

- *Pray for people to understand our purpose to accomplish good in the world around us.*

[Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV] For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

Being a witness includes the willingness to accept that only God transforms hearts. Our role is to be faithful to the truth of the gospel as we walk alongside our prayer list people. Isaiah 55:11 says, “so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

This week, spend time in daily prayer for people on your prayer list. Use these Scripture passages below to remind you of the power of God’s Word.

- *Pray that we would accurately demonstrate God’s love to draw people to Jesus.*

John 13:35: By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

- 1 Thessalonians 2:8, 13

- 1 John 3:18-19

- *Pray for people to turn from their sinful ways towards God and his way of life.*

Psalm 25:8-9: Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

- Galatians 5:18-23

- Proverbs 11:2

- Romans 8:37-39

- *Pray that people would break through the barriers holding them back from a relationship with Jesus.*

1 Peter 1:8: Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

- Hebrews 11:1,6

- Ephesians 1:18-20

- Colossians 1:9-12

- *Pray people to understand God's love for them.*

1 John 4:9-10: This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

- Ephesians 3:16-21

- 1 Peter 5:7

- 1 John 4:16-19

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Debrief on Week 3 Respond Section:** Share about your spiritual conversation. How did it go? What did you learn through it?

2. This past Sunday, we talked about developing an openness to change. Share a time when you wrestled with a tough change in your life. How did you see God at work in that situation? How did God help you through it?

3. What was a catalyst for your openness to change?

4. Spend time in prayer. How can the group pray for those on your prayer list? What change can we be praying for in their life?

WEEK 5 //

MEANDERING TO SEEKING

INTRO:

One of the best-selling books of the past 25 years is called "The Purpose-Driven Life" by pastor Rick Warren. There is something about it that struck a nerve in people. Maybe it was the fact that without a sense of transcendence, many people lack purpose. Many, including Christians, are used to coasting through life entertaining themselves with media and activities. This can make the quest for truth a long and winding road, but not very intentional. This week we will talk about how we can help move people from meandering in their quest for faith, to truly seeking the God of the universe.

"True seekers are on a quest. They want to connect the dots and come to conclusions. Their questions aren't dodging techniques or casual inquiries; they are genuinely looking for some concrete answers."

*I Once Was Lost,
pg. 86*

// PRAYER //

- *Pray that our sharing would be motivated by our awe and respect for God.*

[1 Peter 3:15 NIV] But in your hearts revere 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,

- *Pray for people to overcome strongholds in their lives like addiction, mental health, and belief systems that war against the truth of the gospel.*

[Ephesians 6:12 NIV] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- *Pray for people to ask, seek, and knock in their faith journey.*

[Luke 11:9-10 NIV] So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

The focus of our application this week is to learn to respond to the questions people have about God and Christianity. We had you (our church) submit questions you have been asked by unbelievers. This week, determine how you would answer one of the questions below. Check out the Tools Section this week for resources.

- How can Christians say Jesus is the only way?
- If God is good, why is there evil in the world?
- Does science disprove God?
- Why does God allow pain and suffering?
- Why do you believe in God?
- Why do I need to go to church to have a relationship with God?

Write your answer for one question:

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Debrief on Week 4 Respond Section:** Did you spend time in prayer? How did you pray for your list?

2. What is a question you had in navigating your faith? How did you find the answer for your question?

3. Share a story or series of events that demonstrated to you that God is real and He is trustworthy. Be prepared to share with a person who is seeking.

4. What are questions that people have asked you as they have wrestled with their faith or understanding who God is?

5. What is a topic you would like to explore more as you prepare for conversations with your unbelieving friends or family?

TOOLS // RESOURCE LIST

“Seeker guiding is like being a guide at a museum: showing people different rooms and explaining what they are seeing in each room.”

I Once Was Lost, pg. 99

Below are some biblically sound resources that can help you find answers to common questions about faith.

VIDEOS:

- The Bible Project bibleproject.com
- “The Reason for God” by Tim Keller
- “Answers to Questions” on Waite Park Church website

BOOKS:

- “Mere Christianity” C.S. Lewis
- “Questioning Evangelism” by Randy Newman
- “The Reason for God” by Tim Keller
- “Making Sense of God” by Tim Keller
- “Mere Evangelism” by Randy Newman

- “Evangelism in a Skeptical World” by Sam Chan
- “The Case for Faith” by Lee Strobel

ARTICLES:

- Basic Christianity by John Stott
- What Is the Gospel? by Greg Gilbert

Use the QR code for quick access to additional resources:
<https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



WEEK 6 //

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

INTRO:

Do you remember when you crossed the line of faith and moved from lost to saved? What was it that finally motivated you to make that decision? Well, people are still making that decision today, choosing to give their lives to Jesus. And most of the time, they do so because another believer took their hand and led them into eternal life. Yet we are often hesitant to make that appeal for fear we'll be seen as too pushy, forced or weird. It doesn't have to sound like a sales-pitch. It just takes a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and the willingness to understand how God might be working in a person's life. This week we'll talk about how we can communicate how Jesus fulfills everything they're looking for.

*“Instead, you must
worship Christ as
Lord of your life.
And if someone asks
about your Christian
hope, always be
ready to explain it.”
(1 Peter 3:15)*

// PRAYER //

- *Pray for hearts to understand the hope we have and God's mighty power.*

[Ephesians 1:18-20 NLT] I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called--his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.

- *Pray for people to receive forgiveness and turn from sin and strongholds.*

[Acts 26:18 NIV] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

- *Pray for people to trust in the Lord and turn to follow Him.*

[Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV] Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways submit to

him, and he will make your paths straight.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

Imagine a person on your prayer list crossing this threshold into the Kingdom!

In the sermon, Pastor Kory discussed some of the needs that are addressed by the gospel. Choose one of the needs below. How would you share how Jesus fulfills that need including Scripture?

- To be free from their past.
- To know they are loved/valued by God.
- To have peace with God.
- To have guidance/direction for their present situation.
- To have a community to walk with them through life.
- To reconcile their relationships.
- To have the power to live right.
- To feel confident about their eternity.

Write your response below:

DISCUSS // GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Debrief on Week 5 Respond Section:** What question did you answer? How did you answer it? Share with the group.

2. How did you or someone you know come to believe that Jesus is God and accept Him as Lord?

3. *I Once Was Lost* uses the analogy of wedding vows and a sports team as examples of being part of the Kingdom of God. Which one is the most helpful in sharing about a relationship with Jesus? Why?

4. What are barriers that could keep a person from taking this last step into a relationship with God? How could someone overcome that barrier?

TOOLS // BIBLE STUDY

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY WITH UNBELIEVERS:

- MARK 12:28-34: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT
- LUKE 5:27-32: CALLING LEVI
- LUKE 14:12-24: PARABLE OF THE GREAT BANQUET
- LUKE 15:11-32: PARABLE OF THE LOST SON
- JOHN 3:1-21: JESUS TEACHES NICODEMUS
- JOHN 4:1-42: JESUS TALKS WITH SAMARITAN WOMAN

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What does the passage say about God?
How does it help us understand who God is?
2. What does the passage tell us about people? How does it help us better understand people in relation to God, others, and the world around us?
3. How might we align our thoughts or actions to better reflect the values of the Kingdom of God? What changes will YOU make as a result of this passage?

Use the QR code for quick access to additional resources:
<https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



WEEK 7 //

LIVING IN THE KINGDOM

INTRO:

The book of Matthews ends with what we call “The Great Commission.” “All authority has been given to me, therefore, go and make disciples of all nations...” Notice he did not say, “Go and preach the Gospel!” Or “Go and get people saved!” We certainly want to do both. No, he said, “Go! And make disciples!” We all know that crossing the line of is not the end, it’s the beginning of a long adventure. Evangelism is only the beginning of the process of discipleship.

To be a disciple means to be a learner—someone who walks through life with an apprentice. When someone gives their life to Christ, they need to learn new habits like prayer, Scripture reading and serving. They also need to learn what it means to be a part the spiritual family called The Church. But most people don’t know where to begin. This week will give you the tools you need to walk with a new Christian as they learn what it means to follow Jesus.

“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

(Matthew 28:18-20)

// PRAYER //

- *Rejoice over the gift of salvation.*

[Luke 15:10 NIV] In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

- *Pray for people to grow to maturity and invest in expanding the kingdom of God.*

[Luke 10:2 NIV] 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.

- *Pray for believers to boldly share the gospel and become ambassadors for Jesus.*

[Eph 6:19-20 NIV] Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Spend time in prayer for the people on your prayer list:

// RESPOND //

Sharing your story impacts those around you. This week, write your own testimony. Try to keep it under five minutes. Cru has a great outline for crafting your story based on Paul's testimony in Acts 22:1-21.

1. **THE OPENING** - Identify a theme or an area of transformation to tie your story together.
2. **YOUR LIFE BEFORE CHRIST**- Share what captures our need for Jesus and what relates to the theme.
 - When and why did my perspective on Christ begin to change?
 - Why did I finally decide to accept Christ (or give Him complete control of my life)?
3. **HOW YOU CAME TO CHRIST** - Tell why and how you became a Christian.
 - When was the first time I heard the gospel? What were my initial reactions?
 - What were the final struggles that I went through before I accepted Him?
4. **YOUR LIFE AFTER CHRIST**- Give example of how your life has changed.
 - How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude and perspective on life.

- Even though my life still is not perfect, how does knowing Christ help me deal with that fact?

5. THE CLOSING - Summarize your story and connect it all back to your theme. Make sure that Jesus gets the credit!

Write your story.

Use the QR code for quick access to additional resources:
<https://www.waiteparkchurch.org/confident-witness>



3. How can our small group encourage you to continue being a bold witness to these people?

4. Review the Small Group Health Check in the appendix. How can your group grow in your second value? How will you live out this value together?

TOOLS // DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY

Our friends at Table Church created a tool called the Discipleship Pathway that introduces the practices that strengthen our relationship with Jesus. The Pathway is designed for a one-on-one discipling relationship. The Pathway will guide you through each step and provide resources to deepen your understanding of following Jesus. Find a friend and use the QR code to begin the Pathway.

1. Prayer
2. Calling
3. Self Denial
4. Scripture
5. Hospitality
6. Justice
7. Make Disciples

Use the QR code for quick access to the Discipleship Pathway content: <https://www.discipleship.guide/>



APPENDIX //

SMALL GROUP HEALTH CHECK

Our Small Groups provide a crucial opportunity for growth. Measuring what matters spurs us on to become mature disciples of Christ. Use the scale below to rate your group in the following areas.

SCALE GUIDE:

Non-Existent: not a present pursuit of our group

Enduring: present in conversation, no progress seen or resistance encountered

Exploring: present in conversation, seen energy building around this area or small steps of progress

Growing: tangible steps of progress seen, the area has been embraced or impacted the group

Flourishing: the area is regular practice within the group, become part of who we are

Cultivating Community

How well does your group connect with each other? When you are together, does the group feel comfortable sharing what is happening in their life?

Group Connection (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Engaging in Scripture

How receptive has your group been to studying Scripture together? Have you seen your group grow through Bible study? Have you seen indications that people spend time in the Word throughout the week?

Group Bible Study (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Personal Study (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Practicing Prayer

Prayer is a crucial practice in living as disciples. How well has your group engaged in prayer? How often have you seen God work through your group or personal prayers?

Group Time Prayer (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Overall Personal Prayer of the Group (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Serving

How well has your group served or cared for each other? How well has your group served others outside your group?

Serving One Another (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Serving Others (Outside the group) (Score on

scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Evangelism

How intentional has your group been in investing in relationships with unbelievers?

Cultivating Relationships with Unbelievers
(Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Investing in Spiritual Conversations (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Leadership Development

How well have you been at identifying and developing the leaders in your group? How well have you been at asking people to take ownership in different aspects of leading the group?

Identification of Potential Leaders (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Providing Opportunities for Potential Leaders to Grow (Score on scale from Non-existent to Flourishing)

Use the QR code for quick access to the Small Group Health Check.





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