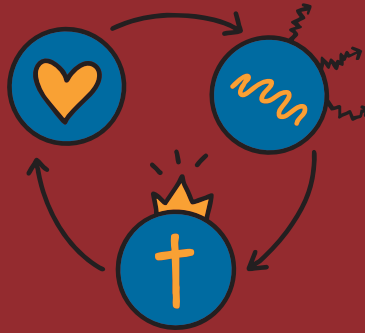


WMU of Texas
Missional Disciple-Making Bible Study



SHARING YOUR FAITH

**The Lazy Approach to Evangelism:
Two Biblical Principles for Witnessing
to Nonbelievers**

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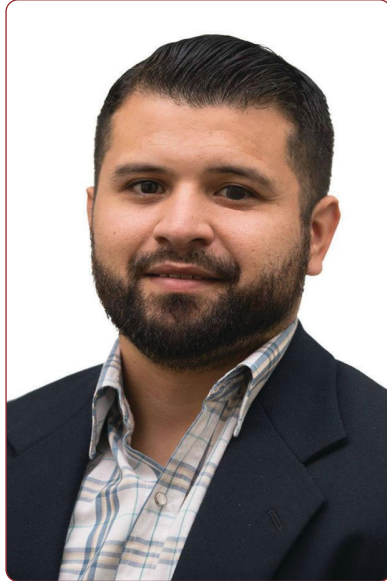
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BIBLE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

Teri Ussery is a wife, mom, and “Gigi” to five grandchildren. Teri has a passion for sharing the transformative power of God’s Word. Her heart for discipling others has led her to teach Bible studies and speak at women’s events and conferences for over four decades. Teri holds a Master’s in Theology from Dallas Baptist University and serves as the Adult and Young Adult Strategist for WMU of Texas in Dallas, Texas.

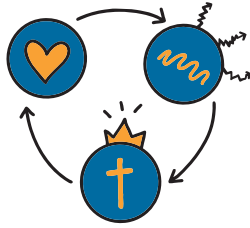


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INTRODUCTION

What is Your Mission in Life?

How has God called you to live as a Christ-follower? What is His challenge for your life's journey?

Some question why God doesn't immediately dispatch us to heaven when we become a Christ-follower. Why would He leave us here on this fallen earth to endure the hardships and trials this life brings?

Jesus provides the answer as He tells His disciples, who are being left behind, that they are to bring the Gospel message to the lost. What we call the **Great Commission**.

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20

We are commissioned to make disciples of Jesus. He leaves us with the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the task of bringing others into a saving faith, and then discipling them in how to live out the Christ-life.

To learn more about WMU of Texas and national WMU's missions disciple-making curriculum for all ages, visit **wmutx.org/resources**.

To download our mentoring resources and missional disciple-making Bible studies, visit **wmutx.org/mentoring**.

The Principles of Missional Disciple-Making

WMU of Texas has created Bible studies to help you on your disciple-making journey. We hope to equip you in the following ways to accomplish the task for which God has called you.

Consider the following four foundational principles as you begin your disciple-making experience.

MISSION

Luke shares the departing words of Jesus before He ascended to the Father, leaving His followers to consider His mandate.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Jesus assured His followers that the power coming of the indwelling Holy Spirit would surely compel them to be His Witness. He instructed all Christ-followers to be on mission to share the Gospel locally, regionally, and to the ends of the earth.

MENTORING

While the mandate to share the Gospel with the whole world seems overwhelming, we are also given instructions for how we are to fulfill such a great command. The writer of Proverbs gives us a hint.

“As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.”

Proverbs 27:17

This Proverb refocuses our disciple-making. Here, we are encouraged to build relationships one by one. We are instructed to sharpen each other as we invest in missional relationships through mentoring. So the question becomes, ***whose life are you pouring into? Who are you discipling?***

METAMORPHOSIS

What is the purpose of disciple-making? Paul tells us that our goal in disciple-making is to equip and encourage another to realize the heart-transformation God longs to bring.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:1-2

The purpose of our investment in others is to bring about transformation. We derive the word “metamorphosis” from the Greek word for transformation, which is best seen in the life cycle of the caterpillar. Metamorphosis allows realization of the full potential within the caterpillar to become a butterfly.

Our goal of investing in the lives of others through mentoring relationships is to lead them to experience a true transformation, becoming the person God has created them to be.

MULTIPLICATION

The result of the transformation we experience is the need to share our transformation with others. The Great Commission tells us clearly:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Much like His departing words in Acts 1:8, Matthew records Jesus' command that, as we are going about our daily lives, we are to be about His business of disciple-making. He empowers and equips, but we become the hands, feet, and mouth of Jesus to invest in disciple-making. We are to teach others to obey His commands and baptize others into His Kingdom, until the very end of the age.

May you find Christ and His purpose for YOU as you walk this missional disciple-making journey.

Getting Started

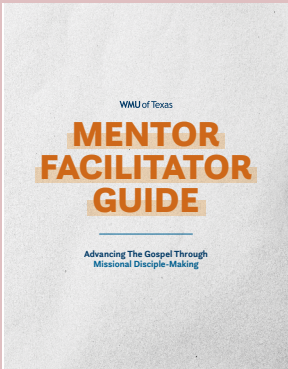
As you begin your journey, either solo, with another person, or in a small group, here are some next steps to help you get started.

You will find five missional disciple-making resources that will help you on your disciple-making journey at wmutx.org/mentoring. You may start with any of the five. There is no anticipated order to the studies. You will find that they all equip you in specific ways to be a missional disciple-maker.

As you embark on your study, consider that God may want you to invite someone else to join you. Feel free to study on your own, but allow space for God to show you others whom you could encourage through the study as well.



Scan to
download the
Mentoring Guide
for Leaders.



MISSIONAL DISCIPLE-MAKING BIBLE STUDIES

Here is an overview of the five spiritual practices you will experience in each Bible study to equip you as a missional disciple-maker.

Each Bible study includes a Bible passage, a short commentary, and a practical tool to help you practice what you have learned. Download at wmutx.org/mentoring

Bible Study	Goal	Application
SURRENDERED PRAYER <i>Matthew 6:9-13,</i> <i>Luke 11:1-4</i>	To deepen intimacy with God and submit every aspect of life to His will.	Learning to use God’s Word to pray.
READ THE BIBLE & APPLY IT <i>2 Timothy 3:16-17,</i> <i>James 1:22</i>	To renew one’s mind and gain wisdom for living in His truth.	To study God’s Word and put it into practice.
PRAYING FOR OTHERS <i>1 Timothy 2:1-4,</i> <i>Colossians 4:2-4</i>	To partner with God in intercession, asking for His work in the lives of others.	Identify people to pray for and include them in your daily prayer time.
SHARE YOUR FAITH <i>Matthew 28:19-20,</i> <i>Romans 10:14-15</i>	To boldly and lovingly proclaim the hope and salvation found in Jesus Christ.	Practice sharing your testimony and the Gospel with others.
GATHER IN COMMUNITY <i>Hebrews 10:24-25,</i> <i>Acts 2:42-47</i>	To grow as disciples within the Body of Christ and be equipped for missional living.	Gathering with other believers for worship, study, fellowship, and service.

How To Use This Study

As you step into each of these Bible studies, you will implement a method of study easily remembered by its acronym: SOAP.

SOAP OVERVIEW

Sometimes studying God's Word can be overwhelming and intimidating at best. However, Jesus tells us in **John 14:26** that the "Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

As a Christ-follower, you have the Holy Spirit teacher within you to help you understand and apply God's Word. Sometimes it just helps for us to have a structure within which to work.

There are a number of different study methods. The method we will use is the SOAP Method. It provides a framework to read the scripture, observe what the text says, apply the scripture personally, and pray for God to speak through His Word.



SCRIPTURE

Read the passage out loud or write it down. Read it slowly and thoroughly for context.



OBSERVE

What does the passage say?

Read the passage again, focusing on observation. You might ask the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions as you observe. Note key details like repeated words, people involved, locations, and major events. Journal your observations.



APPLY

What does the passage mean to me?

Read the passage again and consider how it applies to your life. This step answers, ***"How does this passage apply to my life?"*** As you journal, ask yourself if any of the things you see in the passage apply to a current situation or struggle in your life.



PRAY

Ask God to speak clearly through His Word and guide you as you seek to live out the truths you learned from the passage.

A Note on Bible Study Translations

The Bible, originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, has been translated into English many times. This study will primarily use the Amplified Bible (AMP). But reading the same passage of Scripture from more than one translation can be a helpful study tool. You can find a variety of translations on a Bible app or websites such as biblegateway.com.

BIBLE STUDY

FELLOW WORKERS

⁵ Conduct yourself with wisdom in your interactions with outsiders (non-believers), make the most of each opportunity [treating it as something precious]. ⁶ Let your speech at all times be gracious and pleasant, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how to answer each one [who questions you].

COLOSSIANS 4: 5-6



SCRIPTURE

SHARING YOUR FAITH

The Lazy Approach to Evangelism: Two Biblical Principles for Witnessing to Nonbelievers

By: Eric Hernandez

Most Christ-followers would likely agree that sharing one's faith is the most difficult task we face as disciple-makers. Yet it opens the door and provides the first step toward following God's mandate that we are to make disciples as we live out our faith journey.

How can we be better equipped to "be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth?" ([Acts 1:8](#)). This Bible study will help guide you in practical ways to share the Gospel. It will likely challenge you to consider evangelism in a new light.

As you embark on this study, let God speak to your heart and open your eyes to who and how He is calling you to bring the Good News on your journey.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." [Mark 16:15](#)

Scripture makes it clear: every believer is called to proclaim the good news about Jesus. While this responsibility can feel intimidating, evangelism is not optional. Sadly, many Christians hesitate to engage in evangelism because they fear being asked questions they can't answer. However, this fear often stems from neglecting another critical Biblical Mandate: the discipline of Apologetics.

In [1 Peter 3:15](#), we are commanded to always be prepared to give a defense for the hope we have. The Greek word for "defense" here is *apologia*, from which we get the English word Apologetics. Simply put, Apologetics is giving a defense for what we believe and why we believe it.

From these two verses alone, Christians are unambiguously called to do two things:

1. *share the Gospel, and*
2. *be equipped to defend it.*

Thankfully, neither evangelism nor Apologetics has to be difficult, but in a culture increasingly skeptical of faith, these must be effective.

This resource is designed to help you move from memorized Gospel presentations to meaningful Gospel conversations—equipping you with practical tools for engaging nonbelievers, avoiding unnecessary conflict, and keeping your interactions calm, gracious, and Christ-centered.

Let's start with the Biblical foundation for the "Lazy Approach" to evangelism.



Read Colossians 4:5-6



OBSERVE

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY?

1. List the instructions given in Colossians 4:5-6. Make note of how each of the actions are to be conducted.

Instruction 1	
Instruction 2	
Instruction 3	
Instruction 4	



APPLY

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN TO ME?

1. List practical ways you can apply the instructions personally.

Instruction	Personal Application



PRAY

Pray for divine appointments to share your faith with others.

Pray for God to go before you to prepare hearts to hear the message of salvation.

Pray that you remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in observing and responding to divine appointments.

Pray for boldness and wisdom as you share.

Pray that the one(s) with whom you share will be open and available to hear from the Holy Spirit.

Pray for those with whom you have shared, that God would continue to speak to them and bring them closer to Him.

PRINCIPLES OF “THE LAZY APPROACH” TO EVANGELISM

In this passage, we’re presented with two important principles for conversing with and responding to the challenges, claims, or positions of the nonbeliever:

1. Make the most use of the time.
2. Know how to answer.

These principles form the foundation of what I call The "Lazy Approach" to evangelism. At its heart, this approach emphasizes Paul’s simple, overarching theme: keep the-main-thing-the-main-thing.

Make the Most Use of the Time (Theological Triage)

To illustrate this first principle, suppose you had one hour to speak with a nonbeliever before Christ returned. In that time, at least four topics could be discussed:

- The age of the earth
- Creation vs. evolution
- Biblical inerrancy
- The existence of God and the resurrection of Jesus

Now ask yourself, **which one of these is essential for salvation?**

Only the latter - *the existence of God and the resurrection of Jesus*. To be clear, I’m not saying the other three are not suitable topics for discussion, but the belief in those three is *not essential for salvation*.

If this troubles you, think of this as a sort of “theological triage.”

In medical practices, if a patient were rushed into the emergency room with a scraped knee, a broken wrist, and a bullet in the chest, which of these should the doctor address first?

Clearly, the bullet in the chest.

DEFINITIONS

Biblical inerrancy is the belief that the Bible, in its original manuscripts, is entirely truthful and free from error in all that it affirms.

In a biblical context, **creation** refers to the act of God bringing the universe, including the earth and all life, into existence from nothing (ex nihilo) through divine word and power.

Evolution is a scientific and philosophical theory designed to explain the origin and course of all things in the universe

In the medical community, this is known as **triage**: the prioritization of treating wounds or illnesses in order of their severity.

Similarly, when witnessing to nonbelievers, *focus on the truths essential for salvation*. While other topics might be important, they aren't the priority in a limited-time conversation.

Therefore, if we wish to “make the most of every opportunity” with nonbelievers, then we must learn to keep the main-thing-the-main-thing. Again, salvation is the priority, and this will undoubtedly require theological triage.

Knowing HOW to Answer (Not WHAT to Answer)

The second principle is conveyed in Paul's careful choice of words. He states that we ought to know how to answer, as opposed to knowing what to answer. This distinction is critical.

For example, if someone asks, "Have you stopped beating your wife—yes or no?" answering either "yes" or "no" concedes to a false assumption. Instead, the best response is to challenge the question itself: “*Why would you assume I've beaten my wife?*” or “*Why would you assume I'm married?*”

Similarly, when engaging with nonbelievers, not every question requires a direct answer.

Why not? Because if I disagree with the underlying assumption behind a question, then questioning the question becomes appropriate.

In this instance, it's not important that we know *what* to answer but *how* to answer. Oftentimes, questioning the question helps uncover hidden assumptions and keeps the conversation on track.

PROCESS FOR THE LAZY APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

While it would be ideal that every person we witness to drop to their knees and surrender their life to Christ, our goal for evangelistic conversations here is a modest one. As apologist Greg Koukl states, we simply want to “put a stone in their shoe.” **That is, we want to give the nonbeliever something to think about.** A “nugget of truth” that causes their walk to be a little uncomfortable, forcing each step to press against the pebble of truth we’ve given them.

To grasp this point, Koukl provides a helpful distinction between gardening and harvesting in evangelism. We all want a harvest, but before there can be a harvest, there must first be a gardener. In this way, Apologetics is a “gardening” type of ministry, and a good gardener knows how to cultivate the soil, supply adequate water, and sweats on his knees to pull weeds. Such work takes time, patience, and requires the relevant “gardening knowledge” to address the situation.

In evangelism, gardening is like witnessing to a nonbeliever—listening to their story, answering their questions, and helping them wrestle with their doubt. When this is done effectively, the harvester may later come and “reap where he has not sown.” As Jesus explains, “the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor” (*John 4:37-38*).

While we may not all be harvesters in evangelism, we all have our place in gardening so “the sower and the reaper may be glad together” (*John 4:36*). Both are working toward the same purpose, and God alone makes it grow (*1 Corinthians 3:5-9*).

PRACTICING THE LAZY APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

With these two biblical principles in mind, consider the following dialogue I had with a young lady who identified as an atheist. For the sake of anonymity, we'll call her Jan.

Jan: I'm an atheist because I can't believe something unless there's evidence for it.

Eric: I can certainly respect that. But if you're an atheist, and given what you just said, may I ask, what *evidence* do you have that God does not exist?

Jan: The Bible is full of contradictions!

Eric: And how would this prove that God does not exist?

This question left Jan visibly confused. She had never been asked this before and was likely accustomed to the conversation devolving into a heated exchange at this point. But instead of debating the alleged "contradictions," I gently challenged the assumption behind her objection:

Eric: Let me put it this way; if God exists, would He have existed before the Bible was written?

Jan: Sure, but I don't believe in God!

Eric: I understand that, but follow me here. If God existed before the Bible was written, then how would a Bible full of alleged "contradictions" make Him disappear or prove that He didn't exist?

Key Observations and Conclusion

Note how in this exchange I applied both principles:

1. I focused on the core issue—God's existence—rather than getting sidetracked by secondary objections.
2. I asked thoughtful questions to guide the conversation, demonstrating *how* to answer rather than *what* to answer.

The result? I avoided unnecessary debate, kept the-main-thing-the-main-thing, and gave Jan something to consider—all without needing memorized responses or possessing exhaustive knowledge.

Remember: you don't need to know all the right answers; you just need to know how to ask the right questions.

The "Lazy Approach" to evangelism isn't about avoiding effort; it's about working smarter. By listening carefully, prioritizing wisely, and asking good questions, anyone can have fruitful conversations with nonbelievers. You don't need to be an expert—just a patient and thoughtful witness who points others to the truth. If you do this, you're well on your way to having more fruitful, productive discussions with nonbelievers, making you a better listener, questioner, and, most importantly, a better witness for Christ.

NEXT STEPS

Now that you have a foundation for sharing your faith, begin asking God to empower you as you become intentional in responding to the Holy Spirit along your journey to share the Gospel with others who may not have a relationship with Christ.

If you would like to use a tool to help you as you share, consider the 3 circles model. It is a simple tool that describes **God's plan** for mankind, man's **brokenness** brought on by sin, and God's restoration provided through the **Gospel**.

You can find specific information at namb.net/evangelism/3circles/.

Now that you have some tools in hand, consider role-playing some scenarios for sharing the Gospel with others. Practice responses by sharing with others who are on the discipling journey with you.

ADDITIONAL BIBLE STUDIES & RESOURCES



Ready to continue your disciple-making journey? Explore our other Bible studies and mentoring resources available at wmutx.org/mentoring. These resources provide valuable guidance and support for deepening your faith and helping others grow in theirs.

Bible Study	Goal	Application
SURRENDERED PRAYER <i>Matthew 6:9-13,</i> <i>Luke 11:1-4</i>	To deepen intimacy with God and submit every aspect of life to His will.	Learning to use God's Word to pray.
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