

INTRODUCTION

A Study about the King and His Kingdom

Matthew 6:33

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

(NIV)

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SEEKING GOD

Jeremiah 29:11-14

11 *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

12 *Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.*

13 *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

14 *I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile." (NIV)*

Verse 11

Q: From this verse what do you think God wants your future to be like? (Plans to prosper, protect, a hope and a future)

Q: Do you have a hard time believing that God wants to bless you and has great plans for you? Why?

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

(NIV)

Study Goals

- ❖ To help people realize that God wants to bless them. To have a relationship with them. (Jeremiah 29:11-14; John 10:10)
- ❖ To help the people understand what it means to really seek God. (Jeremiah 29:12; Matthew 7: 7-8; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 13:44-46; Acts 8:26-40)
- ❖ To give hope by recognizing God arranged this study so that he could give them a great future. (Acts 17:26,27)

NOTE: This passage was written at a time when God's people were experiencing all kinds of hardships. They had ignored God and were paying an awful price. Even so, God had not given up on them. Though we may do this, God doesn't give up on us. There is hope!

NOTE: Many have a hard time believing that God could love, bless, or use them because of past actions or events in their life. It is good to remind the person that in the Jeremiah 29 passage, God is talking to people who have failed miserably! A person's past has never stopped God. He is much more concerned with their future than their past.

NOTE: Let the person know that Jesus came to earth to give them a full life!

Verses 12, 13, 14

Q: What are the promises?

❖ Promise #1: “I will listen to you...”

❖ Promise #2: “You will find me...”

Matthew 7:7-8

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find...”

❖ Promise #3: “I will rescue you...”

Q: What are the conditions?

❖ “You will find me when you seek me with ALL of your heart.”

Q: What are some signs that a person is “seeking” something “with ALL his/her heart?”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

❖ **God wants me to seek him like that.**

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

(NIV)

NOTE: In these verses God gives both Promises and Conditions to the people.

NOTE: Most people have never had a whole-hearted commitment to God. They have, however, aggressively pursued things such as popularity, sports, or relationships and careers with all their heart. These things have been their first priority.

Examples:

- ❖ They think about it all the time.
- ❖ It dominates their dialogue.
- ❖ They associate with people who share the same goals or interests.
- ❖ They make personal sacrifices to have it.
- ❖ They don't give up...they keep trying even when it's tough.

NOTE: You must make it clear that God wants to bless the person. However, God will only do it, if and when they make the commitment to seek God with their “whole heart”.

Matthew 13:44-46

44 *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.*

45 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.*

46 *When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.*

(NIV)

Q: How much did the treasure cost the man in this story?

Q: What do you think their friends or family thought about him selling everything?

Q: Why would anyone do what he did?

Acts 8:26-40

Let's read this together.

A real seeker of God will.....

Vs. 27

1. **Make sacrifices to get to know God.**

❖ He travels 1000 miles (6 month journey)

❖ *Deuteronomy 23:1* says it was illegal for the Eunuch to enter the temple courts.

❖ He travels 1000 miles just to look.

NOTE: The man sells everything because the treasure he has found is worth more than he has. In the end he will end up with more. If he doesn't put the treasure first, he will miss out! Let the person know that a relationship with God is a treasure worth selling **all** for.

NOTE: This passage reveals a great example of someone who was determined to seek God first. Give a little background on this story. Point out that God sent Philip to teach the Eunuch to give him the opportunity to be saved. The Eunuch displays **4** specific steps to finding God.

Vs. 28

2. **Read and study his bible on his own.**

- ❖ Not just doing it as an assignment or requirement!
- ❖ Not just studying when he is being studied with.

Vs. 31-34

3. **Asks for help.**

- ❖ “How can I...” “Come help me.”
Great Humility.
- ❖ More interested in becoming good than looking good.

Vs. 36

4. **Quickly does whatever God wants him to.**

- ❖ He doesn't procrastinate – He does what he knows to do, now!

Acts 17:26-27

26 *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.*

(NIV)

NOTE: In this passage, you are introducing a *powerful idea*. God brings people together. The questions that follow are designed to emphasize this truth. Not only does this point encourage the person to see God's interest in having a relationship with him, it also plants the expectation of how God wants to use him to reach others. Explain the context of this passage and point out that Paul did not think that his presence in Athens was an *accident* or *coincidence*. He believed God arranged it! The same was true with the Eunuch. This is also true for him.

Q: As you read this passage, do you think we have met by chance or is it part of God's plan?

- ❖ Because God wants a relationship with you and is giving you an opportunity to seek Him.

CHALLENGE:

Q: Will you seek God with all your heart?

COMMITMENT:

Q: Would you like to study again? When can we meet again?

NOTE: You can point out that your paths have crossed not by accident...it was arranged by God! Why?

NOTE: This gives you a great opportunity to share your excitement over their desire to seek God. Encourage them by sharing how your life changed when you started seeking God.

NOTE: Close each study by calling the person to a challenge and a commitment.

THE WORD OF GOD

2 Timothy 3:15-17

15 *and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

16 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,*

17 *so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

(NIV)

Verse 15:

Q: From this verse, what do you notice Paul pointing to that would help Timothy know he was saved?

TIMELINE

Born? Started going to church? Saved? Baptized?

Study Goals:

- ❖ To help people see that the Bible is from God (inspired) and is not just another book. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
- ❖ To show the benefits of the Bible. Its relevance and usefulness. It supplies answers and solutions. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12-13)
- ❖ To warn what happens if the word of God is ignored or replaced by tradition. (John 12:47-50; I Timothy 4:16; Mark 7:5-13; 2 Peter 3:16)
- ❖ To make a commitment to study, listen to, and obey the word of God. (James 1:22-25; Acts 17:11-12)

NOTE: God’s Word, (The Holy Scriptures) tells us how to have a saving relationship through our faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible says that by knowing the scriptures we can know if we are saved or not. You can use **I John 5:13** as an example. The apostle John says “I am **writing** this to you so that you may **know** that you have eternal life....”

NOTE: Here’s a good place to introduce the Spiritual Time Line. The Spiritual Time Line is a brief history of your friend’s religious experiences. While the Time Line will not be used until much later in the studies, (Repentance and Baptism study), filling it out now allows the opportunity for an objective record of how your friend was ‘*saved*’. Let your friend know that you are doing the time line so that they can compare what they did to become a Christian with what the Bible says. If their conversion matches up—GREAT! If not then the studies will help them secure their relationship with God.

Verse 16:

Q: Paul says the Bible is useful...What does he say it's good for?

Teaching—God's word will **express** information.

Ex: Facts...what is true...what is good...etc.

Rebuking—God's word will **expose** the problem.

Correcting—God's word will **exhibit** the solution.

Training—God's word will **explain** how to do it.

Hebrews 4:12-13

12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

(NIV)

Verses 12-13:

Q: What do you think “living and active” mean?

It applies...it's relevant to today's life and problems

Q: How do you feel about being cut?

This passage says that the word of God is like a sharp knife...it cuts.

NOTE: Point out that **all** of God's Word is inspired (**2 Peter 1:20-21**) and useful...in other words it's good!

NOTE: Point out that as the two of you look into God's word they can expect these things to occur. It's important they understand that there is a connection between their application and their transformation. The 'usefulness' of God's word depends on their response as they learn. Cast a vision for your friend by letting them know God wants them more than saved. He wants them thoroughly equipped for ever good work he's planned for them.

NOTE: The Bible is not like an out of date medical or science book. The message is relevant and accurate for today's problems. People tend to think that their problems are new; that they are the exception. Yet they can't list one activity or problem that isn't directly or indirectly dealt with in the Bible. The word of God has the answers for anyone that is willing to look into it.

NOTE: The Hebrew writer compares God's word to a small surgeon's sword...a scalpel. No one likes to be cut, but under certain circumstances we will allow it. There are several illustrations that you can introduce that explain the *motive* behind God's word cutting us. One way is to discuss the surgery and the motive behind the '*cutter*'. God is more like a cardiologist than a cosmetic surgeon, and all cardiologists must expose what's inside to help their patients. Like a cardiologist, God's word cuts us *deep* as it *judges* our deepest thoughts, attitudes, and values. He does this to help us. When we consent to God's spiritual 'open heart' surgery, we get incredible help.

Q: What do you think will happen if you refuse to be open to God and allow His word to cut you?

- ❖ God will not be able to help you.
- ❖ Just like a person who refuses to have surgery...you die!

John 12:47-50

POINT: LET THE WORD OF GOD BE YOUR STANDARD

47 *"As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.*

48 *There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.*

49 *For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.*

50 *I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."*
(NIV)

Q: What do you think Jesus will use to judge you?

- ❖ His words.

Q: What can you do to make sure that you are saved and not condemned?

- ❖ Accept what the Bible says. Let it determine what you believe and how you live.

NOTE: The next four passages help introduce four things every person must do in order to insure God's word will benefit his life.

NOTE: When Jesus was on the earth, he was not here to judge people; *He was here to save people*. There will be a time when everyone will be judged as saved or lost. His word leads to eternal life. It must be the ultimate and final standard.

1 Timothy 4:16

POINT: EXAMINE WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND WHAT YOU DO.

16 *Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (NIV)*

Mark 7:5-13

POINT: CHOOSE GOD'S WORD OVER TRADITIONS.

5 *So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?"*

6 *He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.*

7 *They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.'*

8 *You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men."*

9 *And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!*

10 *For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.'*

11 *But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God),*

12 *then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother.*

13 *Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that." (NIV)*

NOTE: Watching how you live ‘life’, and what you believe or ‘doctrine’ is essential. **WHY?** It has an impact on your eternal destiny and the eternal destiny of others.

Q: Why is Jesus calling these people *hypocrites*?

Q: What does following traditions do to God's word?

2 Peter 3:16

POINT: AVOID TWISTING AND DISTORTING GOD'S WORD.

16 *He (Paul) writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

(NIV)

Q: What kind of people distort God's word?

- ❖ Unstable...ignorant.
- ❖ People who do so intentionally...and unintentionally

Q: What happens when we distort the word of God?

James 1:21-25

...humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.
22 *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

23 *Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror*

24 *and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.*

25 *But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it-- he will be blessed in what he does.*

(NIV)

NOTE: You may want to stop here and talk a little bit about common traditions in churches today. Ex: Attending church or being a good and sincere person is all that matters to God; all roads lead to heaven; You may want to share particular concepts that were passed on to you from your parents to help your friend identify a few. Before you move on it is important to emphasize that we must honor God's word above anything else.

NOTE: Another passage you can go to is **Galatians 1:6-8**. Paul stresses that perverting (changing) the gospel (good news) not only makes the *good* news *bad* news, it leads to condemnation. Paul encourages the Galatians to stay with the *original* message they accepted. You can stress here how important it is to find the *original* message.

Acts 17:11-12

11 *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*

12 *Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.*

(NIV)

Q: Will you ‘Be a Berean’? Checking out what we study, reading daily on your own and obeying what you discover to be true?

The Commitment: Accepting the word of God as the only source of authority. Accepting that God’s word determines what I will believe and how I will live.

CHALLENGE:

Q: Will you make the Word of God your standard to live by?

COMMITMENT:

Q: When can we get together again?

SIN

Romans 3:23

23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
(NIV)

Q: Who falls short of God's glory?

❖ **Everyone!**

I John 1:8

8 *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*
(NIV)

I John 3:4

4 *Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.*
(NIV)

NOTE: It is very important to develop a good relationship with your friend by the time you get to this study. This promotes openness and honesty. You want to create an environment that is safe for your friend to open up. Make sure you model this by being open with your life too. Respect the confidentiality in this study.

Study Goals:

- ❖ To help people *define* and *recognize* sin. (Romans 3:23; 1 John 3:4; Galatians 5:19-21; Mark 7:20-22; James 4:17)
- ❖ To understand what sin does to them. (Genesis 2:16-17; Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23; Romans 7:7-25)
- ❖ To instill an urgency to deal properly with their sin. (Matthew 5:27-30)

NOTE: Everybody sins...everybody falls short. This is a great place to start in this study because it builds common ground between you and your friend. You are admitting up front that no one is perfect. We all fall short of God's glory. In fact if anyone thinks they don't sin they *deceive* themselves.

NOTE: This is a transition passage. It teaches that sin is disobeying God's word. Remember, in the last study we made a commitment to live by God's word. When we sin, we violate God's will for our lives. We are now ready to look at some sins God lists in his word.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions

21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

(NIV)

Q: Paul says sin is obvious...what do you think that means?

LIST OF SINS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS:

Based on original Greek/NT meanings.

Simplified/modernized for clarity.

Sexual Immorality: Having sex with someone other than your Husband/Wife. This includes homosexuality, having sex before marriage, etc.

Impurity: Lust, Porno, 900 numbers, Dirty magazines, etc.

Debauchery: Out of control, Excessive sensuality, dirty dancing, dressing in sleazy clothes.

Idolatry: False gods. Anything you place above God; girlfriend, boyfriend, sports, television, etc.

Witchcraft: The occult, using drugs or even alcohol to alter the way you think.

Hatred: Detesting someone, mean feelings/actions directed toward another, the opposite of love.

NOTE: It is vital to the success of this study that you use the above passage to get the person to identify their sin, and that they are a sinner. Also make clear that in God's eyes no one's sin is bigger than another. Sin is sin! This will require you to go through Paul's list of sins, explaining each one and asking the student about specific struggles. This can be uncomfortable and will create guilt, but this is necessary. **One way to make this easier is to be open with *your* sin struggles.** Remember the "*all*" of Romans 3:23 includes you!

Discord: Having a bad attitude; acting on your hate; being hard to get along with.

Jealousy: Being angry or resentful toward someone for something that they possess that you do not.

Fits of rage: Throwing a fit; losing control; a temper tantrum.

Selfish Ambition: Always thinking about yourself. Self-promotion; pride.

Dissensions: Thinking that your group is better than everyone else's.

Factions: Cliquish; segregationist; being part of a group that causes trouble; gangs.

Drunkenness: Getting high from beer or drugs; impaired.

Orgies: A wild party; things going on at a party such as drinking, drugs, or sex.

And the Like: Things that are close/similar to the things listed above.

Mark 7:20-22

20 *He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.'*

21 *For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,*

22 *greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.*

(NIV)

Q: Where does sin come from?

NOTE: Here is another list of obvious sins that you can discuss. You want to point out that sin comes from within. Sin is a spiritual problem of the heart. It has a negative impact on our lives. It makes us ‘unclean’. That means we need God’s help to change and overcome them.

Evil Thoughts: Any thought that is bad.

Theft: To take something that isn't yours, to steal

Murder: Taking a life with premeditation.

Greed: An uncontrolled desire to attain more money or possessions.

Malice: A desire to inflict harm to another.

Deceit: Lying, shading the truth, exaggeration, misleading another through words or action.

Slander: A deliberate statement to discredit or destroy another's reputation.

Arrogance: Having a prideful attitude

Folly: Being unwise; unwilling to deal with life seriously.

James 4:17

17 *Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.*
(NIV)

Q: Can you think of things that you know are right, but you are not doing?

Genesis 2:16-17

16 *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;*
17 *but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*
(NIV)

NOTE: Sin is not only doing ‘bad’ things; it involves the lack of doing ‘good’ things as well.

NOTE: Briefly explain the setting of this passage. God revealed his will. Adam and Eve disobeyed (sinned) and they were banished from the Garden of Eden.

Q: Do you think Adam and Eve physically died when they ate the fruit?

❖ No...it was a spiritual death.

Isaiah 59:1-2

1 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.

*2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; **your** sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. (NIV)*

Q: What’s the real reason God could not help the people mentioned in this passage?

<p>MAN</p> <p>Dead Enslaved Lost</p>	<p>S</p> <p>I</p> <p>N</p>	<p>GOD</p> <p>Alive Free Saved</p>
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Q: What do you think of when you think of a ‘wage’?

Q: What wage is God going to pay you and I for our sin?

Romans 7:14-25

Sin enslaves me: *14 “We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.”*

Q: Can you think of a sin that is trying to control you?

NOTE: Isaiah describes the spiritual death (separation) we experience because of our sin. It's like we have built a wall between God and ourselves. Sin blocks out God's help. This is a great time to sketch the box below and make it personal. Make sure they grasp that they are separated from God because of their sin. It is urgent that they deal with this wall.

NOTE: Go to Romans 7:7-25. Show from this passage what we receive (wages) for our sin. Briefly explain (7:7-13) that Paul used God's word to define sin and discovered he was separated from God. Paul mentions several other things sin has done to him (7:14-25). Our sin does the same things to us. Make this personal as you bring out the following points:

Sin confuses me: ¹⁵ “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.” (NIV)

Sin steals my confidence: ¹⁸ “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.” ¹⁹ “For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-- this I keep on doing.” (NIV)

Q: How does your sin make you feel about yourself?

Sin condemns me: ²³ “but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.” ²⁴ “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (NIV)

Q: Is Paul winning his war against sin? What does he do?

I must choose: ²⁵ “Thanks be to God-- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” (NIV)

NOTE: Sin destroys your life and it separates you from God. You can't take sin lightly. It's deadly. You must get radical about dealing with your sin. Paul addressed his dilemma by pursuing a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:27-30

27 *"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'*

28 *But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

29 *If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.*

30 *And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. (NIV)*

Q: Do you think Jesus literally meant this?

Q: Are you willing to get serious about your sin?

NOTE: You can explain here that there is no evidence of early Christians cutting off arms or gouging out eyes. Jesus is using graphic language to make a serious point. We should radically deal with our sin. Explain that the next time you get together, you will see how radical Jesus addressed our sin with the cross.

THE CROSS

Acts 2:23

23 *This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

(NIV)

Q: Why do you think Peter is saying they are responsible for Jesus dying on the cross when most of them were not present?

Isaiah 53:1-3

1 *“Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

2 *He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.*

3 *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not...”*

Q: What do you think Jesus looked like?

Isaiah 53:4-6

4 *Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.*

5 *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

6 *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

(NIV)

NOTE: God's grace is a gift offered to everyone. Though this gift is 'free', there is a price. Jesus paid this price with his death on the cross.

Study Goals:

- ❖ To understand what our sin did to God. (Acts 2:23; Isaiah 53; Isaiah 52:14)
- ❖ To realize how much God loves us by offering his son on the cross. (Matthew 27:22-50; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- ❖ To create an appreciation and godly response to the cross. (Romans 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; I Corinthians 1:18)

NOTE: Explain that Peter is speaking to a group of people that have gathered in Jerusalem from all over the Roman Empire.

NOTE: We didn't witness the crucifixion of Jesus but we are responsible for it. We put him to death. How? Isaiah 53 explains.

NOTE: Isaiah says he wasn't good looking. What made Jesus special was not his appearance. It was what he did for you.

Q: What was Jesus being punished for?

Q: How do you feel knowing that Jesus was punished for the sins you have committed?

Q: What are some of the results of this punishment?

Isaiah 53:7-9

7 *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.*

8 *By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.*

9 *He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.*

(NIV)

Isaiah 52:14

14 *Just as there were many who were appalled at him-- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness--*

(NIV)

NOTE: Jesus was punished for something he didn't do. He was punished for MY disobedience...MY iniquities. I'm the reason he is being punished.

NOTE: Verses 4-6 lists a number of benefits coming from the punishment on Jesus. He took up our **infirmities**. (He feels our pain because He felt our pain on the cross). He carried our **sorrows**. (I'm not alone, he carries my burdens.) His punishment brings us **peace** and **healing**.

NOTE: He was *oppressed and afflicted*. Right here is a good place to stop and discuss the crucifixion in detail. Everyone needs to get a graphic picture of what happened to Jesus.

Matthew 27:22-50

Though this passage is very long; there are some great points. Jesus went through *physical, emotional, and spiritual* pain on the cross for you.

❖ Physical Pain:

- Vs. 26 “...*But he had Jesus flogged.*” Jesus was flogged 39 lashes with a ‘*flagrum*’—A leather whip with bone chips, rock and iron woven into it. Many died during this process.
- Vs. 29 “...*twisted a crown of thorns and set it on his head.*”
- Vs. 35 “*When they had crucified him...*” Jesus was nailed at a pressure point in the wrist (considered part of the hand).

❖ Emotional Pain:

- Vs. 22-23 “*Crucify him!*” He was rejected.
- Vs. 29 “...*and mocked him. Hail, king of the Jews!*”
- Vs. 30-31 “...*hurled their insults at him...*”
- Vs. 50 “*with a loud voice he dies...*”

❖ Spiritual Pain:

- Vs. 46 “*My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*”

Isaiah 53:10-12

10 *Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.*

11 *After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. (cont.)*

NOTE: These are the kind of points you want to bring out.

NOTE: You can point out that the cross was the will of God. It was the way he expressed his love to us. **(Romans 5:8-9)**. The cross was the way God chose to deal with your sin. Jesus is our **guilt** offering (2 Corinthians 5:21). He did this so we could have a relationship with Him. Verse 12 says that Jesus is the answer to our sin problem. But it comes down to our response. Read verse 11...

12 *Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*
(NIV)

Q: What do you think you could do to make the cross worth it to Jesus?

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

14 *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.*

15 *And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*
(NIV)

Q: How does the grace (the love) of God affect the way you view your sin?

Q: What kind of response does the love of God cause you to have?

1 Corinthians 1:18

18 *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*
(NIV)

NOTE: The message of the cross is as powerful as your response. You can't be in the middle. You choose the kind of response to God's amazing grace. The next time we get together, we will talk more specifically about how we should respond to God's grace.

DISCIPLESHIP

Acts 11:26

26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

(NIV)

Q: What do you think of when you hear the word “Christian”?

Q: What do you think of when you hear the word “Disciple”?

Q: Do you think they are different? How?

NOTE: Discipleship is our committed response to the cross and the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Study Goals:

- ❖ **To define what a disciple is and what he does. (Acts 11:26; Luke 6:39-40; John 8:31-32; John 13:34-35; John 15:5-8; Galatians 5:22-24; Luke 19:10; Mark 1:16-18; Matthew 28:18-20)**
- ❖ **To show how early Christians modeled the traits of discipleship. (Acts 2:44-46; 4:36-37; 8:20-24; 12:45; 15:32; Luke 22:39-45)**
- ❖ **To help understand the serious commitment of discipleship. (Luke 9:23-26; Luke 14:25-27; Mark 1:18)**

NOTE: Briefly discuss the differences that they point out. Most think the terms ‘Christian’ and ‘disciple’ are different. Many assume that being a **Christian** is based mostly on sincerity and has little to do with obedience. (Example: “*Christians are good and attend church occasionally.*”) On the other hand, a **Disciple** is viewed as one who is very serious about obeying everything God says. (Example: The 12 disciples) This passage uses both terms *interchangeably*. The word ‘Christian’ is found in the Bible 3 times but the word ‘Disciple’ is found over 300 times. The Bible teaches that the same level of commitment in a Disciple should be in every Christian. At one time the world understood what a Disciple was and they used their term ‘*Christian*’ to describe this, but over time it has been watered down. Remind your friend that this study is going to focus on what it really means to be a Christian/Disciple.

Luke 6:39-40

39 He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?"

40 A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.
(NIV)

Q: What makes a good student?

Q: How does this apply to being a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

TRAIT #1—A DISCIPLE OBEYS GOD’S WORD

John 8:31-32

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
(NIV)

Q: From this passage, what does Jesus say you must do to really be His Disciple?

❖ *Hold on to His teachings.*

Q: What does it mean to ‘hold on to His teachings’?

Q: What happens when you hold on to the teachings of Jesus?

❖ *You are set free.*

NOTE: Jesus defines a Disciple as a *student* or a pupil. He appealed to the common description of a Disciple in 1st century society. The Greek culture of his day clearly understood what it meant to be a student or Disciple. A student followed his teacher closely and learned not only important information, but also imitated their mentor's lifestyle.

NOTE: A good student listens and obeys his teacher.

NOTE: To be a good disciple I must listen and learn what JESUS teaches. Many rely on their preacher, parents, or friends to teach them. These are good avenues of learning, but the word of God must be the ultimate source to our faith. We become like Jesus when he is our only 'teacher' in life.

NOTE: Jesus revealed **three** marks of a disciple. He says that if anyone claims to be seriously learning from him, he will have these obvious traits.

NOTE: Holding on to His teachings involves **studying** and **obeying** what He says. When someone says "*Hold on!*" they imply that there is something tough ahead. Following Christ is no picnic! Life can be difficult. Holding on to what Jesus says can get you through it. In order to hold on to what the Lord teaches, you will from time to time have to let go of what you may think is right. If you are not willing to let go you cannot be his Disciple.

NOTE: Jesus says that if you hold on to me you can let go of the things that hold on to you!

TRAIT #2—DISCIPLE LOVES OTHER DISCIPLES

John 13:34-35

34 "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."

(NIV)

Q: What are some ways you can display your love to other Christians?

1. You can spend time with them. (Acts 2:44-46)
2. You can sacrifice yourself for them. (Acts 2:45; 4:36-37)
3. You can help them when they are in trouble. (Acts 2:45; 12:45)
4. You can encourage them. (Acts 15:32)
5. You can correct them when needed. (Acts 8:20-24)

TRAIT #3—A DISCIPLE BEARS FRUIT

John 15:5-8

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

(NIV)

NOTE: People can tell when you are ‘in love’. Jesus clearly states that a Disciple’s love is obvious too. It’s more than a feeling...more than words...it’s loaded with actions. When the world sees this kind of love, they will know you follow Christ.

Q: What does Jesus point to as evidence of being a disciple?

1. He produced the fruit of **change**. (Read Galatians 5:22-24)

Q: As you look at this list of *spiritual fruit* which would you like to produce?

2. He reproduces himself through **sharing his faith**.

THE COMMITMENT OF A DISCIPLE

Luke 9:23-26

23 *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

24 *For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.*

25 *What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?*

26 *If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

(NIV)

Q: What is Jesus asking a disciple to commit to?

- ❖ *Deny self...take up cross....follow me.*

Q: What does it mean to deny self?

- ❖ *To say no to yourself. To give up something to gain something else.*

Q: What area do you think you need to deny yourself in?

NOTE: Most people don't have a clue what Jesus means when it comes to bearing fruit as a disciple. You want to explain that disciple bears fruit two ways:

NOTE: Here's a simple illustration: *What kind of fruit does an apple tree produce? Apples! What kind of fruit does an orange tree produce? Oranges! What kind of fruit would a Christian tree produce? Other Christians!* As you follow Christ you will begin to be like him too. (Read—**Luke 19:10; Mark 1:16-18**) He made disciples and so will you. (Read—**Matthew 28:18-20**)

NOTE: This is a foundational concept. There are going to be many moments when you must deny the things you want in order to follow Jesus. Jesus modeled this himself: (**Luke 22:39-45**) we all have a cross to carry...it is a cross of self denial. When we are willing to take up our cross, we follow Jesus and change the world.

Luke 14:25-27

25 *Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:*

26 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters-- yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.*

27 *And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

(NIV)

Q: What do you think Jesus is trying to say in verse 26?

Q: Why do you think Jesus wants you to love him more than your parents, your kids, your friends, and your self?

Q: Did Jesus do this?

❖ *Yes!*

Q: As you look at this list of relationships, which relationship in your life will be the toughest for you to love less than Jesus?

NOTE: Most people have a difficult time accepting this passage. That's because they *assume* that Jesus demands that they must *hate* their family in order to follow him. That is **not** what Jesus is saying here. Jesus is talking about the kind of commitment we must have if we are to follow him. There will be moments when a Christian will have to choose between pleasing their family or friends and the Lord. Jesus illustrates with this exaggeration the difference between our commitment to those we love and our commitment to him.

CLOSING ILLUSTRATION:



JESUS

Q: Which of these best represents the commitment level a disciple is to have?

Q: Which one best represents where you are right now?

Q: Do you think you can be a true disciple?

Commitment:

Q: Are you willing to be a true disciple by making Jesus the Lord of your life?

Q: What do you think you need to change?

Challenge:

Read—**Mark 1:18** “at once...”

NOTE: You really need to be urgent when someone makes a commitment to being a disciple. The next 2 studies (Repentance & Baptism and Counting The Cost) need to be done as soon as possible! This may mean you go right into these studies or you may want to do this the *next* day. Be urgent!

REPENTANCE

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Q: When you hear the word repent what comes to min?

Luke 13:1-5

1 *Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.*

2 *Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way?"*

3 *I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.*

4 *Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them-- do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?"*

5 *I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."*

(NIV)

Q: In this passage, Jesus mentions repentance twice. Do you think it's optional?

Q: What does Jesus say will happen if you don't repent?

Acts 17:30-31

30 *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.*

31 *For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

(NIV)

NOTE: After completing the study on discipleship, you are now ready to get very specific. The repentance study urges the one you study with to have a proper response to the cross and the call to be a disciple.

Study Goals:

- ❖ To understand what it truly means to repent. (Luke 13:1-5; Acts 17:30-31)
- ❖ To recognize what repentance looks like. (Acts 26:17-20; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11)
- ❖ To understand the purpose of baptism. (Acts 2:36-41; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:1-14; I Peter 3:21; Matthew 28:18-20)

NOTE: The word *repent* is not a word we use in our everyday conversation. Most associate this word as ‘*religious*’ and to be *sorry* for one’s sin. Repentance means more than that! Repentance has to do with making changes. The root meaning of the word *repent* means to radically change direction. It literally means to *turn around*, much like the military order “*about face!*”

NOTE: Jesus addressed a group of good people who assumed that bad things happen to others because they are bad. Jesus uses these two tragic events to warn them that they will experience a similar tragic fate, (that is, death) if they don’t repent. It’s important that your friend understands this significant point in repentance: *That one cannot be saved if one doesn’t repent!* You can use this passage to support this point.

WHAT DOES REPENTANCE LOOK LIKE?

Acts 26:17-20

17 *I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them*

18 *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.*

19 *"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.*

20 *First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.*

(NIV)

Q: What was the message God sent Paul to convey?

❖ *To open eyes of others and help them turn to God.*

Q: What would happen if Paul's hearers accepted his message?

❖ *Forgiveness of sin and a place with other believers.*

Q: What does Paul's message to King Agrippa have to do with you?

❖ *I must repent and I prove my repentance by my deeds.*

2 Corinthians 7:8-11

8 *Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it-- I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while--*

9 *yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. (cont.)*

NOTE: As mentioned earlier, most assume repentance as an outdated religious word or it means to be sorry for sin. It means more! It means to change your heart. It means to make changes that are obvious to others. The next couple of passages will bring this out. Share some changes Christ has helped you make to illustrate the magnitude of this challenge.

NOTE: Briefly explain the back ground of this passage. Bring out how Paul used to hate and persecute Christians, but nw he explains to King Agrippa how he became a follower of what Jesus called him to do.

NOTE: The next passage gives specific traits one has when they are serious about making changes in their life. Again, you need to give a brief explanation of the context of this passage. One of the members of the church in Corinth was committing incest with his stepmother. The church took a passive stand on this issue. In his first letter, Paul sternly confronts and rebukes them for this! He tells them that their lack of action is doing more harm than good to the young man. The church is sorry

and repents. Paul writes them again and commends them for how their godly sorrow led them to change!

10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

(NIV)

Q: Paul mentions two kinds of sorrow. What are they?

❖ *Worldly sorrow and Godly sorrow.*

Q: What do you think is the difference between worldly and godly sorrow?

❖ *Godly sorrow ALWAYS leads to change, salvation, no regret; worldly sorrow does not.*

Earnestness: *A serious attitude...about making changes.*

Eagerness: *An excitement...motivated to change.*

Q: What are you eager to change?

Indignation: *Being angry with yourself that you blew it.*

Q: Do you tend to blame others or accept responsibility?

Alarm: *Being afraid enough of sin to turn and run from it.*

Q: Are you ready to stay away from sin?

Longing: *A deep desire to restore broken relationships.*

Q: Who is someone you need to restore a relationship with?

Concern: *You care so much about your sin.*

Q: Are you concerned or care about your spiritual condition?

Readiness: *You want the right thing done.*

Q: Will you do whatever it takes to change?

NOTE: Paul lists several attitudes that accompany godly sorrow. Go through each and explain. Ask your friend if they possess these qualities to help them identify the kind of sorrow they have. It's very...very important that before one is baptized they must have a deep conviction about their sin, the cross, and a clear commitment to make changes in their life. If your friend lacks these qualities, they are not ready to be baptized. Look for these qualities as you go through Paul's list.

NOTE: If the one you are studying with can say with confidence that they are experiencing these attitudes, then you are ready to move on to the baptism study.

BAPTISM

Acts 2:36-41

36 *"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

37 *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

38 *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

39 *The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call."*

40 *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."*

41 *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*
(NIV)

Q: The people asked Peter what to do. What did he say?

❖ *Repent and be baptized.*

Q: What was promised if they did what Peter commanded?

❖ *Forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 22:16

16 *"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."*
(NIV)

- ❖ This is Paul's account of his conversion.
- ❖ Paul is on his way to persecute Christians.
- ❖ He encounters Jesus on the way.

- ❖ He is commanded by Jesus to go into Damascus and he will be told what he must do.
- ❖ He prays for three days (Acts 9:9) and wasn't saved.

NOTE: Acts 2 is a great passage to lead into the subject of baptism. It's here we find repentance and baptism connected to salvation. You want to be familiar with the story line that leads up to this passage.

NOTE: Briefly go over the chapter highlighting a few important items:

Q: Why did Paul need to get baptized?

❖ *To wash away his sins.*

Romans 6:1-14

1 *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?*

2 *By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?*

3 *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?*

4 *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.*

5 *If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.*

6 *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin--*

7 *because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.*

8 *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.*

9 *For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.*

10 *The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

11 *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

12 *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

13 *Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.*

14 *For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

(NIV)

NOTE: The next passage will show our part in baptism. Just like Jesus, our spiritual death and burial leads to a resurrection into a new life. This all begins when we are ‘crucified’ and ‘buried’. That’s why Paul alludes to death 16 times in 14 verses! Paul says we are ready to be buried in baptism as soon as we ‘die to ourselves’ You cannot be resurrected until you have been buried and you cannot be buried until you are dead. This is Paul’s challenge: We must be willing to surrender ourselves before we are baptized.

Q: What do you believe God wants you to do so you can be baptized?

❖ *Totally surrender your life...die to self.*

Q: Are you willing to surrender your life like this?

1 Peter 3:21

*21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
(NIV)*

Q: According to Peter, what saves you? What gives it power?

Matthew 28:18-20

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.""

(NIV)

Q: What did Jesus command his disciples?

Q: Do you want to obey this command?

Q: If so, when do you want to be baptized?

Acts 22:16

16 *And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized
and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'*
(NIV)

NOTE: Baptism is more than a bath. It is a part of our
salvation experience. Baptism is my response to God's grace.
It saves me through the power of the resurrection.

COUNTING THE COST

John 3:30

30 *He must become greater; I must become less.*
(NIV)

Luke 14:25-33

This section will be covered in three sections.

YOU MUST LOVE JESUS MORE THAN ANYONE.

25 *Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:*

26 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters-- yes, even his own life-- he cannot be my disciple.*

27 *And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

Q: Why does Jesus list all these different kinds of relationships?

Q: How will these people respond when you become a Christian?

Q: Are you willing to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

NOTE: Becoming a Christian is a life-long commitment with eternal consequences. *It's the most important decision you will make.* This study may seem like a review of the discipleship study, but it isn't! Counting The Cost is designed to help your friend look both ways before they commit the rest of their life to Jesus Christ. **Caution:** You may discover that your student may not be ready to make this commitment after this study. Don't panic! This means two things. They are counting the cost or they need additional teaching and encouragement.

Study Goals:

- ❖ To remind one of the commitment and cost of discipleship. (John 3:30)
- ❖ To identify sources of compromise and how to prepare for them. (Luke 14:25-33)
- ❖ To address any fears or apprehensions of the future. (Luke 9:57-62)

NOTE: Following Jesus Christ is a series of choices that result in you becoming less and He becoming greater. Jesus gives several examples of this in the following passages.

NOTE: Here is a good time to talk about some 'what ifs'. Jesus had members of his family that were 'concerned' about his decision to follow God and get involved in ministry.

(Mark 3:21) They tried to stop him. This is a serious source of struggle in a Christian's life. Don't assume there are no problems here.

YOU MUST DEVELOP A GOOD PLAN.

28 *"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?*

29 *For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,*

30 *saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'*

Q: Why was the man unable to finish?

❖ *He ran out of money because he didn't think ahead!*

Q: How does this word picture relate to what you are about to do?

❖ *I need to sit down and count the cost.*

Q: What could get in your way as you build your life on Christ?

YOU MUST CONSIDER THE OUTCOME.

31 *"Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?*

32 *If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.*

33 *In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.*

(NIV)

Q: What are the choices of a king who is outnumbered by another?

❖ *He either fights or surrenders.*

NOTE: Jesus makes it clear that the Christian life is challenging. It's possible your friend will be apprehensive about making a commitment to Christ. Confront their concerns by discussing the things that could get in the way of their commitment to Christ. If they have trouble relating to this... help them by pointing out the possible issues *you see* ahead for them. Prepare and reassure them by sharing your own experiences when you first made your commitment. Also explore some choices they can make to insure they complete their 'tower'.

NOTE: Jesus paints a word picture of two kings that are about to meet. One has *limited power* (an army of 10,000) while the other has *all power* (an army of 20,000). The king with 10,000 represents *you*. You possess some power. You have the power to choose. The King with 20,000 represents Jesus. He is King

of Kings and Lord of Lords. **(Matthew 17:14)** He is coming to either fight or make peace. That choice is left up to you.

Q: What did the King with 10,000 do to make peace?

Q: What does it mean for you to surrender to Jesus?

Luke 9:57-62

57 *As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."*

58 *Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."*

59 *He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."*

60 *Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."*

61 *Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family."*

62 *Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."*

(NIV)

Jesus demands three things:

- 1. That you accept the difficulties of following Christ.**
- 2. That you let nothing stop you from sharing your faith.**
- 3. That you are serious about leaving your old life. You can't look back and live this life effectively.**

Challenge:

Q: What are you thinking?

Q: Are you ready to begin this new life? When?

Q: When do you want to be baptized?

NOTE: It's very important that you do not water down what the Bible says. Be honest and bold as you discuss what Jesus says about discipleship. Share your personal struggles and rewards as you follow Jesus. They will thank you later.

NOTE: Jesus demands three things when it comes to following him. If you sense that your friend is reluctant in the following things you need to stop and discuss these until you are sure they understand it and are ready to obey.

NOTE: If they are unwilling to do these things. It's best that they do not begin.

STUDY GUIDES

NEW TESTAMENT CONVERSION SCRIPTURES

Acts 2:1-47	The conversion at Pentecost
Acts 8:9-13	Simon the Sorcerer
Acts 8:26-40	The Treasurer of Candice (Ethiopian Eunuch)
Acts 9:1-19	Saul the Persecutor
Acts 10: 1-48	Cornelius and his family
Acts 16:11-16	The Purple Dealer (Lydia)
Acts 16:16-34	Philippi's Prison Guard
Acts 18:7-8	Crispus and the Corinthians
Acts 19:1-7	A Dozen from Ephesus
Acts 22:2-16	Paul Revisits His Conversion

BOOK OF JOHN

PORTRAITS OF CHRIST

<u>Verses</u>	<u>Description</u>
1:1-14	Son of God
2:1-10	Son of Man
3:2-21	Divine Teacher
4:7-29	Soul Winner
5:1-9	Great Physician
6:32-58	Bread of Life
7:37	Water of Life
8:3-11	Defender of Weak
9:1-39	Light of World
10:1-16	Good Shepherd
11:1-44	Prince of Life
12:12-15	King
13:1-10	Servant
14:1-3	Consoler
15:1-16	True Vine
16:1-15	Giver of Holy Spirit
17:1-26	Great Intercessor
18:1-11	Model Sufferer

19:16-19

20:1-31

21:1-17

Uplifted Savior

Conqueror of Death

Restorer of Penitent

PARABLES OF JESUS

Lamp under a bowl	Matthew 5:14-15
Wise and foolish builders	Matthew 7:24-27
New cloth on an old garment	Matthew 9:16
New wine in old wineskins	Matthew 9:17
Sower and the soils	Matthew 13:3-8,18-23
Weeds	Matthew 13:24-30,36-43
Mustard Seed	Matthew 13:31-32
Yeast	Matthew 13:33
Hidden Treasure	Matthew 13:44
Valuable Pearl	Matthew 13:45-46
Net	Matthew 13:47-50
Owner of house	Matthew 13:52
Lost sheep	Matthew 18:12-14
Unmerciful servant	Matthew 18:23-34
Workers in the vineyard	Matthew 20:1-16
Two sons	Matthew 21:28-32
Tenants	Matthew 21:33-44
Wedding Banquet	Matthew 22:2-14
Fig Tree	Mark 13:28-29
Faithful and wise servant	Luke 12:42-48
Ten Virgins	Matthew 25:1-13
Talents	Matthew 25:14-30
Sheep and goats	Matthew 25:31-46
Growing seed	Mark 4:26-29
Watchful servants	Mark 13:35-37
Moneylender	Luke 7:41-43
Good Samaritan	Luke 10:30-37
Friend in need	Luke 11:5-8
Rich fool	Luke 12:16-21
Unfruitful fig tree	Luke 13:6-9
Lowest seat at the feast	Luke 14:7-14
Great Banquet	Luke 14:16-24
Cost of discipleship	Luke 14:28-33
Lost Coin	Luke 15:8-10

Lost (prodigal) son	Luke 15:11-32
Shrewd Manager	Luke 16:1-8
Rich man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31
Master and his servant	Luke 17:7-10
Persistent widow	Luke 18:2-8
Pharisee and tax collector	Luke 18:10-14