



Friendship Evangelism

Four: Ministering to People's Needs

Working with Jesus

iFOLLOW

The iFollow Discipleship Series

About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

Credits

Curriculum Development: The iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition curriculum development was lead by the **Center for Creative Ministry**. **General Editor:** Monte Sahlin; **Assistant Editor:** Debbonnaire Kovacs; **Directional Advisory:** Brad Forbes, Carole Kilcher, Ceri Myers, Cesar Gonzalez, Clayton Kinney, Curtis Rittenour, Dave Osborne, Dave VanDenburgh, Gerry Chudleigh, Jane Thayer, Jerry Thomas, John Appel, Jose Rojas, Kim Johnson, Nicole Chao, Paul Richardson, Rich DuBose, Shasta Nelson, William Sutton; **Pastoral Advisory:** Claudio Consuegra, Collette Pekar, Dave Hutman, Don Driver, Fredrick Russell, Jerry Nelson, Jesse Wilson, Leslie Bumgardner, Loren Fenton, Rebecca Brillhart; **Unit Authors:** Alberto Valenzuela, Althea Pineda, Corienne Hay, Debbonnaire Kovacs, Ed Dickerson, Gianluca Bruno, Gil Bahnsen, Greg Nelson, Jack Calkins, James Whibberding, Karen Collum, Monte Sahlin, Norma Sahlin, Pam Splawinski, Patty Ntihuka, Reinder Bruinsma, Ryan Bell; **Additional contribution** by Maria Ovando-Gibson; **Additional editing:** Dave Gemmell, Meredith Carter; **Graphic Design:** Mind Over Media; **Layout:** Paul D. Young; **Web Development:** Narrow Gate Media.

License

iFollow Discipleship Pastor's Edition is produced by the NAD Church Resource Center for use by Seventh-day Adventist Congregations in Bermuda, Canada, and the United States. Churches may freely copy the lessons and PowerPoints for use within their congregations. Any other usage is prohibited without prior written consent from the NAD Church Resource Center. iFollow Discipleship, Copyright 2010, the North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists. NAD Church Resource Center, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-680-6339.



iFOLLOW

www.ifollowdiscipleship.org

Friendship Evangelism Four: Ministering to People's Needs

This presentation is designed for people who desire to serve Jesus Christ and help lead others to Him.

Learning Objectives

1. Grasp Christ's concern for all aspects of human need
2. Understand the concept of "wholistic" ministry
3. Learn the role that skills from social work, health care, etc., can play
4. Develop the ability to see human needs in the community

Content Outline

1. Christ's example in the first chapters of John
2. Our role as servants of Christ in this world
3. Community service opportunities
4. Understanding human needs
5. Responding to needs

Background Material for the Presenter

The third step in sharing your faith with others is to minister to their needs. Ministry springs from a heart touched by God's unconditional love expressed in service toward the practical needs of those around you.

We continue to use the paradigm from Ellen White found in *The Ministry of Healing* (page 143) to understand how we can relate to other people as Christ did. The next statement says Jesus ministered to people's needs. How can we minister to the needs of people around us? If we are compassionate, if we listen carefully, if we care about the people around us, we will become aware that they have a variety of needs.



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

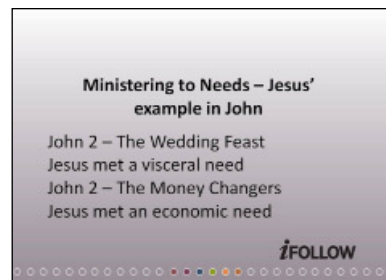
Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

Friendship
Evange-
lism Four:
Ministering
to People's
Needs

1

Christ's Example in John 2

You may not have noticed, but the ministry of Christ did not focus on the religious needs of people. This is clear if you look at the first several chapters of the book of John. In John 2:1-11, Christ meets the friendship needs of a family hosting a wedding feast. You know the story about His first miracle. He went to a wedding feast, and His mother came to tell Him that the host was embarrassed about running out of grape juice. Would Jesus do anything about it?



At first Jesus puts her off. “Would you expect me to work a miracle just so they can have something to drink at a wedding feast? Is it really meeting a need?” But, He goes ahead because his mother asked. He turns water into grape juice, meeting the visceral need—that is, a felt need—of that family to have a good social event.

In the second half of John 2, Jesus is an advocate for the poor and the marginalized. He finds moneychangers taking advantage of people in the temple courts. When the Romans conquered Judea, the Judeans came under Roman government and used Roman money. To retain a sense of national identity, the priests said Roman money couldn't be used in the temple. The Romans allowed them to continue using Judean money in the temple.

The Old Testament laws said that in order to have your sins forgiven, you had to bring animal sacrifices to the temple. In Jesus' time, the priests told people that animals from home were not acceptable because they would not be perfect after traveling from out of town. Therefore, they would have to purchase a perfect animal at the temple. Not only that, they would have to change their money into temple money in order to buy it. And, of course, when they changed money, there were service charges and other fees, and the moneychangers probably took advantage of them in the exchange rate. This meant that the poor were effectively denied access to having their sins forgiven and worshiping God according to the Old Testament law. The system was corrupt.

Christ was enraged by this unfair, ungodly system that had been established. He picked up a cord and was menacing enough that people ran, tables were overturned, animals scattered. He drove the businesses out of the temple court. Jesus went from meeting the needs of people at a wedding feast to confronting an unjust economic system.

Christ's Example in John 3 and 4

In John 3, you find Jesus meeting the intellectual and spiritual needs of a wealthy, powerful man. Nicodemus does not want to be politically embarrassed by being seen with Jesus, so he asks Jesus to talk privately. The talk is about the meaning of life and spiritual

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

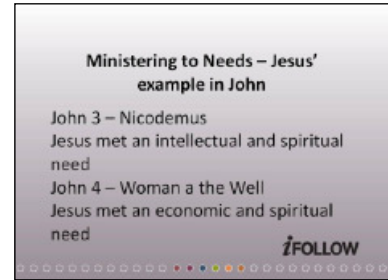
Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

Friendship
Evangelism Four:
Ministering
to People's
Needs

2

things. Jesus responds to Nicodemus in terms of basic spiritual teachings to meet his spiritual needs.

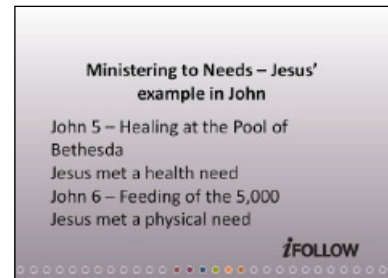
In John 4, Jesus encounters a woman at the well in Samaria. He meets her emotional and spiritual needs. This woman has been through several marriages and has evidently been deep hurt. Jesus ministers to those needs. In the latter part of the fourth chapter of John, Jesus empowers this woman to speak out in the community and share the gospel, and it changes her life and the life of that whole village.



Christ's Example in John 5 and 6

In John 5:2-15, we find Jesus meeting the health needs of a man who's been disabled for 38 years. This man has been there year after year. He believes the story that if you can get into the pool when the water is disturbed, you will be healed. Jesus picks out the man and brings him healing.

In John 6:1-13, Jesus feeds 5,000 people who gather in a crowd and are hungry. Jesus meets their physical need for food. In all these stories Jesus met different kinds of needs, each appropriate to the particular context and the people involved.



Ministers for Christ

How do we apply this principle to ministry with people around us today, at work, in our neighborhood, or with our relatives? First, we need to understand what “minister” means. In English we've taken this word and have blown it up to mean something important, “prime minister” or “the minister” in a church.

However, in the original language, the word simply means “servant.” So, if you're the “prime servant,” that means you have to serve more than anybody else. We've elevated it and covered over the meaning of the word, but the real meaning is “servant.” Paul says, “I'm a servant of Christ.”

Ministry means service. To minister to another person means to serve them as a servant. What does a servant do? Maybe servants have never attended you, and this is a new concept to you.

Servers in restaurants in America earn half the minimum wage in terms of salary. They are entirely dependent on tips to make any kind of a living. The way you earn tips is by

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Friendship
Evange-
lism Four:
Ministering
to People's
Needs**

3

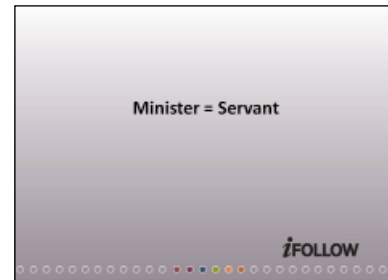
being a good servant. If you are good at serving people, you make a lot of tips.

Servants observe carefully and learn about what people like and don't like. They have to be prepared to respond helpfully. Servants need to be discreet. No one likes a servant to hover too much, listening and intruding; but the servant can't be gone too much either.

Servants have to have good timing. If they bring the right thing at the right time, people like it. If they bring even the right thing at the wrong time, people think it's terrible. If they bring the wrong thing, that is worse.

They have to make the person being served feel comfortable. If people feel too served, that's too much. That's what it means to do the work of a servant.

To serve in Christ's name means to provide real service, real ministry, really meeting the needs of another person. You are practical, useful, relevant, timely, kind, considerate, and protective of the dignity of the other person. You help others feel comfortable and don't expect them to be grateful. This is what it means to serve in the name of Christ. Christ-like service comes from a changed heart. It comes because God places in us the unconditional love of Jesus.



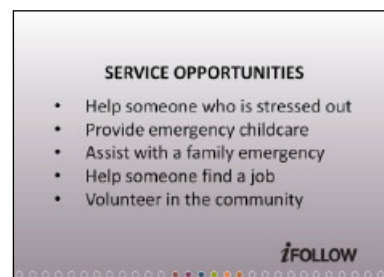
Service Opportunities

There are lots of opportunities for you to serve and meet the needs of people around you. Here are a few examples.

When someone at work is stressed with a deadline or pressure, pitch in and help them. If you are the kind of person who helps other people at these times, that's a way of meeting their needs. You can also connect people with information, opportunities, and potential allies or partners that help them in their work. In the business world, they call this networking.

Another opportunity is when a parent needs childcare. Childcare is often difficult to get at the last minute or at all. Perhaps we could care for somebody else's children for a night or a day while they do something they need to do.

Another occasion is when there is a family emergency. There are many ways to help: bring food, take the mail in, or care for other details. For example, a single woman discovered she had to leave on an unexpected business trip that very afternoon. A friend volunteered



to go to the dry cleaners and retrieve clothes for this person. These are all opportunities to meet needs and serve people around you who may not be poor or sick or hurting in obvious ways.

Understanding Human Needs

Most of us have heard of the hierarchy of human needs. At the bottom are basic physical needs (food, water, air, etc). A second layer is safety needs (feel secure, protected, etc.). The third layer is relationships. Then comes belonging to a group. The final layer is spiritual.

This hierarchy shows that when people are facing basic physical needs, they don't worry much about their safety. When people are very hungry and need food, they will do things that expose them to a great deal of risk. When those basic needs are met, then people start feeling anxious about safety and security. When safety needs are met, people start worrying about relationships and friendship. Emotional needs begin to surface. When those needs are met, people worry about belonging needs (having a job, respect, and role in the community, belonging to a church, etc). Those needs are generally not on the minds of people who have no friends and are alone. But, once they have friends, they start thinking about what they're going to do and their role in the world. When those needs are met, then spiritual needs come to people's minds.

Unless we meet basic physical needs in a person's life, they really don't have the capacity to be concerned about spiritual needs. When a person's basic safety and security needs are not being met, they really don't have the capacity to think about spiritual needs. Only as these other needs are met can we address spiritual needs. The capacity to listen, understand, and engage with spirituality must follow the fulfillment of basic physical and emotional needs.



Responding to Needs

Let's think for a minute about appropriate responses to these various needs. First, in order for your response to be appropriate, it has to be defined according to how they see their needs. No one likes to be told what they need. You are not their parent or doctor. In order to respond appropriately to people's needs, you have to understand how they see their needs and work with that view. Even if you don't think it is an entirely healthy or biblical view that is still the view you have to work with if you are going to actually serve them.

People with basic physical and safety needs require help. By definition, a person who

faces basic survival needs does not have the capacity to meet those needs alone, or they wouldn't be in that situation. Most people who are educated and have sufficient income will take care of their own needs. But people with physical and safety needs don't have the capacity to help themselves because of economics, age, lack of education, or other limiting circumstances.

The people on the upper end need a challenge. In fact, we might say that we need them more than they need help. They need to do something that requires boldness. The mission of the church is a challenge that gives people a sense of belonging and meaning and purpose in life. For those on the high end, we call them to that challenge. We call them to be part of what God is trying to accomplish in the world.

Most people are in the middle. Those people need good relationships—healthy, trusting, supporting relationships with people who are going to help them move in the right direction without using or hurting them. The majority of the population in North America today is probably in this category. Smaller portions of the population are on the low and high ends.

As you think about someone you know in your circle of acquaintances that you want to minister to, consider where they are on this scale. People move up and down. A person can be at the top of the scale in their career and then suddenly a loved one dies, and their needs move down because they are hurting. With changing circumstances, people move up and down the scale. In order for us to minister to them in an effective, Christ-like way, we need to know where they are and how we can respond appropriately to them.

Handouts in this Package

1. Ministering to People's Needs
2. An Adventist Paradigm for Sharing Your Faith



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Friendship
Evange-
lism Four:
Ministering
to People's
Needs**

6

Additional Resources

Finley, Mark (1989). *Making Friends for God*. Fallbrook, CA: HART Research Center. (This is a video seminar series with video cassettes, participant book and leader's guide.)

Sahlin, Monte (1991). *Friendship Evangelism Seminar*. Siloam Springs, AR: Concerned Communications. (This is a seminar package that includes an instructor's guide and a participant notebook.)

Sahlin, Monte (2000). *Ministries of Compassion Revised Edition*. Lincoln, NE: Advent-Source.

Sahlin, Monte (2003). *One Minute Witness*. Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry. (This is a small, 40-page booklet that could easily be used as a textbook for the series of units on Friendship Evangelism.)

Sahlin, Monte and Rittenour, Curtis (2001). *Friend 2 Friend: Sharing Faith with Secular People*. Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry. This is the video seminar for teaching Friendship Evangelism recommended by the North American Division. It is available with DVDs, participant book, instructor's guide and PowerPoint slides. A total of six sessions which are parallel in content to this series of units.)

Additional Resources from Other Christian Sources

Harkey, W. G. (1988). *How to Share Good News Without Being Obnoxious About It*. Lima, OH: C.S.S. Publishing Company.

Henderson, Jim and Casper, Matt (2007). *Jim and Casper Go to Church*. Carol Stream, IL: BarnaBooks/Tyndale House Publishers.

Humphreys, Kent and Davidene (2000). *Show and Then Tell: Presenting the Gospel Through Daily Encounters*. Chicago: Moody Press.

Innes, Dick (1983). *I Hate Witnessing*. Ventura, CA: Vision House.

Martinet, Jeanne (1992). *The Art of Mingling*. New York: MJF Books.

McIntosh, Duncan (1984). *The Everyday Evangelist*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.

McLaren, B. D. (2001). *A New Kind of Christian*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mittleberg, M.; Strobel, L. and Hybels, B. (1995). *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. (This is a video seminar with video cassette, instructor's guide and a textbook for participants. Can be presented in four two-hour sessions or eight one-hour sessions.)

Moore, Ralph (2001). *Friends: The Key to Reaching Generation X*. Ventura, CA: Regal.

Neville, Joyce (1983). *How to Share Your Faith Without Being Offensive*. New York: The Seabury Press.

Nouwen, Henri, Douglas A. Morrison, and Donald P. McNeill (2006). *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life*. Random House.

Sweeting, George (1991). *The No-Guilt Guide to Witnessing*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Articles

Hall, Eddy and Morsch, Gary (n.d.). "The Myth of Secular Work." Published online in PDF at: www.living-stones.com/articles/myth.pdf

Hunter, George (n.d.) "To Spread the Power," Chapter Six. Available online in the form of a slide show at: home.snu.edu/~hculbert/needs/sld007.htm

Website

Internet Evangelism Day is a concept that has started in recent years and is supported by an Evangelical parachurch ministry with provides many resources on their website. The following page includes information specifically about meeting needs as a Biblical and practical concept: www.internetevangelismday.com/felt-needs.php

Discussion Questions

1. How do you find out what the needs are of the people in your neighborhood or your workplace? Do they generally talk openly to you? If so, why do you think this is so? If not, why not?
2. Jesus met a very different set of needs for the Samaritan woman and than He did for Nicodemus. What were the differences and similarities in their needs as they saw them? How did Jesus know what they needed (setting aside his special knowledge)?
3. In the case of the man by the pool of Bethesda: Before the healing happened, which needs do you think he would have said were the deepest, physical healing, or spiritual healing? Do you think his answer would have changed after the healing had taken place?
4. Share a way in which someone you know met deep needs you were feeling. How did you feel about their help?
5. Discuss this quote from the presentation: “In order to respond appropriately to people’s needs, you have to understand how they see their needs and work with that view. Even if you don’t think it is an entirely healthy or biblical view that is still the view you have to work with if you are going to actually serve them.”

Group Activity

Purpose: To consider creative ways of helping to meet people's needs.

Preparation: Put the three scenarios below (and others you may think of) on slips of paper or 3x5 cards. You will need space for small groups, and writing materials.

Assignment: Divide group into teams of 4-6. Give them a scenario and ask them to create specific ways they or their church could reach out to the needs of these people. First, identify what human need they have; then share how that need might be met. Then ask the members of the group to list real people they know and do the same process.

Debrief: Share the ideas each group has come up with, and share reactions and insights.

Time: Allow 10 minutes for the first part of exercise, then 10 minutes more for them to come up with real people and real plans. Allow 10 to 15 minutes to share during the debriefing at the end of the exercise.

Sample scenarios:

- A. A single, unwed mother without a job and two pre-school children
- B. A wealthy couple who are well-educated in their 60s and actively involved in the local Red Cross Blood Drive
- C. A young, twenty-something guy who is a computer "techie" and struggles with alcoholism

Handout 1

Ministering To People's Needs

The third step in sharing your faith with others is to minister to their needs. Ministry springs from a heart touched by God's unconditional love expressed in service toward the practical needs of those around you.

"Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water'; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, 'Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.'" (John 2:7, 8)

Minister = Servant

Human Needs

5. Spiritual
4. Belonging
3. Friendship
2. Safety
1. Physical

Reflect: In the list below, what service opportunities have you ever been involved in? Put a check in front of those categories.

What service opportunities have you ever wished you could be involved in? Circle those categories.

Would any of these service opportunities meet the needs of anyone you know? Underline those needs.

- Help someone who is stressed out
- Provide emergency childcare
- Assist with a family emergency
- Help someone find a job
- Volunteer in the community

Responding to needs: Understand how others see their own needs and work from that perspective. People on the low end often cannot meet those basic needs themselves. People on the high end need the challenge of helping others. Most people are in the middle where the largest need is simply friendship.

Handout 2

An Adventist Paradigm for Sharing Your Faith

There is an Adventist paradigm for friendship evangelism in our heritage. A paradigm is a model, framework, or example through which we see and act. Ellen White wrote a statement originally published in the book *The Ministry of Healing*. On page 143 she speaks of Christ's example as our model for ministry.

“Christ’s method alone gives true success in reaching people.” Notice the implication that some successful evangelism isn’t true success. Remember that category from the Church of Christ research of people who said that salesman brought them into the church but before a year was over they were back out?

As we continue with the quote, notice the verbs. “The Savior **mingled** with men as one who desired their good. He **showed** his sympathy for them, **ministered** to their needs, and **won** their confidence. The he **bade** them, ‘Follow me.’”

These five verbs progress deeper and deeper into a relationship; mingling, showing sympathy, ministering to needs, winning trust, and inviting people to follow Jesus.

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

HANDOUT

Friendship
Evange-
lism Four:
Ministering
to People’s
Needs