

L.I.F.T.

Listen - Inspire - Facilitate - Transform

STUDY GUIDE

Jesus' Way of Coaching



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NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

ADVENTIST ASSOCIATION OF
HEALTH & WELLNESS COACHING

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Disclaimer

In preparing this material and when using it for training, we have been careful to teach general principles of communication and have instructed all those who take this training to give no medical advice but to refer those involved to seek appropriate direction from a qualified medical professional. This training is not intended to qualify the student to be a certified professional coach.



INTRODUCTION TO LIFT

Jesus' Way of Coaching

One reason we call this program LIFT is because Jesus came to lift people out of the pits into which they had fallen. Today, we follow His example as LIFTers in our world. As we learn from Him and allow Him to work through us to connect with and support others, we become, in effect, “Christ reflectors.”

Just as Christ came to represent His Father, we now go out to reflect Christ in our world. At times, simply watching people and praying can be powerful. Try asking Jesus:

“What do You want me to see in this person?”

“Give me Your mind and heart for them.”

To understand the LIFT program, you need go no further than the acronym itself:

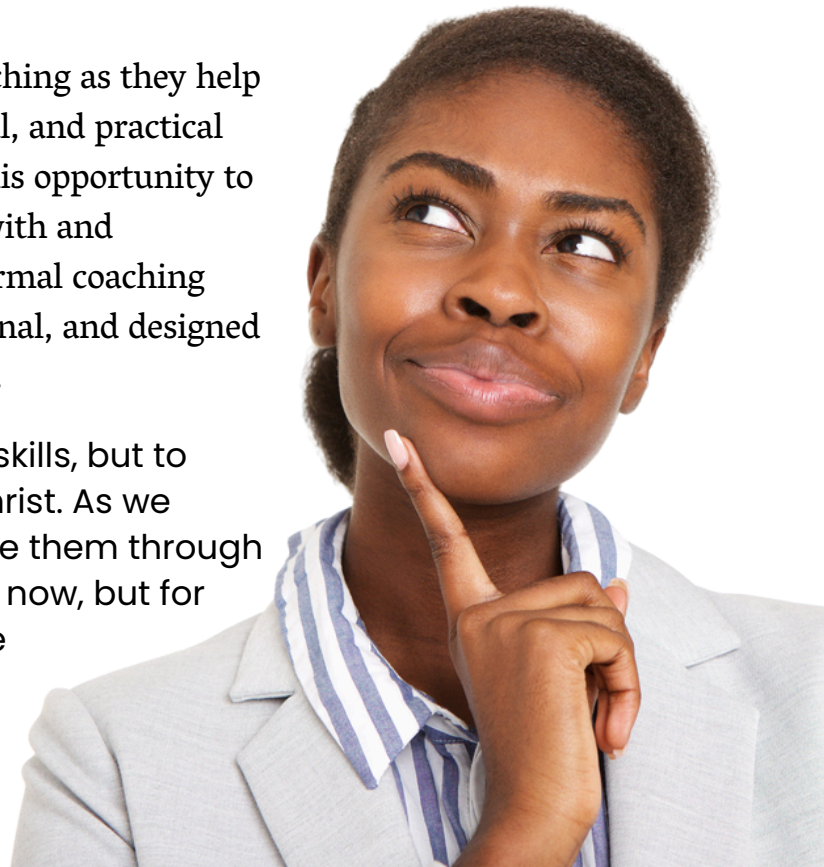
Listen - Inquire / Inspire - Facilitate - Transform

Most of us are very good at giving information, but not nearly as good at listening. Yet truly knowing people—listening to understand—goes a long way in reflecting Christ’s character. Inquiring means asking thoughtful questions, being curious, and genuinely wanting to know another person’s story.

To facilitate is to help a person achieve something for themselves, rather than doing it for them. This leads to transformation, because people grow stronger as they reach their goals—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. These four practices are gifts that can change lives and help make the church a true agent of positive change in the world.

Many have already discovered the joy of coaching as they help others find success in their personal, spiritual, and practical endeavors. Through LIFT, we are offering this opportunity to anyone who wants to learn how to connect with and encourage others—without the need for a formal coaching certification. This approach is simple, relational, and designed for everyday, friend-to-friend conversations.

Our desire is not only to teach coaching skills, but to help participants develop the mind of Christ. As we approach each individual, we learn to see them through Jesus’ eyes—not merely for who they are now, but for who they can become. Restoration to the image of God was Christ’s mission, and it can be ours as well.



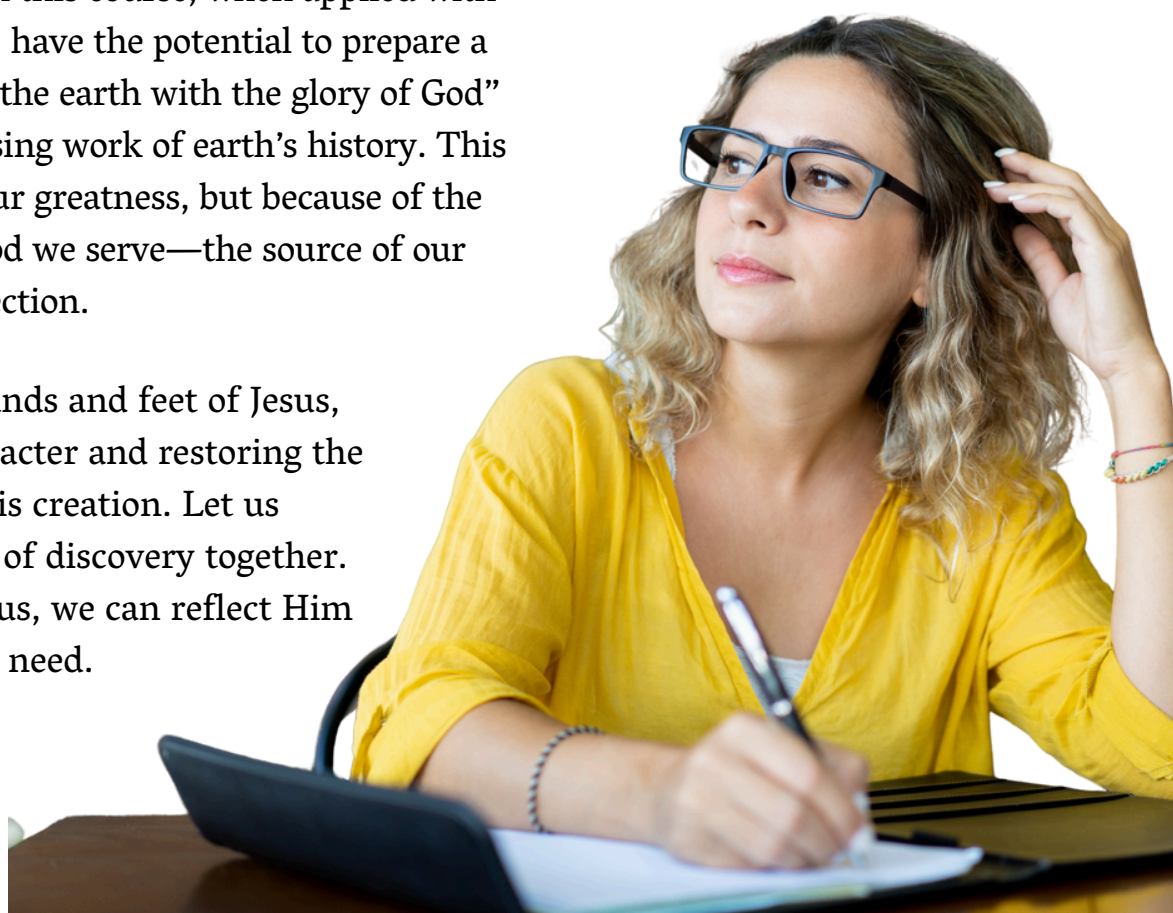
During this training, we will explore and learn from our Master Teacher how to mingle with people from every walk of life, always looking for ways to help and do good. As we listen with understanding and ask thoughtful questions, motivated by love, we befriend people and help them discover pathways to a better life. In doing so, we gain their confidence and open hearts and minds to the further gifts and instruction God longs to give.

The principles of LIFT are practical and applicable in families, friendships, workplaces, and church life. Through your listening, your questions, and your presence, people will find help and hope. Building on these core skills, you can also guide others in setting realistic goals, provide accountability and encouragement, and help them navigate obstacles. Every church can experience greater effectiveness as its members learn and practice Jesus' way of coaching.

Although the task of reaching the world with the gospel may seem overwhelming, it is not difficult for the Creator of the universe. The works Jesus did on earth were astonishing—and He declared that greater works would follow through His people.

Perhaps it is time to expect the unexpected. The principles taught in this course, when applied with faith and humility, have the potential to prepare a people to help “fill the earth with the glory of God” and hasten the closing work of earth's history. This is not because of our greatness, but because of the greatness of the God we serve—the source of our power and our direction.

LIFTers are the hands and feet of Jesus, reflecting His character and restoring the image of God in His creation. Let us begin this journey of discovery together. With Jesus beside us, we can reflect Him to a world in great need.



WHERE TO USE LIFT

We have done well training physicians, teachers, and other instructors, but we have often neglected to train one of the most important parts of the ministry team: those who walk alongside others and help turn knowledge into lived experience.

Effective evangelism and outreach must be accompanied by personal ministry. We are called to approach others with a spirit of benevolence—seeking to relieve suffering and restore people to the image of Christ, without expectation of personal gain.

LIFT can be used to support lifestyle changes, but its principles are equally powerful in facilitating spiritual growth. As we remain sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will discern how God is leading as people share their dreams, struggles, and desires for change. By listening attentively and asking discerning questions with open hearts, we participate in the same redemptive work modeled by Jesus Christ.

Various Applications

A church trained in LIFT principles will grow stronger and healthier. Communication improves, relationships deepen, and internal conflict is reduced.

When applied to outreach, LIFT strengthens and enhances all community programs in which the church is engaged. It also increases member involvement, helping more individuals become active participants in ministry. In this way, LIFT equips the church to serve more effectively—both within its walls and beyond them.



WHERE TO USE LIFT

Example: LIFT in a Local Health Program

The facilitator of a Diabetes Undone Class gives an introduction.

“Welcome to our first Diabetes Undone class.

In this program, you will learn about the powerful role lifestyle plays in reversing and managing diabetes. This is not a typical health class where information is presented and then you are left on your own to apply it.

We care deeply about your success. That is why we provide personal support throughout the program—and even beyond it.

Although the principles we teach are presented in a simple and practical way, we understand that lifestyle change is not always easy. Real change often requires encouragement, understanding, and accountability. That is where our Personal Support Team comes in.

Our support team members attend the same classes you do. This allows them to learn the same information, understand the journey you are on, and get to know you personally. As the program progresses, you will also get to know them, and you will have the opportunity to choose the team member—or combination of team members—you feel most comfortable working with.

Now, let’s take a moment to meet our Personal Support Team.

(Each volunteer introduces themselves.)

Example introduction:

“Hi, my name is Jane Smith. I teach fifth grade and have always enjoyed helping students understand and apply what they are learning. As I’ve seen the power of lifestyle change in my own life and in others, I’m excited to walk alongside some of you—helping you take what you learn in this class and apply it in ways that improve your health and your quality of life.”



WHERE TO USE LIFT CONT.

First Contact by a LIFTer

After the initial class session, a LIFTer begins getting acquainted with participants on a more personal level. For example, Jane Smith might approach one participant and say:

“Hi, I’m Jane Smith. I think I remember you—it’s Sue, isn’t it?...

Tell me a little about yourself....

What are some of your goals for this class?”... (and so on)

(The pauses indicated by “...” represent the LIFTer listening attentively, responding thoughtfully, and allowing the participant time to reflect and share.)

During LIFT training, you will learn what to say and when to say it. However, even with just a few guiding principles, the most important element is loving people well. Be curious. Remember that the participant is in charge of their own journey. Do not take over—your role is to guide, not to direct.

Connections should be natural and relational. Pay attention. Remember names and meaningful details people share. Reflect back what you hear so participants know they are understood and valued.

When connecting by phone, begin the conversation on a positive note. For example:

“What’s the best thing that happened this week?”

Avoid the overused question, “How are you doing?” While well-intentioned, it can cause people to feel evaluated or anxious—especially if they feel they have not made as much progress as they hoped. The goal is for participants to look forward to hearing from you, not to dread the call out of fear of disappointing someone.

A LIFTer creates a safe space—one marked by encouragement, understanding, and hope—where real change can take root.



HOW TO USE LIFT

As you connect with people, you will encounter a wide range of conditions, emotions, and needs. Jesus faced the same variety of human experiences, and we can learn much from His example. He spoke with those who were anxious, troubled, worried, grieving, fearful, and hurting. Often, He simply asked questions such as:

“Why are you anxious?” or “What do you want Me to do for you?”

LIFT follows this same relational approach.

Let’s look more closely at each word in the LIFT acronym:

LIFT - Listen, Inspire/Inquire, Facilitate and Transform

LISTEN

Listening begins wherever life happens—at church, at work, during a health program, or in everyday encounters. The goal is to get acquainted and build genuine connection.

1. The person may or may not feel a need to change; they may simply need someone to listen.
2. See them through the eyes of Jesus, not only as they are, but as all they can become.
3. Reflect Christ’s character in every interaction—kindness, patience, humility, and love.
4. Remember the power of the personal approach: meaningful change often happens one-on-one.

INSPIRE / INQUIRE

As we listen and ask thoughtful questions, we begin to understand people more deeply. We start by inquiring—remaining curious, respectful, and nonjudgmental. Jesus both inquired and inspired through His words, His actions, and His example, inviting people into lives of love, compassion, and service.

Effective connection begins with:

1. Discovering their “safe zone” — the space where conversation feels comfortable, respectful, and unthreatening.
2. Gently expanding understanding with simple invitations such as, “Tell me more.”
3. Building rapport so people feel safe, seen, and valued—whether or not a clear need emerges.
4. Listening for what truly matters to them, not just what is easy to hear.
5. Asking open-ended questions like, “What are your dreams or goals?”

Above all, resist the urge to talk too much. No one should ever dread another conversation because they felt unheard. True inspiration grows out of attentive, compassionate listening.

HOW TO USE LIFT CONT.

FACILITATE- Facilitation begins when a person expresses a desire or readiness for change. Even if there is no specific goal in mind, your role is to help them clarify needs and explore next steps—without taking control.

1. This stage may not happen during the first contact—or at all—and that's okay.
2. Listen for “change talk,” such as: “I should...” “I want to...” “I need to...”
3. Brainstorm options together, exploring possible paths forward.
4. Keep the big picture in mind when discussing goals.
5. Help them choose one simple, achievable first step.
6. Ask sincerely, “What can I do to help?”
7. Put yourself in their place, sharing empathy for both their struggles and their hopes.

TRANSFORM- Real life change happens through consistent support, not information alone. As you reflect Christ's character, you gently lead others toward Him.

1. Keep steps small and realistic to promote success.
2. Review the plan together to be sure you understood them correctly.
3. Encourage them and reassure them of your ongoing support.
4. Schedule the next connection. Short encouraging messages or texts can help keep momentum.

As you study Christ's life more deeply and grow in having the mind of Christ, you may find that these steps become less mechanical and more natural. God will guide you as you pray and trust Him. Over time, connecting with people will simply become part of who you are.

Christ did not teach His disciples a set of techniques. They were transformed primarily by being with Him. As we spend time with Jesus, we too are shaped to minister as He did.

IF YOU WANT SUCCESS IN YOUR MINISTRY

WORK LIKE JESUS

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. 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.’”
—Ministry of Healing, p. 143

Here is an acronym for Remembering Christ’s Method

MODEL – How to Work Like Jesus

- M** M – Mingle
Take advantage of every opportunity to connect naturally with people.
- O** O – Optimistic
See beyond who they are now and view them through the eyes of an optimistic God.
- D** D – Desire
Reflect Christ’s character. As they see Him in you and begin to **desire** if for themselves, gently lead them toward Him.
- E** E – Empathy
Put yourself in their place—feel their pain and dream their dreams.
- L** L – Listen
Discover what they truly need and value. Through **listening**, learn what is most important to them.



BE LIFT-ED BY JESUS

As you learn the value of LIFTing others, you may also discover that you yourself need to be LIFTed. When Jesus was training the twelve to become disciples—true LIFTers—He first Listened to them, Inspired them, Facilitated their growth, and Transformed their hearts. Only then did He send them out with the call to “go and do likewise.”

To be an effective LIFTer, we must first allow Jesus to disciple us. He desires to do that for you today.

Jesus begins by getting acquainted with us. He knows our name, what matters most to us, and where we are headed in life. We may not hear His voice audibly, but He speaks clearly through His Word. As we read and pray, we are invited to listen for His personal questions. He patiently waits and **LISTENS** for our response.

He longs to **INSPIRE** us as no one else can. He is, after all, the greatest Inspirer. Through Scripture, His life, and His promises, He breathes hope, purpose, and courage into our hearts. As you read, allow yourself to be inspired.

You may also notice that not everything you read is immediately clear. This is intentional. Jesus often **FACILITATES** our growth rather than giving us all the answers at once. He knows that lasting change comes through discovery. That discovery unfolds as we read, listen, compare, reflect, and then live out what we are learning.

Above all, Jesus desires to **TRANSFORM** us into His image—restoring us to God’s original design. As He LIFTs us, we may realize that our focus has often been centered on ourselves. Yet God knows we will never experience true joy and peace until our focus turns outward, toward others. With patience and love, He leads us to this understanding through His Word and His Spirit.

Just as the disciples were not ready to become effective LIFTers until they themselves were transformed, my prayer is that you will allow Jesus to LIFT you first. Then, like the disciples, you can go out and help change the world.

And remember—when they went out, they were never alone. Jesus was always with them. The same is true for you. You are never on your own.



L.I.F.T. - IN YOUR HOME

As you have been learning LIFT—and learning to coach like Jesus—you may find yourself looking around and wondering, Who should I begin with? Who should I LIFT first?

May I suggest that you begin close to home.

Start with your friends. Start with your roommate. Start with your own family—your spouse and your children. Often, this is where Jesus begins His work in us.

With that starting point, Jesus may be asking you His first question:

“Where is your focus?”

Is your focus on what you need or hope to receive in these relationships? Or is it on what you can give? He may also be gently drawing your attention to how much time you spend telling rather than asking—inviting you to begin with genuine inquiry about those closest to you.

Make no mistake—Jesus has not forgotten your needs. He simply knows that your deepest needs are often met when you experience the joy of giving rather than getting. This is one of the great paradoxes of the kingdom of God. When we are constantly trying to get our needs met, those around us often respond by doing the same. But when we live to serve and to give, others frequently respond in kind. In that atmosphere, both their needs and ours are met—on a foundation that reflects God’s kingdom.

As you practice LIFT principles in your own home, Jesus Himself will be discipling you. And the cycle continues: as you are LIFTed, you learn to LIFT others.

So listen for His questions as you read His Word—He is listening to you. Allow Him to inspire you through Scripture and through His personal leading in your life. He will faithfully facilitate your transformation. And then, He will go with you as you step out to LIFT others.

You are never alone in this work. Jesus is both your Coach and your Companion.



LIFT SKIT

This skit is included to give you an early picture of what it can look like to help LIFT someone—even before all the key skills have been formally taught. As you watch, remember that this is a learning example, not a perfect model.

Things to Watch for in the Skit

- Did you observe the use of LIFT principles?
 - Listening well
 - Inspiring through encouragement and hope
 - Facilitating rather than directing
 - Movement toward Transformation
- Did the interaction help identify a Purpose, a Path, and Steps?
- (These concepts will be explored more fully later.)
- Did you notice elements of the MODEL approach?
 - Mingle naturally
 - Optimistic view of the person and their potential
 - Desire for something better emerging from the participant
 - Empathy—entering into the person’s experience
 - Listening with care and attention

This skit represents a LIFT interaction focused on specific goals that Gus needed help with. He already had information from a previous health program, so no medical advice was being given. The conversation remained centered on basic health principles, which anyone can appropriately share.

It is also important to note that this type of supportive interaction does not always need to happen face-to-face. Often, LIFT support can be provided effectively over the phone or through other remote methods, making it accessible and flexible.



LIFT SKIT

(I was just introduced to Gus. This is our first conversation.)

Me: So, Gus, what do you do?

Gus: I'm a retired commercial pilot.

Me: Oh wow, that sounds exciting. What about a family?

Gus: Yes, I'm married, with two grown children.

Me: You seem a little young to be retired. That must have its upsides.

Gus: Well, not really. I had to stop flying because of diabetes.

Me: I'm sorry to hear that.

Gus: I thought I had it beat, actually. About four years ago my wife and I went to a lifestyle center. I lost weight, and my borderline diabetes was corrected.

Me: That sounds encouraging.

Gus: It really was. It was a plant-based diet, daily exercise, and other lifestyle practices. It worked wonders—especially since they prepared all the food and we could focus on our health instead of work.

Me: What happened after that?

Gus: I just couldn't keep it up once I was back to flying. Airport food made it really difficult. Two years later, my diabetes worsened, and I was forced to take a medical leave from flying.

Me: That must have been very disappointing.

Gus: Yes, it was. Though honestly, I was about ready to retire anyway.

Me: It sounds like you really saw what was possible when the environment supported you.

Gus: Yes—when everything lined up, it worked incredibly well.



LIFT SKIT.

Me: Have you considered going back to what you learned at the lifestyle center now that you're retired?

Gus: Yes, I'm trying to work on my health again. But I'm mostly on my own—my wife works out of town for 1–2 months at a time, so she isn't available to cook for me regularly.

Me: I hear that. How can I help you as you get started again?

Gus: I guess I just need to take the first step, instead of only talking about it.

Me: I'd be happy to support you as you start this new journey. Maybe we could check in by phone each week—would that help?

Gus: That sounds like it could make all the difference.

Me: I'll be there for you, but it will be your plan—based on what has worked for you in the past.

Gus: I can do that.

Me: Should we start working on it now, or set up a time to get going?

Gus: I don't have time today, but how about next Tuesday around 1:00?

Me: I'm working then, would 6:00 pm work instead?

Gus: That works just as well.

Me: Great. Maybe in the meantime you could pull out some of your books from the lifestyle center and see if anything sparks ideas for where you'd like to start again.



LIFT SKIT. (SECOND VISIT BY PHONE)

Me: Hi Gus, this is Rick. I'm curious—what did you discover when you looked through your old lifestyle information?

Gus: Well, I found the cookbook and picked out some recipes I liked.

Me: That's great. Are you thinking about starting with your diet first, or maybe exercise? What are the things you'd like to begin with?

Gus: I'm thinking of slowly incorporating some of these recipes and starting to walk a little.

Me: That sounds like a solid plan. I think starting with walking is perfect. What's the smallest amount you think you could easily do?

Gus: Maybe 10 minutes.

Me: Excellent. That's a great place to start.

Gus: I can do that. Thanks for helping me get started—I really needed that.

Me: I'm glad I can help. Feel free to text me anytime. I'll call you next week—does Tuesday at 6:00 still work?

Gus: That's perfect. Thanks again for helping me take steps to regain my health.



LIFT SKIT. (THIRD VISIT BY PHONE)

Me: Gus, from your texts this week, it sounds like you're off to a good start on this health turn-around. I'm proud of you. How does it feel to you?

Gus: Yes, thanks for the texts. They came just at the right time—right when I was either getting discouraged or didn't know what to fix.

Me: That's great to hear. So what did you find regarding food choices for next week?

Gus: I found some recipes from the lifestyle center that I liked. But when I was there, they prepared them for us. I'm not much of a cook, and it's new for my wife too. I'm glad we started with just looking at the recipes, not making the changes right away—it gives me time to get ready and not start with failure.

Me: That makes sense. Were there any easier recipes you could handle yourself?

Gus: Yes, they did show us some simple things. That might get me by until we both learn how to cook the more complicated recipes.

Me: I know what you mean. I like when I can just dump cans of beans, corn, and tomatoes in a pot to make chili, and throw some greens in another pot—even though I'm no cook.

Gus: I remember they taught us whole grains and fruit for breakfast, and beans and greens for lunch or supper.

Me: What about breakfast—can you cook oatmeal or other whole grains? What do you like best?

Gus: I can cook oatmeal, I think. I'll give that a try.

Me: That sounds like a good plan. It looks like you're putting together a practical, manageable approach.



LIFT SKIT. (FOURTH VISIT BY PHONE)

Me: Hey Gus, tell me about your week. From your texts, it sounds like you're seeing some gradual progress.

Gus: Yes, it's coming—maybe not perfect, but it's better than a month ago.

Me: That's encouraging. I want to hear more about that. But first, it might help to see how your goals connect to the bigger picture in your life.

Gus: What do you mean?

Me: Well, Gus, describe the path you're on and what the end of that path might look like. Sometimes, seeing where you're headed helps you stay on track.

Gus: Yeah, I see what you mean. I want to improve my health by making good choices and being aware that my choices have consequences. At the end of that path, I guess I see myself more active and avoiding disease. It would be nice if I could fly again, but it was probably time to retire anyway. Looking back, if I had put in a little more effort, I could have enjoyed a few more years of work as a pilot.

Me: That makes sense. Let me ask you—why is that path to better health important to you?

Gus: I guess even in retirement, better health allows me to be more involved with my grandchildren, spend quality time with my wife, and help others.



LIFT SKIT

Gus: I guess I never really thought about why I have these goals. Thank you for helping me connect the smaller things to a bigger picture.

Me: What I'm hearing you say is that your life purpose is to trust and serve God and others, while taking the best care of your health that you can. And one of the paths toward that purpose is getting your diabetes under control—avoiding its complications and improving your health and stamina by regularly enjoying and sticking with a primarily plant-based diet.

Gus: Yes, that pretty much explains it.

Me: What do you think will be the biggest motivators to help keep you on that path?

Gus: One big motivator is the fear of the devastating effects of disease. I also want better health, a longer life, and greater happiness. And I think the desire to live out that life purpose we just talked about will motivate me too.

Me: That's very insightful. What do you think might get in the way and pull you off that path?

Gus: A lack of knowledge about how to prepare the right foods—both for me and my family—and honestly, my love for foods that won't help me reach my goals.

Me: Those are very real challenges. What strategy do you think could help you stay on the right path when those things come up?

Gus: I think I need to pray for wisdom and strength to make the hard choices, and to develop a love for the foods God has given for my best good. I also need to work on building a supportive family atmosphere.

Me: You can't go wrong when you rely on God's power for success. That's about all the time we have for today. Was it helpful to step back and see the bigger picture and how everything fits together?

Gus: Very helpful. Thank you for all your support—I wouldn't have made this much progress on my own.

Me: You're welcome. You're a true friend, and I'm really encouraged by the progress you've made. Would you mind if we took a minute to thank God for what He's already done and ask Him to continue giving you the help you need?

STEP 1 - Connecting with Questions & Listening

This section focuses on connecting with people through thoughtful questions and attentive listening. These principles are modeled on the example of Jesus. As we apply them, it is important to remember that He remains present, guiding us as His disciples, and works through us according to His will.

Step 1 includes

- How to connect with people
- Connecting through Questions
 - What are the reasons for your questions
 - Questions that Jesus asked
 - Two questions you should always ask
- Listening Like Jesus
 - What I am listening for
 - Listening as a way of loving others
 - Jesus' Masterclass in Listening
 - Bible Verses about Listening



HOW TO CONNECT

Personal connections are the most rewarding part of life—the most rewarding part of ministry, and the most rewarding part of family. Let's focus on maximizing our ability to connect with others and discovering the best ways to do so.

Jesus was the ultimate example of connecting with people. By studying how He engaged with others, we are practicing a form of discipleship—learning from the Master Himself.

There are many aspects involved in connecting with someone. A few key ones are listed here:

1. Observing Them

- a. Notice people in the contexts of their daily lives:
- b. At the gym
- c. At church or events
- d. At work
- e. At school

2. Asking Questions

- a. Ask questions related to what they are doing.
- b. Example: Like Jesus with the woman at the well—He asked for a drink while she was fetching water.

3. Listening

- a. Focus on their story, not yours.
- b. Give them space to share what matters most to them.

4. Digging Deeper

- a. Be curious about the things that are important to them.
- b. Explore their interests, passions, and concerns.

5. Finding Common Interests

- a. Identify shared interests or experiences.
- b. Provides a natural reason to reconnect later.

6. Follow-Up

- a. Reconnect in ways that are appropriate for both of you:
 - i. Call, text, meet at the gym, or another shared setting.

7. Offering Support

- a. Be willing to help or be available when needed.
- b. Go out of your way to serve them in practical ways.

CONNECTING

Connecting often occurs at events and programs like

1. Church
2. Programs (large or small group gatherings)
3. Gym
4. Other common settings where people naturally come together

Programs as a Means to Connect

Programs can be a valuable way to connect with others, but the focus needs to be on the people, not just the program itself. Rather than concentrating solely on what we want to teach, we should pay attention to the needs of those attending.

When you are involved in a program that invites the community, remember that the primary purpose is to connect and get acquainted. While the content you present may be important and useful, an even greater blessing comes when your focus is on building relationships with individuals. This is the key difference between a program-focused approach and a people-focused approach.

A program-focused approach centers on what you have to share. Success is often measured by attendance numbers and whether the audience learned the content.

However, this approach rarely asks the participants: What did you want? What did you think? What did you learn? How will you apply it? Were your needs met? Did you have the opportunity to respond?

A people-focused approach considers all of these questions. It recognizes that preaching or presenting information in a one-sided manner is not enough to truly connect. Listening, engaging, and helping participants apply what they learn transforms a simple program into a meaningful connection.

CONNECTING THROUGH QUESTIONS:

Whether or not you are a follower of Jesus, we can all benefit from studying the “communication practices” of the One whom many consider the greatest communicator of all time.

Jesus’ communication style centered on two key strategies: He told compelling stories and asked insightful questions. Both served the purpose of restoring people to God’s original design—one person at a time.

I don’t know about you, but I often ask questions because I don’t know the answers. That was never the case with Jesus. He knew all the answers, yet He chose to focus much of His interaction with people on asking them questions. Why do you think He asked so many questions?

Asking questions serves several important purposes.

- It helps form a connection with an individual or group
- It acts as the starting point for building a relationship.
- Most conversations begin with a question,
- It encourages people to think and often allows them to discover their own answers.

Each Person is Unique

Jesus’ desire was to restore people—to bring them back to the original nature He created them for, reflecting His image. He saw the effects of the great deceiver and recognized that many were living in a fog, unable to see the solution. Often, they didn’t even realize they had a problem or what they were missing.

For this reason, He approached each person in a unique way, tailored to their ability to understand the truth and recognize what was lacking. The goal, however, was always clear in His mind. With those who knew what they needed but stubbornly rejected the solution, He could be direct. With others who had no foundation to build upon, He began with something they could understand—something in their life that could serve as the key to unlocking their soul.

As we observe and begin connecting with people, we need to pray for the same discernment that Jesus had and that He desires to give us. Above all, we must be flexible and patient, recognizing that each person’s journey and readiness are unique.

QUESTIONS THAT JESUS ASKED

Your Turn: Study Jesus' Questions

Memorizing every question Jesus asked can be challenging—and even if we did, we might use them with the wrong people or in the wrong situations. A more practical approach is to focus on His purpose and understand why He asked certain questions. By doing this, we can better fulfill the work He has entrusted to us.

On the following page, you will find a list of questions Jesus asked. Use the following prompts to study and learn from them:

1. Identify the Focus

- Is there a common theme, such as “What do you think?”

2. Determine the Category

- What is Jesus addressing with each question?

3. Closed-Ended or Open-Ended

- Is the question closed-ended (starting with “Are you...,” “Do you...,” “Will you...”) or does it require more than a yes/no answer?

4. Question Starters

- How does the question begin: “Why...,” “What do you...,” “Who...?”

5. Length and Style

- Are the questions short and direct (“bullet” questions) or longer and more detailed?

6. Modern Application

- Can you create similar questions suited to modern contexts or worded in contemporary language?

1. Recurring Themes

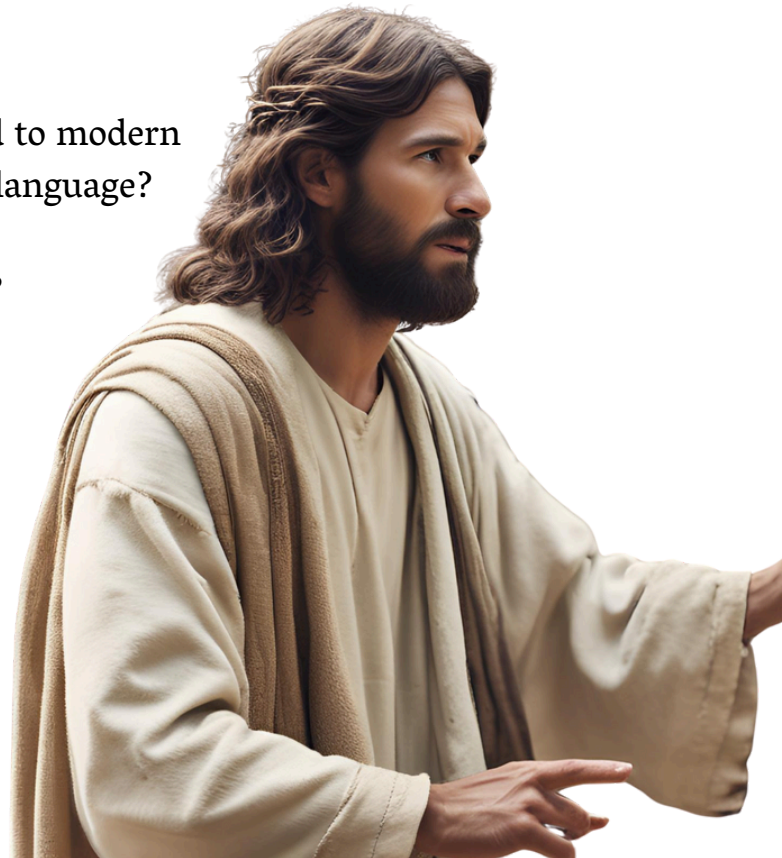
- Are there patterns or recurring topics ?

2. Categorization

- Can the questions be grouped

3. Practical Takeaways

- That you can use



QUESTIONS THAT JESUS ASKED

1. “What will it profit a man?”
 - a. Reflection: Consider the results of your actions and pursuits.
2. “Where are we to buy bread?”
 - a. Reflection: Tests faith and reveals where people are in their trust and dependence on God.
3. “Why are you anxious?”
 - a. Reflection: Encourages taking stock of emotions—how you feel and why.
4. “Do you see this woman?”
 - a. Reflection: Observing people closely; reading emotions, body language, and circumstances.
5. “Why are you troubled?”
 - a. Reflection: Examine feelings to determine if they are helpful, harmful, or misplaced.
6. “Has no one condemned you?” (John 8:1–11)
 - a. Reflection: Helps people confront fear, shame, and misplaced guilt.
7. “Do you want to be healed?”
 - a. Reflection: Understand real desires and readiness for change or restoration.
8. “Why do you call me Lord?”
 - a. Reflection: Challenges motives—are our words sincere, or just empty talk?
9. “Who do you say I am?”
 - a. Reflection: Calls for a personal response and commitment.



STUDY OF JESUS' QUESTIONS (PART 2)

1. "Do you love me?" The ultimate test and call for genuine commitment.
2. "Why do you worry?" (Luke 12:23-34). Some emotions make things worse
3. "Why are you weeping?" Insight and understanding
4. "Who touched my clothes?" Encourages honesty about actions and true desires.
5. "Why are you so afraid?" understanding truth removes unnecessary fear.
6. "Why don't you notice the log in your eye?" Uses humor and exaggeration to make a memorable point about self-awareness.
7. "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" True connection is sometimes found more in shared purpose than in familial ties.
8. "What do you want me to do for you?" Clarifies the other person's desires versus your own intentions for them.
9. "Are you also going away?" Calls for staying true to what matters, even in difficult times.
10. "Was no one found to give praise?" (Luke 17:11-19). Highlights the condition of one's environment and response of people.
11. "Do you have any fish?" (John 21:1-14) Focuses on what you have rather than complaining about what is lacking.
12. "Why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:33-39) "Why" questions help uncover deeper truths behind circumstances.
13. "Do you understand what I've done for you?" (John 13:1-13) Helps people recognize and understand God's work in their lives.

Possible Insights from Studying Jesus' Questions:

1. Primary Focus: Restoration of individuals.
2. Categories:
 - a. Relationship with God
 - b. Relationship with others
 - c. Pain and suffering
 - d. Encouraging reflection and thought
3. Principles Jesus Used:
 - a. Using questions to discern where people were spiritually and emotionally
 - b. Awakening people from "brain fog" to see the truth
 - Providing insight and support to overcome challenges or the enemy
 - Continuing the conversation based on the person's response

QUESTIONS THAT JESUS ASKED - EXTRA STUDY

Things to Remember About Questions

Asking a series of unrelated questions without building on a person's responses can feel more like an interrogation than a conversation. Genuine connection grows when questions flow naturally from what the other person has shared.

Jesus shows us how to apply principles—not scripts. His questions were used to connect, inspire, reveal the heart, and encourage growth. The goal is not to memorize His questions and try to insert them into the “right” moment, but to understand His heart and purpose so that our interactions reflect the same spirit.

For this to happen naturally, we must have His heart. Effective questioning flows out of daily life when our love for God and for people is real and growing. This requires a balance of skill and empathetic love—truth expressed through compassion.

When you truly love God and understand His character, you will find ways to share those principles in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. Questions then become a tool for care rather than correction.

Ask questions to discover a person's readiness. Listen for where the edge of their understanding or pain lies. From there, you can ask the kinds of questions that make it safe for them to take another step—toward truth, healing, and restoration.

Extra Study on Questions Jesus Asked

Questions That Create a Human Connection

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her,
“Will you give me a drink?”

The Samaritan woman replied,

“You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.). — John 4:7-9

Questions that caused introspection:

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful”. ~Luke 6:32-36

QUESTIONS THAT JESUS ASKED - EXTRA STUDY

Questions that addressed worry:

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet, I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ~**Matthew 6: 25-30**

Questions that gave balance to their grievances with others:

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ~**Matthew 6:3-4**

Questions to make an argument:

Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” ~**Mark 3:4**

If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ~**Matthew 18:12b**

Questions that revealed inadequacy:

His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?” “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked. “Seven,” they replied, “and a few small fish.” ~ **Matthew 15: 33-34**

QUESTIONS THAT JESUS ASKED - EXTRA STUDY

Questions that reminded them of what they already knew:

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?” ~**Matthew 19: 3-5**

My favorite question:

“What do you think?” ~**Matthew 18:12**

Questions that asked for opinion:

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” ~**Luke 10:25-28**

Questions that allowed people to voice their own needs:

As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” Jesus stopped and called them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. “Lord,” they answered, “we want our sight.” Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him. ~**Matthew 20:29-34**

REASONS FOR YOUR QUESTIONS

When you understand the reason behind a question, your questions become far more meaningful. Purpose gives direction, and when your questions have intention, it becomes much easier to know which questions to ask and when to ask them. In this chapter, we will explore the reasons behind the questions Jesus asked. As you review the examples provided, consider which questions apply to your own context and the people you are connecting with. Jesus' primary interest was the restoration of the image of God as it existed in His original creation. I believe this was always His central focus when He asked questions. At times, however, He addressed a secondary focus—relieving suffering and asking people what they wanted Him to do for them. Even then, these questions served the greater purpose of restoration.

We would do well to follow His example. As we get to know people and help meet their needs, we should always keep in mind the greater goal: restoring the image of God within them. When this purpose guides our questions, our conversations move beyond information and toward transformation.

In your initial contact with someone, the goal is simply to get acquainted and begin forming a connection. There are obvious and appropriate reasons for asking questions—learning their name, family background, and interests. The easiest questions often arise naturally from what you observe or from the shared setting you are in, such as a gym or a grocery store.

These simple questions can “grow” as you invite them to tell you more, guided by genuine curiosity and by responding thoughtfully to their answers. It is natural—and appropriate—to mention connections to your own interests or past experiences, as long as the focus remains on them and not on “your story.”



REASONS FOR YOUR QUESTIONS - THE WHY

As I read the examples of questions Jesus asked, I am reminded that many of them were based on prior encounters or on relationships He had already developed—such as with His disciples. With each connection we make, the shared “story” grows, and new opportunities arise to address more personal matters.

Over time, people may begin to ask for help with a specific issue, a lifestyle change, or a personal challenge. As conversations deepen, two simple questions become especially valuable:

“Can you tell me more?” and “What do you think?”—often followed by “What else?”

(These will be explored further in the next section.)

Reasons for Asking Questions

- To get acquainted
- When a need is sensed, to understand how you can help
- To give them space to voice their need
- To encourage action or movement forward
- To learn their opinion or perspective
- To remind them of something they already know
- To prompt reflection and deeper thinking

When questions are asked with purpose and care, they create space for growth, understanding, and meaningful connection.

If you'd like, I can turn this into a short checklist or quick-reference box that coaches or leaders can review before conversations.

As you talk with people and truly listen, you begin to understand the boundaries of their comfort level. You start to see the edges of their spiritual life and discover what occupies most of their time and energy.

You may also become aware of the more negative aspects of their experience. We often say, “Meet people where they are,” but that phrase covers a wide range. You can meet someone on the negative end of their spectrum, or you can meet them on the edge of their spiritual curiosity and growth.

Jesus modeled this beautifully with the woman at the well. He respected her boundaries while gently exploring her spiritual interests. As she responded, He allowed the door to open a little wider, leading her step by step toward truth. Through this process, He was able to restore in her the image of God.

TWO QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ALWAYS ASK

Have you ever responded quickly to a question or statement, only to hear the other person say, “Why don’t you listen to me before trying to answer? You don’t even know what I was asking!” I know I have.

Most of us have been there, which means we could all benefit from a simple solution. Instead of immediately trying to answer what you think the question is, pause and ask:

“Can you please tell me more?”

This single question slows the conversation down, communicates respect, and invites clarity. More often than not, it opens the door to understanding what the person is really trying to express.

Have you heard this story?

Seven-year-old Johnnie comes running into the house and shouts to his mom,

“Where did I come from?”

His mom is completely caught off guard—at least not expecting that question yet. After taking a deep breath and gathering her thoughts, she invites Johnnie to sit down and launches into a full explanation of “the birds and the bees.” Johnnie listens with wide eyes, absorbing every word.

When she finishes, she asks,

“Now, Johnnie, do you understand where you came from?”

Johnnie replies,

“No! Joey said he came from California, and he asked me where I came from.”

Do you think Johnnie’s mom wished she had responded to his original question with,

“Can you please tell me more?”

The real benefit of asking “Can you please tell me more” is not just clarity—it gives you time. Time to understand the real issue and time to respond thoughtfully rather than reactively.

Sometimes the best response is simply:

- A listening ear (when the person isn’t actually asking for advice)
- A clear answer
- A thoughtful follow-up question that helps them discover the solution themselves

This single question protects relationships, deepens understanding, and keeps us aligned with Jesus’ model of listening before speaking.

TWO QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ALWAYS ASK - CONT.

“Communication is not as much about knowing the right answers as it is about knowing the right questions.”

“Questions are the golden keys that unlock hearts and minds.”

I want to introduce the second key question with a little confession:

Are you familiar with T.A.? Not A.A.—Alcoholics Anonymous—but T.A., which stands for “Tellers Anonymous.”

I have an addiction—I am addicted to telling! At T.A. meetings, I stand up and introduce myself:

“My name is Rick, and I am a teller.”

Yes, I am addicted to telling! Today, I consider myself a recovering teller. But the temptation to “lead by telling” is still real. Sharing this story is part of my recovery process, and the other part is learning to lead with questions.

Leading with questions takes preparation, intentionality, discipline, and practice. The good news? If I can move from telling to asking, so can you!

The second important question is:

“What do you think?”

You can expand this approach by adding three more follow-ups:

“What else?” ... “What else?” ... “What else?”

This simple sequence encourages reflection, draws people into the conversation, and allows them to explore their own thoughts and solutions rather than relying on your answers.



(Adapted from Bob Tiede,
biblicalleadership.com)

CONNECTING - THROUGH LISTENING

Examples of Jesus Listening

(As a boy) Seating Himself at the feet of these grave, learned men, He listened to their instruction. As one seeking wisdom, He questioned these teachers in regard to the prophecies, and to events then taking place that pointed to the advent of the Messiah.

The doctors turned to Him with questions, and they were amazed at His answers.

With the humility of a child, He repeated the words of Scripture, giving them a depth of meaning that the wise men had not conceived of.

If Jesus had appeared to be trying to teach them, they would have disdained to listen.

But they flattered themselves that they were teaching Him DA 80

Even though His understanding of Scripture had not been distorted by tradition, and though they recognized that He possessed wisdom beyond theirs, He still approached them in humility, seeking to learn. He asked questions and listened carefully to their responses.

Key principles demonstrated:

- He listened and asked questions in humility, approaching others as a learner.
- He taught through questions, guiding others to discover the answers for themselves rather than imposing them.

Jesus was non-critical of those different from Him.

In His contact with people, He did not ask, “What is your creed?” or “To what church do you belong?” He exercised His helping power on behalf of all who needed help (DA 86).

In our connection with people, we will encounter some who have ideas and beliefs different from ours. We should treat everyone the same and try not to be startled by their manners.

Can you think of some specific ways you can apply these principles of listening that Jesus demonstrated for us?

WHAT AM I LISTENING FOR ?

The ultimate goal of our connection with people is to help them—to bring them joy, peace, and, whenever possible, relief from suffering. In essence, it is to undo some of the damage that sin has brought into the world and to restore the image of God.

Jesus had this purpose in mind when He connected with people and asked questions. Likewise, as I ask questions and listen to others, I am also listening to the Holy Spirit for guidance on the best way to assist in the restoration process. In fact, since Jesus is alive and present, I can be like one of the disciples—learning from the Master while talking and listening to someone.

What else am I listening for? I am listening for hope—a spark of trust. But it is also okay to hear doubt and questioning, because Jesus has answers for those emotions as well. He is available to work through me.

I am listening for more than just problems. I am listening for solutions, plans, and a process for improvement. I am listening for a desire for help, so that I can guide them to the source of Wisdom and Strength.

One must be patient and comfortable with silence, giving the person time to think. Our natural tendency is to tell them what to do, but the solution is more lasting when they discover it for themselves.

I like to use statements such as:

- “What do you think might help...?”
- “What if...?”
- “Do you think God might have an answer to that...?”
- “Tell me why you feel or think that way.”
- “If you had the power to change the situation, what would you do?”
- “What would you want others to know?”

Listen for changes in thinking—those moments that show the edges of their comfort zone are shifting toward Him—and then reinforce that shift. You might ask, “How would it feel to be free of worry or anxiety? Do you believe God is willing to take that load from you?”

Jesus has the answer, and He will not hide it from you. He is always present; never feel alone when in His service. Continue to listen with two ears—one for the person you are speaking with, and the other for Jesus.

LOVING OTHERS LIKE JESUS BY LISTENING

Adapted from Listening as a Way of Loving Others Like Jesus: Learn From Jesus' Example first published at American Bible Society on August 13, 2018.

“Listening to God is what grounds our ability to love others like God.”

Sarah Zaske

A story told by Sarah Zaske about listening like Jesus:

A typical Manhattan morning is noisy, crowded, and busy – and this day was no exception. Like the thousands of individuals with whom I shared the sidewalk, I had somewhere to be and was running late. As I hurried down Fifth Avenue, I heard a noise that stood out from the rest. It is common to hear construction, honking, or even shouting, but this was different—someone was crying—sobbing, actually. I looked toward the noise and saw a homeless woman sitting to the side, back pressed against a building, weeping.

Then I justified the decision. “I’m late,” I told myself, “Someone else will help her.” Despite my best efforts at self-persuasion, I made it only one block further before my conviction grew too great. Returning to the woman, I began rummaging around in my purse. I hurriedly pulled some cash from my wallet, placed it in her cup, and tried to go on my way. Conviction surfaced again. I knew this was not the right response either. God was asking something more from me.

At that moment, what I read and remembered from the pages of Scripture was surfacing, and it was clashing with my current demands and desires.

I paused to remember how Jesus encountered quite a few people in need while en route somewhere. How did he respond to the woman at the well or the disciples walking toward the village of Emmaus? What about blind Bartimaeus? While I wanted to hurry and leave, Jesus was eager to pause and listen.



Jesus's command is clear: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" John 13:34. While Jesus loved others well in many ways, loving through listening was often his first move—and that day I knew it should be mine.

I knelt on the pavement next to the woman, looked her in the eye, and asked her, "Why are you crying?" I wanted to know what her tears meant. I wanted her to know that her story mattered.

Instead of worrying about everything I could not do for this woman, I focused on what I could do. I knew I could follow Jesus's lead and love her through listening.

We spent time talking about the difficulties she had encountered in life and the deep loneliness she was feeling that day. After twenty minutes of sharing her heart, we prayed together. When I opened my eyes after the prayer, I was so moved by the strength of this woman that I was the one crying and she was the one smiling. "No one ever talks to me," she said. I knew what she really meant was, "No one ever listens to me." We all need to be heard.

Theologian David Augsburger says, "Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person they are almost indistinguishable." It took a few failed attempts, but I was able to show God's love to her that morning in the way she needed to receive it. This was only possible because I first listened to God speaking to me through the pages of Scripture. Listening to others in love is only possible when you first listen to God in earnest.



LISTENING TO GOD THROUGH SCRIPTURE

While there are many ways to hear God, Scripture is foundational. When you read the Bible, you can give space for God's Spirit to teach, direct, encourage, convict, and move you toward action.

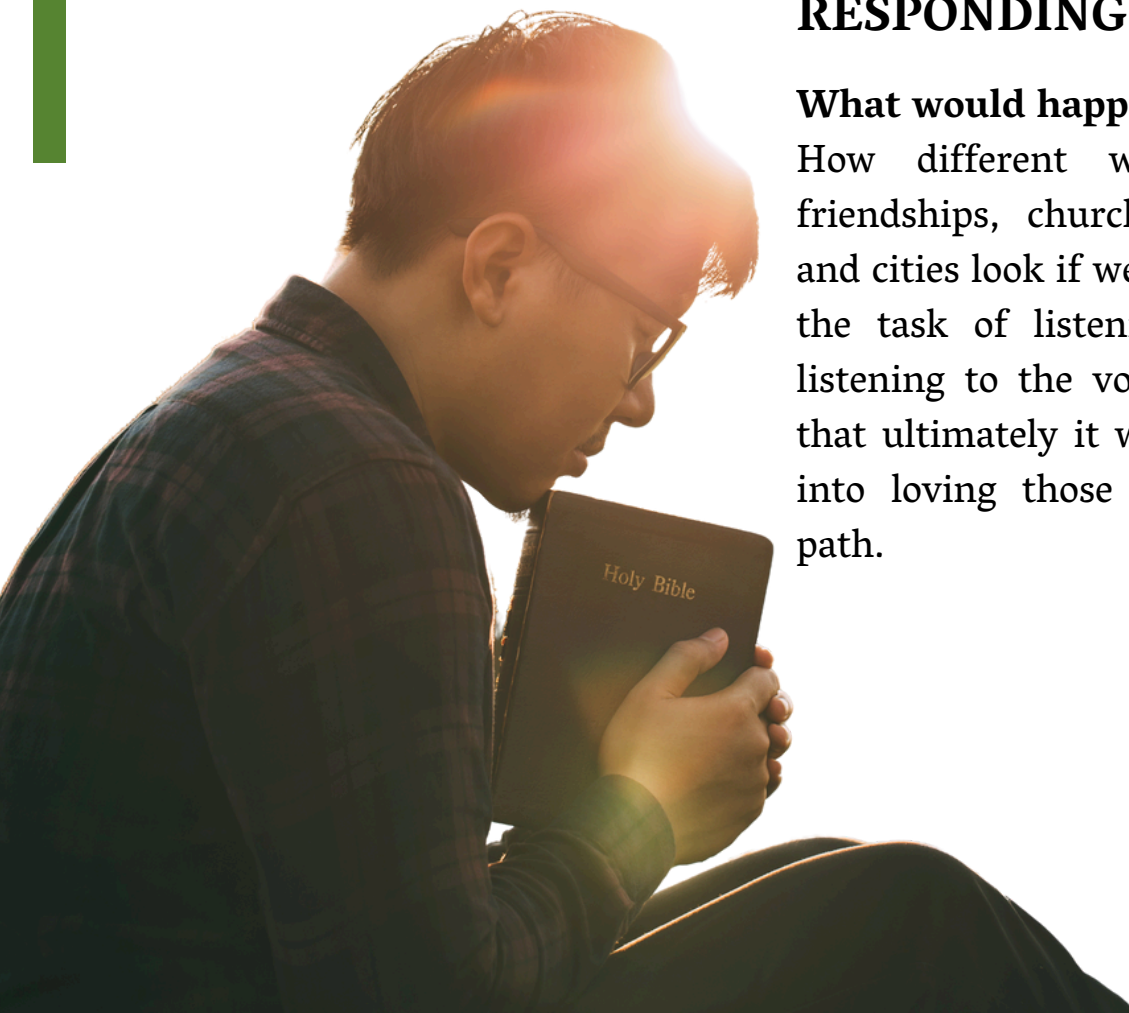
Just as you have to be tuned to a radio signal to hear music, you must be attuned to God's voice through Scripture if you are to truly listen and respond. Radio stations are always broadcasting, yet they remain inaudible unless you tune to the right frequency. Similarly, God is always speaking, but His voice often goes unheard unless we intentionally listen.

Ask yourself: Are you simply reading the Bible, or are you listening for God to speak to you through it? Is your aim merely to get through the text, or to let the text get through to you? Are you gaining information without a changed heart or redirected actions? If so, it may be time to listen more carefully.

LISTENING AND RESPONDING

What would happen?

How different would our families, friendships, churches, neighbor-hoods, and cities look if we followed through on the task of listening well? Lean into listening to the voice of God, knowing that ultimately it will cause you to lean into loving those God places in your path.



JESUS' MASTERCLASS, IN LISTENING

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MORE BY JOHN KONING

Listening might be defined as the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Fundamental to being a human is our ability to communicate with other humans. Meaningful relationships are what makes us fully human and proper communication is absolutely critical to this end.

Effective listening is thus a skill that underpins all positive human relationships. Communication gurus call it the missing half of communication. The skill of good listening is incredibly rare. For while there is a vast amount of talking and broadcasting in our world, how much real listening is taking place?

Listening requires full attention, focused concentration, and careful thinking.

Jesus commanded us, “Consider carefully how you listen” (Luke 8:18). So listening is not a passive skill.

It is not merely being quiet and letting the other person speak. It requires full attention, focused concentration, and careful thinking. This means most of us are bad listeners. Below I show why we struggle to listen before contrasting good and bad communication. Finally, I will point to Jesus as the ultimate model when it comes to listening.



JESUS' MASTERCLASS, IN LISTENING

Five Obstacles to Listening

1. We are Not Taught to Listen

Nobody took me aside and taught me to listen. It's one of the most fundamental skills that a human can master. Yet it's not deliberately taught and it's rarely modelled. There are no courses or electives in schools and universities on this fundamental subject. Ironically, while the mode of learning is by and large through listening, we are not even taught how to do it.

2. All of Us Struggle with Pride

Behind bad listening is a complex of evil. Various forms of arrogance lie behind bad listening. We think we know everything about the speaker, both in their person and their situation. Furthermore, we believe we can anticipate what someone is going to say. The listener is actually rehearsing his response, sometimes even finishing their sentences. Interruptions and impatience indicate pride. An impatient listener is not able to fully engage in the present. Thus pride is an enemy of listening.

3. Various Forms of Laziness

Listening is hard work. Proper listening requires full attention, focus, and concentration. It's far easier to keep nodding, and saying "yes" intermittently while tuning the speaker out. Few of us excel at listening because we are lazy.

4. Our World is too Noisy

In fact, moments of quiet frighten the living daylights out of many people. Why? The rise of technology and the explosion of social media. We take refuge in our headphones, actively shutting others out, while we prefer brief soundbites and distractions through WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok. Conversation is replaced by broadcasting. It's very hard to pay attention to the quiet or the subtle in such a noisy world.

JESUS' MASTERCLASS, IN LISTENING

Five Obstacles to Listening Cont.

5. The Ways We Relax and Unwind

Linked with the above, watching a series or checking out the endless options online encourages bad listening. For many contemporary people, their favorite kind of relaxation is to “veg” in front of a screen, whether it’s mindlessly scrolling or endless streaming. Consuming media in this way requires only superficial listening and trains us in those habits.

What Does God Say About Bad Listening?

In the book of Proverbs, we find practical wisdom from God. Much of this wisdom is concerned with communication, both speaking and listening. For example, “A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion” (Proverbs 18:2). Similarly, “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame” (Proverbs 18:13).

The fool only finds pleasure in speaking. Because of pride, he doesn’t care about understanding.

The “fool”—a very strong word—is someone who doesn’t listen and therefore doesn’t understand. Instead, he speaks too quickly. The first proverb above says that the fool only finds pleasure in saying what he wants to say. Because of pride, selfishness, and self-importance, the fool doesn’t care about understanding. He is impulsive. He answers without listening. According to the second proverb, such a person is both foolish and shameful.

How Can We Become Better Listeners?

Writing in the 1st century, Jesus’ half-brother said: “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry” (James 1:19). Being quick to listen and slow to speak is a disposition indicative of both wisdom and love. The profile of a good listener is the opposite of the proverbial fool. The wise listener is patient, energetic, and focused. She lets the other person finish without interrupting. She is eager to put others before herself. Thus she listens and works hard to understand the other person. She doesn’t think too highly of herself.

JESUS' MASTERCLASS, IN LISTENING

Being quick to listen and slow to speak is a disposition indicative of both wisdom and love.

Good listening also requires appropriate body language. The listener faces the speaker and maintains eye contact. We don't interrupt and we don't impose our "quick fix solutions." We ask appropriate questions to clarify things and make sure that we understand things correctly. We tune in to the other person, putting ourselves in their shoes.

Learning Conversation from Jesus

Consider Jesus and his conversations. He was a listener, par excellence; the true physician of the human soul! How engaged he was. Observe how he listened to others, asking questions in response.

He also listened to what was not said. For he was skilled at drawing others out and communicating sympathy. What would Martha, blind Bartimaeus, the woman at the well, or the disciples, say about Jesus? He listened. **He never merely listened to words**, but he listened for attitudes and he listened for the whole range of emotions. Jesus listened in a way that communicated compassion and care, taking the time to understand others.

Jesus listened in a way that communicated compassion and care, taking the time to understand others.

Do you want to be like the proverbial fool? Or do you want to be like Jesus? Growth in listening is a key part of sanctification. It's critical to care about each other. Good news: no matter how good or bad you currently are at it, listening is a skill you can develop. But, you'll never do it apart from God's strength and his grace. Nor will you do it so long as you love yourself—and your own voice—more than you do the person who is speaking to you.



BIBLE VERSES ABOUT LISTENING

Proverbs 18:13 ESV If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

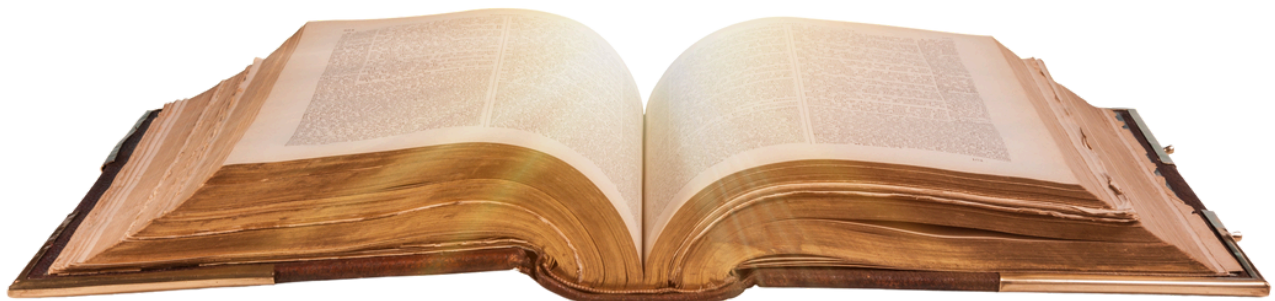
James 1:19 ESV Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

James 3:1-18 ESV Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ...

James 1:22 ESV But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Psalms 46:10 ESV “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

James 1:1-27 ESV James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously.



BIBLE VERSES ABOUT LISTENING - CONT.

Romans 10:17 ESV So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ.

Revelation 3:22 ESV He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

John 10:27-28 ESV My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

Mark 4:9 ESV And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Proverbs 15:1-33 ESV A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent. ...

One last thought on listening: Even though we have learned that it is all about them, briefly sharing a related personal experience can be helpful. It provides a sense of two-way sharing, bringing the conversation back to a natural flow and easing any “spotlight” feeling for the person we are speaking with.

STEP 2 - Discovery

This section provides training on how to help your friend discover their Purpose, Path, and Steps. In other words, it helps them see the “Big Picture” (Purpose), identify the path to get there, and determine the steps needed to move forward. This involves setting meaningful goals (Path) and breaking them down into achievable actions (Steps).

It includes:

- **Finding your Purpose**
- **Choosing the right Path**
- **Steps along your Path**
- **Examples of Purpose, Path & Steps**
- **SMART goals**
- **Handling Resistance**
- **Motivation & Confidence**

Introduction to Purpose, Paths and Steps



Now that we have learned more about connecting with people through asking questions and listening, remember that sometimes they may simply want a friend—someone who will listen and be there for them. However, during your conversations, they may begin to talk about things they would like to change. This is especially true if you meet them through a health program. Let’s now look at ways you can best support them in making the changes they desire. We all have goals in life—starting something new, improving our health, or continuing with something we have already begun.

There is a better chance of achieving those goals when we are intentional and have someone to provide support. Planning is a good first step. One helpful format is to identify a person’s Purpose, Path, and Steps.

Think of it like planning a trip:

1. Purpose: Know where you want to go and why—this is your destination, the Big Picture.
2. Path: Know the route you will take to get there.
3. Steps: Break the journey into segments—what you will see each day, how far you will travel, and where you will spend the night.

I have chosen Purpose, Path, and Steps because these are terms the Bible uses to describe life's journey. Scripture describes God's purpose for us, the paths we choose and where they lead—either for good or bad—and our steps, the daily actions that follow a particular path.

To maintain a peer-to-peer relationship, you can discuss these concepts in a normal conversation rather than in a formal “coaching” style. Talk about their goals and the larger purpose in their life, the paths that will help them achieve that purpose, and the small daily steps that will keep them on track.

Steps are the path broken down into manageable daily actions to improve the chances of success. You may need to help them avoid taking on too much at once. Encourage them to take small steps at first so they can experience success right from the beginning.

The process may look something like this:

Hey Don, we've been talking about some of your dreams and goals. Have you ever thought about the big picture—what we might call your purpose in life, your “why”? Having a clear direction may be the most important step in effective living.

Do you have an idea of your purpose, or would you like to look at some examples that other people have written to see if any of them resonate with you? (The next pages of this workbook have some options to choose from.)

When they have picked a few that relate to them, you may want to jot down their thoughts and adjust the purpose so it fits them personally.

Now that you have written your purpose, what are some paths you could follow consistently that would help you reach that purpose? What kind of routine, attitude, and decision-making would support your journey? This is a good place to brainstorm—come up with as many processes as possible that will help them reach their purpose. Aim for at least five different ideas that could lead to successful fulfillment of their purpose.

Once we have identified some paths, what could you start doing this week? Be specific: decide what you will do (walk, eat, study), how often (Monday and Wednesday), and at what time (7 AM, 6 PM). We will review these as SMART goals later.

It's important to make the steps simple and achievable. They can always exceed their goals, but the goal should be easy enough that they cannot fail to achieve it.

POSSIBLE PURPOSE, PATH, AND STEPS WITH A SPIRITUAL FOCUS

The following are examples of a person's Purpose (first), Path (second, a.), and Steps (last, i.).

- Purpose is the “why”—the ultimate outcome that results from following the paths and steps.
- Path is what will get us there; it is the ongoing process that moves us toward the purpose.
- Steps are the daily or weekly actions we take along the path to achieve our purpose.

The possibilities are endless and depend on each person's choices. These examples are meant to provide ideas and inspiration.

1. Have a growing relationship with God
 - a. Prioritize activities that strengthen this relationship.
 - i. Regular prayer, Bible study, and worship.
2. Live a life of kindness
 - a. Embody the teachings and attitude of Jesus.
 - i. i. Show love and kindness, respect others, be forgiving, and seek ways to help those in need.
3. Live a life of service, making a positive impact in my community
 - a. Look for opportunities to serve in work, home, and community.
 - i. Volunteer for projects that provide service to those in need.
4. Cultivate a character that reflects Christ
 - a. Daily discover more of His character and apply it to my life.
 - i. i. Study His character in Scripture and pray for guidance.
5. Be a forgiving person, fostering reconciliation
 - a. Work toward resolving conflicts when they arise.
 - i. Always look for the good in people and situations.
6. Pursue excellence in all my endeavors and work
 - a. Do everything as to the Lord and give others the best I can offer.
 - i. Work with diligence, integrity, and excellence.
7. Use skills to make a positive impact and reflect God's glory.
 - a. Always desire and pursue growing in wisdom and knowledge
 - i. Be a learner, curious to gain more knowledge and skills
 - ii. Add new skill or knowledge each year.
8. Live a life of gratitude to God and others
 - i. Appreciate God's gifts and the people around you.
 - ii. Express gratitude for all gifts and friendships.
9. Be an effective disciple of Christ
 - a. Share my faith effectively and winsomely.
 - i. Look for opportunities and pray for wisdom to share in a loving way.
10. Overcome adversity and inspire others with hope
 - a. Face challenges with hope and optimism.
 - i. Daily choose to see difficulties as opportunities to grow.

1. Strive for personal growth and self-improvement
 - a. Improve skills and knowledge.
 - i. Read books, attend workshops, and listen to podcasts.
2. Make health and well-being a high priority
 - a. Prioritize physical and mental health.
 - i. Set goals related to exercise, nutrition, and emotional well-being.
 - ii. Establish healthy habits.
3. Have a life that values and strengthens personal relationships
 - a. Build relationships with family, friends, and colleagues.
 - i. Schedule time to spend with those you want to strengthen relationships with.
 - ii. Plan regular connections with special people in your life.
4. Set high career and professional goals to achieve
 - a. Identify your passions and pursue a career that brings joy and fulfillment.
 - i. Look for opportunities in your current job.
 - ii. Adjust your current activities to better align with your passions.

PURPOSE, PATH, AND STEPS WITH A SECULAR FOCUS

5. Be involved in the community and make a social impact for good
 - a. Look for opportunities to participate in community activities.
 - i. Talk to friends and see what they are doing to join them.
 - ii. Find areas you enjoy or where your skills can be used.
6. Raise and nurture a loving and well-balanced family
 - a. Make decisions and time commitments that support family relationships.
 - i. Schedule time for family, spouse, and children, such as date nights and family events.
7. Take time to enjoy travel and exploration
 - a. Broaden your exposure and knowledge of other cultures.
 - i. Become acquainted with people from different cultures.
 - ii. Plan trips to explore areas you are not familiar with.
8. Spend appropriate time in leisure and recreation
 - a. Maintain a healthy work-life balance.
 - i. Find hobbies and activities you enjoy, and schedule time to engage in them.
9. Have a plan to achieve financial stability and security
 - a. Develop an attitude of planning and saving for your needs and goals.
 - i. Create a budget, stick to it, and plan for the future.
10. Enjoy personal fulfillment and happiness
 - a. Set goals that align with what brings you fulfillment and joy.
 - i. Schedule and prioritize activities that bring you happiness.
 - ii. Identify at least one thing each day to do purely because it brings you joy.

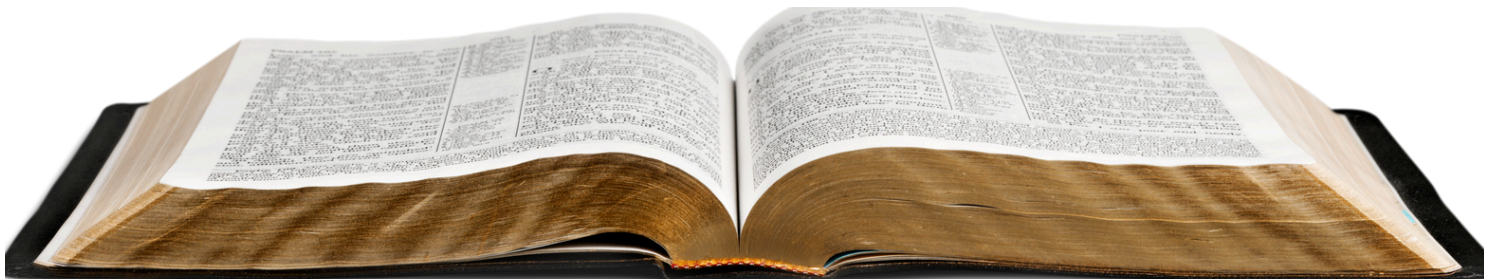
FINDING YOUR PURPOSE, PATH, AND STEPS FROM SOLOMON, IN PROVERBS

A good place to find wise direction regarding these areas of life is from the wisest man, Solomon. The book of Proverbs is full of practical wisdom that can guide life choices safely. Even those who are not particularly spiritual are often open to the insights of Solomon.

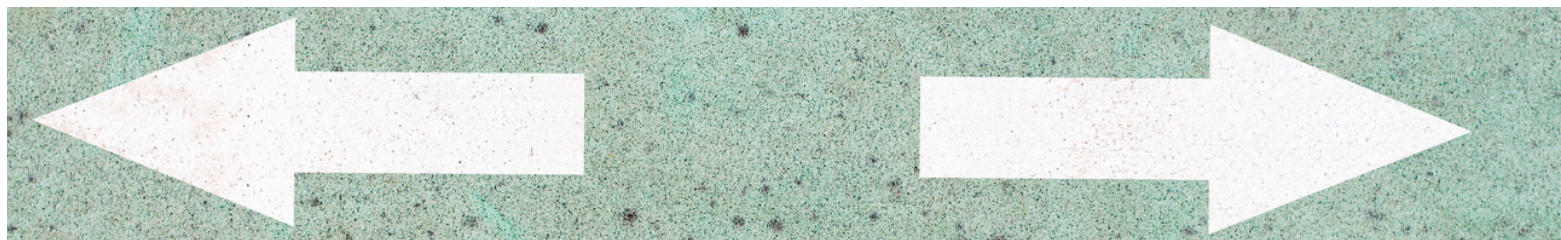
Here are a few examples—you can explore Proverbs further to find guidance that applies to your own life:

- Proverbs 1 – Talks about knowledge, wisdom, and avoiding evil.
 - Prov. 1:7 – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” (Fear here means trust, respect, and obedience.)
- Proverbs 2 – Highlights the value of wisdom, which helps you find good paths (v. 9).
- Proverbs 3 – Emphasizes the importance of God’s law and generosity, especially starting in your youth.
- Proverbs 4 – Discusses the path of the just; encourages pondering the right path (v. 26).
- Proverbs 6 – Warns about dangerous promises, laziness, and adultery, and their consequences.
- Proverbs 10 – Explains that hatred and strife have no good outcome; be careful with your speech.
- Proverbs 11 – Shows that honesty and righteousness bring joy and peace.

Proverbs is an excellent source for discovering wise choices in life and provides safe guidance for anyone seeking direction.



FINDING YOUR PURPOSE



Finding your Purpose is the most important part of living an effective and fulfilling life. I don't know exactly when it became clear to Jesus, but the first time His purpose is recorded in Scripture was when His parents found Him with the teachers in the temple. He said, "Didn't you know that I must be about my Father's business?" Even though that was a fairly general purpose, it was clear and demonstrated focus.

As we contemplate God's purpose for us, we can be confident that we "have been called according to His purpose." The general call is the same for all, whether we accept it or not: to glorify God in all we do and to be obedient to Him as He reveals His will. The most important decision we can make is to follow Him in every way possible, producing the happiest and most fulfilling life.

But what about a more personal purpose? One that is consistent with the general life purpose, yet unique to you—one that uses your strengths and talents and brings you the greatest joy. Finding your personal purpose removes much of the doubt and anxiety about the future. There is assurance in knowing that God wants the best for us.

I remember my own struggle to find purpose. It was 1968, and I was a high school senior trying to decide on a profession. I didn't want to make a mistake that would lead me into work I wouldn't enjoy or where I couldn't find employment. As I read through Romans, a verse in chapter 8 spoke to my confusion—verse 28. In the Amplified Bible, it reads:

"We are assured and know that God, being a partner in their labor, causes all things to work together and fit into a plan for good for those who love God and are called according to His design and purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

That didn't tell me exactly which profession to pursue, but it assured me that God wanted to partner with me. If I chose to partner with Him, all things would work together for good. From that point on, I was confident that if I sought His guidance and was honest with Him, with a desire to do His will, my decisions would fit into His best plan. Only when I tried to make decisions relying solely on my own wisdom did I miss out on His guidance and insight.

FINDING YOUR PURPOSE

The Bible offers guidance on how to live a purposeful life. Here is one passage that provides insight:

1 Corinthians 10:31 – “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

This verse encourages us to live with a sense of purpose in all areas of life, seeking to honor and glorify God in everything we do.

- **Romans 8:28** - "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to **His purpose**." This verse suggests that God has a purpose for each of us, and even our struggles and challenges can ultimately work for our good if we trust in Him.
- **Ecclesiastes 12:13** - "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind." This verse emphasizes the importance of living a life that honors God and follows His commandments, which can give our lives a sense of purpose and direction.
- **Proverbs 19:21** - "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the **Lord's purpose** that prevails." This verse suggests that our purpose is ultimately determined by God's plan for us, and we should seek to align our own plans with His will.

Helping someone find their purpose can be a critical step as they begin to shape their life and choose the path they will walk. From the passages above, we see that God has a good purpose for each of us.

But what if we are helping someone who is not yet interested in God's purpose for them? We can still pray, study, and keep in mind the purpose God may have for us. After all, His plans are far better than anything we could come up with on our own.

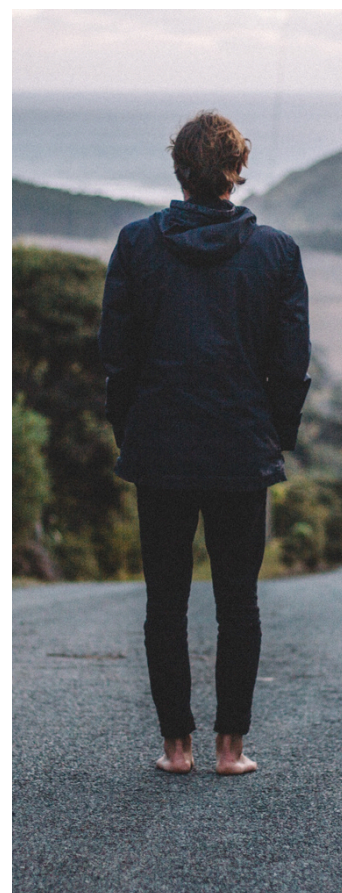
As you help others with their goals, you can pray that God will open their minds to His purpose and guide you to ask the right questions—questions that may begin to open doors to God's best plans and His power. Just as with the woman at the well, Jesus began with a simple request for a drink of water, and God guided her step by step toward full restoration.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATH (PLAN)

Our path refers to the way we live and the choices we make in life. Choosing a path is similar to setting goals. Scripture provides abundant guidance on which paths lead to the most meaning and fulfillment.

The Bible offers many passages about choosing the right path in life. Here are some verses to consider:

- Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your **paths**."
- Matthew 7:13-14 - "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."
- Proverbs 4:11-12 - "I will teach you the way of wisdom and lead you in **straight paths**. When you walk, you won't be held back; when you run, you won't stumble."
- Psalm 23:3 - "He restores my soul. He leads me in **paths** of righteousness for his name's sake."
- Isaiah 30:21 - "And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the **way**, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left."



These passages emphasize the importance of trusting in God, seeking wisdom and guidance from Him, and following His path rather than relying on the ways of the world or our own understanding. They also highlight the rewards of choosing the right path, including spiritual fulfillment, blessings from God, and lasting success. Overall, the Bible teaches that setting and achieving goals requires seeking God's guidance, diligent effort, perseverance, and intentional action toward fulfilling one's purpose.

In the same way as with purpose, as we listen to someone's purpose and the path that will lead them there, we can work alongside them to achieve their plan while gently guiding them to trust in God's best plans for their life.

STEPS

If the path is the direction we are going, the steps are the daily choices we make. Your friend may have identified a general goal or path but may not be clear on what to do daily. This is where you can help, keeping a few key points in mind:

- Have them brainstorm all possible actions that might help them reach their goals, then narrow it down to one or two.
- Help them keep these steps specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic.
- Avoid making the steps too big. Consistent small successes are more effective.
- Remind them that you will be there to support them every step of the way.
- Encourage them that God wants them to succeed and will be with them throughout the journey.

The Bible teaches that the steps we take along the path of life are important and can lead us toward our purpose and God's plan for us. Here are some Bible verses that speak to this principle:

- Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding..."
- In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths."
- Psalm 37:23 "The **steps** of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in His way."
- Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
- Proverbs 29:11 "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his **steps**."
- Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

These verses encourage us to trust in God, seek His guidance, and acknowledge Him in all our ways. They remind us that God has a plan for our lives and that our steps are established by Him. As we walk along the path of life, it is important to stay connected to God, listen to His voice, and follow His lead.



MORE BIBLE EXAMPLES OF PURPOSE, PATH & STEPS

Overall, the Bible teaches that our purpose in life is to love and serve God, using our gifts and talents to fulfill His plan for us. We can seek guidance and direction through prayer and study of the Scriptures, trusting that God will lead us as we strive to live a meaningful and purposeful life.

Proverbs 19:21 - "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." This verse suggests that our purpose is ultimately determined by God's plan for us, and we should seek to align our own plans with His will.

Mark 10:43-44 Whoever wants to be great must become a servant .

John 14:6 Jesus believed that our ultimate destiny was to be with God in heaven, and taught that the way to reach that destination was through faith in Him.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 - "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind."

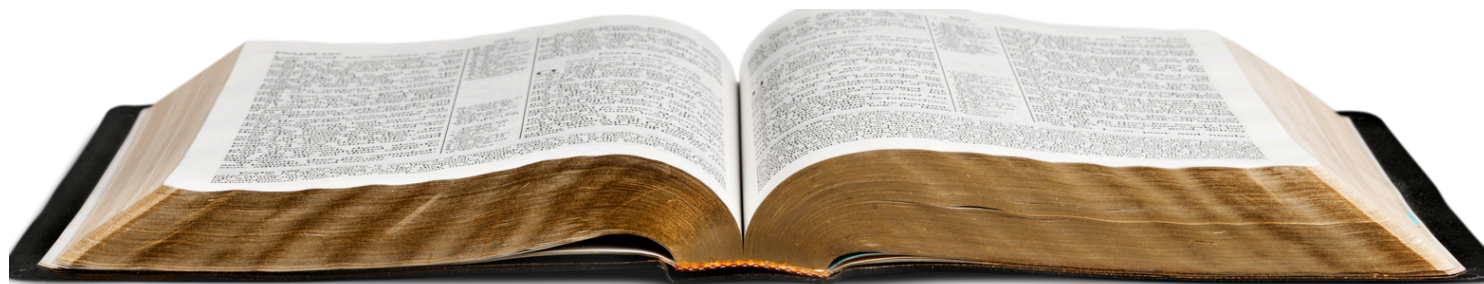
This verse emphasizes the importance of living a life that honors God and follows His commandments, which can give our lives a sense of purpose and direction.

1 Corinthians 10:31 - "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." This verse encourages us to live with a sense of purpose in all aspects of our lives, seeking to honor and glorify God in everything we do.

Jer. 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This verse reminds us that God has a specific plan and purpose for our lives.

Prov. 16:3 "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans."

Eph. 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." We are created for a specific purpose and that God has prepared good works for us to do.



MORE BIBLE EXAMPLES OF PURPOSE, PATH & STEPS

The Bible provides several examples of choosing a path or direction in life. Here are a few examples:

Joshua 24:15 - "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." This verse highlights the importance of making a conscious decision to follow God and to choose the right path.

Psalms 25:12 - "Who, then, are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose." This verse emphasizes that when we seek God's guidance, He will show us the path we should take.

Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." This verse reminds us that when we trust in God and submit to His will, He will guide us and make our path clear.

Matthew 7:13-14 - "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." This verse emphasizes the importance of choosing the right path, which may not always be the easiest or most popular.

Proverbs 16:9 - "In their hearts, humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." This verse reminds us that while we may plan our own path, ultimately it is God who directs our steps and leads us in the right direction.

Proverbs 4:26-27 - "Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil." This verse encourages us to be intentional about the path we choose and to stay committed to it.

Psalms 119:105 - "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." This verse reminds us that God's Word provides guidance and direction for our life path.

Isaiah 30:21 - "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" This verse assures us that God will guide us and direct us on our life path, even when we feel lost or unsure.

MORE BIBLE EXAMPLES OF PURPOSE, PATH & STEPS

Jeremiah 29:11 - "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This verse reminds us that God has a specific plan and purpose for our lives and that we can trust Him to guide us along the right path.

Proverbs 3:6 - "In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." This verse emphasizes the importance of surrendering our plans and desires to God and trusting Him to lead us on the right path. These verses remind us that our life path is not something we need to navigate alone, but that God is always with us, guiding and directing our steps along the way.

Psalms 37:23 - "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way." This verse reminds us that God directs our steps as we follow Him and that He takes delight in our obedience.

James 4:13-15 - "Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'" This verse reminds us that we can make plans for our future, but ultimately, it is God who directs our steps and determines our path.

Romans 12:2 - "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will." This verse reminds us that we have a choice to make each day - to either conform to the ways of the world or to renew our minds and seek God's will for our lives.

Colossians 3:17 - "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." This verse encourages us to make a daily choice to live our lives for God's glory and honor, in all that we do.

James 1:22 - "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." This verse reminds us that our daily choices should be informed and guided by God's Word, and that we should actively seek to live out its teachings in our lives.

Psalms 37:23 - "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way." This verse emphasizes that God directs the steps of those who seek to follow Him and take delight in His ways.

More on facilitating change with Purpose, Paths, and Steps

A biblical model places trust in a God who wants the best for us and is ready to guide us toward the best purpose, path, and steps.

The terms purpose, path, and steps are not necessarily spiritual in themselves, but because they are biblical concepts, they allow the spiritual dimension to develop as the Spirit leads.

For example, you can ask:

- “What is the path to your desired outcome?”
- “What small steps could you take on that path that wouldn’t overwhelm you?”

The purpose can be discovered later by asking:

- “I really like the steps you chose, and the path looks like it’s leading in a good direction, but I’m curious—why did you pick those steps and that path? Why are they so important to you?”
- Continue to dig deeper with questions like, “Tell me more?” until you get to the core of their beliefs and what truly matters to them. That is often their purpose. Over time, you can gently guide them toward God.

For example, you might say:

- “You know, I used to have a really hard time making some of these changes, but now I have a lot of help, so I don’t have to do it alone anymore.”
- If they ask, “What kind of help do you have?” you could respond:
- “I found out that God wants me to succeed and is ready to help anytime I ask.”

Leave it at that unless they want to know more. You are not being pushy; you are simply sharing what works for you.

Many ideas can be learned by studying how Jesus gently led people and guided them without force, allowing them to discover the best path for themselves.

If someone is willing to let God be part of their process, you can begin by emphasizing that God wants the best for each of us. He provides clear guidance for finding our purpose, and although our unique paths may differ, they ultimately lead to the same purpose: loving God, serving others, and trusting and obeying Him.

Since we all start from different places, the paths we choose—whether related to health, finances, service, relationships, or work—will vary, but they all converge on the same goal. Each path can be broken down into small, doable steps, starting with simple actions that allow for early successes and build momentum.



SMART GOALS

SMART Goals—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound—are helpful to keep in mind when setting a path or steps. Without sounding like a coach, you can gently guide someone as they begin choosing their path or steps by asking questions such as:

- “Maybe you need to narrow that down to something specific.”
- “How will you know when you reach it if you don’t choose something measurable?”
- “Is that something you could realistically achieve?”
- “Does that fit into your overall path or purpose?”

These questions can arise naturally as they do their planning—there’s no need to present them all at once.

This process is also a wonderful opportunity to help them develop trust in God, recognize His care for them, and understand that He wants to guide them toward the best path.

I hope you are seeing that we are using coaching skills without sounding like a coach. Our goal is to begin supporting people with these LIFT principles so naturally that it becomes second nature. We are learning from the greatest coach of all—Jesus—who also didn’t sound like a coach.



HANDLING RESISTANCE CONT.

There are many reasons why someone might resist your efforts to help them:

1. You have encouraged them into a area that feels difficult or uncomfortable
2. They are not seeing the results they want and feel discouraged
3. They have had to give up too much and miss some of their old habits
4. The process feels simply “too hard.”
5. They do not have enough time to invest in change
6. They are experiencing conflict or ridicule from family or peers.

#1 – Let the person choose the plan, not you.

“Pushing” reflects your agenda rather than their choice. If resistance comes from something you may have caused, admit the mistake and apologize. For example, you could say:

- “I may have encouraged you to take too big of a step on that goal. What do you think is a doable plan?”
- “What do you feel is something you could handle that would still move you forward on the path you have chosen?”

#2 – Adjust goals and offer support.

- “You know when we started, you had several goals you wanted to work on. What if we put this one on hold for a while and focus on exercise instead?”
- “I’m sorry I wasn’t there for you last month. Do you think it would be easier with more help in the future?”

#3 – Review the Purpose and Path they chose.

- “Are you still committed to the outcome? Are the good results worth the cost?”
- “How can I help you?”
- “Do you want to explore other recipes or strategies that might be more enjoyable?”

#4 – Introduce support and encouragement.

- “What if you had help from someone who never fails and is always available to help you succeed?”
- This is a way to introduce the principle behind “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” without directly quoting Scripture. For example: “With God’s help, you can do anything.”
- Give them time to reflect on each concept before introducing another.

#5 – Explore options.

- “Let’s look at some options.” Brainstorm all possibilities together.
- Consider Bible promises that might provide guidance, encouragement, or insight—perhaps revealing truths that counter discouraging thoughts or lies (we will cover this concept in more detail later).

#6 – Address peer pressure.

- Peer pressure can be very strong. Talk it through and have them explain the circumstances that are most difficult. Then ask what they think would help.
- Examples of guiding questions:
 - “Do you think your friends would leave you if you continue making choices for your own good?”
 - “Is it possible they admire your willingness to take on difficult challenges, and that their attitude comes from knowing they should do better themselves?”

MOTIVATION & CONFIDENCE

Jesus was a master motivator, inspiring and encouraging people to live their best lives. True, lasting change comes from internal motivation. The following are ways to help that process develop.

1. Lead by example: Jesus practiced what He preached and set an example for others to follow. Motivate others through your actions, showing them what is possible.
2. Speak with compassion: Jesus was known for His compassion and empathy. Speak with kindness and understanding, showing that you recognize the challenges others may be facing.
3. Use stories and metaphors: Jesus often taught important lessons through parables and stories. Stories are memorable and help people internalize lessons.
4. Encourage personal growth: Jesus encouraged transformation and personal growth. Help others identify their strengths and areas for improvement, and support them in developing and growing.
5. Emphasize faith and hope: Jesus gave people hope and encouraged them to have faith in themselves and in God. Highlight the importance of faith and hope to help others overcome challenges and achieve their goals.

Remember that everyone is unique and will respond to motivation differently. Use these tips as a starting point, and adapt your approach to meet the needs of the individuals you are trying to encourage and inspire.

When you are faced with someone who lacks motivation or confidence, consider the following approaches to help them grow and succeed.

Motivation

- Safe atmosphere
- Empathy
- Unconditional acceptance
- Facts with hope
- Weigh pros & cons
- Define the Why
- Honor values & beliefs
- Discover Purpose
- Discover Readiness
- Success stories

Confidence

- Make commitment
- Start small
- Add, rather than take away
- Have a flexible plan
- Build on previous success
- Anticipate obstacles
- Insights into behavior
- Affirmation & encouragement
- Cheerleaders
- Accountability

HOW LIFT PROVIDES ONGOING SUPPORT

We reflect Christ's character by acting like Him. Providing ongoing support is a major characteristic of God that we are called to reflect. Here are some examples of God's ongoing support that we can learn from:

- God promises to always be with us.
 - Deuteronomy 31:6 – God promises to never leave or forsake us.
 - Matthew 28:20 – Jesus promises to be with us always, even to the end of the age.
- God provides for our physical needs.
 - Matthew 6:25-34 – Jesus tells us not to worry about food, clothing, or shelter because God knows what we need and will provide.
- God is our refuge and strength.
 - Psalm 46:1 – God is a very present help in trouble.
 - John 14:26 – Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide us.

How can we apply these verses in the way we treat others? For example, after a health program, can we show that we are always there for them and never forsake them? This program is about teaching us Jesus' way of supporting others—being present, reliable, and caring in every interaction.

1. Selling the Idea of an Ongoing Process of Support

- a. Start by developing a friendship and trust early on.
- b. Get to know them during a program they are attending.
- c. Keep it simple and ensure it fits into their schedule.

2. What You Provide

- a. A supportive friend, not a judge.
- b. An accountability partner.
- c. A facilitator to guide them in their process.

3. What to Do for Ongoing Support

- a. Help them discover their Purpose, Path, and Steps.
- b. Start with an easy step to ensure early success.
- c. Assist them in choosing good steps for the future (weekly or as needed).
- d. Identify obstacles and find ways to overcome them.
- e. View “mistakes” as opportunities to learn.
- f. Provide motivation and encouragement throughout the process.

4. Ways to Connect

- a. Phone calls
- b. ZOOM or other video calls
- c. Text messages

5. Principles to Follow

- a. Listen for their needs.
- b. As you listen, also listen to the Holy Spirit.
- c. Focus on them, not you.
- d. Do not give advice without permission.
- e. Use guiding questions such as:
 - “Can you please tell me more?” - “What do you think?”

REVIEW OF THE LIFT PROCESS

As you connect with people, you will encounter a variety of conditions, emotions, and needs. Jesus faced similar situations, and we can learn from His example. He spoke with those who were anxious, troubled, worried, weeping, afraid, or hurting.

In many cases, He simply asked: “Why are you anxious?” Why are you troubled?”

Or He asked: “What do you want me to do for you?”

In most cases, the answer was found in Scripture, a promise, a truth, or a story—guidance that addressed their heart and circumstances.

The following are steps that are helpful in providing support.

Steps for Connecting and Supporting Someone

1. Get acquainted.
2. Build rapport.
 - Don’t jump immediately into “helping.”
 - Listen and learn about them first.
3. Discover what is important to them.
 - a. Where are they now, and where do they want to be?
 - b. Explore the big picture (Purpose) that guides their life and decisions.
 - c. Ask: “What would it feel like to experience being where you want to be?”
 - d. Determine how important it is for them to reach that place.
4. Identify obstacles preventing them from staying on the chosen path toward the big picture.
 - a. A biblical clue: “We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” 2 Cor.4:8-9
5. Inspire them.
 - a. Jesus inspired people through His teachings, actions, and personal example, motivating them to live a life of love, compassion, and service.
 - b. Biblical guidance:
 - “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”(Galatians 6:9)
 - “My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)
6. Assess their support system.
 - a. Biblical guidance: “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.” (Phil. 4:13)
7. Brainstorm options for their path and steps toward their purpose.
 - a. keep the Purpose (big picture) in mind when setting goals.
8. Choose the first step toward the big picture.
 - a. Ask questions to ensure steps are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).
 - b. Keep steps simple to assure early success.
9. Review the plan with them to confirm understanding.
10. Encourage them about the first steps and let them know you will be available anytime if issues arise.
11. Set up the next connection.
 - a. Frequent connections are helpful, such as encouraging texts or check-ins.

These steps can be helpful, but the more you study Christ’s life and grow in the mind of Christ, the less you may need structured steps. God will guide you as you pray and trust Him.

Over time, connecting with people will become so natural that it will simply be who you are. Christ did not teach His disciples rigid steps or methods; they were changed primarily by being in His presence. If we spend more time with Him, we too will be able to guide and support others in the same way.

STEP 3

PRINCIPLES USED IN LIFT

This section includes general principles that help us understand the mind of Christ, our role in reflecting Him to others, and key principles that make our work more effective.

These principles also help us recognize the power that Christ brings to each of us and what we need to know to help others see Him more clearly. While these topics are not necessarily part of the formal LIFT process, they are foundational principles that will shape the way we communicate and provide support.

The Principles in this section are:

- **Walking the Health Path**
- **Christ Reflectors**
- **A Personal Work**
 - **He Makes the Difference**
 - **Reflecting Through Truth**
 - **Bible Promises**
- **The Power of Prevention**
- **Health Principles**



WALKING THE HEALTH PATH TOGETHER

If we are going to introduce health principles in our work, we should acknowledge that many church members may not currently follow these principles. This attitude may have developed as a reaction to a more legalistic approach to health presented in the past.

“Walking the Health Path Together” was developed to address this situation. It serves as a tool for health leaders to introduce a fresh perspective on health ministry in the church. Most people are interested in their health and are likely willing to make some changes toward a healthier lifestyle—but they do not respond well to pressure or judgment about the choices others think they should make.

The Health Path approach takes the position that anyone making even the smallest effort to improve their health is “on the Health Path.” (This is why the trifold includes a list of choices that participants can pick from.) In the past, some may have felt that they were only “on the Health Path” if they followed all the principles deemed important by the health leader. This program engages those who have been “tuning out” whenever a health program is presented in the church.

The health leader’s role is to serve the health of the entire church—not just a specific group such as vegans. To capture the attention of everyone, focus on inclusive topics. For example, instead of a “vegetarian cooking class,” offer a class titled:

“Are you getting the nutrition you need?”

This approach emphasizes adding healthy foods to the diet rather than focusing on what to remove. The goal is to ensure participants are getting sufficient dark greens, whole grains, fiber, antioxidants, etc. The term “vegan” can carry negative connotations, as it emphasizes what is not eaten, which may lead to nutrient deficiencies for some.

Before presenting any new health program, introduce the “Walking the Health Path Together” program along with a few of the inclusive ideas above to engage the entire church community. Supporting each other makes it easier to take on the more challenging steps toward a healthier life.

Resources:

Graphics and materials are available to copy and use from: [Walking the Health Path Together](#)





Building a healthy community begins with one universal truth:

Everyone Wants to be Healthy!



We all usually already know what we need to do to improve our health. We all have probably tried and failed many times to improve our lifestyle. We each need help and support from our friends to make these changes and have them last.

Making this decision to take care of our bodies will bring good results but doing this with others in a caring supportive manner will transform our entire being. A completed creation, reflecting more perfectly the creator's original intentions. As we seek to take care of our bodies, revealing His character should become our first priority.

I CHOOSE TO WALK THE HEALTH PATH.

Signed _____ Date _____

A Team Approach to Health...



Imagine a group where everyone is on the health path, each choosing their own steps toward health and receiving support from their friends. A place where others want to become a part of this healthy team. And where young people want to stay connected and involved as they experience consistency and loving acceptance.

When Walking the Health Path:

- ▶ Choose your own starting point
- ▶ Support others regardless of their progress on the path
- ▶ Enjoy the process as you progress through these steps
- ▶ Respect others in this no criticism safe zone

Loving people unconditionally is the
foundation of our existence and
reflecting Jesus is our highest calling.



Choose a place to start...

WATER:

- ☐ Add one glass of water a day to your daily routine.
- ☐ Wash your hands before meals and after using the bathroom.

EXERCISE:

- ☐ Park your car farther away from the store.
- ☐ Use the stairs rather than the elevator.
- ☐ Take a 10min. walk after a meal.
- ☐ Join the Gym.
- ☐ Follow an exercise video at home.
- ☐ Limit sitting time to less than 30 min.
- ☐ Try intermittent training:
3 min. vigorous — 1 min. light.

SUNLIGHT:

- ☐ Be out in the sun for 15 min. during lunch time.
- ☐ Have your Vit. D level checked.
- ☐ Get your sunlight in many small doses. Avoid a sunburn.

TRUST:

- ☐ Identify one thing a day about God's trustworthiness.
- ☐ Look for the bright side. More praise and less complaining.
- ☐ Thank God for one thing each day.

NUTRITION:

- ☐ Write out a food diary for one week.
- ☐ Use a smaller plate with no refills.
- ☐ Eat a good breakfast.
- ☐ Replace butter/margarine with hummus.
- ☐ Replace a meat meal weekly.
- ☐ Reduce or eliminate oil in your food preparation.
- ☐ Choose water vs. other drinks.
- ☐ Cut out supper, or make it very light, like toast and fruit.
- ☐ Add one fruit a day to your routine.
- ☐ If eating meat, reduce portion size.
- ☐ Substitute fruit for sugary and high fat deserts.
- ☐ Reduce or eliminate artificial meat analogs.
- ☐ Try whole grain cooked cereals vs. boxed refined ones.
- ☐ Modify what you are eating now vs. extreme changes.
- ☐ Eat 4-5 walnut halves and 5-8 almonds each morning.
- ☐ Cook without salt; add it to taste as you eat it.
- ☐ Allow 4-5 hours between each meal.

REST:

- ☐ Stop working an hour before bedtime.
- ☐ Have your last meal at least 4-5 hours before bedtime.
- ☐ Take mini-vacations during the day. 5-10 min. breaks.

ENVIRONMENT:

- ☐ Open windows in your home to let in fresh air.
- ☐ Add some indoor plants to your home.
- ☐ Clean up clutter in and around your home and work place.
- ☐ Add some soothing music to your home or workplace.
- ☐ Practice deep breathing.

TEMPERANCE:

- ☐ Ask help to bring extreme habits into balance.
- ☐ Get help to stop (smoking, drinking, caffeine).
- ☐ Reduce caffeine drinks or stop all together.
- ☐ Practice simplicity in diet, entertainment and spiritual life.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

- ☐ Forgive someone who doesn't deserve forgiveness.
- ☐ To your spouse, live like you are dating.
- ☐ Listen more, talk less. Find out more about another person, less about you.

Begin with one, and choose more as
you continue **Walking the Health Path**.
Work with these or create your own.

CHRIST REFLECTORS

Different types of work provide varying opportunities to reveal Christ, but one that He frequently utilized in His ministry was coming close to people—helping them find health of body, mind, and soul and bringing relief from physical suffering. Statements regarding this type of work elevate it to the level of “the most important,” “the right arm,” “the door for truth,” and “the signature of heaven.”

“I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work.”(CH 533)

When reading about medical missionary work, the theme of personal work—coming close to people to bring wellness to body, mind, and soul—is repeated often. This is a type of work that anyone can do, not just trained professionals.

God has blessed our church with clear instructions on how to be most effective in reaching the world, particularly in these last days. Scripture and prophetic guidance emphasize that God’s character is revealed through the lives of those working closely with individuals daily, especially as they help others toward wellness. The world today needs what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ:

“Christ’s method alone will give true success.” (MH 143)

Health ministry can “light the world with His glory” or simply provide information. To truly represent Christ, we must allow Him to change us, living in us so that we may become like Him. The instruction in this LIFT training is designed to make each participant a “Christ Reflector.” There is no doubt that Jesus changed His world, revealed the character of His Father, and successfully restored the image of God in those who followed Him. Now, He calls us to let Him work through us to do the same in our world today—by studying Him, His methods, and His passion, and then asking Him to work in us.

Imagine the impact if, instead of just one Jesus changing His world, there were millions with Christ living in them. Members of every church could connect, support, and love those in their families, church, workplaces, and communities—reflecting the character of Christ and changing lives on a daily basis.

If we want to correct misconceptions about who God is and what He is like, we can do so by learning to provide meaningful, ongoing support to those we have come to know—support that reflects the character of Christ.

John the Revelator saw a vision of the earth filled with the glory of God. It is not information alone—even gospel information—that fills the earth with God’s glory. Rather, it is people reflecting His image.

My prayer is that we will allow Him to use us in the most personal way, giving the gospel through both word and action, and being ready to expect the unexpected.



“THERE IS A NEED OF COMING CLOSE TO THE PEOPLE BY PERSONAL EFFORT.”

Your ongoing connection and support reflect a God who will never leave them but will walk alongside them, supporting and helping them no matter what.

One practical approach is to invite a neighbor over to your home—or visit theirs—prepare a healthy meal together, watch a short health video, and discuss any questions they have. This method is personal, allows for more intimate discussion, leads to greater success, and is simple enough for almost anyone to do.

Much of our health work is centered around programs, and we may assume that the more people who attend, the better. However, smaller, more personal events are often more effective. They provide more time for talking, listening, and truly getting to know one another. This was Jesus' way of connecting and touching lives, and it is an approach that most people can implement successfully.

QUOTATIONS FOR “A PERSONAL WORK”

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of the Savior shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten, the coming of our Lord. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel! Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come. Maranatha 112.5

CH 533 I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work.

MH 142-143 Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me.”

MH 145 Many have no faith in God and have lost confidence in man. But they appreciate acts of sympathy and helpfulness. As they see one with no inducement of earthly praise or compensation come into their homes, ministering to the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the sad, and tenderly pointing all to Him of whose love and pity the human worker is but the messenger--as they see this, their hearts are touched. Gratitude springs up. Faith is kindled. They see that God cares for them, and they are prepared to listen as His Word is opened.

HE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

MM 23 God chose His son to be His representative on the earth, even so, has Christ chosen us to represent His character.

MH 143 Everywhere there are hearts crying out for something which they have not. They long for a power that will give them mastery over sin, a power that will deliver them from the bondage of evil, a power that will give health life, and peace.

The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago--a revelation of Christ. A Great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration--physical, mental, and spiritual--can be accomplished.

The whole purpose of this training is to help people succeed rather than fail. It is designed to provide personal support and to connect them with the source of strength, which is far more powerful than their own willpower.

Each of us needs to understand four powerful sources for success, and the way we share them depends on each individual's readiness:

1. **Trust** – Trust that God's instructions are good and perfect.
2. **Power** – God provides all the strength we need.
3. **Truth** – His Word reveals guidance and truth.
4. **Success** – He will bring about success when we follow Him.

With such a guaranteed source of success, why wouldn't we share this good news?

Trust

A lack of trust was the reason for the "failure" of our first parents in the Garden of Eden. They believed the lie of a talking serpent over the instructions of their Creator:

"Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:4-5)

In contrast, victory was gained by Jesus, the "second Adam," through trust in His Father's words. Today, trust can either give us victory or lead to failure. Satan uses many of the same deceptions on us that he used on Eve. Trusting that all of God's instructions are for our good, because He loves us, is the first step to a successful life.

Who makes God's instructions seem like burdens? The original deceiver, and no one benefits by following his advice. Be alert to statements such as:

- "I don't see anything wrong with..."
- "It's not a salvation issue."

These are often subtle ways of saying, "I don't need to follow God's instructions; I know better." Aren't these just clever variations of the original temptation?

Power

Many people say about lifestyle changes: "It's just too hard."

Would a little extra power make a difference? Yes. The same One who gives the instructions also provides the means to achieve them. As Scripture reminds us:

"Satan is well aware that anyone who trusts in Christ is more than a match for the hosts of darkness."

So, should we still accept the excuse, "It's just too hard?" The truth is, it may feel too hard—but nothing is too hard for the source of our strength. Strength and power are readily available to anyone who asks Christ for help.

It is only when we rely on our own strength that it feels impossible and we fail.



HE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Truth

What if we had the power to know for certain whether someone was telling the truth or lying? That would be an invaluable gift. Lies and deception cause pain in every area of life—scams, false witnesses in a trial, dishonest or embezzling employees, even our own teenage children. If we could always know the truth, we could avoid much of that pain.

A lie is powerful, and a temptation is often just a believable lie. But knowing the truth destroys the power of the lie. Truth gives us power over temptation. Knowing the truth may not automatically stop us from doing something we want to do, but it exposes the lie, so we are no longer deceived.

Where can we find this truth? The Bible provides it in the form of Bible Promises—statements of truth that take away the power of the lie and, like David, can keep us from sinning ignorantly. For more, refer to the Bible Promises section in this workbook.

Success

You might also call this Victory or Prevention. Success is a way to avoid problems altogether, rather than failing first and then needing to fix them, ask forgiveness, or deal with remorse and guilt.

For more on this subject, see the section on “The Power of Prevention.” When combined, Trust, Power, and Truth can lead to success and prevent much pain, providing a firm foundation for a life of fulfillment and purpose.

TRUTH IN HIS PROMISES

Sometimes a simple truth or concept can change everything, helping us see beyond our feelings to the real truth of a matter. When we are able to provide that type of clarity to another person, we may make the biggest impact for good in their life.

As a Christian, I have found this type of insight in Scripture—truths that shake me out of my “stinken thinken.” At times, it may be the ability to see hope and possibilities when all I could see before was despair and a bleak future. Other times, it is the reassurance that God is far bigger than my most discouraging problems.

Truth is the most powerful agent for providing new insight. When truth exposes a lie, everything changes. I have found the Scriptures to be a reliable source of truth, but I didn't fully grasp their power until I discovered what Bible Promises are really all about. Perhaps we could even call them “Bible truths”—timeless truths that reveal God's guidance, protect us from deception, and empower us to live victoriously.



BIBLE PROMISES

Bible promises are not “maybe” but “yes”. God does not grant help only if we can quote the right text at the right time. Instead, they are statements of fact—they are the truth. And when we know the truth, a lie loses its power. A lie can only tempt us if we believe it is true; once we know the truth, the lie has no hold.

For example, if you saw your child do something they shouldn't and later they lied about it, how convincing would that lie be? Not at all, because you already know the truth.

By placing God's truth (promises) in your mind ahead of time, when a lie or temptation comes along, it has no power over you. Quoting a promise isn't about invoking a magic formula—it's about clarifying the contrast between truth and lie in your mind and confirming that the lie should be discarded and given no space in your thinking.

David expressed this principle in Psalm 119:11:

"I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."

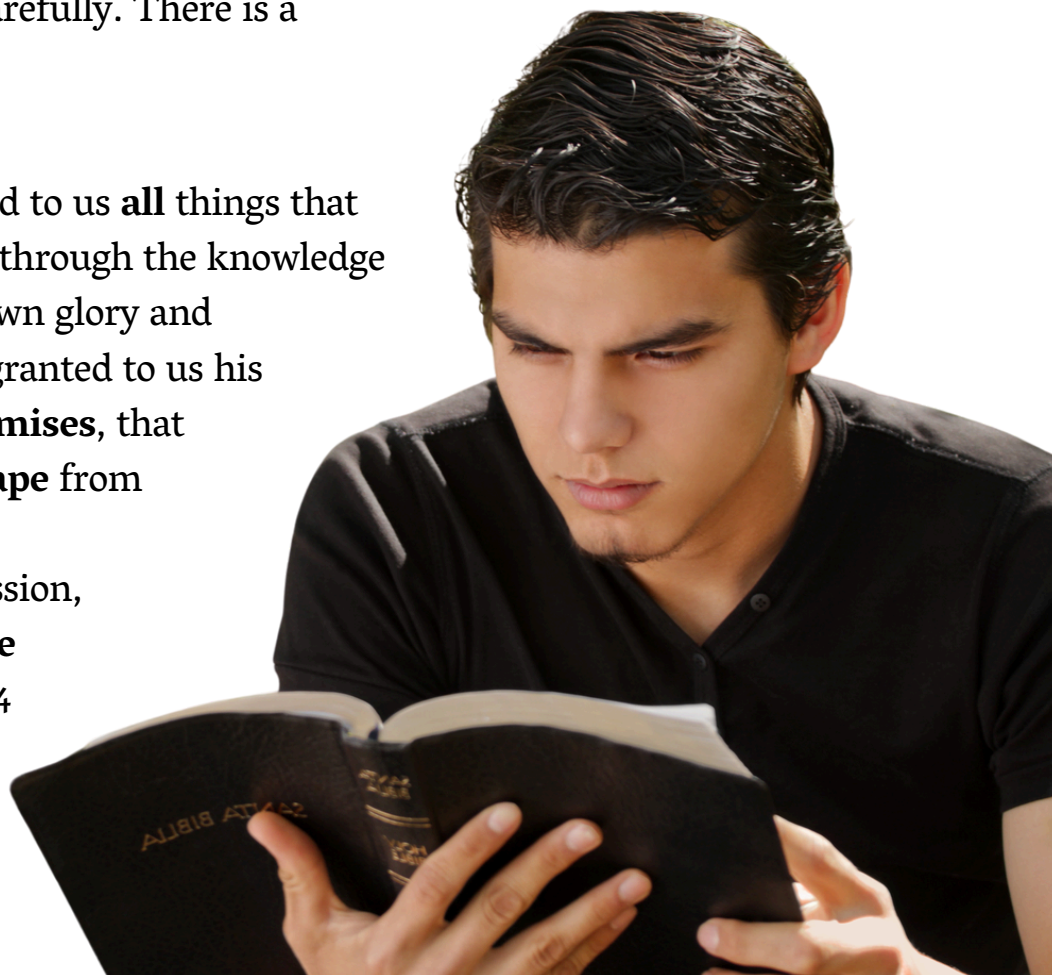
He had memorized God's truth so that when temptation arose, he could resist with the promises and remain victorious.

Memorized promises are powerful tools to overcome future lies and temptations. A helpful exercise is to go through the promises and ask yourself, “What lie does this promise

destroy?” I suggest starting your study with 2 Peter 1:3,4

But take your time, read it carefully. There is a powerful message there.

“His divine power has granted to us **all** things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and **very great promises**, that **through these** you may **escape** from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become **partakers of the divine nature.**” 2 Peter 1:3,4



- His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature. II Peter 1:3,4
- And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Rom. 12:2
- I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. John 16:33
- I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. Psalms 119:11
- But seek first His kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Matthew 6:33
- No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. I Corinthians 10:13
- Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. James 4:7,8
- The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe. Proverbs 18:10
- Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of His glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 24,25
- For the Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been confounded; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Isaiah 50:7,8
- I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20
- Because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted. Hebrews 2:18
- Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. I Peter 5: 8,9
- You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. I John 4:4
- Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12
- For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses but be in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15,16

MORE BIBLE PROMISES

- I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Galatians 5:16
- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new. II Corinthians 5:17
- And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9
- Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6,7
- We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. II Corinthians 4:8-9
- "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:1,27
- But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine." Isaiah 43:1
- Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. I Peter 5:6,7
- "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10
- When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. Isaiah 43:2
- For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39
- "See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me." Isaiah 49:16
- For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. Hebrews 2:18
- Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Romans 8:37
- But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. James 1:14
- For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? I John 5:4,5
- And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus Phil 4:19
- I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. Phil.4:13.
- Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But His delight is in the law of the Lord. Psalms 1:1,2.
- Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble. Psalms 119: 165

Anyone in the health care system knows that with the rising cost of care and the increase in chronic diseases, the disease/treatment model is not sustainable. Most of us handle our personal health this way: we wait until symptoms appear or a diagnosis is made, and then we seek help to fix the problem. Some may say, “I get regular checkups; if there’s a problem, my doctor will let me know and take care of it.”

The problem with this mindset is twofold:

1. It is far more costly to treat a problem after it manifests than to prevent it in the first place.
2. For some diseases, once symptoms appear, it may already be too late. Treatments may be limited, excessively expensive, or even worse than the disease itself.

Consider breast cancer: a few cancer cells are not much of a problem, but it may take 20 years of silently growing until detection is possible. Why not adopt a lifestyle that fights cancer cells before they ever reach a detectable level? Or heart disease, which develops silently until a small crack in the coronary artery lining forms a clot, causing a sudden heart attack—often without warning. For too many people, the first symptom is sudden death. Yet, most heart disease is preventable through lifestyle.

Prevention is the only safe course, but it requires a new mindset. Instead of a disease/treatment approach, we adopt a lifestyle/prevention model—a model whose side effects are only positive: a happier, longer, healthier life with greater mental clarity. The lifestyle that prevents heart disease and cancer also prevents many other chronic diseases.

You might ask, “Is it worth the effort?” Yes, there will be things you enjoy that you may have to give up. But from my experience, what you replace them with—and the positive results in your life—will be more than worth the initial inconvenience.

The power of prevention can also transform other areas of life. For instance:

- In relationships: preventing conflict before it arises rather than repairing damage afterward.
- In your spiritual life: moving from a sin/forgiveness model to a prevention mindset.

It takes no more power on God’s part to give us strength to resist temptation than to forgive us afterward. In fact, He prefers that we avoid the pain, guilt, and regret by asking for His help early. Is it possible? The question is: How big is your God? He is more than able. We, however, are not capable on our own strength or willpower. All it takes on our part is to ask for His help at the point of temptation—and He is ready to give us victory.

Both physical and spiritual prevention require a new mindset, but it’s the same transformed mind that makes both possible. Practicing one reinforces the other. This, too, is the work of the Holy Spirit.

In Christ, there was nothing that responded to Satan’s sophistry. He did not consent to sin—not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. **So it can be with us.** Christ’s humanity was united with divinity, and so long as **we are united to Him** by faith, **sin has no dominion over us.** God reaches for the hand of faith in each of us, inviting us to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain perfection of character. — DA 123

Physical prevention is the answer to the health care crisis.

Spiritual prevention is the answer to the great controversy.

Supporting Others in Health Without Being a Professional

Remember: in the LIFT support program, your primary role is to be a supportive friend, not a health professional. Even if you have medical training, your focus is helping someone toward their purpose, along their chosen path. Often, they already know what to do from doctors or health programs—you are there to reinforce and encourage, not create new plans. Some general health principles, widely accepted and safe to share as a friend, can help provide guidance. The NEWSTART principles are a good foundation:

1. Nutrition

- Encourage adding more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains rather than removing foods.
- Share practical tips from your own experience or point them to reliable sources.
- Avoid arguments about what they should or shouldn't eat—focus on adding nutritious options.

2. Exercise

- Walking is safe for most people; start slowly and add gradually.
- Encourage checking with their doctor if needed, especially for those with underlying conditions.
- Join them for a walk occasionally to provide support.
- Light weights can be helpful, but suggest getting guidance from a trainer for specifics.

3. Water

- Encourage drinking more water unless restricted by a medical condition.
- External water treatments (hot/cold water for blood flow) can be suggested safely—demonstrate only at home, and avoid performing treatments on them.

4. Sunlight

- Daily exposure without burning is beneficial and safe to suggest.

5. Temperance

- Focus on moderation in good things and avoiding harmful things.
- If issues like tobacco or alcohol arise, you can support their efforts to reduce or quit without judgment.

6. Air

- Encourage fresh air, deep breathing outdoors, and good indoor ventilation.

7. Rest

- Refer to helpful resources for improving sleep quality if needed.

8. Trust in God

- Your faith and supportive presence can be the most effective witness.
- Answer questions briefly and clearly—avoid long discussions. It's better to leave them reflecting and wanting more.

Suggested Resources

Disclaimer: We are not endorsing any of the following resources. They are listed as examples that some individuals have found helpful. Each person should assess the usefulness and validity of any source for themselves.

Adventist & Health Resources

- [Adventist Whole Health Network](#) – Resources on whole-person health.
- [NAD Health Resources](#) – North American Division health resources.
- [DrNewStart.com](#) – Timothy Arnott, MD, FACLM.

Vegan Cooking & Nutrition Sites

- [Speaking Wellness](#) – Chef Erik Akko videos and seminars.
- [Vegan Blueberry](#) – Plant-based recipes.
- [Ela Vegan](#) – Vegan cooking tutorials and ideas.

Nutrition Research

- [NutritionFacts.org](#) – Michael Greger, MD, FACLM, and team summarize and present the latest nutrition research in accessible ways.

Health with a Spiritual Perspective

- [Timeless Healing Insights](#) – David DeRose, MD, MPH, offers insights combining medical knowledge and spiritual health principles.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The Bible

Desire of Ages (EG White)

Medical Ministry (EG White)

Jesus Life Coach (Laurie Beth Jones)

Jesus the Master Coach (Dr. Joseph Umidi)

The Whole Life – Health Partner's Guide (Joshua Vazquez)

In preparing and presenting this material, we have emphasized general principles of communication and support.

Participants in this training are not to give medical advice. Any health-related concerns should be referred to a qualified medical professional.

This training is not intended to certify students as professional coaches. Its purpose is to teach supportive, Christ-centered guidance and to help others toward their purpose, path, and steps.