

Lesson Plan & Study Guide



Friendship Evangelism

Five: Winning Confidence

Working with Jesus

iFOLLOW

The iFollow Discipleship Series

Version 1.0 - 11/17/10



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 Five: Winning Confidence

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

Learning Objectives

1. Learn about basic trustworthiness
2. See how Jesus gained the trust of others
3. Study 1 John 3 to see what use of material possessions have to do with trust
4. Learn about the qualities of a trustworthy friend
5. Learn a basic readiness question you can use

Content Outline

1. Trust built through compassion
2. Material possessions and compassion
3. Manipulation and short-term “trust”
4. Qualities of a trustworthy friend
5. True Christians are willing to be vulnerable
6. The basic readiness question
7. God’s Job

Background Material for the Presenter

Trust is built through compassion. Winning the confidence of others cannot be forced or manipulated, but it is built through non-manipulative, caring love. It often happens in everyday little things. Doing something specifically to try to “make someone trust you” not only won’t work, but is counterproductive. People can smell hidden agendas a mile away. To gain trust, you must simply be trustworthy, and that comes only from your own close relationship with God, which causes you to love those around you.

Up to this point in the paradigm of Christ’s example of ministry, all the verbs describe Christ reaching out to people. With the fourth verb, people respond. *The Ministry of Heal-*



ing, page 143, states, “He won their confidence.” They gave Him their trust. You don’t win people’s confidence by forcing it out of them or manipulating them. You can’t trick people into trusting you. Now the action begins to come back from people, and it has to come back voluntarily. They trust Jesus because He’s trustworthy, because he’s shown compassion.

The principle of building trust through compassion is laid out in the New Testament. 1 John 3:16 picks up right where John 3:16 left off. “This is how we know what love is.” To say to a person “God loves you,” if they don’t know about love, is meaningless. For most unchurched people, the problem is not knowing what the word “God” means. The problem is what the word “love” means. Many have never been exposed to a non-manipulative, caring kind of love. And when Christians have tried to reach out to them, it has often come across as manipulative even though the Christian didn’t mean it to be. The unchurched person felt himself or herself being manipulated into agreeing to a certain belief, or joining a certain church or group.

The text says, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” There’s no more significant way to show you care about another person than to give your life for them. That was God’s answer to the sin problem.

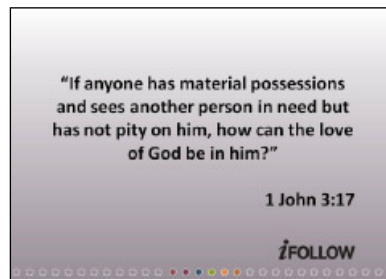
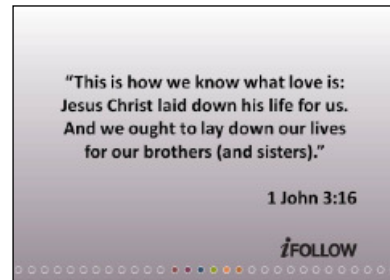
Likewise, we ought to give our lives for others. Now, if you stop and think about it, it’s easier to give your life in a blaze of glory than it is to give your life 365 days a year for 70 to 80 years or more. It takes more effort to give your life every day in smaller ways. But that’s what the unconditional love of the grace of Christ is all about; giving your life every day in little ways to the people around you.

Material Possessions

This passage includes a case study on what it means to give your life for others. In verse 17 it says, “If anyone has material possessions and sees another person in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in them?”

Notice the construction of this passage. It doesn’t say that if somebody is rich and they don’t share, then they don’t have the love of God in them. It uses a unique construction that says “anybody” who has material possessions.

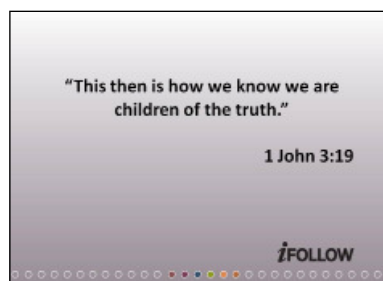
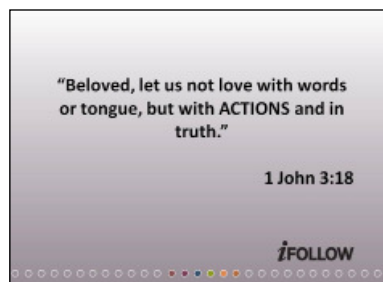
The Bible talks about people so poor they didn’t even have clothing. Having pity on the poor is a contemporary issue in the United States. There are a lot of people who are not wealthy but do have some of this world’s goods.



They'll look at somebody else and say it's not fair that they get government assistance of \$400 a month. When you ask that person how much they make, they don't want to say because it may be five or ten times what the other person gets from the government. The issue is not whether or not we give, but the response of our heart.

The passage goes on in verse 18, "Beloved, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." How we act toward others tells them what is really in our heart, how we honestly feel about them. They will respond with trust or lack of trust based on what they see in our actions.

One more important fragment from this passage shows how important this is to Adventist believers. Verse 19 says, "This then is how we know we are children of the truth." Having the truth is important to Adventists. But we tend to think "the truth" is an intellectual thing, a certain set of facts to which we subscribe. The Scripture says that the way you know you have the truth is in the way you live toward people around you. Are you trustworthy, caring? Is the grace of Christ visible in the way you live with others?



Not by Manipulation

How do we win a hearing for the gospel? Not by clever literature, great bumper stickers, posters, or logical things to say. We gain the trust of people on the basis of our character, by how we live. Trust cannot be grabbed, stolen, or tricked without risking a short-term result.

A classic problem in missions is short-term results. In the 19th century, there was a famine in a part of the world where rice is a primary food. The missions brought in emergency supplies of rice, but it was only given to people who joined the church. Lots of people joined the church! When the famine was over, lots of people quit going to church, so they were called "rice Christians."

The mission people were trying to manipulate others to trust in Christ. You can't manipulate people into trusting you. People come to know God through trustworthy, trustable messengers, not through indirect strategies.

That sort of short-term "trust" often leads to long-term disaster. Some people have been so hurt by so-called Christians that they may never agree to Christian faith. Only God knows how to judge their hearts. His first step in rehabilitating them will be to send them true Christians; that is, human beings in whom the Holy Spirit lives, shining God's own unconditional love out all over those around them.

Who is someone you can trust? When Adventists first arrived in Battle Creek, Michigan,

they asked who was the most honest man in town. People could tell them. That man was the first person in Battle Creek to accept the Adventist message.

In any group, neighborhood, office, work team, or student group, people can tell you who they trust most. If we want to share Christ with unchurched people in the community or where we work, we need to be on their list of who they trust. When we recommend Christ to them, we're asking them to trust us for some of the most basic and important things in life.

Qualities of a Trustworthy Friend

What are the characteristics of a trustworthy friend? Here are some of the most common answers people give. Trustworthy people: Won't lie to you. Respect your property. Respect your decisions. Uphold your dignity and worth. Want the best for you.

People think that in order to be a good witness, you have to be a **perfect** Christian. Actually, for unchurched persons, the idea of a perfect Christian becomes a barrier to thinking about being a Christian. A common response in research interviews with unchurched people is not being good enough to join the church.

A **real** Christian can admit mistakes and asking for forgiveness. A **real** Christian stays away from a holier-than-thou attitude. A **real** Christian quietly insists on living by his own standards but doesn't impose those standards on others. A **real** Christian is transparent about struggles, doubts, and feelings. A **real** Christian is willing to admit that when something terrible happens sometimes she gets angry with God.



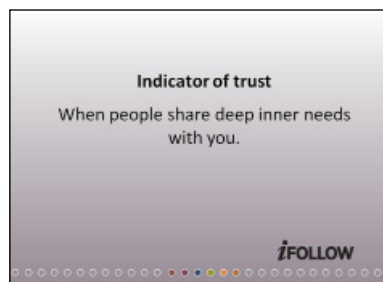
While a **real** Christian respects others who believe differently, he or she does not necessarily condone those beliefs. Respect and agreement are two different things. Unfortunately, not every Christian is mature enough to separate those two factors. Respect for the dignity of others and living according to your own standards are two different things. A **real** Christian who is open and willing to admit mistakes becomes a trustworthy witness. Others are willing to hear from them a recommendation that they would benefit by giving their life to God.

Indicator of Trust—the Basic Readiness Question

How do we know that a person is ready or that we've won their confidence? One good indicator is the person will share deep inner needs with you: pain, concern, and hopelessness that they don't share with many others. They are willing to share with you because you're a good listener and a trustworthy person. That is an indicator that there is some

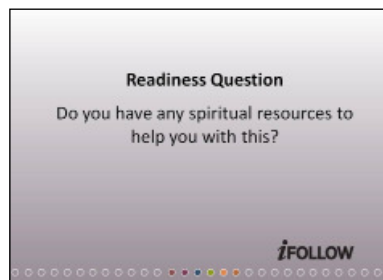
openness coming up. When a person faces an inner crisis—one that makes them question the value of life and their beliefs—a door begins to open for them to consider different beliefs and approaches.

There is a **basic readiness question** you can use to test whether that person is ready to talk about spiritual things. It comes at the point where they have shared with you some deep, inner needs or concerns within their heart. You simply ask them, **“Do you have any spiritual resources to help you deal with this?”** Keep a casual tone of voice. Don’t make too big a thing out of it. The more offhand it sounds the better.



The readiness question is generic. It’s aimed at secular, unchurched people. You may want to change the language and use something more specific than “spiritual resources.” But, a generic form of the question works well with most people.

Once you ask the question, bite your tongue. Control the urge to give a little sermon. Just ask the question and be quiet. Listen. What people say next will tell you whether they’re ready to talk about spiritual things. They’ll make it clear. Some will change the subject, which means they’re not ready to talk. However, after thinking about it, they may come back later and ask you about it. Often people will say they really don’t have spiritual resources. This begins to open the door to talk about deeper, more important things in their life.



A response to this readiness question will tell you whether the door is open; and they want to talk, or whether it’s not time. Be prepared to go either way. Don’t say too much too soon. That’s the biggest problem we have with evangelism and witnessing. Talking a lot turns people off.

At this point in your friendship, you have reached a very delicate point. You love this person, and long for him or her to be able to enjoy and depend on the kind of close friendship with Jesus that you have. It is very tempting to jump in now, and let go with eager urging. You can destroy some of the trust they have in you and send the relationship reeling backwards if you say too much too soon.

God’s Job

This is the time to remind yourself that saving this person is God’s job, not yours! Gently, carefully opening a chink in their armor was done by the Holy Spirit, and he is the one who will slowly, steadily (or suddenly in a blaze of glory—His choice) shine through that chink. Jesus has been glowing out of your life, and He is the one who will now begin to

seep into theirs. God is the one who sent this person to you to be loved, and God is the one who loves that person infinitely more than you can imagine. It is God who will bring conviction, God who will urge a decision (perhaps through you; He'll let you know), and God who will save the person.

Then the Holy Spirit, who has surrounded the person since before birth, will move fully into that life, and turn to begin the process all over again with one of their friends. This will be a trustworthy new Christian, in part because you showed them the way, but mostly because the trustworthy Spirit and the faith of Jesus now dwells in them.

Handouts in this Package

1. Winning Confidence
2. An Adventist Paradigm for Sharing Your Faith



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Friendship
Evangelism
Five: Win-
ning Confi-
dence**

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 (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.

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

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Friendship
Evangelism**

**Five: Win-
ning Confi-
dence**

8

Discussion Questions

1. Share about a person (no names necessary) in whom you have deep trust. What built that trust? Share about a person (no names necessary) in whom you once had trust, but then you lost your trust in them. What happened?
2. Discuss the ways that others have used to build your trust. Different people may give and receive trust differently. What are the similarities? What are the differences?
3. Are you a trustworthy person?
4. What could you do to build trust with those around you?
5. What have you done that has broken trust? What can you do about it?
6. How can we guard against the attitude, even in our hearts, that we want people to trust us so that they will accept Jesus, or join the church?

Group Activity

Purpose: To help move concepts of “trust” from our heads to our “gut.”

Preparation: Put the three scenarios below on slips of paper or 3x5 cards. You or the group may come up with others. If this group has been meeting together for awhile, there may be a sufficient level of trust for some to share real situations in their own lives. Give them this option if they choose. Write the basic readiness question on the board or flipchart. (Do you have any spiritual resources to help you deal with this?)

Assignment: For part one, have each person choose a partner. One person is blindfolded while the other person gives verbal instructions (do not use touch to guide) on how to navigate around the room. Everyone do this at once. The congestion will increase the need for the blindfolded person to trust his or her partner. After three minutes, have the partners change roles and proceed for another three minutes. When time is up, invite those who wish to share what they experienced. Then have the partners find a place to sit together. At this point, they may choose one of the given scenarios, or share a real problem. Give them five minutes, then have them switch so that each person can unburden their hearts, and each can listen. They are to use the basic readiness question and then remain silent while the person decides what to answer.

Time: Allow 10 minutes for the blindfold exercise: a couple of minutes for pairing up, three minutes for each turn, and a minute to switch the blindfolds in between. Allow 10 minutes (five minutes for each person) for sharing, but three minutes into each turn, give notice that it is time for the listener to ask the question. Allow 10 to 15 minutes to share reactions and insights.

Sample Scenarios

1. Jennifer is sitting on your living room couch. She lost her job and doesn't know what to do. Through tears she says, “I don't have any prospects. I don't have very many skills. I don't know where to start looking. I don't know what I'm going to do!”
2. Alfred plunks his lunch pail on the lunchroom table next to you. Everyone else has left. Alfred mumbles, “I don't feel hungry.” You lean forward to listen and show interest. Alfred continues, “My daughter has gone off the deep end. She hates her mother and me so much that she threatened to leave. Well, we haven't seen her for a week now. She's only 16. We've notified the police. But I think we're going to crack if we don't find her soon. We're worried sick she's dead.”

3. Tarah is fed up with her husband. She's bailed him out of jail several times for drunk driving. He hasn't followed up with the AA meetings and misses counseling appointments. She's ready to leave him but is fearful of the future and concerned about their three children. Tarah speaks with dread, "It's just not working out. I can't trust him."

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Group
Activities

Friendship
Evangelism
Five: Win-
ning Confi-
dence

11

Handout 1

Winning Confidence

Trust is built through compassion. Winning the confidence of others cannot be forced or manipulated, but it is built through non-manipulative, caring love. It often happens in everyday little things.

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers (and sisters).” (1 John 3:16)

“If anyone has material possessions and sees another person in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” (1 John 3:17)

Trustworthy people:

- Won't lie to you.
- Respect your property.
- Respect your decisions.
- Uphold your dignity and worth.
- Want the best for you.

“Beloved, let us not love with words or tongue, but with ACTIONS and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

A real Christian can admit mistakes and asks for forgiveness.

The **basic readiness question** asks, “Do you have any spiritual resources to help you deal with this?”

What could you do to build trust with those around you?

Think of specific ways to win the confidence of others in you.

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

HANDOUT

Friendship
Evangelism
Five: Win-
ning Confi-
dence

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. Then 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
Evangelism
Five: Win-
ning Confi-
dence