

**Don Sunshine Ministries  
M.A.D.  
Leader's Discussion Guide**

**NOTE TO LEADERS**

This guide is designed to help you facilitate an ongoing interest and faithfulness to the vocation to which we've been called; namely, making a lifestyle of sharing the gospel with those God has placed in our touch. I have divided this discussion guide into five different sections with the idea that it may be used over a six-week period of time. Should you desire to use this in a small group Bible study or Sunday school class, it may be adapted to extend beyond six weeks. There is no copyright protection, so add or subtract, multiply or divide any way that you desire. This supplement to your training is something God has laid on my heart to share, and we at Don Sunshine Ministries would welcome any and all input regarding its expansion or improvement.

I would encourage you to open each session with a time for sharing how God has worked through group members throughout the week. Taking time to rejoice in opened doors and seized opportunities and committing those "planted seeds" to God in prayer will be an effective means of assisting and encouraging faithful evangelists.

Until the whole world hears!

Grace to you,

Pastor Ron Woudenberg

Board Chairman, Don Sunshine Ministries

# Introduction

## A WORD OF CAUTION

As with all new endeavors and disciplines, developing a lifestyle of sharing the gospel as Christ's ambassadors requires encouragement and practice, practice, practice – not because the message of the gospel is difficult, but because it takes persistent effort to be a faithful evangelist.

Many people leave the training sessions with a handful of Gospel of John booklets and a fresh spark of enthusiasm to get started right away. It is invigorating to notice and seize new opportunities and to receive positive responses to our good news. Let's not forget, however, that after the initial excitement wears off, the old "buttons" of fear and apprehension can become active once again. At this point, some will fade in their resolve to be faithful ambassadors of Christ.

Further, it is all too easy to give in to our sinful natures and fall into the trap of self-satisfaction. We may be tempted to take pride in the fruit and fervor of our early efforts and, as a result, become complacent. Such an attitude of self-righteous contentment will naturally foster negligence, through which a lifestyle of evangelism can never be made. Being an effective representative of Christ requires continued spiritual encouragement and habitual devotion to our vocation.

# WEEK 1

## CHANGING A LIFESTYLE

### TESTIMONIES

Take a moment and share with your group any testimonies that you may have of putting into practice what was learned in your training.

- Where did you have opportunity to share with someone?
- Did you pray with someone after your conversation revealed a need the person may have?
- Did you share the gospel?
- If you prayed with someone, did that open the door for further discussion?
- If you had opportunity to share the gospel, how was it received?
- Were you able to place some gospel literature in this person's hands?
- Will there be other opportunities to follow up with this person? If yes, how so?
- Was there a clear open door to speak to someone about Christ but you failed to take the opportunity?
  - If so, why? What was your thinking at that moment?
  - When did you realize that you had missed an opportunity?
  - What do you think you could do to have your radar always up to avoid missing many more opportunities?

## GOD'S FORMULA FOR HABIT-CHANGE

Read Ephesians 4:17-24 together.

- What does the text say is true about those that **do not** know Christ (vv.17-19)?
  
- And what is true about those that **do** know Christ (vv.20-21)?
  
- According to verses 20-21, what has taken place for those who are growing in Christ?
  
- In what ways do professing Christians identify more with verses 17-19 than verses 20-21?
  
- Verses 22-24 speak of a process of actions taken by the believer in order to facilitate change and spiritual growth.
  - By what is the underlying conduct of the old-man – mentioned in verse 22 – motivated?
  
  - What is the believer called to do concerning these old-man habits in verse 22?
  
  - What does Paul mean by “put off” concerning our life habits in verse 22?

- The picture here is one of taking off an old garment, but that is not the end of the process.
  - What must take place in verse 24 as a follow up to the “put off” of verse 22?
  
  - What are the characteristics of the new man mentioned in verse 24?
  
  - Verse 23 completes the formula. What is essential in our walk with the Lord in the “putting off” and “putting on” process according to verse 23?
  
  - How is this best accomplished?
  
  - What has God provided to facilitate the renewing of the mind?
  
  - What might this look like in your life? What needs to change to facilitate this further?

- Between verse 25 and the end of chapter 5, we find numerous illustrations of change and growth (progressive sanctification). In each example you can see the “putting off,” “putting on,” “renewing the mind” disciplines at work.
  - How would these disciplines manifest themselves in the process of becoming more faithful witnesses for Christ?
  
  - What specific old-man habits come against our faithfulness in sharing the gospel?

## WEEK 2

### WHAT'S AT STAKE?

#### BRIEF REVIEW

Last week we spent some time in Ephesians 4 where we saw Paul compare and contrast believers with unbelievers.

Summarize the differences.

- Unbelievers are characterized here as
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- True believers in contrast are characterized here as

#### TESTIMONIES

- What open doors has God supplied for you this week?
- Have you been remembering to pray the “Three-Open-Prayer?”
- For those of you that have remembered to pray this prayer, in what ways did God answer your prayer?
- How has it changed your outlook on your day?

## IMPACTING THE SOULS OF MEN

The Scriptures often make mention of the contrasting ways in which we may have an effect on the souls of men. As believers we are called to actively do well by the souls of men.

- Proverbs 11:30 – The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that winneth souls *is* wise.

In contrast, there is the destructive activity of false teachers and those driven by the lusts of this world, as is illustrated in the Apostle John's description of latter day commerce.

- Revelation 18:13 – And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, **and slaves, and souls of men.** [emphasis mine]

Ultimately, everyone will stand before God and give an account for his actions (1Peter 4:17).

## A MATTER OF STEWARDSHIP

Read Luke 19:11-27

- What is meant by our being called 'stewards' of the Lord Jesus?
- What do we see in this parable about what it looks like to report as an unfaithful steward?
- In what ways has God called us to be stewards?



- Do you believe that God will ask us how many people we have won to salvation? Why or why not?
  
- In verse 13 the King James Bible uses the phrase, “occupy until I come.” What do you believe Jesus’ purpose is in that expression?
  
- What comes to mind when you think of an occupying force?
  
- What is the reward for the faithful steward according to verse 17?
  
- Many people say, “I’m not ambitious for the reward, I just want to make it to heaven.”
  - How does that statement fit with this parable?
  
  - Do you believe that a person with that attitude truly knows the Lord as Savior? Why or why not?
  
  - How will you stand when it comes time to give an account?

- As stewards you are entrusted with those things and people that God has placed into your care.
  - What people has God placed into your touch that you may give an account concerning the presentation of the gospel?
  
  - Brain storm with your group what it might look like for you to engage those people with the goal of sharing the gospel.
  
  - Are you ready to give an account as a steward before the Master? Why or why not?

## WEEK 3

### STAYING ON COURSE

#### BRIEF REVIEW

Last week we talked about being good stewards of the Master.

- What are the contrasting ways in which we can impact the souls of men?
- What does it look like to be a good steward of the Lord Jesus?

#### TESTIMONIES

Take a moment and share with your group any testimonies that you may have of putting into practice what you have learned.

- Have you had any opportunities to implement some of the ideas produced by last week's brainstorming?
- Have you had any further opportunities to follow up with those with whom you may have previously shared the gospel?
- How has the idea of being a good steward impacted your thinking and daily habits?

## CHECK YOUR FLUIDS

In the same way you check the fluids in your car as good maintenance and upkeep, it is good to check your theology against God's Word to be sure your evangelism efforts are operating efficiently. Pragmatism, pride, and incomplete teaching all have a way of causing us to stray a little here and a little there, so this week, let's check the theological oil of our understanding.

In his book, *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus*, J. Mack Stiles defines some terms for our theological shop manual. Take some time to review and discuss them together. For each, how might you modify the definition? What precautions should be taken when considering each definition?

1. Evangelism – Teaching or preaching the gospel with the aim, or intent, to persuade or convert.
2. Gospel – The joyful message from God that leads us to salvation.
3. The Message from God – The explanation of who God is, the human predicament of sin and lostness, the work of Christ for our salvation, and the response people must make to gain a restored relationship with God....
4. Sin – A state of rebellion against God characterized by self-centeredness and unbelief.
5. Sins – The symptoms and expressions of (the state of) rebellion and unbelief.
6. Repentance – Turning from a life of unbelief.
7. Conversion – Moving from death to life, guilt to pardon.
8. Belief – Complete trust in and reliance upon God and His saving grace through Christ.

## WEEK 4

### NOT AN ARMY OF ONE

#### BRIEF REVIEW

Last week you were encouraged to “check your fluids.”

- Were there any areas where you’d found that you’d strayed in your thinking?
- Were your evangelistic efforts being impeded by any misunderstanding or misapplication of theological concepts?
- What steps should be taken to assure clarity in the future?

#### TESTIMONIES

Take a moment and share with your group any testimonies that you may have of putting into practice what you have learned.

- Have you had any new opportunities to share the gospel?
- Have you been faithful in praying the “Three-Open-Prayer?”
- How have you followed up with those God has previously placed in your touch?

## **MOTIVATED AS A TEAM**

Most often when we talk about personal evangelism, we speak of individuals motivated on a personal level to share the gospel with those that God has placed in their lives (divine appointments).

While this is absolutely essential in our daily walk, the truth of the matter is that God usually calls us within the context of the church. The church is an assembly of God's people. While we do come into a right relationship with God personally, Jesus really isn't our personal Savior. He is the Savior of the redeemed and so the language of Scripture usually addresses us as a body of believers rather than as individuals.

We are most effective when we work together as a team.

Evangelism can and should be a collective effort. That doesn't mean that we go on evangelistic raids as a battalion of Christ's soldiers, surrounding the sinner and wielding our "swords" to bring the message of salvation with quick speech and mob persuasion. What we are called to be is a church family that is making a lifestyle of sharing the gospel and praying regularly for each other's efforts with knowledge and encouragement.

## **CHANGING MORE HABITS**

*"Betty is going into the hospital for major surgery, let's be in prayer for her. Let us pray that while she is there recovering from the surgery, she will have open doors to share the gospel with care-givers and other patients."* Let's be honest, our prayers for someone who is going into surgery are usually not directed in this way. Take a moment, though, to think about the higher goal of the proclamation of the gospel, and not merely a speedy recovery. Might we even dare to consider that a slower recovery may give more opportunities to share with those at the hospital who are lost?

*“Rodger is having his second interview for a new job; let’s remember him in prayer, asking that God would give him opportunity to share the gospel with those with whom he may be speaking.”* We may think it unwise to witness at a job interview as it may hinder our chances for being hired, but truthfully wouldn’t it be the perfect way of helping the interviewer to understand the kind of man Rodger really is? After all, it is a divine appointment. This requires really trusting God for all things pertaining to life and godliness.

## **DISCUSSION**

Look up the following Scriptures and discuss how each addresses the involvement and application of a culture of evangelism.

- 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
- Romans 1:16
- Ezekiel 33:30-32; Psalm 96:2-3
- 2 Corinthians 5:16a
- Philippians 1:3-5
- 1 Peter 3:15b; 2 Timothy 1:13
- 2 Timothy 2:2
- Philippians 2:19-22
- Colossians 1:3-4, 7
- Philippians 1:12-13
- Acts 2:46-47

## WEEKS 5-6

### BE CATCHERS OF MEN

#### BRIEF REVIEW

- How are we most effective in our evangelism?
- What does it look like to make evangelism a collective effort?

#### TESTIMONIES

Take a moment and share with your group any testimonies that you may have of putting into practice what you have learned.

- Did you have opportunity to pray with someone this week?
- Did you have opportunity to offer support for the evangelistic efforts of a brother or sister this week?
- Did you share the gospel?
- Did you notice any missed opportunities?
- Have you implemented any changes in your prayer life to reflect the desire to be part of a church family that embraces a lifestyle of evangelism?



## OIL THE GLOVE

You may remember the method Don used to illustrate how we can be directed and used by the Holy Spirit. He put his hand in a glove and said we are the Spirit's glove. Don used a motorcycle glove at the time, but envisioning a baseball glove – kind of a one-handed net – allows us to take the illustration even deeper.

- Luke 5:10 – and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."

“Catch men.” That paints an interesting picture, doesn’t it? These individuals who were fishermen were now being called to fish for men. If we are the glove, and the Holy Spirit is the hand that fills and controls the glove, it behooves us to be a well-oiled baseball glove. Oil protects, softens, and stains the glove. As gloves we are to have watched souls, be soft-hearted, and have no shame of the stains of the gospel on our leather. Let’s consider each of these as we desire to be gloves directed by the Spirit.

## FIT FOR THE MASTER’S USE

Read Hebrews 13:7, 17

- Look at each of the verbs in these verses. What is the author specifically instructing us to do?
  
- According to verse 7, who has rule? In what capacity according to the wording of verse 17?

- If the rulers have watch for your souls, how should you be working with them in the area of your sharing the gospel?
- How might we make it grievous for them?
- How might this be unprofitable for us (see 2 Corinthians 5:13)?

Read Isaiah 64:8; Ezekiel 36:26; Jeremiah 18:4-6; Lamentations 4:2; 2 Corinthians 3:2-3

- How can these pictures of softness and pliability be applied to our own hearts?
- What truth in Jeremiah 18:4 shows that God will continue to form us for His use? What might He do in order to reform us?
- What is essential in our responsibility for maintaining the softness of a “well-oiled” heart?

Read Romans 1:16; Matthew 5:12; Romans 15:20; Acts 4:17-20; Acts 7:54-60; Acts 16:21-25; 2 Corinthians 11:22-28; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

- The well-oiled glove is stained, its battle scars are highlighted with a darker color. In the same way, the above verses are just a small sampling of what may be facing those who are faithful as Christ's Ambassadors. We are gloves that are to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God. This will not exempt us from suffering persecution.
  - Having read Paul's testimony in 2 Corinthians 11 and 12, letters that were written before his letter to the Romans, what does Romans 1:16 say to you about your confidence in the gospel?
  - What should be true about our prayer life as we enter each new day as Christ's Ambassadors?
  - What are the main prayer requests in Paul's letter to the Philippians (Phil. 6:18-20)?
  - As a group, how can you pray for these same things for one another? Will you?

Read John 14:26

- What does Jesus say will be ours as we walk the walk of our calling? What does this look like in your confidence in being able to effectually share the Good News?