

## Helping Others Fall in Love with God, Part 1

When sharing the gospel, first determine if the person is secular or has a church background (where you can quote the Bible).

If they are secular, **and** you have a relationship with them, **when** they share a serious problem (e.g. major distress, serious disease, or death) you can say, (1) “We were never meant to experience (whatever problem they just shared). (2) Humanity rebelled against God thousands of years ago, resulting in problems like this. (3) But God loves us too much to leave us in this condition. (4) Therefore, He sent His Son Jesus to this world and solved our sin problems. (5) Now He wants to adopt us back into His family. (6) Are you willing to be adopted into the family of God?” (7) If they say “yes,” share John 1:10-12. Tell God just now that you want to be part of His family – that you want Him to be your Lord and Savior. (8) Next say, “Let me introduce you to your new family.” Remember all relationships are based upon shared time and experiences. Thus, spending time with God in the Bible deepens our relationship with Him. Explain, based on either the Gospel of Mark or John, how to have a devotional life (see below Parts 2 & 3).

If they have a church background, after getting acquainted, you might ask, “Do you know how to be right with God?” (You could also ask, “Would you like a relationship with God?” or “Would you like to know God better?” etc.) Once they agree, give them a simple “gospel presentation.” If you can remember these three letters, namely “PSA” (stands for; *Problem, Solution, and Acceptance*) you can remember the framework of a simple gospel presentation.

First, explain concisely mankind’s problem; *because we’ve sinned, we deserve death*. You could quote Rom. 6:23; “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Next, explain the phrase “wages of sin.” Death is the results or consequences of sinning. Why? According to Isaiah 59:2, “sin separates us from God” who is the Author of life. Once separated from the source of life, we cannot help but die.

Insert a story here which illustrates this concept. I’ve shared a story about tripping on, and unplugging, an electrical cord, resulting in the light going off. Even though I did it only once, or was sorry that I did it, the light always goes off. Once we’ve sinned, we always deserve death.

Don’t rush through this concept. Give the Holy Spirit time to bring about repentance. If you work with someone who doesn’t understand the concept of “sin,” I’ve defined sin as “something that causes God, others, or yourself unhappiness” or sin is “self-destructive behavior.”

Second, explain God’s solution to our problem. Quote again the second half of Rom. 6:23, “but the *gift of God is eternal life* in Christ Jesus our Lord.” God wants to give us the gift of eternal life. We’ve earned death, but we can receive, as a gift, eternal life.

Insert a story that illustrates the difference between a gift and a bargain. You could say, "I'll give you my car (pause), for \$10,000. As soon as you add the \$10,000, it's no longer a gift. It might be a bargain, if you have a new car, but it's not a gift.

Since this is the most important gift one could ever receive, it's important to know how to obtain this gift. Quote, or read, Eph. 2:8, 9; "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." We receive God's gift of eternal life because of His graciousness. This gift comes by faith, not by our works, so no one can ever boast about how they earned salvation. This faith includes both "belief" and "trust." We believe God wants to give us this gift and we must also act as if this is true, in other words, trust that this is so.

How do we *accept*, by faith, this gift? The easiest way to accept God's gift is to ask Him for it in prayer. Most people repeat after me the following prayer. (I often asked them to wait, as I first talk with God, then I make it clear when they are to repeat after me).

"Dear God, (1) I realize I'm a sinner and deserve to die." (2) I accept your gift of eternal life. (3) I want you to become my Lord and Savior. (4) Thank you for your gift."

Once they finished this prayer, I ask them, "Do you now have God's gift of eternal life?" Most will say, "Yes." If they are not sure, I read 1 John 5:11-13, emphasizing where it says, "that we may know that we have eternal life."

I conclude this visit by sharing some Bible promises with them. These promises are intended to help them realize the goodness of God (See Rom. 2:4). Here are some promises I like to share. If I have time, I'll also share a story which illustrates that verse.

**John 1:11,12** "Even in His own land and among His own people, He was not accepted. But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, He gave the right (power) to become children of God."

Or, **Rom 5:6-10** "For when we were still *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ... But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were *still sinners*, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Obtain your next appointment and promise that you will share how to fall in love with God.

**Ask 10 of your friends to let you practice giving to them a gospel presentation. Practice until you can give this presentation effortlessly.**

## Helping Others Fall in Love with God, Part 2

**John 14:23**, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep my Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

To help people fall in love with God, we need to help them develop the habit of daily spending time with God in His Word. During this meeting, explain *and model* spending devotional time in the Word. Begin with prayer. Explain we cannot understand spiritual things unless God guides us. Instruct them to always pray before reading God’s Word.

Since depth, not distance (in our relationship with God), is our goal, we will select only one Gospel story, starting in either Mark or John. Explain that we are influenced by what we are exposed to (we become what we behold). If we want to be like Jesus, to love God as Jesus did, we need to spend time in the four Gospels.

I often use the following quote from Ellen White (MB:1). I say that a profound religious writer described what we are going to do so well, that I will share what she wrote with them. Here is that quote. “Let us in our imagination go back to that scene, and, as we sit with the disciples on the mountainside, enter into the thoughts and feelings that filled their hearts. Understanding what the words of Jesus meant to those who heard them, we may discern in them a new vividness and beauty, and may also gather for ourselves their deeper lessons.” Review the primary concepts of this quote with them.

Let’s use John 2:1-11 to illustrate this. Slowly read and re-read this story. Next, picture this story in your mind, try reliving it. What would you have seen, if you had been there. Encourage them to use their imaginations. There are no right answers. Ask, what would they have heard (or any of their five senses) or felt? This exercise gets them to meditate (contemplate) upon a passage and opens their minds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (A car in “drive” is easier to move than a parked car). Conclude this time by asking two questions; (1) What does this verse tell me about God? and (2) How does this verse apply to me?

Relationships begin with shared experiences. Sharing time with God in His Word begins to build, within us, a relationship with Him. Just as the farmer must place the seed into the earth for it to grow, we must place ourselves before God, in His Word, to grow spiritually. The devotional life is how we learn to “abide in Christ.”

Secure your next appointment to see how they are doing spending time meditating upon the Bible. As with “Weight Watchers” accountability can motivate us – having to weekly weigh in helps keeps us doing what we should.

### Helping Others Fall in Love with God, Part 3

When you return, ask about their devotionals. If they say, “Fine,” ask them what chapters (or verses) in the Bible they studied. You will usually discover that most people struggle developing the discipline of a devotional life. You will need to find out what hinders this development. If they say they are too busy (the most common excuse), you know devotionals are a lower priority for them. (We all find time to do what is most important to us!) You might want to help them set a devotional priority or help them with time management.

However, the real reason I have found why most people do not become consistent in their devotionals is a mismatch of devotional styles and that person’s temperament. God loves diversity and this is evident everywhere in our lives. Note the different flower colors, or the different types of bird, animals, or even humans. So why do some people think that we must do our devotionals all the same way?

God created us to be different. Some people are **introverts**, others are **extroverts**. In other words, some are energized when they are alone and others are energized being around others. Since we want to have a relationship with God, noticing how we relate to others will help us learn how we can best relate to God.

Introverts are happiest doing their devotions by themselves. Extroverts need others to help them do their devotionals. For extroverts, you often have to get them a “buddy” to hold them accountable (a role you are playing at first).

No one needed to tell Jesus about human nature according to John 2:25. We too need to be observant when it comes to human behavior to know how best to lead people closer to God.

When it comes to guiding different people to develop a consistent devotional life, I try to figure out what **motivates** them. Some people are “achievement oriented.” They like getting things done, crossing items off their to-do list. Other people are “relationally oriented.” They like having fun with their friends and are energized by them. The word “fun” is often used in their conversations. Others are more “rationally oriented” and could be described as very logical, calm, thoughtful, and reasonable. Once they see the logic or rationale for a task, they do it methodically. The last group could be called “perfection oriented.” They seek beauty, harmony and perfection and are energized when they can remove as much external and negative stimulus as possible from their life.

**Achievement oriented people** often start by seeing the devotional life as a task to be achieved, rather than an experience to be savored. Therefore, give them a devotional assignment and hold them accountable regarding daily devotions. Later, guide them into a deeper relationship with God based upon His love.

**Relationally oriented people** experience the greatest difficulty in becoming consistent in their devotional life (discipline is hard for them in most areas of their life as well). To become consistent, they need to have a group to spend time in the Word. Sharing insights with fellow extroverts will be fun for them and will meet their spiritual needs.

**Rationally oriented people** have the easiest time becoming consistent in their devotions. They like quiet reflection and when they understand the reason (logic) for the devotional life, they will do such.

**Perfection oriented people** usually fall into two further groups. Some become like “Pharisees,” reducing religion to “do’s and don’ts.” You might be tempted to admire their zeal, but make sure it’s rooted in a passionate love for God. The other group could be called “mystics.” These people are often intellectuals and are deeply moved by “mystical” or “deep” authors, (even authors whose theology they may even disagree with). Help them to meditate on scripture (often the Psalms) to meet their mystical needs. Also, Christian music is very important in the devotional life of this type of person – as well as some other types.

Please return as often as necessary to help them to become consistent in their devotional life, where they have come to know, love, and serve Him!

After a while, ask them if you could cover the major themes of the Bible so they would get more out of their devotions. (You just offered to give them Bible studies). If you are new at this, use one of our denomination’s Bible study guides from our ABC or AdventSource.org. Make sure they are grace oriented!

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