

How to Win Friends and Influence People For the Kingdom of God

2. How to lead someone to Christ



The promise of eternity is clear in scripture; we are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Since we are in God's image, we are eternal, whether we like it or not. God made us this way, eternity is promised in scripture to both saved and lost. Heaven and Hell faces those made in the image of God.

When Adam and Eve fell, all of mankind fell with them; Jesus came to redeem us, to restore us from our fallen state. He died in our place, for our sins, His death purchased our redemption. The word redeem in Hebrew is גאל *Ga'al*, and means to play the role of kinsman, someone who is a relation to the person needing rescue, hence the term, *kinsman -redeemer*. Jesus became a "son of man" when He was born into humanity, Jesus, "fully man" and "fully God", is our *kinsman redeemer*. His death purchased our redemption; he paid the price of our salvation.

The good-news of our redemption, is called the *Gospel* or in the Greek, *Euaggelion*. This is the mission of the church, to announce to the world the good-news of salvation. The world needs to hear the message of salvation, so they can make an eternal choice. Jesus has given the job of presenting the Gospel to those who are "Saved". We, who have accepted Jesus as Lord and savior, have the responsibility to carry the message to the lost. Just as someone was faithful, to bring us the message of redemption, we are called to be faithful and bring the message forward.

Just how does somebody lead somebody to Christ? Just what are we called to do? This is the dilemma for many who know Jesus Christ as their personal savior.

If you have a friend who does not know Jesus Christ, you have the greatest opportunity in the world. If you could offer someone the whole world, it is still not equal to what you can offer a friend, when you offer him/her Jesus Christ. Through friendship, we have this amazing opportunity, to introduce people to Jesus Christ. First, we need to understand just what does it mean bring someone to Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to lead someone to Christ

Just how do you lead someone to Christ is a question I faced after I first became a believer. I knew why I believed, and I would often tell people about the evidence and leave it at that. I knew why I accepted, however after I accepted, I did not really understand, what I should do with my new found salvation.

Later through my search for fellowship and knowledge, I took a class on *personal evangelism*¹ then the whole picture come together. Yes, I was saved! But now with my salvation I had a mission. I was called by Jesus Christ, to bring the good-news of salvation to lost people. To explain to them, who Jesus is, what He did, why we need them, and then give people an opportunity to accept Jesus, personally. The same as someone asked me, if I would like to receive Jesus Christ, I was to ask others.

Asking someone to accept Jesus Christ means giving them an opportunity to hear the good-news, the Gospel, and giving them an opportunity to put their faith in Jesus Christ. Imagine you were walking through a desert, dying of water, you find an oasis in the desert, and you're saved! Finding the oasis saved your life. A short while later, in the distance you see another person struggle in the hot desert sun, dying of thirst. What do you do? How do you lead them to the oasis? You might go out into the desert, you might call to them from the distance, and you can even take them water from the pool.

Jesus Christ is our salvation in the desert of life. We struggled for the living water, like the Samaritan woman. Jesus offered her this same water that he offers to us, the living water of everlasting life.

¹ Personal Evangelism is means to spread the Gospel in your personal life, which is along the lines of friendship evangelism.

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,
14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." **John 4:13-14**

We are called to offer the water of life, to those in the desert. Even if you are the most successful person whoever lived, without Jesus Christ you are lost and bankrupt, dying of thirst in the desert.

So leading someone to Christ is bringing someone to point of decision, informing them of God's offer of redemption, then allowing them to accept or reject the offer. Leading someone to Christ is not making them a member of our church; it's not making them friends or having them repeat a prayer after us.

Leading someone to Christ is having them make a sincere commitment to Christ, only the Lord knows someone's heart. The sincerity of accepting Jesus Christ it between them and the Lord, our job is to present the Gospel clearly, allowing them to make a decision. Showing them how to receive the gift of salvation, Jesus Christ, we are leading them to the living waters.

Once someone comes to Christ, we can help them along in their faith, through discipleship². Jesus set the model for us to follow. He trained 12, who reached the whole world. God puts people in our life, so we can transfer His wisdom to them.

The Holy Spirit draws people

One point, we need to clarify is that we are merely instruments used by God to complete the work. When we lead someone to Christ, we are actually letting God work through us to bring people to Christ. People do not come to Christ because we choose, but because God chooses. We are merely making ourselves available for God's service.

In the book of Acts, we see the Ethiopian eunuch, sitting in his chariot, reading from the scriptures. He was reading from the book of Isaiah, chapter 53, when Phillip came upon the scene. Now this is how it appeared in the physical world, actually Acts reveals the Holy Spirit was directing the scene. Phillip was merely a willing servant, used by God. Philip had a message to deliver to the Ethiopian, the same message we have.

26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert.

27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship,

28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. **Acts 8:26-39**

Philip explained to the man, what he was reading in scripture. How it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, pointing to the way of salvation (vs. 35). Then the man confesses Jesus Christ is the Son of God, through Philip's preaching the Gospel. Following his sincere faith, he was baptized in the faith. From the beginning to the end the Holy Spirit was involved in the whole event. Philip made himself available for God's service.

² Discipleship is the act of disciplining someone in the faith. Helping them understand the operation of faith, instructing a person on how to live the Christian faith.

The same thing happens today, when we allow God to use us, he directs those, searching and yearning for salvation into our life. Like Philip, we need to be sensitive to the Spirit of God, (Romans 8:1-27). The Spirit of God today is drawing people to Salvation, our job is to find those who God is calling. Therefore it does not depend on our abilities, but on our availability. When we make ourselves available, God will then call us when the time is right.

44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.
65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." **John 6:44,65**

Through friendship, we make ourselves available to God's Spirit, as people come into our life. Like Philip going down the road, he showed friendship to a stranger. Jesus showed friendship to the Samaritan woman (John 4), causing the village of Sychar to come out and meet Him.

Let the light of Christ shine

When do we broach the subject of salvation and Jesus Christ in a friendship? This is really up to the move of God's Spirit. This is why being sensitive to the Spirit is essential in our spiritual walk. God will open the door of salvation, through our life or by God's prompting them.



26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. **Romans 8:26-27**

Often, it's our life that causes people to ask what makes us different. When we let the light of Christ shine through our lives, we demonstrate the love of God. Through our life, people will be drawn to us, when Jesus Christ shines through us. People in the world are looking for hope, the world only offers dead ends. This is what sets us apart, the Spirit of God, dwelling in us has changed us, we are *Born Again*, because God is dwelling in us (John 3:3-7, I Cor. 6:19).

The world cannot find hope apart from Jesus. Therefore we need to make sure people know why we are different. We are reflectors, reflecting the light we have inside of us. We need to let the light of Christ shine out of our life.

If we are filled with darkness, then evil shines out of our life. If we are filled with the Spirit, then our life will reflect the light of God. We become

"images" and "reflectors" of our Father to a lost and dying world.

44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **Matthew 5:44-46**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

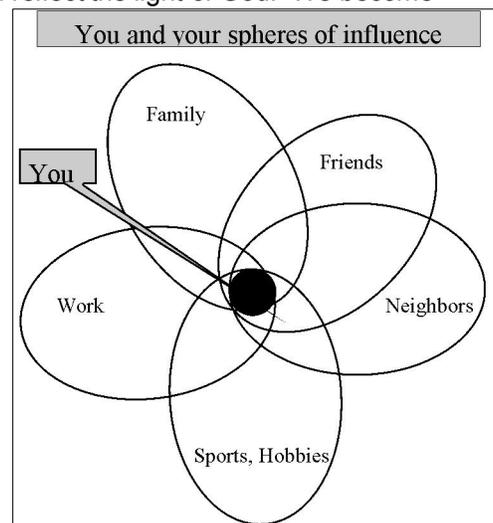
23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. **Galatians 5:22-25**

34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one



another." **John 13:34-35**

In each of these verses, we see the world is watching our life. The world is comparing us, evaluating us, to see if we are real. They want to know is Jesus real? Through our friendships we allow the world to come into contact with us. As a result, we let them see how real Jesus Christ is, it's not an act. Ultimately through our life, friends will yearn to know what makes us different.

Ask yourself, before you knew Jesus; were there people who stood out to you? People who did not seem like the world? Did you wonder what made these people different? This is the opportunity we have everyday, with those who God has put around us.

Praying for our friends

Armor of God	
	girded your waist with truth (Vs. 14)
	breastplate of righteousness, (Vs. 14)
	shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Vs. 15)
	taking the shield of faith (Vs. 16)
	helmet of salvation (Vs. 17)
	sword of the Spirit (Vs. 17)
	praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit (Vs. 18)

When we become aware of the vital role we play in the salvation of souls, expect a battle to ensue. Bringing souls into the kingdom of God is a direct attack on Satan's domain. Satan does not like his domain attacked; Satan however is powerless against the authority of Christ (Matthew 28:18). However, we need to have a clear understanding of Satan's power in the earthly realms. Scripture calls him (Satan) *the god of this age*, this title, in scripture is defining the power we are up against. Satan is not someone we should take lightly, Peter calls him a lion, *seeking whom he may devour* (1 Peter 5:8).

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**

Make no mistake, bringing souls into the kingdom of God is spiritual warfare, Satan's domain is being assaulted. This is the reason we need prayer cover, we need the resources of Heaven available to us. Our actions and relationships need to be covered in prayer, because we are at war. The eternities of souls are on the line, Satan would love to stop us in our tracks, but Christ's authority is supreme.

Prayer is the often overlooked part of Paul's description of the armor for the spiritual warrior in Ephesians 6:10-18. Here, Paul requests prayer cover, so he may advance the gospel.

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints

19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel. **Ephesians 6:18-19**

Understand all heaven is focused on the salvation of souls, on the battle between the forces of Satan and the forces of Jesus Christ (the saved). Jesus declares the joy in Heaven, when a sinner finds salvation.

7 "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. **Luke 15:7**

Leading Someone to Christ

Therefore with each relationship we develop, we need to understand the depth of the spiritual struggle. Since our goal is not merely to have friends for the sake of friends, our goal is to develop eternal friends. Friends we will know for eternity in heaven, friends who we can take with us into heaven.

Therefore let's summarize the important points before we continue.

- Leading someone to Christ is giving them an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- The Spirit of God is the force behind a persons salvation, we are only instruments

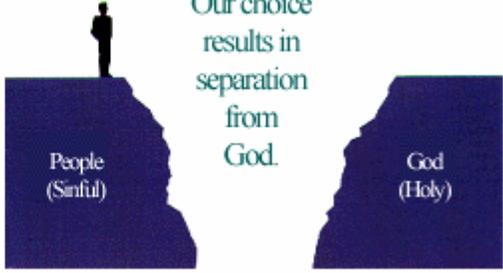
- We need to let the light of Christ shine through our lives
- We need to pray for those who God puts in our life

With the above points in context, God opens the door for our friend to be presented with the Gospel. Where do we start? There are several methods to present the Gospel, including the *Roman Road*, *Three Phase Pattern*, *Religion vs. Christianity*, *Jesus' Definition of Christianity*, *Four Steps to God*³ and *Steps to Peace with God*.

Each method has one point in common; the need for Christ has to be established. The belief we are "good enough" and worthy of Heaven is one of the hardest bridges to cross. Most people consider themselves good, and we justify our sins in our hearts. Therefore, since I am good why do I need a savior? We will use the method *Steps to Peace with God* by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Objections about Jesus and the Bible sometimes need to be answered first, before someone is willing to trust Christ. This is why understanding *apologetics* (Word of defense) is important, especially since the Gospel is under constant attack. Many people have sincere questions, so we should never dismiss questions; the truth has nothing to fear.

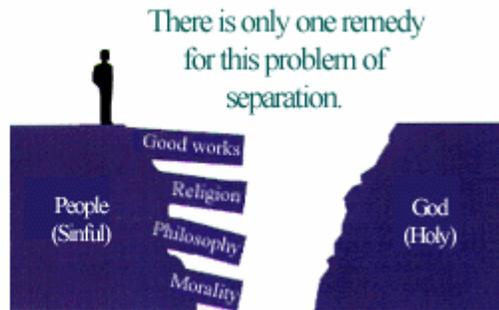
Steps to Peace with God

 <p><i>Step 1</i></p> <p>God's Purpose: Peace and Life</p> <p>Since God planned for us to have peace and the abundant life right now, why are most people not having this experience?</p>  <p>(Everybody yearns for a purpose, we are looking for meaning, why am I here. Some find their purpose in success, fame, money, looks or sports, all are vain attempts to purpose. Only through Christ will we find our purpose)</p>	<p>God loves you and wants you to experience peace and life -- abundant and eternal.</p> <p>The Bible says...</p> <p>"...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1</p> <p>"For God so loved the world that He have His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16</p> <p>"...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10</p>
 <p><i>Step 2</i></p> <p>Our Problem: Separation</p>  <p>Our choice results in separation from God.</p> <p>People (Sinful)</p> <p>God (Holy)</p> <p>(Our fallen condition has caused us to be separated from God. Most people don't know there is a problem. We are constantly trying to find a way to fill the empty feeling. This is our yearning of redemption.)</p>	<p>God created us in His own image to have an abundant life. He did not make us as robots to automatically love and obey Him, but gave us a will and a freedom of choice.</p> <p>We chose to disobey God and go our own willful way. We still make this choice today. This results in separation from God.</p> <p>The Bible says...</p> <p>"For all have sinned and fall short of the</p>

³ How to Give Away your Faith, Paul Little Pgs. 96-97, InterVarsity Press Downers Grove Illinois Revised 1988.



Our Attempts



glory of God." Romans 3:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

Through the ages, individuals have tried in many ways to bridge this gap...without success...

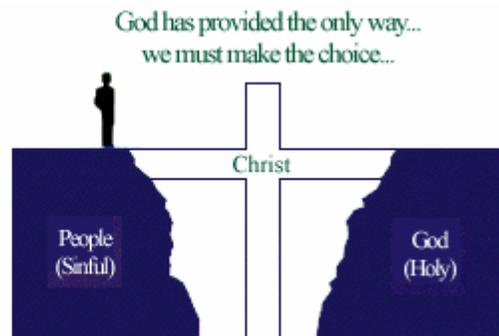
The Bible says...

"There is a way that seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death." Proverbs 14:12

"But your iniquities have separated you from God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:2



God's Remedy: The Cross



Jesus Christ is the only answer to this problem. He died on the Cross and rose from the grave, paying the penalty for our sin and bridging the gap between God and people.

The Bible says...

"...God is on one side and all the people on the other side, and Christ Jesus, Himself man, is between them to bring them together..." 1 Timothy 2:5

"For Christ Jesus also has suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God..." 1 Peter 3:18a

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

(Jesus came to restore this lost relationship with God. Jesus death has paid the price of our redemption. The way of restoration is established. The Gospel is the good-news of salvation)

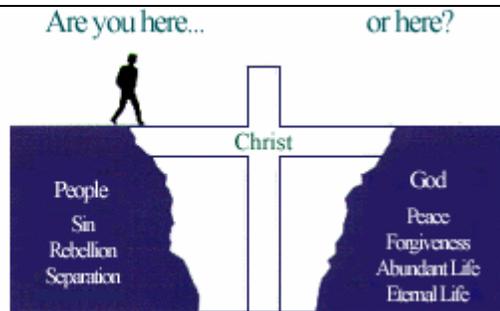
We must trust Jesus Christ and receive Him by personal invitation.

The Bible says...

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20



Our Response: Receive Christ



"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

"...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

Is there any good reason why you cannot receive Jesus Christ right now?

How to receive Christ:

1. Admit your need (I am a sinner).
2. Be willing to turn from your sins (repent).
3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the Cross and rose from the grave.
4. Through prayer, invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit (Receive Him as Lord and Savior).



God's Assurance: His Word

If you prayed this prayer, The Bible says...

"For 'whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.'" Romans 10:13

Did you sincerely ask Jesus Christ to come into your life? Where is He right now? What has He given you?

"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." Ephesians 2:8-9



The Bible Says...

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God." 1 John 5:12-13, NKJV

Receiving Christ, we are born into God's family through the supernatural

