



## Session Objectives:

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1. Build awareness of the spiritual journeys of others and the roles we can play in their lives.
2. Understand the CoJourneyer paradigm, identifying the four primary roles.
3. Begin to pray consistently for opportunities to be an effective witness in the lives of others.

## Introduction: Spiritual Journeys

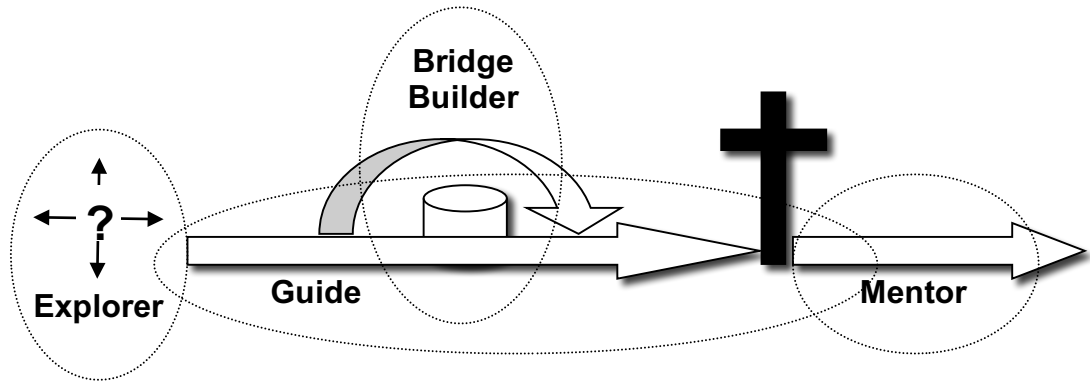
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1. **Tell a Story:** Share an example of God at work using you in someone's spiritual journey. [For an example, see CoJourners Transferable Concept avai] Use the story to illustrate:
  - a. Everyone is on a spiritual journey.  
**Discuss:** True or false: "Everyone is on a spiritual journey." Why?  
  
[God has created people as spiritual beings. Therefore, everyone's life is a spiritual journey. Some may be moving toward God, others away. Some may be moving toward other so-called "gods" or stuck in a spiritual quagmire. But everyone is on a spiritual journey. But we don't always recognize that in others.]
  - b. God is already at work.  
**Discuss:** How did you see God at work in the story?
  - c. He wants to use you!
2. **Optional: Discuss: Why don't we recognize the spiritual journeys of others?**  
Observe and discuss the awareness of the disciples from John 4:8, 27, 31-33, 35.
  - [4:8] The disciples are sent into town to get lunch. What might they have been thinking? Feeling? What would they have thought about the people of Sychar?
  - [4:27] Why were the disciples surprised at Jesus' conversation with the woman?
  - [4:31ff] After the woman left, the disciples turn their attention to lunch. But Jesus is fully conscious of something the disciples were completely unaware of – they were in the midst of a spiritual harvest. Already the Samaritan village is on its way to meet Jesus [4:30], with many believing in him because of the woman's testimony [4:39].
  - Why did the disciples miss the reality that the Samaritans were spiritually open to Jesus?
  - More importantly, why are we so unaware of the spiritual journeys of those around us? Why do we miss so many spiritual opportunities?
3. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:5-6)

## The Four Roles of a CoJourneyer

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1. There are four primary roles that you can play in another person's spiritual journey – An Explorer; A Guide; A Builder; A Mentor  
[Note: The Powerpoint slide #4 builds this diagram with each click.]



### a. The Explorer

- i. The first role we play is that of an Explorer.
- ii. In the ordinary life, what does an explorer do?  
[Enters into unknown territory to discover, learn and understand.]  
Same is true in spiritual arena, except we explore lives, not land.
- iii. We need to discover where they are spiritually.  
We want to understand they've been and where they are, so we can help them come to Christ. That is the role of the Explorer.
- iv. The two main things an explorer does is ask questions and listen. [Next session we'll focus on how to be an effective explorer.]

### b. The Guide

- i. The second role we can play is that of a guide.
- ii. What does a guide do in everyday life?  
[Shows the way.]  
A guide is someone who joins with you on a journey, helping show you the way. A good guide will explain things as you go, helping you understand as they lead you. That is the essence of being a witness – showing the way to Jesus, helping someone understand how they may come to Him.
- iii. What does a guide use? Their personal experience (often called a testimony or a life story) and the gospel. [In our third session we will focus on being a more effective guide.]

### c. The Builder

- i. When a person is on a journey and comes to an obstacle, say a river, what do they need to continue on?  
[A bridge.]
- ii. The same is true spiritually. There are all kinds of issues and obstacles that keep people from coming to Jesus – intellectual issues, emotional baggage, competing desires; etc. (Optional: Have them share some examples.)
- iii. When we are exploring someone’s spiritual journey and showing them how they can know Christ, we might discover they are stuck because of a debilitating issue. We don’t give up and leave them there. Rather we seek to deal with the issue, that is, we provide a bridge over and beyond the issue so they can continue to move toward Christ.
- iv. How? Through prayer and gentle persuasion. Prayer is important because, no matter what the issue is, the enemy (the devil) seeks to use these obstacles as a way of blinding them and keeping them in spiritual bondage. Prayer unleashes God’s power. But we also use gentle persuasion—not trying to win an argument, but coming beside them as a friend or CoJourneyer and helping them get beyond the issue.
- v. [We use the fourth session to deal with becoming a more effective Bridge Builder.]

#### **d. The Mentor**

- i. When a person comes to Christ, their spiritual journey is not over – rather it is just beginning. Now they need help and encouragement to continue to follow Christ. That is the role of the Mentor.
- ii. The Mentor encourages new believers in their spiritual journey.
- iii. The two primary resources for the mentor are the foundational concepts of the Christian life) and relational connections to other believers. The new believer needs to develop significant connections with other believers – Christian friends and a Christian community. He also needs grounded in foundational truths for the Christian life.
- iv. [We will use the fifth and final session to explore being an effective Mentor for others.]

#### **2. The Roles in Action [Powerpoint slides #5-7]**

- a. The roles are not chronological, that is, always following the same order like a formula. They do always begin with being an Explorer. But the role you play next depends on what you discover about the other person and their spiritual journey.
- b. [Slide #5] You may find as you begin to explore that the other person is already prepared and seeking for God. So you might be a Guide who leads them to Christ without encountering any obstacles that would require you to be a Builder.
- c. [Slide #6] Or you might discover from your exploring that they are already stuck with various issues or obstacles. Then you would have to become a Builder before you could be a Guide to show them how they could know Christ.
- d. [Slide #7] Or you might discover that someone already knows Christ, but they have become stuck and need you to help them get beyond an issue so they can continue to follow Christ. So you are an Explorer, then Builder, and then a Mentor.

- e. The point is that the roles work together depending on what is true in the person's spiritual journey. They are flexible to the person's needs, and not a formula that you follow.
3. Review The CoJourney Toolbox: Each role has two primary tools.
    - Explorer: Asking Questions & Listening
    - Guide: Your Story & The Gospel
    - Builder: Prayer & Gentle Persuasion
    - Mentor: Foundational Truths & Relational Connections

### **Application – Relational Networks**

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1. On a large pad, brainstorm together your relational networks, that is, groups of people you relate with. Put each group in an interlocking circle.  
[Family, neighbors, classmates, fellow-workers, social activities, sports and recreation teams, doctors, hairdressers, etc.]
2. Have the participants take a sheet of paper and begin to write names of people in circles on their sheet of paper.
3. If there is time, have them break in small groups and share examples of evidence of spiritual interest among the individuals written on their papers.

### **Prayer**

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1. Have them begin a list of individuals whom they will pray regular for, seeking the opportunity to be a spiritual CoJourney with (witness to) them. Write down those that you sense God is giving you a special burden to pray for regularly.
2. Break into prayer groups and begin praying for:
  - a. The individuals on their lists,
  - b. Additional divine appointments – the unexpected opportunities that God orchestrates to witness to spiritually open people,
  - c. The additional requests that are found on the student notes.

### **Assignment:**

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Pass out the CoJourney resource: [\*Passages: A Devotional Journey\*](#). Have them begin using *Passages: A Devotional Journey* as a supplement to their daily quiet times with the Lord.

Also, download copy of the [\*CoJourney Transferable Concept\*](#) from [cru.org](http://cru.org).



# EXPLORER

Session 2: DISCOVERING SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

## Session Objectives:

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1. Understand the role of the Explorer in others' spiritual journeys.
2. Identify the "sound barriers" that hinder spiritual conversations.
3. Understand principles for breaking through the "sound barriers" (especially the first two.)
4. Sharpen the skills of listening and question-asking.
5. Launch an "exploration" for this coming week.

## Section 1: Sharing

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Lead a time of sharing thoughts from the week's devotionals found in *Passages: A Devotional Journey* and any reports from significant spiritual conversations.

## Section 2: What's Their Story?

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Movie Clip: Scene from *Amistad*

The Steven Spielberg film *Amistad* chronicles the true story of a group of enslaved Africans who in the spring of 1839, revolt on board the Spanish slave ship *La Amistad*. Overtaking their captors, they attempt to return to their beloved homeland. The ship is seized off the U.S. Eastern Seaboard, and the captives are brought to the United States where they are charged with murder and await their fate in prison. An enthralling battle ensues that captures the attention of the entire nation, confronting the very foundation of the American legal system. But for the men and women on trial, it is simply a fight for the basic right of all mankind...freedom. (Adapted from promotional materials for *Amistad* and the book.)

A turning point in the movie occurs during a conversation between the elderly, eccentric, ex-president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, and Mr. Theodore Joadson, a former African slave who is now working for the abolition of slavery in America. Joadson seeks advice from Adams on how to try the case.

Adams responds,

- "When I was an attorney a long time ago, I learned by trial and error, that whoever tells the best story wins. I offer that scrap of wisdom free of charge."

Joadson appears disappointed with this counsel and turns to leave, when Adams speaks.

- "What is their story?"
- "Why, they are from West Africa."
- "No, what is their story? Mr. Joadson, you are from where originally?"
- "Why, Georgia, sir."
- "Georgia?"
- "Yes, sir."
- "Is that pretty much what you are, your story? No. You're an ex-slave who has devoted his life to the abolition of slavery and overcoming great obstacles and hardships along the way, I imagine. That's your story. Isn't it? Hah. You and this young, so-called lawyer have proven you know what they are. They are Africans. Congratulations! What you don't know, and as far as I can tell, haven't bothered in the least to discover, is who they are. Right?"

The fate of these African slaves and the power of the movie rests on the ability of Mr. Joadson and the lawyer, Roger Baldwin, to discover and tell their story.

How often do we get to the end of an evangelistic presentation and discover “what they are,” they are unbelievers, but we don’t know “who they are.” We don’t know their story.

That is the role of the explorer – to discover who people are and where they are on their journey. Exploring helps us know the context for how to help them on their journey.

### Compare and contrast the stories of Nicodemus (John 3:1-21) and the woman at the well (John 4:1-26).

- If all you knew was that Nicodemus was a Jewish teacher of the law, what would you assume about him spiritually? Why?
- If all you knew was that the woman was a Samaritan, ostracized from her community for immorality, what would you assume about her spiritually? Why?
- What was actually true of Nicodemus spiritually?
- What was actually true of the woman at the well spiritually?

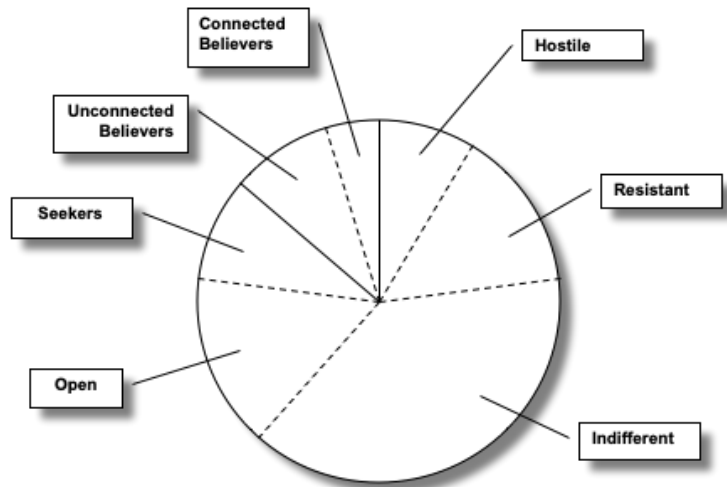
### The key principle: Explorers don’t assume, they enter and discover.

Our lives are filled with people who are spiritually unknown to us - we have no idea where they are spiritually.

Often we make assumptions, but we are often surprised by who is really spiritually open. Sometimes those whom we assume are the farthest away, are the most open. (Share an example.)

As we explore, we discover people can be all over the spiritual map...

- We’ll discover **Christians** – some who are **Connected** to a community of believers and growing, some who are **Unconnected**.
- We’ll discover **Seekers** – who are searching for God in their spiritual journey.
- There are individuals who are **Open** – they are not actively seeking God, but they are generally open, if approached appropriately, if in a safe environment.
- The greatest majority may be the **Indifferent**. For them it is just not on their radar screen; they aren’t thinking much about it, because it seems irrelevant to how they live.
- Another group is the **Resistant**. Their resistance is rooted in world-views and beliefs that conflict with the gospel.
- Finally, there are the **Hostile**. Their hostility could flow out of strong beliefs that conflict with the gospel, but often it flows out of emotional issues like bad experiences in their past.

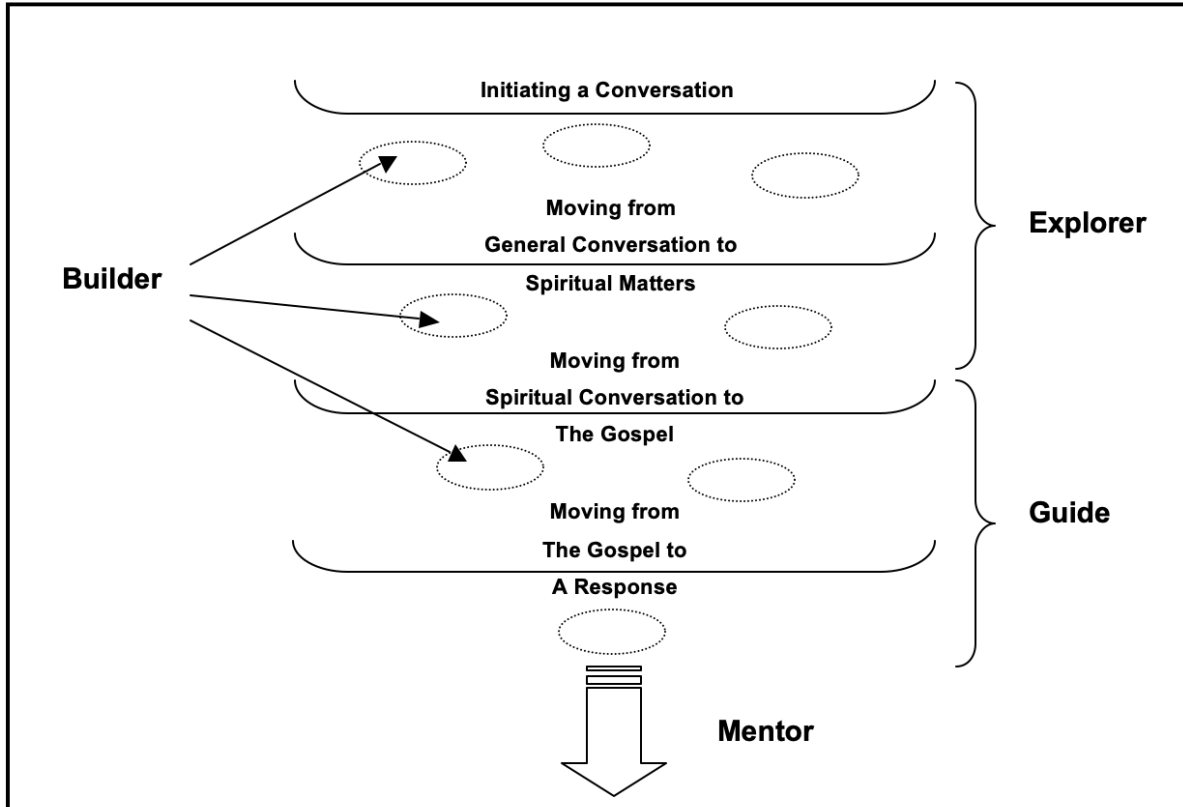


All of them need others to enter into their journeys and help them along. But before we can help show them the way to Jesus (the Guide) or get beyond their obstacles (the Builder), or encourage them to keep following Christ (the Mentor), we have to discover where they are.

### Section 3: The Challenge: “Sound Barriers”

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There are natural “sound barriers” in conversation that must be broken so we can move deeper into spiritual conversations that lead to Jesus.



- There is generally a “sound barrier” that keeps us from entering into a conversation, particularly with a stranger. It is often easier not to talk than to initiate a conversation.
- But then there is a second barrier. It’s easy to have a general conversation, but it can be difficult to enter into a spiritual conversation.
- When we are talking about spiritual matters, we can get stuck. Another barrier can exist between spiritual conversations—about church, God, experiences, etc.—and talking about the gospel.
- Finally, we can be explaining the gospel, but still find it difficult to ask about the other person’s response to the gospel.

The roles address different issues related to the “sound barriers”.

- The Explorer – the first two Barriers
- The Guide – the second two
- The Builder – with issues which create hindrances to moving to the next level
- The Mentor – when one has responded positively to Christ

### Section 3: The Explorer’s Tools: Listening & Question

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## 1. **Case Study:**

*Tell a witnessing story of you (or someone else) having the privilege of exploring and discovering significant insights into another person's spiritual journey. The best stories would include a good example of listening and asking questions.*

Ask, "What do you observe about the role \_\_\_\_\_ played in the spiritual journey of \_\_\_\_\_?"

## 2. **Teach: The Explorer**

### **Introduce the Explorer**

- As we enter into someone's spiritual journey, we often don't know where they are or which way they are going. So the first role we play is that of an Explorer—Entering into unknown territory to discover, learn and understand.
- Illustration: When you are at a mall and you look on a big map, what do you look for? The big X that tells you that you are here. That helps you figure out where you've been and where you want to go.  
Spiritually, we want to help others find the big X in their lives. We want to understand where they've been and where they are, so we can help them come to Christ. That is the role of the Explorer.

The two main things an explorer does is to ask questions and listen.

### a. **Listening: What do you listen for?**

#### i. Common Ground

1. What do we share in common? Interests? Experiences? Concerns?
2. Illustrate with story.

#### ii. Windows to the Soul

1. A window allows you to see what is on the other side. The closer you get to a window, the more you see.
2. Conversations often have "windows to the soul", which provide a glimpse below the surface.
3. What comments reveal more under the surface?
4. The simplest way to see below the surface is to ask, "How are you?" and mean it. When people sense you are genuinely interested, many will openly share.

#### iii. Unmet Needs

1. Life does not work well apart from God's design. So you can be assured that any one who is not following Christ has significant unmet needs in their lives.
2. In fact, we have plenty of needs of our own as believers – which gives us more common ground.
3. The gospel isn't the "cure-all" for all problems—i.e. "Believe in Jesus, and your problem will go away". But the gospel fundamentally changes our experience and approach to the issues.

#### iv. Traces of the Spirit

1. What is most exciting is when you discover how God is already at work in someone's life – preparing the way, drawing the person to himself.
2. Share an example to illustrate.

### b. **Questions**

- There are general questions to get to know the person better.
- You can use specific questions to explore spiritually.
- Highlight a few favorites from the list in the student notes, the Field Guide, or add your own.



### c. **Spiritual Mapping**

Examples of questions can include:

#### **The Past Experiences: Where you've been**

- What was your religious background as a child?
- What have you tried in your spiritual journey since?

#### **Present Attitudes: Where you are**

- How has your search left you feeling?
- Currently how important is the spiritual area of life to you personally?

#### **Future Direction: Where you're going**

- Do you think you are moving toward God, away from God, or staying about the same?
- How would you rate your desire to know God personally?

You can more fully explore each aspect of their spiritual journey by asking follow-up questions.

## **Section 4 – Scenario Discussion**

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- *Print out sufficient copies of the scenarios at the ends of these notes. Cut them into strips that can be distributed to the individuals in the session.*
- *Have the members form triplets. Give one person in each triplet a scenario (unknown to the other two).*
- *Have a second person in each triplet play the role of an explorer.*
- *The third person observes the interaction.*
- *Give 3-4 minutes to let the Explorer ask questions and listen for insights, while the first person plays the role.*
- *At the end of the time, see if the Explorer was able to discern the spiritual journey of the role player.*
- *Ask the Observer what they noticed about the process. What was done well? What clues or opportunities might have been missed?*

## **Section 5 – Preparing for an Expedition**

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Pray for the opportunity to be an Explorer this week. It may occur in one of two settings:

1. By seeking the opportunity to talk with someone that God has placed on your heart to be praying for.
2. By being alert to the opportunity with someone he brings into your day unexpectedly.

You might break the “sound barrier” with something like:

*I am involved in a seminar at \_\_\_\_\_ (my church, school, etc.) called CoJourners. One aspect involves understanding other people's spiritual journeys. An assignment is to visit with someone else about their experience. I thought it would be interesting to hear your thoughts, if you are open to it. Could I ask you a few of the questions? You can feel free to share as much or as little as you are comfortable saying.*

An alternative would be to ask to get together at another time for coffee and conversation about it.

*Would you be open to getting together SOMETIME over coffee and sharing about your experience spiritually? (Set up a time when they answer in the affirmative.)*

Initial Questions could include:

- *What would you say is most important to you in life right now?*
- *How important is the spiritual area of life to you currently?*
- *What have you tried in your spiritual journey?*
- *What has your search left you feeling?*
- *On a scale of 1-10 (1 – low and 10 - high), how strong is your desire to know and experience God in a personal way?*

If they are very open or interested, ask them if they would be interested sometime in seeing a brief explanation of how one can know God personally.

## CoJourney Workshop Session 2: Scenarios

Photocopy this page so that you have enough scenarios for each person in the class. Feel free to create other common scenarios that might be encountered in your setting. Have the workshop pair up. Give one person in each pair a scenario description without revealing it to their partner. Instruct them to play the part, adding to it details to make their spiritual journey realistic. Instruct the other person in the pair to be an Explorer, seeking to conversationally discover insights into the partner's spiritual journey.

Define the context: two casual acquaintances are visiting in a common conversational setting (such as a coffee shop, a resident hall or Greek house lounge, waiting for a child's sports event, etc.)

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- You are a person who is generally spiritually minded, but you rejected the institutional church as old-fashioned and irrelevant. You have never read the Bible or really understood the gospel.

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- You are a person who had been involved in a church as a child but found it too restricting. Now you are trying out Wicca, but only out of curiosity, not conviction.

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- You are a person who had been involved in a youth ministry and come to Christ. However, in college you have gotten caught up in the college lifestyle, started partying lightly, and began hanging out with non-believing friends. You are spiritually stuck.

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- You are a person who was never involved in church as a child. You generally think there is a God, but you don't think much about him. You are not antagonistic, nor particularly interested.

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- You are a person who has been deeply offended by the judgmental attitude of Christians (or at least, those involved in a particular church). The wound came as a high school student when you struggled with issues of sexual identity. Now you are bitter against Christianity and embrace a personal but non-Christian spirituality.

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- You are a person who has been involved in many different kinds of churches, due to your family moving often. You are generally positive, fear God, but have never understood the gospel.

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- You are a person who is trying all the spiritual options. You have read the Bible, the Koran, some Hindu writings, and even tried Buddhism. You are very resistant to "Christian cults" and anything perceived to be one, but open to the major religions.

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- You are an agnostic, not knowing whether there is a God or not; and you do not think anyone can really know. You generally think science is adequate for knowledge, and you are not spiritually minded at all.

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- You are a person who has sensed God at work in your life and wants a relationship with God. You are ready to respond, but just need to know how.

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- You are a person who is a strong adherent to a Christian denomination, thinking that is all you need for salvation, though in actuality you have not understood or accepted the gospel.



# Guide

Session 3: Leading People to Jesus

## Session Objectives:

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1. Understand the role of the Guide in others spiritual journeys.
2. Identify the sound barriers that hinder the Guide, understanding principles for breaking through.
3. Sharpen the understanding and ability to use Christian community, life-story and gospel presentations.
4. Initiate a gospel conversation for this coming week.

## Section 1: Sharing

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Lead a time of sharing thoughts from the weeks devotionals found in *Passages: A Devotional Journey* and any reports from significant spiritual conversations.

## Section 2: Needed: Guides

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Movie Clip: Scene from the Matrix (Excerpted from John Eldridge, *Waking the Dead*. Pg. 19-21)

Two men are seated across from each other in a dark room. Outside, a thunderstorm rages in the night, shading the old house to its foundations. Flashes of lightning are dimmed by heavy curtains, which been drawn because it is a secret meeting. This is the first time these men have ever met, though they have been searching for each other most of their lives. Not a moment too soon, their destinies have crossed. One of them, a tall black man dressed all in black, carries the aura of a spiritual master. The younger man, trying his best to conceal the fact that he is frightened and uncertain, might become his disciple. It all depends on a decision.

Morpheus: I imagine that right now you're feeling a bit like Alice, tumbling down the rabbit hole?

Neo: You could say that.

Morpheus: I can see it in your eyes. You have the look of a man who accepts what he sees because he's expecting to wake up. Ironically, this is not far from the truth. Do you believe in fate, Neo?

Neo: No.

Morpheus: Why?

Neo: Because I don't like the idea that I'm not in control of my life.

Morpheus: I know exactly what you mean. Let me tell you why you're here. You're here because you know something. What you know you can't explain. You feel it. You've felt it your entire life. There's something wrong with the world. You don't know what it is. But it's there, like a splinter in your mind, driving you mad. It is this feeling that has brought you to me. Do you know what I'm talking about?

Neo: The Matrix?

Morpheus: Do you want to know what it is?

[Hesitantly, Neo nods his assent.]

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## Compare and contrast three guides:

1. **Andrew (John 1:40-42)**
2. **Philip (John 1:45-46)**
3. **The woman from Samaria (John 4:28-29)**

- What do they have in common? What was different?
- What did each say?

- What did each do?
- What was their influence rooted in?

**The key principle: Guides lead people to Jesus.**

[This is an ideal time to share a rich evangelism experience that illustrates being a guide. Share the story and let the participants identify principles or insights into:

- God’s part: What did God do within this interaction? What did he have to do to make it happen? Etc.
- Your part: What did you do to make it possible? Etc.

**Section 3: Sound Barriers - 2**

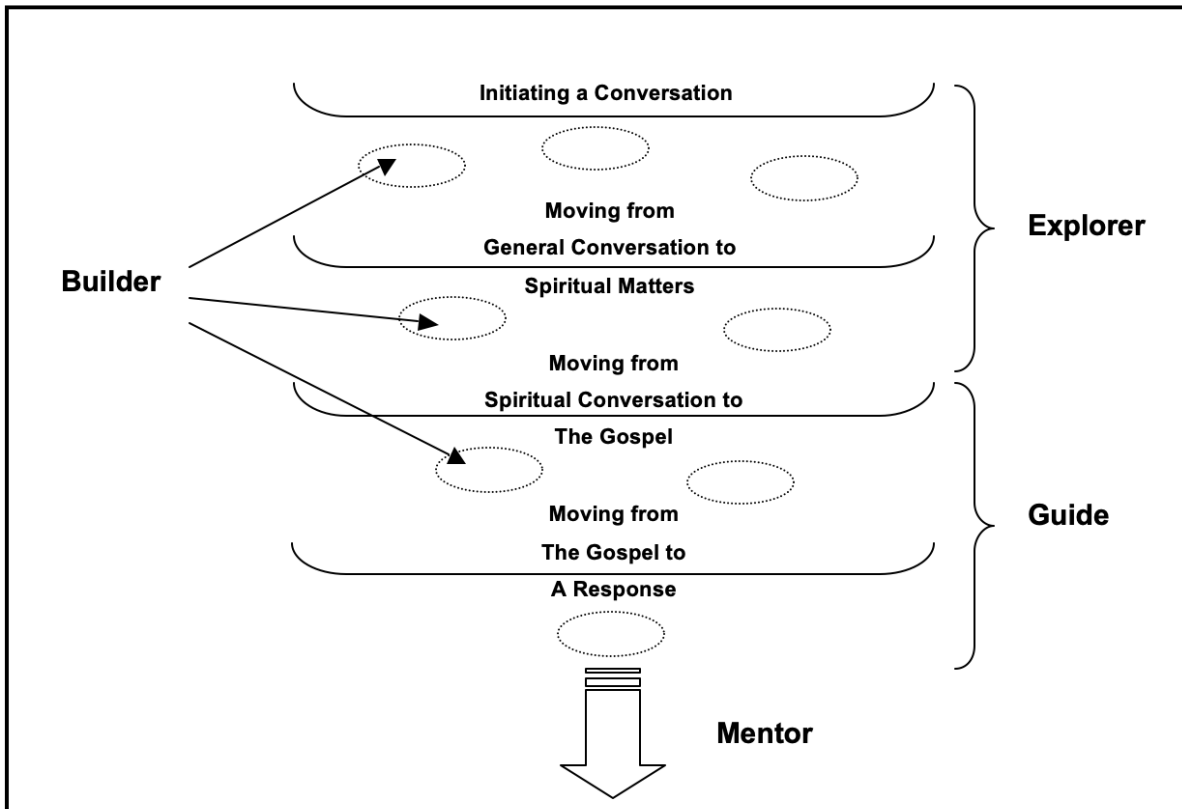
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Review the sound barriers from session 2.

The sound barriers that the guide must break involve:

1. Moving from general spiritual conversation to the gospel, and,
2. Moving from discussing the gospel in general to personalizing it, helping them respond.

[Share a conversation/relationship that illustrates that challenges of breaking through the sound barriers.]



**The Power of Permission**

- At times, the barrier is minimized when the interest of the other person has been piqued and they express a curiosity or desire. This interest can be fostered by carefully sharing “inviting glimpses” into your spiritual experience. We’ll talk more about this in a few minutes, as we talk about sharing life-stories.
- Most often, the path through the barrier of general spiritual conversation to the gospel is found in asking permission.
  - Can I show you something that has really helped me?
  - Can I explain what has really made sense to me about this?
- What does asking permission do?
- [Shows respect. Protects the relationship. Tests interest or openness. Etc.]
- In on-going relationships, the key word is “**SOMETIME**”. “**SOMETIME**, can I show you something about this that has really helped me? It’s a short outline that gives the essence of what the Bible says about this.”

#### **Section 4: The Tools of the Guide**

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##### **1. Case Study:**

- *Tell a witnessing story of you (or someone else) having the privilege of sharing the gospel clearly, especially if it involves leading a person to faith in Christ.*
- Ask, “What do you observe about the role \_\_\_\_\_ played in the spiritual journey of \_\_\_\_\_?”

##### **2. There are primary tools that Guides use to help others journey to Christ.**

- Life Stories: Gospel Illustrations
- Presentations: Gospel Explanations

##### **3. Sharing Life Stories**

- In an inviting sentence – John 4:29
- In an amazing list – Mark 5:19, 20
- In a brief story – Acts 26:1-32

##### **4. Sharing presentations: Gospel Explanations**

###### **Always Prepared**

By memorizing Romans 3:23, you can always be prepared to share the essence of the gospel conversationally. There are three phrases, each containing three ideas that are unpacked by defining the terms.

Romans 6:23

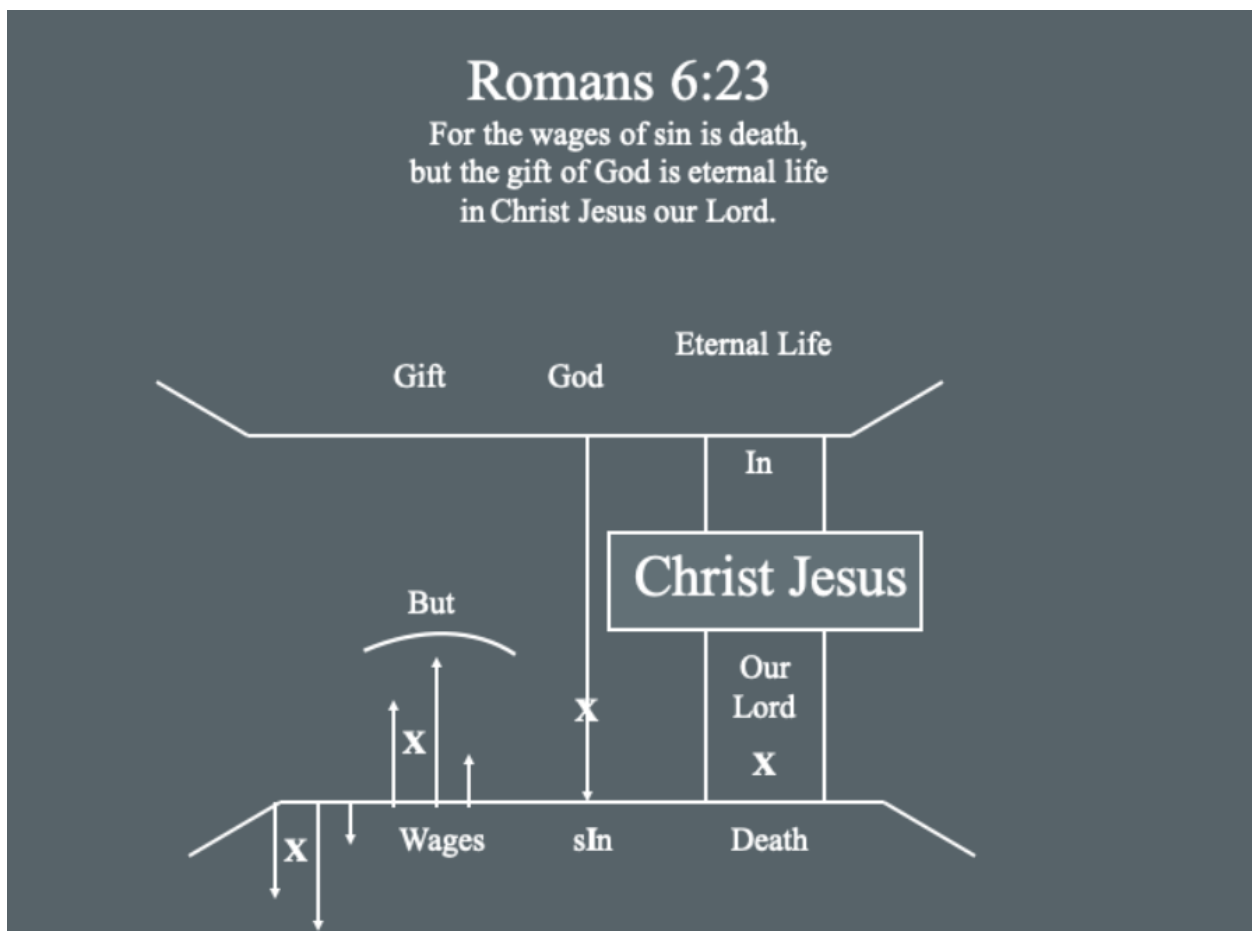
“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

##### **1. “The wages of sin is death...”**

- What is a wage?

- What is sin?
  - What does it mean by death?
- 2. "...the gift of God is eternal life..."**
- What is eternal life?
  - Why can only God give eternal life?
  - What is the difference between a wage and a gift?
- 3. "...in Christ Jesus our Lord."**
- Gifts often come in packages. When you get the package, you get the gift. What does eternal life come in?
  - What does it mean that Jesus is the Christ?
  - How does he become our Savior and Lord?

An easy way to share Romans 3:23 is drawing this diagram as you quote the verse and define the terms.



## 5. Using Gospel Tools to Guide

### Explaining the Gospel

One of the simplest and clearest ways to share the gospel is to read through an outline, like *The Four Spiritual Laws* or *Would You Like to Know God Personally?* Simply read the outline conversationally, making sure they can see it. Pointing and underlining can help focus their attention.

### The Big Six

The Big Six are questions that help clarify *Would You Like to Know God Personally?* They do not add to it or lead into tangents. Memorize these questions; it will only take 5-10 minutes. They will help you to communicate the gospel with clarity and to know how well the other person understands.

1. How would you define sin?
2. So, have you ever sinned?
3. Why did Christ die on the cross?
4. What do you think this verse (Ephesians 2:8, 9) is saying?
5. What is the main difference between the circle on the left and the circle on the right?
6. What is the main thing that this prayer is expressing?

### The Threshold of Decision

The threshold of decision is found at the intersection where belief in the truth of the gospel, awareness of the need for the Savior and the willingness to trust him meet.

Three questions to answer:

- Do you believe it's true?
- Do you need Jesus to be your Savior and Lord?
- Will you trust him to be your Savior and Lord?

## Section 5: Taking Steps

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As you continue exploring other people's lives and spiritual experiences, seek opportunities to be a guide.

By Asking Permission.

- Can I tell you a little of my story?
- Can I show you what has really helped me understand...?

By Setting-up Conversations

- **Sometime**, can I show you something that has really helped me understand...?



By Prayer :

Colossians 4:3, 4

- *Pray for Open Doors*
- *Pray for Clarity of Witness*

Ephesians 6:19, 29

- *Pray for the Words to Say*
- *Pray for Boldness*



# BUILDER

Session 4: BRIDGES OVER OBSTACLES

## Session Objectives:

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1. Understand the role of the Builder in others spiritual journeys.
2. Recognize the reality and diversity of obstacles in spiritual journeys.
3. Understand the importance and principles of bridge-building.
4. Identify an acquaintance that is stuck spiritually and take a step to provide a bridge.

## Section 1: Sharing

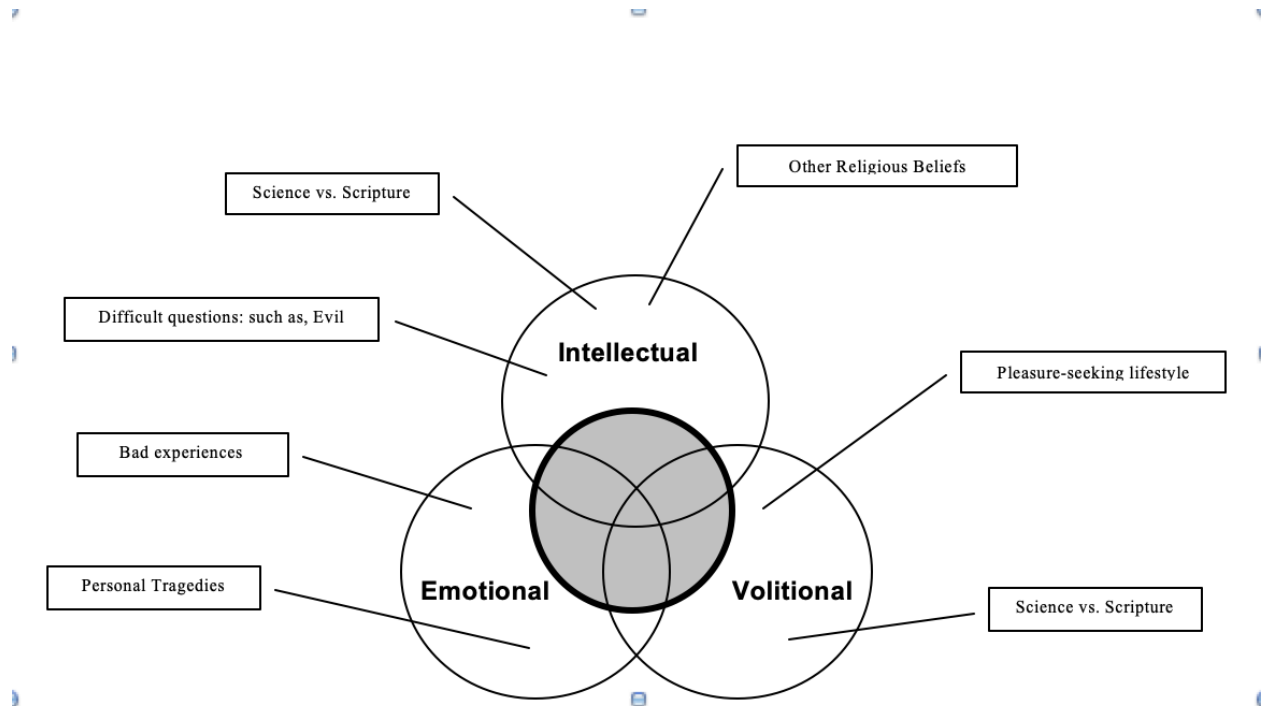
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Lead a time of sharing thoughts from the weeks devotionals found in *Passages: A Devotional Journey* and any reports from significant spiritual conversations.

## Section 2: Caution: Obstacles ahead

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Draw a circle [representing a person on a spiritual journey] surrounded by three interlocking circles. Label them for different kinds of issues: Intellectual, emotional and volitional. Brainstorm examples of each (a few examples are below). No matter what the issues are, ultimately they are spiritual issues.



The challenge for the builder is not knowing the right answer or response to each issue. Rather, it is to know the principles that apply no matter what the issue.

## **Section 2: A Model Bridge Builder**

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### **Acts 17:16-34**

Read the text together, by section, discussing the following questions:

#### **What were the Athenians obstacles? [16-21]**

- Idols
- Philosophy
- Laziness
- Followed Fads

#### **Where did Paul begin? [22,23]**

- Recognized their religious inclinations.
- Their altar to an unknown God.

#### **Where did Paul end? [31]**

- Need for repentance
- Coming judgment of all idolatry
- Judge appointed
- Proof of the resurrection of Jesus

#### **How did he connect the two? [24-30]**

- Proclaim the unknown God
- Creator, ruler, life-giver, greater than creation
- Our purpose is to seek and find God
- Our views of God are wrong

#### **What was the result? [32-34]**

- Some sneered
- Some were curious and wanted more
- Some believed and followed

**The key principle: An effective bridge begins where the person is at, ends with Jesus and connects the two effectively.**

## **Section 3: The Art and Science of Building**

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Review: Just as...

- An explorer has two primary tools: Listening and asking questions
- A Guide has three: Christian community, your personal story, the gospel
- The Builder has two primary tools: Prayer and God's Word.

If you are building a road and you come to an obstacle, you either remove it or you build a bridge over it.

### **Prayer**

Prayer is essential because no matter what the issue looks like on the surface, it is ultimately a spiritual obstacle, used by the enemy to blind the eyes and keep in bondage [2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.]

Share an example of someone coming to Christ after a time of being prayed for by someone. (It could be your story.)

### **God's Word**

God's Word is the second tool.

But how it is used is with ***Gentle Persuasion***. The two words together give a rich picture of what is needed.

Persuade:

the root of the word comes from per (thoroughly) and suadere (to urge), and is related to the Latin word: for sweet (suavis).

The picture is not of victory (winning a debate or argument), but of influence (urging a change.) It is attractive (sweet) not offensive.

Paul was persuasive [Acts 17:2-4.]

Gentleness

Gentleness is strength under control.

A gentle person is not a weak person. A gentle person is a safe person. (Think of a gentle stallion – powerful, but safe.)

People on spiritual journeys need gentle persuasion. They need us to come beside them, understanding where they are at, helping them over the issue or

### **Beginning point:**

- Understand the issue. Explore and ask questions. It may sound like an intellectual issue (Why does God allow evil?), when in reality it is emotional (Why did this happen to me?)
- Let them know you understand and appreciate it. Don't minimize or make light of it.

### **Ending Point:**

- Ultimately, this is about Jesus.
- Don't end up talking about peripheral matters [Churches, Christians, etc.]

### **Connect the Two**

The most powerful connections include:

- The **Bible**: Share a verse and explain its implications to the issue.
- Your **Experience**: What has helped you related to this issue.
- **Questions**: Can you help them think differently about the issue?
- **Stories**: Is there a story they could relate with or an illustration they could understand?

## Section 4: Examples of Bridges

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Share personal examples of building bridges (or have others share their examples.)

Examples could include:

- Someone who is self-dependence
- Someone struggling with evil
- Someone struggling with pluralism (“all religions lead to the same place.”)
- Someone with a bad experience
- Etc.

## Section 5 – Builder Resources

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Share examples of recommended resources for builders:

Websites:

- Everystudent.com
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Books to Read

- Boyd & Boyd, *Letters From a Skeptic*
- Newman, *Questioning Evangelism*
- Sproul, *Reason to Believe*
- Torrey, *How to Bring Them to Christ*
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Books to loan or give-away. (It is normally better to loan something, than to give something. If you loan it, there is an expectation that they will read and return it. If you give it, they can get to it whenever it is convenient, and often it goes unread.)

- New Testament
- Strobel, *The Case for Faith & The Case for Christ*
- Stanley, *How Good is Good Enough*
- *The Life of Jesus/More than a Carpenter* combination book
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## Section 6 – Preparing to Build

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### Prayer

Con conversationally pray together through:

- 1 Peter 3:15
- 2 Timothy 2:23-26

### Preparation

Choose a book, video, or other resources to begin.

- What are the issues it is addressing?
- How is it doing it?
- For whom would this be effective?
- How could it be improved?



5. He sent another believer to build into them when he couldn't be there himself. 1 Thessalonians 3:1, 2)

Like Paul, we seek to provide an environment of growth for the new believer, where he or she can experience the work of God in the context of community.

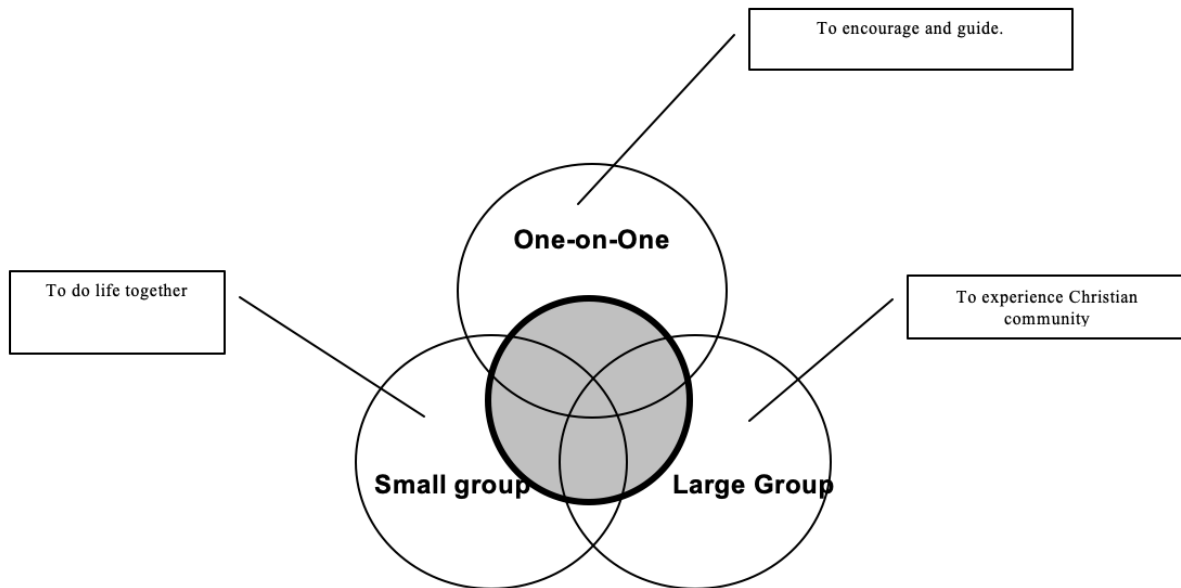
**The key principle: The growth environment is one characterized by grace (or love) and truth (especially God's word) with time to grow.**

### Section 3: Life Connections -

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The growth environment for believers always involves relationships. Along with the relationship with the Lord, there are three other relational contexts or priority relationship in which the believer experiences love and grace. They are:

1. A relationship with a more mature believer who can encourage and guide.
2. A relationship with a group of believing friends with whom they can do life.
3. A relationship with a believing community which provides a fuller experience of God's grace and truth.



#### **Two out of Three: Minimum growth requirements.**

- A believer with all three is in an ideal growth environment.
- Two out of the three should sustain healthy growth over time [no matter which two it is.]
- Only one relational connection is normally not enough to sustain growth for long.
- Lacking all three is a dangerous situation, spiritually depriving the new believer of essential relational connections.

**The key principle: Help the new believer make at least one other relational connection beyond your influence.**

## Section 4: Life Concepts

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The truth of God’s word is essential to spiritual growth and “all scripture is useful...so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17.)

But there are truths that help provide a firm foundation on which to build a Christian life. These truths can be called *Life Concepts* and include:

- Assurance of Salvation
- God’s Love and Forgiveness
- The filling and power of the Holy Spirit
- Walking in the Spirit
- The principles of spiritual growth, including the importance of prayer, the Bible, fellowship, and witness.

An easy paradigm to use to communicate each truth is:

- Start with Our Struggles
- Explore a Key Scripture providing God’s Solution
  - Assurance – 1 John 5:11-13
  - Forgiveness – 1 John 1:5-2:2
  - Spirit Empowering - 1 Corinthians 2:9-3:3
  - Spirit-Led – Galatians 5:16-26
  - Growth – Acts 2:24-27
- Take Steps of Application

<b>Needs</b>	<b>Powerful Passages</b>	<b>Foundational Concepts</b>
<i>Doubts</i>	<i>1 John 5:11-13</i>	<i>Assurance</i>
<i>Guilt</i>	<i>1 John 1:5-2:2</i>	<i>Forgiveness</i>
<i>Frustration</i>	<i>1 Cor. 2:14-3:3</i>	<i>Spirit-empowered</i>
<i>Struggles</i>	<i>Gal. 5:16-26</i>	<i>Spirit led</i>
<i>Immaturity</i>	<i>Acts 2:42-47</i>	<i>Growth</i>

Cru’s series entitled [\*Life Concepts\*](#) provides conversational guides that can be used to communicate these concepts. Anyone can use them by following the guide, though a *Leader’s Guide* is available to help you be confident and equipped. *Life Concept* training is also provided in another training session.



## Section 5 – The Turning Point

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As you interact with others about their spiritual journeys, you will often meet individuals who have trusted Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, but who have slipped into a self-centered lifestyle. These individuals are often experiencing frustration in their spiritual life but need some appropriate “love and truth” to get turned around. *Satisfied?* is a tool designed to help such individuals.

Using *Satisfied?* is as easy as using the *Would You Like to Know God Personally* booklet. But the flow of the outline is:

- **The Divine Gift** – God has given us His Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with Him and enjoy all He has for us.
- **The Present Danger** – We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us if we fail to depend on His Spirit.
- **The Intimate Journey** – By walking in the Spirit we increasingly experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us.
- **The Empowering Presence** – We are filled with the Spirit by faith, enabling us to experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us.
- **The Turning Point** – Individuals who identify with failure to live a Christ-centered life are provided an opportunity to turn in prayer, confessing their sin, and trusting Christ to fill them with His Spirit.

Additional training in using *Satisfied?* is also available in other sessions. Our purpose today is to merely introduce you to the booklet and make it available to you.

## Section 6 – Mentor Resources

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Along with *Life Concepts* and *Satisfied?*, there are many other valuable resources for the Mentor. They include:

### One-on-one Mentoring

- [The Compass](#) – A discipleship curriculum divided into three sections: Walking by Faith, Sharing Your Faith; and Multiplying Your Faith.

Brainstorm other helpful resources:

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### Small-Group Mentoring

- [The Community](#) – An electronic resource filled with small group Bible study.
- [Thrive Studies](#)

Brainstorm other helpful resources:

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## Websites

- [Cru.org Train & Grow](#) – Filled with valuable resources.
- [www.startingwithgod.com](http://www.startingwithgod.com) - A website for the new believer.

Brainstorm other helpful resources:

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Cru resources are available for purchase from [www.crustore.org](http://www.crustore.org)