

# GREAT STUFF IN THE BOOK

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S E S S I O N 1



## Seeing the Need

Last Wednesday night, Andy's youth leader talked to their group about communicating their faith. He challenged each person to express his/her faith to one person during the next week. Andy immediately thought of his friend, John.

John comes from a respected family. His dad makes plenty of money at his job. His parents are happily married. John has lots of friends and gets along well at school. He has everything going for him. But Andy isn't sure John is a follower of Jesus and even wonders why John would need Jesus Christ. What advice would you give Andy?

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When you think about giving away your faith, what kind of mental picture do you get?

-> Thumping some stranger's head with a 50-pound Bible?

- > Telling your friends they are going to hell?
- > Standing on a street corner, preaching at the top of your lungs?
- > Scattering tracts all over the lunchroom?

If the word witnessing conjures up any of the above images, you are probably not too excited about giving away your faith. Maybe you are apathetic. Or scared to death of what your friends will think. But let's look at giving away your faith from another perspective.

Imagine going for a swim with your friends. You are resting on the shore when one of your friends gets a cramp and goes under twice. A life preserver is next to you. What is your reaction? Are you turned off, indifferent, or too scared to take action? Do you stop to wonder if that person would mind if you saved his life? No! Your instincts tell you to do whatever you can to save your friend. Witnessing is sharing the Gospel (the life preserver of Jesus Christ) with your friends to save them from spiritual death and offer them an incredible personal relationship with Jesus now and forever.

## THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE LOST

The Bible describes a person without Jesus Christ as lost (Luke 19:10). Describe an experience in your life when you were lost. How did you feel?

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**In Acts 3:1-10** we read of a man who symbolizes the lostness of humanity. Read the passage and then note the following realities about his condition.



### **The Man Was Lame (Acts 3:2)**

This man, lame from birth, had tremendous needs. He was lost but did not know it. Even though he was living in the shadow of the temple, he had just enough religion to make him ignorant of the living God.

Have you noticed that most lost people are religious to some extent? They believe in something. They have some kind of god. Some live moral lives. But they are lame — either emotionally, physically, or spiritually — with needs they cannot fill.



Think of someone you know who fits that "religious, but lost" category. Describe him or her below.

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**The Lame Man Was Limited (Acts 3:3)**

All this man knew how to do was beg. He lived every day trying to make just enough money to survive. Because of his limited view of himself, he had no idea who he was or who he could become.

Like this man, many students have limited views of their lives. They get new cars, new stereos, the right clothes, and other material things. Yet they seem to have little concern for God. Sometimes we look at those people and think, I wish I had what they have. We may even be tempted to think they don't need God. But in spite of their substitute gods, they are lost. They will never have life without knowing Jesus Christ and growing in a strong relationship with Him.



Describe one of your friends who has a limited view of himself and his life.

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**The Lame, Limited Man Was Looking (Acts 3:3-5)**

When Peter and John told the lame man to look at them, he "gave them his attention." He expected to receive something. He was looking...searching...hoping for something better around the next corner.



Many people at your school are looking for satisfaction in what they do or what they have. Who is one person you know who is looking for something better? What is he or she like?

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Let's explore more deeply what a person without Jesus Christ is like.

- > Spiritual (is crippled by guilt and fears death)
- > Mental (experiences low self-esteem and boredom with life)
- > Emotional (has an aching loneliness and distrusting love)
- > Social (performs for success, tries to prove himself, and puts himself first)

This person has these characteristics not because of what he does, but because of who he is — a person without Jesus Christ in the center of his life. This person may look like a real loser or look like he has everything. He may be "in the pits" morally or he may have high moral standards and attend church regularly. Either way, this person is lame and limited in every area of life.



With this list in mind, look back at the three people you listed above and write a sentence about why each one needs Christ.

*Name*

*Reason*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Picture the three people you listed out on the ocean in a boat with a big hole in it. It's sinking. They need someone to rescue them or they will drown. That's where you come in. Your friends are lost; you have the

help they need — Jesus.



**Read Luke 15.** Three parables center around one theme. What is the main theme of this chapter?

\_\_\_\_\_

What did you discover from this passage about Jesus' attitude toward people who are lost?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus has compassion for lost people. He challenges us to desire His compassion and to help people find their way to Him.

### LOVING LOST PEOPLE

Now that we understand that people without Christ are lost, and that God wants to give us compassion for them, how can we help them find their way to Christ? Let's see what Peter and John did.



**Reread Acts 3:6-10.** Peter and John stood ready to help the lame man in any way possible. Peter told him, "What I have I give you" (v.6). What an attitude!

How can you develop an attitude of love toward others like Peter's and John's attitude?

**People don't care  
how much you know  
until they know  
how much you care.**



#### **The Reality of Jesus' Love for You**

Love for people occurs when you understand how important Jesus Christ is to you personally. Peter and John had experienced Jesus' love when they were lost and unlovable. Many years after Peter and John saw the lame man in the temple, John wrote: "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with

us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete" (1 John 1:2-4).



Jesus' love was so real for Peter and John. Is Jesus' love real to you? When have you experienced that Jesus loves you even when you are not lovable?

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**The Conviction That Jesus Is the Ultimate Answer to Life**

Are you convinced that people without Jesus Christ are lost — living outside the presence of God now and for eternity?

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Michael Green said: "If you believe that outside of Jesus Christ there is no hope, it is impossible to possess an atom of love and kindness without being gripped with the great desire to bring men to this one way of salvation" (Evangelism in the Early Church, Eerdmans, p.249).

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**Read Matthew 25:40.** What did Jesus say about a believer's conviction to help lost people? What do you think He meant?

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**According to Acts 4:10-12,** why is there "salvation...in no one else" except Jesus Christ?

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When you become convinced of this truth, you will want to give Jesus' love to your friends.



If you do not have this desire to see lost people know Christ, ask yourself why not:

- > Am I disobeying God?
- > Do I have any unconfessed sin?
- > Is anything in my life more important than Jesus?

### 3

### The Habit of Living in Jesus' Presence Every Day



**Read Acts 4:13.** How did living in Jesus' presence affect Peter and John?

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By living every day in Jesus' presence, you will develop the boldness to tell your friends about Christ.



Think of one creative, practical idea to remind you that you are living in Jesus' presence every moment of the day.

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### PRACTICAL HINTS FOR LOVING LOST PEOPLE

At this point you might be thinking, *I'm not Peter or John*. You're right, but you are *you*. Since you know Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit, you have what it takes to love lost people. God has already put His love in your heart. Now you need to learn to pass it on to others.

How do you show the love of Christ to a lost person?



If I know the love of Christ...  
and if I know a lost person...  
then I can express the love  
of Christ to that person.

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**Get to Know Lost People**

The lame man could not go to Peter and John, so they went to him.

Lame people will not come to us either. When was the last time someone came up to you and asked you how they could know Jesus. We must go to them. John Stott describes "rabbit-hole Christians" as those who are around non-Christians all day, but never go to them. They pop their heads out of their Christian homes every morning and scurry to class, only to frantically search for Christian friends to sit by. At school they proceed from class to class, then regroup in the cafeteria for what the athletes call the "holy huddle" (the corner for all the Christians). And all the time the Christians are thinking, *What a witness!* At night they go to their all-Christian Bible study where they will probably pray for non-believers. Then they scurry home, glad to be safely through the day without getting their fur ruffled by the world! (*Out of the Salt Shaker*, Rebecca Manley Pippert, InterVarsity Press, p.124)



Would you describe yourself as a "rabbit-hole Christian"?

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In what ways do you "rub shoulders" with lost people?

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Name one friend who you think needs to know Jesus Christ.

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**Establish a Common Interest**

Peter and John picked up on the lame man's interest in money. They turned that interest into an opportunity to talk about Jesus with him.



Your friend who is lost, what is one of his/her interests?  
(Think hobbies, sports, trips, books, other friends, etc.)

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**Meet the Other Person's Need**

The lame man thought he wanted money, but he really wanted to walk. Peter and John met that need and healed the lame man.



What do you think is a real need of your lost friend? How can you specifically meet that need?

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**The greatest need you can meet is to lead your friend to Jesus Christ.**



**Make Jesus the Issue**

Peter and John didn't focus on the lame man or on their healing miracle. Their focus was on Jesus Christ.



How can you make Jesus the issue with your friend?

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**If the previous questions were tough to answer, don't worry. The rest of this book focuses on specific ways to love your friends and lead them to Jesus.**



# People

are not abstract souls to be saved. They will not respond unless they know you are genuinely interested in them. People who try to communicate Christ without an attitude of love, present Christianity as something to avoid. But with Jesus' love alive in you, He will come to life to your friends who aren't yet believers.

This week use the five hints in this Bible study to establish a deeper relationship with your unbelieving friend.

1. *Determine to whom you will offer the love of Jesus this week.*
2. *Meet with that person for a fun time together. Hang out over a coke or pizza.*
3. *Discover his needs. Tell him your greatest need, then ask him what his is.*
4. *During your conversation, mention Jesus' name at least one time.*
5. *Pray for him. Ask Jesus to become real to him.*

**Complete this session by memorizing John 17:3.**



## ASSIGNMENT

1. Have a time alone with God every day this week, using the following Bible readings.

Day 1: Acts 1:1-11

Day 2: Acts 1:12-36

Day 3: Acts 2:1-13

**Moving Toward Maturity Series** .....

Day 4: Acts 2:14-28

Day 5: Acts 2:29-47

Day 6: Acts 3:1-10

Day 7: Acts 3:11-36

2. Complete *Session 2*.

3. Review all of the verses you have learned if you studied *Following Jesus*, *Spending Time Alone with God*, and *Making Jesus Lord*. Learn them word-perfect to say to a partner next week.

4. Get together with a non-Christian friend and follow the instructions given in this Bible study.