

Fieldnotes

stories of the gospel transforming lives

Published by GoodSeed® International

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Acknowledgments

We all love stories, and those of us who are Bible believers find it especially moving when we hear of others' journeys to faith. It is only right that we should rejoice in seeing God work through His Word. Personally I am so grateful to my heavenly Father for allowing me the privilege to be involved.

I do want to say special thanks to the following:

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Last, but not least, my thanks to our many friends around the world who, along with our GoodSeed staff, have gleaned these stories from the harvest fields.

John R. Cross
General Director
GoodSeed International

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Foreword

One of the privileges God has granted the staff at GoodSeed is the chance to hear testimonies from around the world. People tell us of the ways in which God has used them and our tools to help others become believers.

As an equipping ministry, our work is about enabling ordinary believers, missionaries, pastors, parents and church leaders to be more effective in sharing the life-transforming message of the gospel. Each year, thousands of copies of our resources in different language translations make their way around the globe and end up in the hands of those wanting to share the message or those wanting to learn it. Each resource goes with the prayer that a life will be transformed. But how do we know what happened to that German translation of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* given to a friend? Or the copies of *By This Name* that were read at a book club? Or what became of the copies of the French translation of *All that the Prophets have Spoken* that were delivered to a prison in the Congo?

Every so often, we do get to hear the end of the story! People write us letters, send us emails, call us on the phone or walk into our offices and ask, “Would you like to hear my story?”

And of course we do! We want to thank each one who has taken the time to share their stories with us. We live for those moments when we can marvel at how God has worked in someone’s life to bring him or her to faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. Every week, we receive testimonies—some very

brief, others longer—of how one of our resources has helped take a person from unbelief to faith in Jesus.

Fieldnotes: Stories of the gospel transforming lives is a collection of true stories that have come to us from the harvest fields of Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas. Our prayer is that as you read through these testimonies, you will get a little more acquainted with the ministry of GoodSeed, be encouraged to follow in the footsteps of the everyday ambassadors in these stories, but most of all, praise God for all the people who now have eternal life because they put their trust in Jesus.

*Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.*

Psalm 105:1

Amos Kwok
General Editor
GoodSeed International

Note to readers

The following are true-life stories as told to GoodSeed staff. These testimonies were first published on the GoodSeed blog. This anthology contains a mix of stories about people giving away one of our resources or someone guiding a friend through the gospel message.

Most names are pseudonyms. Places and locations are as reported, but some details have been redacted for privacy reasons.



A story of guiding in Brazil featuring
O Estranho no Caminho de Emaús

His greatest desire was to end his life

In the sweltering heat of the day, Davi stood quietly as he watched the men fix the tire of his car. He didn't notice the passersby on the sidewalk as they streamed by but he did take notice when he felt a small presence beside him. Turning his head, he saw a young boy, dressed in clothes that had seen better days, smile at him. His hands clutched the handle of a box that held the equipment for shining shoes.

"Shine your shoes?" asked the boy in Portuguese. He held up a brush to show he was ready to start.

Davi's eyes took in the slim form of the boy standing in the heat. Beads of sweat dotted his brow and Davi could only imagine how thirsty and hungry this street urchin was.

"Yes," he said. The boy broke into a grin. Davi sat down on a stool and the boy knelt in front of him, his dirty hands going straight to work. Davi took the opportunity to start a conversation. The boy talked easily. His name was Thiago and he made a living shining shoes of passing strangers.

Davi asked if Thiago had ever had a drink of living water. Thiago had no idea what Davi was talking about but was curious. Davi

shared that 34 years ago, he had learned about the living waters and when he understood what it was, he drank it and found new life and everything he had ever longed for in his heart. Thiago looked up at him with narrowed eyes. It was clear he didn't understand. So Davi offered to lead the boy through a study.

"If you let me teach you, you will understand what living water is and how to drink it. You'll understand what it is just like you understand how to shine shoes. Would you like me to explain it to you?" asked Davi. He was very pleased when Thiago agreed.

They arranged a time to meet and Thiago joined one of the many studies Davi was leading. Davi used the Portuguese translation of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* and patiently went through it page by page, chapter by chapter. He had to go very slowly, as Thiago did not read well. Davi would read some and then explain some. Thiago soaked up every word like a dry sponge.

Over the weeks as they studied the book together, Davi learned that Thiago led a hard life. He was being raised by a woman who was not a relative. This lady had also helped raise Thiago's mother. His separated parents lived in other parts of Brazil. Though Thiago was just a boy, he worked long hours like an adult and could only spare his evenings for studying.

Thiago was so taken with the study that after each session, he would hound Davi to continue with the book. As Davi reached the climax in chapter 14, he had to stop often because he was welling up with emotions as he read the book aloud. Thiago was transforming right before his eyes. Where once the boy's eyes were dull with hopelessness, now there was light. The boy saw that life came from Jesus, whom the Bible calls "living waters."

At the end of the study, Thiago believed. He was so excited with Jesus. He asked to go to church; he even asked to be baptized.

The day before his baptism, Thiago revealed to Davi that before he believed, his greatest desire had been to end his life. Since neither his mom nor dad wanted him, Thiago found no reason to live. But now with Jesus, he was overflowing with joy.

Davi related, "How many more kids are there out there, whose greatest desire is to end their own life because of the meaninglessness of their existence? What a joy and privilege it is to be able to share with people how they can drink of living water that satisfies like nothing else."

Thanks be to God that Davi didn't just see Thiago as a street urchin wanting to shine shoes for loose change. Instead, he saw a lost, 13-year-old boy in desperate need of Jesus.

Where once the
boy's eyes were dull
with hopelessness,
now there was light.

Matthew 9:36-38

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."



A story of guiding in Canada featuring
the *Worldview Rethink* curriculum

The gospel saved our marriage

Rob and I were married in October 2003. We had dated for almost two years before we took this step. Our dating years had quite a few rocky moments, but we were young and in love and went ahead with getting married. We were both Christians, but certainly not living like it.

We had met during college, both of us quite heavily involved in the party scene. We didn't have as much time for partying once we got married and were both working full time. In fact, we didn't have much time for each other either. In our first year of marriage, we literally passed each other in the hallway as one of us was coming home and the other was headed to work. So as a result, we did not fight a lot in the first year.

We decided that having opposite careers was not healthy for our marriage, so I quit my job and got a regular Monday to Friday, nine to five job. That is when we really discovered what it was like to live together and that is when the fighting really began. Rob struggled with his "inherited" temper during our disagreements. In reality, we were both very driven individuals and when it came to disagreements, we both had our own

way of stubbornly driving our heels into the ground. Often our disagreements were a power struggle and neither of us was willing to give up our selfish issues.

We tried so many different ways to fix our marriage. Every time after we had a fight, we would talk for hours about how each of us could do better next time and “try harder” not to

We tried many different kinds of counselling books; they taught us to stop pushing each other's buttons ...

make the other one mad. We tried many different kinds of counselling books; they taught us to stop pushing each other's buttons, to give each other warnings that the other had pushed our

buttons, and how to share with each other what bothers us about the other person. But it never worked for very long before we were right back to our fighting. After about two years of constant fighting, we were emotionally exhausted. We both loved each other, but were feeling very hopeless. I felt like I could not live the rest of my life like this and if it wasn't for my faith, I would have left him.

During this time, we started attending a church in Airdrie, Alberta. We were still living a double life in many ways; we were the classic “Sunday Christians.” It was there that Rob met a man named Paul Humphreys. He worked as a missionary for GoodSeed and he invited Rob to a seminar they were having that would go through the Bible from creation to the cross.

Rob went and enjoyed it so much, he kept telling me I had to go to one and that he understood so much more about God

now. I just thought, *I have been going to church my whole life—what can they possibly tell me that I don't know already?* After a year of Rob trying to convince me to go to a seminar, I finally took the time off work to go to one.

I remember sitting there during the whole seminar in awe—I had been a Christian since I was six and I knew all the stories and all the right answers, but now I actually understood. It was like the pieces of a puzzle that had been scattered my whole life were finally put together!

There is power in understanding and that statement has never been truer for anyone than it was for us! Through the next two years, God worked a miracle in our marriage. I still find it so strange that after trying everything else, our last resort was turning to God, the only one who has the power to restore broken relationships.

I remember one night after we had another big fight, Rob stayed up for hours and he wrote down verses in the Bible that talked about love. Our focus slowly changed from pointing at each other and what we were doing wrong, to falling on our knees before a God who loved us, admitting that we were totally helpless to fix our marriage on our own.

The issues that
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Ironically, all those “self-help” marriage techniques we tried accomplished the exact opposite of helping our marriage; ultimately they focused on conforming the marriage relationship to serve and justify our “selfish” attitudes and focus on each other’s faults more than focusing on our own. But now, we

moved our focus onto the Lord and into His Word. We focused on serving Him and on sharing the reason why we believe what we believe. And as to all the issues in our marriage, we can honestly say we don't know what happened to them—they just disappeared. It's not that our marriage became perfect but the issues that bothered us weren't important anymore as we focused on God. What became important was serving the Lord. And the Lord, somehow, some way, put us back together.

When we look back at where we started and then at where we are at today, we are in awe of God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives. There is no way we can personally take any credit for the work God has done in our lives—to God be the glory!

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.



A story of giving in Germany featuring
Bist du der Einzige, der nicht weiß, was geschehen ist?

A deep and cavernous void

PART I OF KASPAR & ALYS'S STORY

Ever since I was a child, I thought I was a Christian. I lived my life how I wanted, spent a lot of time at wild parties and did everything that I thought was fun. I thought I was living life to the fullest. All of this went "well" for a while, but when a long-term relationship broke down, I began asking myself what the meaning of life really was. Nothing was fulfilling anymore. Initially, I didn't find a satisfactory answer to these questions and so I was filled with a deep and cavernous void. Everything seemed pointless to me—having a family, going to work or making a lot of money.

When my father became seriously ill, I asked myself where he would go after his death. I did believe in a Heaven and a Hell, but I still couldn't be really sure. I became ever more depressed and could even understand people who had committed suicide. Life made absolutely no sense.

When my mother found out about my state of mind, she asked if I had any relationship with Jesus at all. I didn't understand what Jesus had to do with my problems. Upon my mother's recommendation, I read a book she gave me. One sentence in

that book said something like this: "One isn't a Christian because one donates a little money once a month and is generally a good citizen." It was then that I realized that I wasn't a Christian, as I had thought I was. I wanted to know how to become a Christian. Then the author went on to say that man's greatest problem was his sin, but I didn't understand this.

I knew straight away that should I die now, I would go to be with God.

During this time I was meeting with Alys, my study partner from university, and we had frequent discussions about God. She gave me the book *Bist du der Einzige, der nicht weiß, was geschehen ist?* (*The Stranger* in German). I read the book in one sitting. As I read the explanation of Genesis 3:15, I noticed two things: first, God really loves people; and second, I understood why Jesus Christ came into the world. I also recognized that I was a helpless sinner and that He died for me personally. The fact that the curtain had been torn in two upon Jesus' death meant that now the way to God is open!

At the end of the book the reader is asked, "Will you recognize and believe in Jesus as your own personal Saviour—the One who has paid your sin-debt?" I believed and immediately felt that a heavy burden had been lifted from me. The inner void and sadness disappeared too. This was replaced by a deep peace in my heart and I was full of joy. I knew straight away that should I die now, I would go to be with God.

Then I noticed that my home contained films, music and certain periodicals that would not be pleasing to God, so I gradually let go of these things. I was also compelled to pray

and read my Bible. The author of the book explained that if I wanted to live my life for God, then it would be important for me to go to a church where the people believed the Bible to be God's Word. As neither my study partner, who had also recently found new life in Jesus, or myself knew of such a church, we prayed that God would lead us to the right place.

Shortly after this, Alys was rushed to hospital with arrhythmia. The paramedic asked if she was afraid, to which Alys replied, "No, because I believe in God." It turned out that the paramedic was also a Christian, and so it was through him that we started attending his church. We are still members of that church to this day.

Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.



A story of giving in Germany featuring
Bist du der Einzige, der nicht weiß, was geschehen ist?

If the Devil is alive...

PART II OF KASPAR & ALYS'S STORY

I grew up “religious” but have always felt an inner emptiness. I kept asking myself questions concerning the meaning of life. I couldn’t find satisfaction for my soul—neither in philosophical views nor in wealth and success.

During my school years I became friends with a Christian woman. For my birthday, she gave me a book entitled, *Bist du der Einzige, der nicht weiß, was geschehen ist?* (*The Stranger* in German). At that time, the book did not really interest me, so I put it aside on a bookshelf and there it sat.

Years later, I worked with health practitioners from Poland. They were treating German patients but because they spoke only Polish, I became an interpreter for them during treatment sessions. This allowed me an intimate view of their work. These healers used white and black magic for their treatment! This was a completely unknown realm for me. My whole worldview was shaken and I began to wonder what truth was.

I suffered from frequent anxiety attacks at night and became more and more skeptical towards these healers. But I couldn’t understand how their actions could be considered wrong,

since it seemed to me that what they did helped the patients temporarily. These questions tormented my life. I needed answers but I didn't know who had answers.

It was during this time that I met regularly with Kaspar, a fellow student, to study together. He perceived that I was not doing well and asked what was happening in my life. I risked it and told him what was troubling me. To my amazement, he was able to offer me answers. He said that what these practitioners were doing had demonic origins and that the Bible says such deeds were atrocities before God.

The moment I realized this, everything suddenly made sense. I thought, *If the Devil is alive and his followers did demonic work for him, then God must also be alive!* I asked myself the question: "Where can I find the living God?"

Kaspar wasn't a believer at the time, but his mother was and she recommended several Christian books for me to read. Then I remembered that I still had the book *The Stranger* in German on my bookshelf. It had sat there for five years!

**I needed answers
but I didn't know
who had answers.**

Since I didn't know what books to trust, I first asked Kaspar to read *The Stranger*. Through its pages, Kaspar understood the gospel for the first time and he believed. Then I read it and also got to know God in all His glory, goodness, incredible grace and infinite love. I realized that my whole life and my way of thinking was entirely sinful and that I needed Jesus' salvation. I asked God for forgiveness and began to experience God's powerful change in my life. I was filled with a deep peace and my soul

was satisfied for the first time. I could hardly believe this gift—a life full of meaning and eternal life with God.

Since then, my greatest desire is that God will use me to help other people understand the gospel and be saved. I am very grateful for God's guidance and the book *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*.

Kaspar and I are now married. For the last two years, we have partnered with another couple to lead courses based on *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. We have had the privilege of seeing people put their trust in God at the end of each course and we have watched how God is changing them.

To God be the glory.

Isaiah 30:15

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength..."



A story of guiding in Canada
featuring the *Worldview Rethink* curriculum

Lord, where would you use me?

The warm spring sunshine lit the windows of the church fellowship hall. Nestled among a group of 50 or more TERM Seminar participants, Marie felt a growing sense of anticipation. She had spent three days learning how to share the gospel, concluding with hands-on experience in guiding a course. Now, she had been won over by how simple it was to use the *Worldview Rethink* curriculum to lead someone through a clear presentation of the gospel message. Along with her fellow participants, Marie had been asked to think of people in her life that she could invite to a course. She started to make a mental list.

Back at home, Marie prayed, “Lord, where would You use me? Where would You have me use these tools?”

She took her responsibility as an ambassador for Christ seriously and started with a neighbour. She invited Laura to sit with her through a study of the Bible.

Laura hesitated and replied, “I’m mildly interested, but not right now.”

Marie looked at her friend with sad eyes. She knew Laura was on heavy medication and sensed that she was living a

life of fear and terror. Although Laura had never admitted it, Marie sensed she was afraid of death. She wished her neighbour had agreed to a study, but she trusted the Lord for the right timing.

Keeping Laura in prayer, Marie turned her attention to other friends and offered each of them a chance to journey through the Bible. One by one, they declined her invitations.

Undaunted, Marie asked her stepdaughter. She was taken aback by her stepdaughter's vehement response: "No!"

Marie could sense the revulsion in the young lady. The sorrow that swept over her wasn't because of her stepdaughter's rejection, but rather because of what she knew about the state of her stepdaughter's life.

Though these refusals were disheartening, Marie continued to trust that the Lord would use her. She knew she was ready to guide, so she patiently waited for God to bring the right person to her.

She didn't have to wait long. Soon after, Marie was able to speak with Bianca. She was the mother-in-law of Marie's daughter. Bianca was about 60, from the Philippines and very religious. She had been seeking to be righteous through good works and piety, but deep in her soul, she knew her efforts fell short.

Marie told Bianca about her experience at TERM. She said, "I'd love to tell you what I learned."

Bianca replied, "Yes! I've been praying for someone to teach me the Bible! The Bible doesn't make sense to me."

Here was a woman, trying her best to be righteous before God, but knowing deep in her soul that her religious efforts and piety fell short of God's standard.

Elated at how God brought someone to her, Marie made arrangements to meet. Bianca had to drop her grandchild off at a church preschool in the neighbouring town and it was too far to drive home before preschool ended. She had been wasting the two-and-a-half hours each time she waited so Marie thought that this was the perfect opportunity for them to meet. After securing the church's permission to use a room, both women began to meet one-on-one each week to go through a *Worldview Rethink* course.

**Yes! I've been
praying for
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As she had been taught, Marie began to teach. She taught using her leader's guide as Bianca followed along with a copy of *The Stranger*. Marie would read the commentary as Bianca read the Bible verses. Marie also made use of supplementary visual aid toolboxes. At the appropriate times, she set out on the table the altar, the ark, the Passover door and more. Bianca appreciated how the course made her read, see, hear and touch. She was learning in so many different ways.

Marie recalled, "As I led, I watched Bianca out of the corner of my eye. I knew there were certain passages of Scripture over which she had stumbled. As the book explained each passage, I could see the shock on her face; her eyes grew wide. The clear and simple explanations were different from what she had been taught."

As the two women met each week, Marie could see the understanding dawn in Bianca's eyes. Between sessions, Marie spent time with her hands clasped tightly together in prayer. Recalling the parable of the sower, she cried out, "Lord, don't let the evil one snatch away the seeds of Your truth that I'm planting!"

At the end of the course, Marie closed the leader's guide and leaned back in her seat. Looking steadily at her friend, she asked, "Bianca, are you righteous?"

With a smile lighting her face, Bianca responded, "Yes, I am! I'm covered with the blood of Christ."

There was no need to say more. Marie knew Bianca was no longer trusting in herself but in Jesus Christ and what He accomplished on the cross for her salvation.

Not long afterwards, Bianca's son had a word with Marie. "My brothers can see the change in Mom. They really want to know what's been going on with her. They want to know what she's learned!"

Marie was thrilled. It was evident that the Holy Spirit was working in Bianca's heart. She was now freed from the "religious work" she had been performing. Her understanding of God's provision had freed her.

Bianca was just the first. Marie knew God was beginning to lead others to her. There was the opportunity with Bianca's sons. And when a lady had observed Marie teaching Bianca at the church, she stopped by to find out what they were studying. When Marie showed her the *Worldview Rethink* curriculum,

the lady expressed great interest. She now wants to get some of the GoodSeed tools to use herself. Marie's other daughter has also showed interest in using the resources and another friend has asked for help to explain the gospel to her father. Marie began by simply committing the time to learn how to share the gospel. Then, she committed herself to the Lord, to be used in any way He saw fit. Now, the Lord is answering Marie's prayer of sending her people. She is looking forward to her next study.

Colossians 4:2-4

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.



A story of giving in the USA featuring
The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus

The Christian who became a Christian

Let me take a moment of your time to tell you my story—the true story of a Christian who became a Christian. No, that was not a typo! Let me explain...

I grew up in the Bible Belt surrounded by churches. The local school was called a Christian school and most folks were called Christians. My parents also subscribed to this way of thinking. We went to church Sunday after Sunday, read our Bibles and prayed regularly. In fact, we made a good number of short-term mission trips together.

So it happened one day that the local evangelical church we attended had a joint Sunday school meeting. All the kids were gathered together to watch a film. I can't remember what it was about, but I do remember an adult stepping forward after the film and saying that if we wanted to go to Heaven then we needed to invite Jesus into our hearts. So around the age of five, I did just that, without telling a single soul, not even my own mother.

From that point on I would consider myself a Christian. At the age of 13 my mom asked me if I was a Christian and I said, "Of course!" Being satisfied with the answer, nobody would

ask me again until I wanted to be baptized and join the local church at the age of 15. I simply said that I had "invited Jesus into my heart." They too were content with that answer.

As I got older, I was bothered by my sin. At first, it was somewhat enjoyable, but then I realized that it controlled me. I tried to better myself as best I could. I started studying my Bible more earnestly. I tried really hard to live a good life but I kept failing in so many ways. At the same time, I was often plagued by doubts about my salvation. This began many repeated times of "inviting Jesus into my heart." My attempt at living right only became a cycle of sin, confess, sin, confess, sin, confess ... It was causing me to become depressed and angry. My anger for the most part was well-hidden, but it was reflected in my guitar playing as well as outbursts of anger whenever I was pushed to the limit.

The truth was that I was trying to live the Christian life even though I wasn't a Christian at all—I just thought I was. Not only were those around me deceived into thinking I was a Christian, I deceived myself. I can tell you firsthand, that trying to live the Christian life without being

I was often
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one is very miserable. It is as useless as a caterpillar trying to fly without going through metamorphosis first! Just imagine for a moment a caterpillar ever so slowly making its way high up into a tree and then taking a flying leap

while trying to flap its body somehow! There is always that awful landing at the bottom and then the trying it all over

again. What utter misery! Not only that, it is a completely useless endeavour. The truth be told, if I had continued in my thinking, I would have ended up in Hell, thinking all along that I was a Christian!

What was happening was that God in His great mercy and love had brought me to the end of myself. I needed to repent—that is, change my thinking. Specifically, change my thinking as to how one could be saved. I needed to accept the true way to be saved.

**What was
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It was around this time that God in His mercy and loving-kindness showed me the way I could truly become a Christian. God brought me into contact with John Cross, the author of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. Though we would not talk about whether I was saved or not, I received a copy of the book. The book pointed me in the right direction. This book would be the means by which God Himself would change my life forever. This book put the puzzle pieces of the Bible together in the correct way.

Yes, it was humbling to admit that my way of thinking had been wrong, but at the same time I was eternally grateful that I was now a true Christian. It still makes my heart skip a beat or two thinking that I would have ended up in Hell with the thinking I had. It scares me to think that I was so confident that I was a Christian and would have ended up in Hell despite my confidence. The problem was that my confidence was incorrectly placed.

Now, with my confidence placed correctly, I no longer have those nagging doubts. I'm not miserable anymore but rather, I'm rejoicing and I'm very thankful. I praise God for what He's done in my life! Reading *The Stranger on The Road to Emmaus* helped me make sense of what God was trying to communicate from Genesis to Revelation.

P.S. I later had the joy of pointing both my mother and youngest sister, along with her husband, to the Lord.

Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.



A story of giving in the USA
featuring *El Forastero En El Camino A Emaús*

I gave him just one chapter

I work in a meat packing plant where in my job, I have the opportunity to build relationships with about 1200 employees and their families. Most of them are Hispanic and know very little English. I am constantly looking for ways to help many of the employees rethink their worldview and gain a new understanding of who God is and what He has done for them.

I was blessed one recent Sunday to witness the baptism of Pedro, an employee who trusted in Jesus for salvation after reading and studying *El Forastero en el Camino a Emaús*, the Spanish edition of *The Stranger*.

Pedro had not stepped into a church in over 40 years and would have never done so had it not been for a major change in his life. Alcohol had been his god. He thought he had no need for God. I would see Pedro in the workplace and he would tell me about his many problems. However, he would also tell me why he had no need for "religion" or for God. It took several years just to gain his trust. I made many attempts to get him to read or study *El Forastero* with me but he always refused. Then, one day I printed out the first chapter and gave it to him. I waited and prayed.

About a month later, Pedro came back and asked me for the rest of the book. I gladly gave him a copy—and he read it! God used it in a powerful way to open his eyes to the truth and bring him to faith.

Today, his circumstances haven't really changed but his outlook is completely different. Pedro has hope! He loves the same

**Today, his circumstances
haven't really changed
but his outlook is
completely different.**

job that he used to hate. He struggles to be loving to his wife when she treats him like dirt and demeans him for following Christ, but now he has a purpose. He no longer

lives at the bar after work, coming home drunk every evening. Rather, he spends every waking moment studying Scripture, reading books about the Bible and is gaining a passion to reach others who haven't heard, just like him!

Pedro can't figure out how he lived almost 60 years with a church on every other corner near him and why he had never heard this truth before. So, on Sunday, he stood before more than 1000 people at his new church—including his unsaved family who came for his baptism. He professed what God had done for him through Christ and that he is now a follower of Jesus! What a joy! I was blessed to be a part of his journey, and I want to thank GoodSeed as well, for being a part.

This is one example of many. I hope it expresses my passion for having these tools at our disposal and demonstrates the need that it fills in my personal ministry.

Colossians 4:5-6

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.



A story of guiding in Sri Lanka
featuring *By This Name*

Hope coming over the airwaves

TWR is a global ministry that uses broadcast media to engage people in more than 160 countries. GoodSeed is very glad to partner with them, equipping them with resources that will help share a clear gospel message. In Sri Lanka, we passed along *By This Name* and gave them permission to translate the book into Sinhala, and then create a weekly radio broadcast program entitled “God’s Unique Book.” Sinhala is one of the three official languages of Sri Lanka, so we knew many would have a chance to hear the gospel message. In the first of two months of being on air, TWR had received over 50 letters and phone calls from listeners. Here are some quotes that have been translated from Sinhala into English:

“I’m a pastor and I had 200 believers gathered to listen to the radio program. One believer said that before he heard the first episode of the program, he didn’t know how to study the Holy Bible. Now, he wants to study the Word of God as was taught in the program.”

“I became a ‘Christian’ when I married my husband. But I didn’t know much about God. Your program has been very helpful.”

"I am blind so I can't read anything. That's why this radio program was so important to me. I got to learn about the living God."

"We listen to the program as a family. This is our first time learning about God through a radio program. We are eager to learn more about the Word of God."

"I was touched by the program. I'm not a Christian but the message has impacted my life. I want to listen to the rest of the program and learn about the almighty God."

"I love this program because I can learn things that I didn't know before."

"I am not a religious person but as I listened to the program, I was touched by it."

"I am a disabled person who can't walk. I cried when I listened to the program. It was as if God were speaking to me personally. Please continue to broadcast this program."

**I am not a
Christian. Please
tell me the way
to know this God.**

We were greatly encouraged by this initial batch of responses. TWR continued to faithfully broadcast the program. The readers read out the Sinhala script and the program

also played appropriate worship songs. The power of radio is that it can reach into the lives of people living in remote areas who either have no access to books or are unable to read. About five months later, TWR sent us more messages they had received from people who called in:

"I live in a remote tea estate. There are no churches within 40 kilometres of where I live. Your program has been so very useful for me."

"I work in the air force and one day, by accident, I tuned into your radio program. It was very good for me to learn about the living God."

"I am not a Christian. But after listening to your program, I feel I need to learn more about the God of the Bible. Please tell me the way to know this God."

These are just some of the messages from people who have called in or written to TWR, expressing thanks or a desire to know more about Jesus Christ. Imagine the countless others who have heard and believed. What a joy it will be on that day, when we meet these fellow brothers and sisters in Heaven.



Romans 10:17

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.





A story of guiding in Malawi featuring
Khisimisi ndi Nyenge ya pasaka—Zitanthauza chiyani?

A preacher who was not right

When the book *What are Christmas and Easter All About?* was translated into Chichewa (the national language of Malawi), it didn't take long for the local church to make use of this tool to provide pastors and young people alike with a clear understanding of the gospel and to equip them to use the book to share the Bible's message with their own people.

Rodrick, the book's translator, shared with us his experiences from the first studies he taught using the Chichewa edition entitled, *Khisimisi ndi Nyenge ya pasaka—Zitanthauza chiyani?*

He said, "It was discovered—or rather confirmed—that many Christians do not have a clear understanding of Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross." He went on to describe how many local churches had "converts," but many of them did not truly understand the gospel. "Christmas and Easter are celebrated almost without appreciating their true meaning," he explained.

Once the book was in print, Rodrick began organizing studies. The first one was comprised of pastors and church leaders. While all the participants had initially indicated they were born

**May God forgive me
for teaching people the
philosophies of man
and not his truth.**

again, 15 of them declared belief in Christ alone for salvation by the final day of the study. Here are just a few testimonies heard that day:

“Now that I have understood what really happened, that I deserved death as a result of my sin and that Christ died on my behalf so that I may have life, I have no choice but to give my life to Him. I never thought about it this way; my eyes have been opened! Today, I have the assurance of salvation.”

“I wish I could go back to the people to whom I preached and taught the Word of God before. I confess that I did not help them. I was wondering why, after having presented the gospel message to the best of my ability, my hearers seemed not to appreciate God’s love for them. And there was no growth! But how could they grow when I was not experiencing any growth myself? How could they understand something that I did not understand? So, God came down to us and died in our place for our salvation! It is hard to believe [the kindness that God has shown us], but I will take it that way.”

“Once upon a time there was a preacher who did not preach the whole gospel because he thought he knew, yet he did not know. That’s me. May God forgive me for teaching people the philosophies of man and not His truth. Please, come back and tell us more. This book has simplified it all.”

A short while later, Rodrick led almost 50 teenagers through the same study. Of that number, 21 came to faith and they also committed their lives to the Lord!

The following are a couple of the comments the youth made:

“The graphic demonstration of how God made Adam and Eve witness the first death made a lot of sense to me. Now I understand salvation. I desire to grow in my faith, and please, make such resources available to others. I really wish the whole church listened to this message.”

“From here on I will read and re-read the Old Testament stories about sacrifices. I never understood them and could not see any relationship between those sacrifices and Jesus Christ. Now that it makes sense to me that Christ is the Lamb of God, I will be able to explain this to my friends. All my zeal for evangelism was without knowledge, yet I did not realize this. I hope this is not the only book that you will bring to us.”

Reflecting on his experience, Rodrick shared his deep appreciation of these resources that have helped him reach his people. “I am grateful to GoodSeed’s work. The church in Malawi will not remain the same.”

Colossians 1:9-10

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.



A story of giving in the USA
featuring *By This Name*

I'm calling you from the casino!

Keith, a GoodSeed staff member, had the opportunity to preach at church one Sunday morning. He chose John 1:29 as the key verse for his sermon: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

"Do you know what that truly means?" he asked the congregation. "Here is John baptizing people in the waters of the Jordan, when all of a sudden he stops and points to an approaching man. And he exclaims, 'Look, the Lamb of God!' What a strange expression." To get an answer to what John the Baptist meant, Keith turned back to Genesis and began explaining about the lamb.

After the sermon, a man came up and introduced himself as Oliver. Oliver admitted that he rarely ever stepped into church. It had been years since his last visit. He went on to tell Keith that he really appreciated the sermon.

"You made so much sense!" said Oliver. Keith asked if he would like to learn more and offered Oliver a copy of *By This Name*. Oliver looked uncertainly at the thick book. "I'll read it...but maybe not this summer," he said hesitantly.

"Read it when you have the time. I'll leave my contact information so you can tell me what you think or ask me any questions," said Keith. Oliver agreed and took the book.

I'll read it...
but maybe not
this summer.

As they parted, Keith prayed that Oliver would indeed read the book.

More than a month later, Keith received a phone call from Oliver. "I'm calling you from the casino! I've been at the lounge area, reading the book you gave me. This book is making incredible sense! I'm up to chapter five." Keith was thrilled to hear this news. He encouraged Oliver to keep on reading and learning. This was exciting. God was working in Oliver's life.

The next time Keith bumped into Oliver was in the church parking lot. Oliver was beaming. "I finished the book! Now I'm trying to get my wife to read it." Keith was overjoyed not only by the fact that Oliver had finished the book, but by how he was now coming to church more. Oliver—the reluctant reader—had been gripped by the gospel's message. God was working in him and Oliver was already being an evangelist ... to his wife!

Colossians 1:27-28

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.



A story of guiding in the Democratic Republic of Congo
featuring *Tout ce qu'ont dit les prophètes*

I want the God you preach to free me

As an equipping ministry, GoodSeed works with many ministries around the world to provide them with resources so they are able to share the gospel message clearly to the people they are reaching. We are glad when we can help fellow ambassadors in the harvest field.

Through connections we have with other organizations, we were able to send a quantity of *Tout ce qu'ont dit les prophètes* (*All that the Prophets have Spoken* in French) to Africa. The books travelled the long journey from our offices and eventually made their way into the Congo. Passing from one person to another, some of the books ended up in the hands of a pastor who was involved in prison ministry.

He led a Bible study in French with the inmates of a local prison. Each Sunday, an average of 44 prisoners listened to the gospel message. They were riveted. The pastor wrote to us, summarizing the impact the good news had on the inmates in the Bible study.

“Many of the prisoners who heard the Word of God put their trust in Jesus as their Saviour,” he wrote. “Some of the prisoners could not get along with others because of their bad behaviour,

but after hearing the good news and believing, have changed. They are able to integrate back into their family, their community and their church."

**Pastor, here is my god
that I have always used
for my evil deeds.**

their liberation from prison and over the course of time, God answered their prayers! This increased their faith and they drew closer to God after their imprisonment.

"After listening to the teaching, a prisoner gave me the charms that he kept in a box saying, 'Pastor, here is my god that I have always used for my evil deeds. I want the God that you preach to free me.' I had been praying for this man and when he handed me his charms, I immediately went to burn them."

We can only praise God for the way he orchestrated the chain of people who brought our tools and placed them into the hands of those who needed them. In this chain are the prayer supporters, financial sponsors, translators, the people from other ministries who shipped the books and more. It's astonishing to think how our resources can go halfway around the world and help prison inmates come to a clear understanding of the good news.

Galatians 5:1, 25

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free... Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.



A story of giving in the UK featuring an online course
based on *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*

We went to the “wrong” church

rowing up, I was a happy, faith-filled boy who enjoyed attending church and Christian school. As I grew into my twenties though, that all began to fade. I found myself slipping deeper into a hole of despair and depression—feeling beyond help!

As I tried to cope, I studied different religions and philosophies and poured myself into practicing martial arts. The study of one religion left me unable to meditate. Another left me confused and unable to focus. The deep philosophies of man just clouded my mind. Finally, I fell to my knees, but I wondered, “Would God listen to me now after all this time?”

By now, I experienced what can only be described as a meltdown. I suffered severe numbness in my face and lips—the effects of stress and depression. I was given medical leave for about four months. The doctor prescribed anti-depressants and I was sent to the hospital for tests, but they found nothing neurologically wrong with me. My depression worsened and my decisions, regrettably, took their toll on my marriage and on our son and daughter.

One day my wife, Eliza, met a customer named Janine at the bank where she works. In passing, Janine invited us to visit her church. Eliza had only been to church for weddings, christenings and funerals, so the idea intrigued her and we chatted about it.

Eventually, the topic came up again and when it did, we sent an email to Janine's church inquiring about a visit. We chuckled when three replies came back immediately—one from the secretary, one from the associate pastor, and one from Pastor Hernando—each email a warm invitation. Our first Sunday, however, we realized that we were at the "wrong" place. We had contacted the wrong church—Janine's was across the street! But, we were so warmly received that we continued to attend. God had a plan to connect us with the right people.

Pastor Hernando invited me to study *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* VideoBook which was hosted on the

**I just couldn't believe
that I had spent the
last 12 years walking
on my own, trying to
fill the void in my life.**

church website. So I did—all 11 hours—from start to finish. I can honestly say it changed my life! I had never seen or experienced God from that perspective. Despite my upbringing and education in a

Christian school, the whole meaning and truth had passed me by. I just couldn't believe that I had spent the last 12 years walking on my own, trying to fill the void in my life.

I prayed the prayer of a broken man: "Lord, save me!" It was then that Christ reached down into that hole, picked me up and pulled me out.

After completing *The Stranger*, the pastor and I continued to meet regularly to learn more from the Bible, first studying through Ephesians and now the life of David.

My health? Well, things are much better. I only get a slight numbness now and then after stressful events. In this respect, I still have to continually be in prayer for guidance and strength.

Both Eliza and I were baptized together—"dunked" as my daughter calls it. Our son and daughter have been greatly impacted by the love of our church family. They both accepted Christ last year and have expressed interest in being "dunked" sometime soon.

Last year, Eliza and I launched a new course that combines physical instruction in martial arts with an invitation to learn about the Bible's message. We have a website that has a "digital syllabus" for members only, so I embedded *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* VideoBook into that section.

It's awesome to think how this started off a whole new chapter in my life. I'm thankful to God for saving me!

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.



A story of guiding in the USA
featuring *The Lamb*

At the bedside of my father-in-law

Aileen's father-in-law, George, had been in a nursing home for some time. As his health progressively failed, the time came when Aileen learned he didn't have much longer to live. Though her family had prayed for George's salvation for many years, he had never been open to the gospel. Aileen prayerfully decided to take a copy of *The Lamb* with her as she went to visit him.

Day after day, as Aileen sat at George's bedside, she read the book aloud. He listened intently and gazed at the colourful pictures through rheumy eyes. Carefully he pondered the questions at the end of each chapter and answered them quietly but clearly. By the end, Aileen watched as George softened to the message of hope offered in this simple book and she was certain he believed. What a relief to know her father-in-law was saved! At times George was too sleepy or weak to interact, so she spent that time visiting other residents, reading *The Lamb* to them.

When George passed away last fall, Aileen had the opportunity to speak briefly at his funeral and told of how he had come to faith in Christ. The pastor also used pictures from *The Lamb*

as the basis for his message, and referenced the story of the drowning boy reaching out for help.

Later, Aileen was able to share this experience at a ladies' retreat. As a result, six ladies were inspired to obtain copies of *The Lamb* and read it with their elderly parents.

... she read
the book aloud.
He listened
intently ...

Just recently, Dan, a long-time pastor friend of Aileen's, also had a father in the final stages of life. Initially his dad, Barney, was reluctant to listen to *The Lamb*. However, as Dan and his wife read to him over a period of three weeks, he opened up little by little and wanted to hear more. In the end, just before he died, Barney professed belief that Christ was his Lamb, who had died for his sins. It was on that basis that he knew he would go to Heaven, rather than upon the basis of his baptism and good works, which he had trusted for so long. At the funeral, Dan was able to give a testimony of his dad's salvation.

What a patient God we have, so gracious and willing to save even in our last moments!

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.



A story of guiding in Singapore
featuring *By This Name*

That immediately put me off Christianity

As the lights dimmed in the church, the Christmas Eve service began. The rows of people in the pews sang the familiar lyrics of Christmas hymns with smiles on their faces. Children fidgeted in their seats, waiting for the minute before midnight when the sanctuary would go completely dark to herald the arrival of Christmas.

For Stephen, he was fidgety for a different reason—he was about to share his testimony for the very first time. When the pastor called his name, he stepped up and faced the expectant faces.

“When I was 17,” he began, “I was at the stadium watching a soccer match. This young man came up to me and asked if he could share some Bible verses with me. I thought to myself, *Who shares Bible verses at a soccer match?* That immediately put me off anything to do with Christianity.”

Over the years, Stephen had little interest in God and whatever he learned about the Bible was gleaned from TV documentaries. It didn’t make sense to him. His wife tried to talk to him about it but he refused to be drawn into a discussion.

Then, Mabel, a friend of his wife, invited both of them to attend a *By This Name* course. Stephen wasn't interested, but his wife insisted on him accompanying her. Unknown to him at the time, Mabel and his wife had been praying very hard

...from the very first
page of the book,
he was intrigued...

for Stephen to attend the course.

He eventually agreed—just to placate his wife. His plan was to go once, then tell her he didn't

want to continue. He went to the first class, expecting to be bored, but from the very first page of the book, he was intrigued. After each Friday night class, Stephen and his wife had coffee with Mabel to discuss what had been taught in class. He began to look forward to each Friday's session.

By the end of the course, Stephen said, "The jigsaw pieces fell into place!"

The Holy Spirit had impressed on his heart the truth of what he had been learning. After so many years of being indifferent to his wife's faith, Stephen didn't know how to tell her he had become a believer. He felt sheepish after all those years of rejecting her attempts to talk to him about God.

Finally, one evening he plucked up his courage. He asked her hesitantly, "What's it like to attend a church service?"

She shot him a look, "Why do you want to know?"

That's when he admitted he was now a believer and wanted to be part of a community of believers. He said, "I've finally found peace with God."

With much joy, Stephen and his wife started to attend Mabel's church. They made friends and got involved in the life of the church. Today, both Stephen and his wife are active members of the church and help lead others through the gospel message.


James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other... The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.





A story of guiding in Canada
featuring *By This Name*

Her illness was not a waste

In life we are often faced with difficult circumstances—an illness or some tragedy. Even during these times, if we look beyond ourselves, we often find that God brings someone into our lives with whom we can share the gospel message. This was something that Phoebe learned.

"I have wanted to write to you for some time and thank you for the book *By This Name*," she wrote. Phoebe went on to explain that she had been bedridden for two years. During that time of illness, she had to have a housekeeper, who also doubled as a caregiver. This housekeeper was named Annette. Though not a Christian, Annette was interested in learning about the Bible. Both of Annette's parents were staunch atheists. In addition, Annette's husband was very disillusioned with religion. Instead of dwelling on her illness, Phoebe wondered what would be a good way to explain the gospel clearly to her caregiver.

One of Annette's jobs was to read to Phoebe every day. This gave Phoebe an idea. She handed Annette a copy of *By This Name* and asked her to read it aloud. And Annette did. Every day she read sections of the book and by the end of it, she

happily put her trust in Jesus for her salvation. Phoebe then handed Annette a Bible and asked her to read it aloud too. She also got Annette to read Christian books aloud, all in an effort

**God is at peace with me
because of the finished
work of the cross ...**

to help Annette grow in her understanding of God.

Before long, the Lord healed Phoebe, which meant she didn't require Annette's help any longer. God graciously provided Annette with another job and, while Phoebe was happy for Annette, the two women found it hard to keep in touch. Phoebe wondered if Annette was continuing to grow in her faith.

One day, Phoebe saw a video testimony posted on GoodSeed's website. She immediately took the opportunity to forward the video to Annette.

Annette replied the same day: "I just watched [the video] testimony and I, too, am at peace. God is at peace with me because of the finished work of the cross... I love that!! It made sense to me."

Phoebe was overjoyed. Her long season of illness had not been a waste. God had used that situation to bring Annette into Phoebe's life. And, being ever alert for the opportunity to be an ambassador for Christ, Phoebe did not let the chance slip by.

2 Timothy 4:2

*Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season;
correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and
careful instruction.*



A story of guiding in the USA
featuring *By This Name*

Over a pint of frozen custard

I was putting away chairs and clearing up the hall after our youth group meeting. I'd been teaching the group and it had been a very good time of learning and fellowship.

One of the new members of the group approached me. His name was Jake, and without any preamble, he started talking. Though this was our first conversation, he wasn't bashful or reserved. He spoke to me as if we were old friends.

As Jake shared bits and pieces about himself, I was able to piece together his life. Jake had started attending our youth group because he had fathered a child with one of the girls in the group. At age 16 and still in junior high, he was already a father. But it didn't seem to trouble him at all.

From the first conversation onwards, he would approach me after every youth group. Although I wanted to develop our friendship, his conversation topics were not my "cup of tea," so to speak. I decided that we needed to try something different in order to avoid hours of empty conversation. So, I invited him out for coffee on a night when I wasn't so busy. He agreed.

As I wondered how to best use that time, the Lord impressed on me the idea of taking Jake through *By This Name*. I asked him if he would like to study the book with me. He said yes immediately and I suspected he didn't know what he had signed up for.

The next Monday after school, I picked him up and we drove to a local burger place. There, over a pint of frozen

**Everything we've
read so far, has led
me to say yes...
let's keep reading.**

custard, we spent the next two hours in study. I would read the commentary from *By This Name* and Jake would read the Bible verses. This became our routine three times a week. Each time we

met for frozen custard, we would go through about 25 pages of the book. Jake really loved highlighting the key points.

Throughout all the sessions, he was very attentive. Jake was like a blank book and I was filling in the pages. Aware of this, I was especially conscious that it was important for me to teach God's Word accurately. This was one of the reasons why I enjoy *By This Name* so much—it moves a reader straight through the Bible with the sole purpose of opening the reader's eyes to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

At our last meeting, we read through chapters 14 and 15. It was a four-hour marathon! Jake wouldn't let me stop. We then arrived at the point in the book where it said, "If you believe, keep reading... If you don't, skip to page..." I looked Jake in the eye and asked, "What's it going to be?"

Jake replied, "Everything we've read so far has led me to say yes...let's keep reading."

For me, this wasn't a clear declaration of faith so I paused to summarize the book once more, explaining the gospel message one more time. I explained the decision that was before him—to put his trust in Jesus for salvation or to reject the Bible's message. He said he believed the Bible to be true and he affirmed that he believed in Jesus. So there it was! He was now a believer.

Jake now hopes to go through the book with someone else, in the same way I did with him. He's praying that the Lord will lead him to someone who wants to learn the message of the gospel. He's come a long way, starting as someone who was biblically illiterate to becoming a believer who wants to share the precious gospel message. I'm thankful to God and to all the people who put so much work into *By This Name*.

Isaiah 59:1

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.



A story of guiding in the USA
featuring *By This Name*

The ladies' tea and book club

Jody is a hairstylist who has many co-workers and clients whom she has come to know as friends. Recently, she took a step of faith and discovered a simple and effective way to help her friends clearly understand and believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

Jody explained how she makes meaningful connections with her clients: "As a stylist, I work hard to make the women who sit in my chair look and feel beautiful. As a Christian, I want to be a good listener, so that each one knows I truly care for them."

Jody listens to clients talk about troubled relationships, issues at work and the loss of loved ones. As she commiserates, she prayerfully looks for ways to help these women understand the hope she has found in Jesus. The salon, though, is not an ideal setting and there is little time to explain the gospel.

Last year, Jody was introduced to the idea of inviting friends to join her as she guided a course that explained the Bible's message in accurate and simple terms. She didn't really fancy herself a teacher, but she did have a love for books, and she knew many of her clients and co-workers did too.

She had the plan to start a ladies' tea and book club on Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. till noon at her house. She ordered 24 copies of *By This Name* and began giving out this invitation to her friends: "Please come and relax, make some friends, have tea and treats, and read a really great book together."

It was a big step of faith for Jody because she didn't know how many—if any—would actually come. She also wondered if just reading a book together would be an effective way for them to learn about the gospel. But Jody was willing to give it a try.

On the Sunday before the first get-together, she was pleased when she had to order more copies of *By This Name* to ensure

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really fancy
herself a
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she did have a
love for books.**

there were enough for everyone who said they were coming. Sure enough, that first Thursday morning, Jody's front living room was filled, knee-to-knee with more than 30 moms, students and friends all chatting and drinking tea together. Jody knew many of them had read very little of the Bible or had rarely been to church.

Jody gave a brief introduction about the book, saying that the Bible could be a big confusing book, but that rightly understood, it contained a message of hope and peace that helped people make sense of life, suffering, death and it even gave a glimpse of life after death—all from the perspective of God Himself. She invited the ladies to take turns reading aloud as they felt comfortable, while the others followed along together.

One lady felt nervous and asked, "So, we're just going to read, right? Because I don't know anything about the Bible."

Jody assured her, "Yes, we're just going to read it together."

For this group of women, the next seven Thursday mornings became a respite—a quiet time set aside from their busy lives and an opportunity to go on a journey of discovery about the Bible. There was no homework or assigned reading. However, Jody did learn that a number of the ladies would go home and look up Bible verses on their own.

Near the end of the book, Jody wrote to say, "The club has gone really well. It's taken a little longer than we thought it would, but there has been a ton of growth and understanding... We still have had a good turnout and some definite light bulbs have gone on! One of my co-workers practically jumped off the couch when we got to the good news that our sin-debt is paid in full—past, present and future. THAT was fun! Just to see such a growth in understanding in these women has been so rewarding."

1 Corinthians 10:31

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.



A story of giving in Canada featuring
The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus

Please don't go to the Bible study!

Some years ago, Kathy was puttering around in the garden one afternoon when a couple on the sidewalk approached her. In the conversation that ensued, the two strangers quoted some Scripture verses. Kathy was excited. For some time, she had been longing to learn more about God but she didn't have a clue where or how to get more information. Now, here were two people who were willing to share about the Bible!

Upon their return visit, Kathy invited the couple into her home and had a long conversation with them. She was keen to learn more and enjoyed the time together so much that she invited them over for a third visit. On that occasion, the couple invited Kathy to a Bible study.

"Well, I had no idea such a thing existed!" said Kathy. "I'd never heard of a Bible study before." Later that day, she told her daughter Chelsea about the opportunity. Chelsea, who was not a believer, was suspicious. When Kathy expressed interest in joining the study group, Chelsea cautioned her mom not to be so hasty. Kathy, however, was eager to learn more. So

Chelsea asked, "If I can find some other material about the Bible that you can read, would you agree not to go to this study?" Kathy replied that the teacher didn't matter, she just wanted to learn.

Jane's instructions were simple: read a chapter of the book, do the related questions in the workbook and then go on to the next chapter.

Explained what was going on with her mom and asked Jane if she could recommend something for her mother to read. Jane knew of just the right book. She brought to work a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*, including its workbook, and handed both to Chelsea who then passed them on to Kathy. Jane's instructions were simple: read a chapter of the book, do the related questions in the workbook and then go on to the next chapter.

Kathy said of the book, "It changed my life!" Before long, she wanted to meet Jane and the two women became fast friends. Kathy became a believer and it wasn't long before she began attending Jane's church.

"I love going to church and I can't get enough of what the Bible has to say," said Kathy. "I am very thankful for *The Stranger*. Since I've read it, I've been passing out copies for others to read."

When Kathy shared her story with us, we were amazed at the work God had done in her life. The chain of people that brought the gospel to her was astonishing. The simple

The next day at the pharmacy where she worked, Chelsea approached her colleague, Jane, who happened to be a pastor's wife. Chelsea

act of Jane giving away a book that explained the gospel played a part in Kathy being able to put her trust in Jesus for salvation. We thank God for this and we continue to pray for Kathy's daughter who, at present, is still not a believer. Perhaps one day soon, she will also read the book that she delivered to her mother.



Deuteronomy 4:29

But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.





A story of guiding in Canada
featuring *By This Name*

Stitching together the story of hope

Stacy looked around the room. It was filled with women who were recovering addicts. Behind the expectant faces were stories of poor choices, wrong turns and heartaches of every kind. Stacy wasn't sure why each of them had ended up in this room with her. But each lady had before her scraps of cloth, thread and other materials. Today, they were gathered to learn quilting. As well, they were about to learn what God had to say about life, death and life after death.

About four years earlier, Stacy had attended a TERM Seminar. There, she had been thrilled to learn a simple, clear and effective way to share the gospel. She had journeyed through *By This Name* and since then, had been waiting for God to show her how she could share the good news with others.

She related to us that the Lord inspired her to do a "Good News Quilt." The idea was simple: she would design a quilt with panels that served as visual aids highlighting the gospel story. Drawing from *By This Name*, she would teach through the gospel message as she taught women how to quilt. In this

way, she was offering women a chance to learn a new skill and at the same time, hear God's plan of redemption.

Stacy took her idea and offered quilting classes in women's rehabilitation centres, prisons and women's shelters. A number of them responded positively and thus her ministry began.

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It requires three sessions for her to teach the women how to quilt. As she integrates each piece into the full quilt, she explains a section

of the gospel story. In addition, she asks the women to tell the story back to her in order to gauge their understanding.

At one quilting class, there was a lady who was going through drug rehab. She sat through each session and gospel presentation, but Stacy was not sure what, if anything, the lady had understood. At the end of the day, this lady took her work to show her supervisor. At her own initiative, she explained the meaning of each piece of the quilt. Stacy and her team were amazed at her understanding. It was encouraging for them to see that the time and care they took in explaining the gospel following the architecture of *By This Name* was working.

Since then, Stacy has also taught the quilting class in churches. She had expected the church ladies to find her teaching too simple, but she's been told that even long-time Christians had never heard the gospel explained so simply or clearly. Now, other churches are requesting her to conduct more classes. Some groups have even asked if she can sell them her quilting kits!

1 Peter 4:10-11

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.



A story of guiding in the USA
featuring *By This Name*

Christ becomes real to a Chinese atheist

The Bible says that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:4-5 NKJV). Up until just a few years ago, this verse made no sense to me as a young Chinese atheist.

I grew up in Beijing, one of the biggest and busiest cities in the world. I had seen people going into temples and giving money to idols, wishing for good fortune. I had grown tired of people saying, “Be good,” so that we could come back in the next life with good fortune. I had also heard about western religions from movies and books. These left me with the general impression that only good people can go to Heaven. I considered religion to be nothing more than a man-created tool to manage society and to advocate for morality. At the time, I did not consider the more important question, namely, what is morality derived from?

I also thought that religious people were bribing their way into Heaven by giving money to the poor people, doing good works and, in some cases, not eating meat or getting married. This kind of thinking never made sense to me. None of my family members

**... religious people
were bribing their
way into Heaven
by giving money to
the poor people...**

were religious and so I did not grow up believing that there was a God.

I do remember one time when I was very young asking my mother, "What is it like after people die? Do we still know what is going on around us? Will we wake up somewhere else?" From what I recall, my mother said it would just be like sleeping forever. I remember being really scared and not very satisfied with that answer.

As the Bible says, God had put "eternity" in my heart.

At the end of August 2008, I came to Minnesota to attend college. Shortly after, a group of students from a local church approached me with an invitation to attend what they called an "international dinner" event. I was told that they were just some Christians who wanted to invite the international students from the college to local homes in order to get to know us. So I began attending different events hosted in various homes.

In the beginning, the dinners just included some volleyball, good food and great casual conversations. Later on, I met with another student named Ambi from India who explained to me the good news of the gospel by using a diagram to explain the meaning of John 3:16. For the first time in my life, I learned that Jesus Christ is actually the Son of God who had to die on the cross in our place in order to pay for our sins.

Because of my atheistic background, I had no previous scriptural background knowledge about who God is, why there must be a penalty or payment for sin or that, as an unbelieving sinner, I was bound for Hell.

I remember being invited to a Bible study after an international dinner, but I refused because I wanted to go back to school to either watch a movie or hang out with friends.

It was not until we had a heated discussion on evolution versus creation at a Christmas party that I started thinking seriously about the biblical teaching I had been hearing at the dinners. As a biology major, I came into school having learned evolution as if it were fact. I had tried to make sense out of everything based on the assumption that everything came into existence through evolution. In college classes, I remember having doubts as I heard my professors explain evolution. But during that heated discussion, I felt that I had to defend evolution and atheism because that was the basis of my worldview. That night, however, I heard another view expressed—creationism. In my heart, I had to admit that it made a lot of sense.

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Throughout my whole life, I had suppressed the knowledge of God's existence, but now I could no longer do so. I was without excuse.

During that first winter break from college, those involved in the international dinners began a new study of a book called *By This Name*. This book gave a chronology and summation of the key events of the Bible, as well as an explanation of its message about Jesus Christ and how He came to provide salvation for mankind. That is when I finally connected the dots of those scattered Bible stories I had gathered over the

years, resolving much of my confusion. I finally understood that because God is holy and Heaven is pure and because everyone is born as a sinner with a sin nature, we all fall short of God's holy standard to go to Heaven.

Yet, I also learned the good news. I learned that God graciously sent His Son Jesus Christ to die in order to pay for our sins because His righteousness and justice required that the penalty for sin be met. Christianity was not about being a good person to buy our way into Heaven but it was about trusting in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross.

The Lord also used several other Bible verses to bring me to the knowledge of the truth: Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:34; Ephesians 2:8-9. I realized that true biblical Christianity stood out from all the religions I had heard of and it actually made total sense! God's saving grace is unique!

But I asked myself, "Can I put my faith in Christ? I do not really know Him." I still had mental struggles and many questions.

At this time a girl named Samantha befriended me and personally invited me to Friday night gatherings of believers from her church. I loved the singing and the peace I always felt coming out of there. God also used the time of voluntary group prayer to reach me. One particular night, I listened as people prayed about various things. Everything that needed prayer was covered. It moved me that they not only remembered each other's requests as they prayed, but that they also talked to God as their heavenly Father, with real care and thought. I sensed a great unity among this group of believers in Christ. I saw great love between husbands

and wives, between parents and kids, and even with new people that they had just met. In the world in which we live with so many divorces, rebellious kids and betrayals between friends, this group of believers was unique to me. One might see individuals but it is rare to see a whole group of people like that. That's where I saw Jesus Christ manifested in the lives of believers and that was when Jesus Christ became real to me.

That's where I saw Jesus Christ manifested in the lives of believers and that was when Jesus Christ became real to me.

One night after a gathering, just before I was planning to return home to China for the summer, I went to my friend Samantha's house. That night, her dad, Bob, asked me a number of important questions:

"Who is Jesus Christ?"

I said, "According to the Bible, He is the Son of God."

He asked, "What did He do?"

I replied, "He died on a cross and paid for our sin."

He continued with his next question: "What do you have to do to go to Heaven?"

I said, "A person has to believe in Jesus Christ and what He did for us."

He had still another question, "Can you do anything to lose that salvation?"

I responded, "No."

Then he said, "Do you believe all this?" I paused and thought that was a good question because I didn't know if I just knew all the right answers or if I actually believed them for myself.

One thing I've come to know and appreciate about Bob is that he never gives up. So he asked me about five more times. I realized that if I had already believed that there is a God and that the Bible is God's Word, then whatever is said in the Bible about Jesus Christ must be truth. I just need to make a logical decision to believe it for myself. I realized that I could spend my whole life gathering more evidence, but if I didn't make a personal decision to put my faith in Jesus Christ, I would be just another person going to Hell with the full knowledge of how to get to Heaven.

So that night, I gladly chose to put my faith in Jesus Christ and became a child of God. I know I can never lose that salvation and the love from my heavenly Father.

Now I know why I went to college in Minnesota of all the places on earth. God loved me and wanted me to come to the knowledge of the truth. He had a plan to bring me 6000 miles to where He knew I would hear the gospel of Christ, believe it and be saved forever. "Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:22 NKJV).

I praise the Lord for His grace, His Son Jesus Christ, and for the faithful testimony of the dear people at church.

1 Timothy 2:3-6

This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

Giving & Guiding

While the body of Christ has been blessed with gifted evangelists and pastors, we know that each one of us, as believers, are in a unique position to reach many of our family, friends and neighbours in a way that only we can. In spite of our unique placing in others' lives, many of us don't feel gifted and more often than not, we don't know what to do or say.

GoodSeed strives to help the common believer be an effective ambassador for Christ, making individual evangelism a way of life. We provide tools and training to help believers cultivate a lifestyle of readiness so that when God puts into our lives the opportunity to share, we don't miss it!

The tools and resources we create are designed for two avenues of sharing: Giving and Guiding.

Giving away the gospel message

Over the years, GoodSeed staff members have found that giving a person a book, audiobook or DVD is the simplest way to share the gospel. In under a minute, we can give someone a carefully developed tool that will clearly explain the gospel. The resources help to provide a clear understanding, whether the person is familiar with the Bible or has never read any Scripture before. Giving a resource allows a person to take the time to learn the gospel message at his own pace, in the privacy of his home. Through giving away, many people come to put their trust in Jesus Christ. Read the testimonies of giving in this book.

Here are four steps to prepare you to be ready to give away the gospel:

1. BE READY

Think about your daily routine. Do you commute on public transport? Do you have lunch at diners or cafés? Do you work in an office or from home? Ask yourself where your opportunities are to meet people, have conversations and give away the gospel.

Here are just a few places or scenarios you can consider:

Near the main door of your house

Keep tools on hand for the salesman, the piano tuner, the plumber and so on. Give the gospel as a “thank you” or in turn for listening patiently to their sales pitch.

In your car

When we end up in a meaningful conversation with someone while out, it's wonderful to have a resource nearby to place into their hands.

In your backpack or briefcase

On the bus, train or plane, you may have a conversation with fellow passengers. Leave them with more than a faint memory.

A drawer in the office

It's not unusual for co-workers to share struggles they are having in life. Have a tool handy to give them true comfort and hope for the future.

In the end, we must heed the warning of Ephesians 5:15, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise.” As others watch the living testimony of your life, God may nudge towards you those who are seeking to understand the Bible.

Be Ready Box

No matter where you are, you'll want to have a box of gospel tools ready to give away. We call this your "Be Ready Box." The Be Ready Box is just a simple container in which you store the tools. It could be anything from a sturdy cardboard box, to your car glove box or compartment, to a shelf at home. For your Be Ready Box, you'll need to think of the types of people you come across in your daily life and then choose a selection of tools that will be helpful for them.

For example, if your community is dominated with people from an Asian background or with immigrants influenced by Islam, you could include in copies of *By This Name* and *All that the Prophets have Spoken* in your Be Ready Box. You might even stock Chinese or Arabic editions. If you have friends who are not readers, then you'll want to have video books and audiobooks in your box. Pack your box and have it handy. Now you're ready to give a resource away.

2. BE PRAYING

Pray for opportunities. Begin by asking God for one person to whom you can give the gospel. Later on, that first person usually leads to other opportunities when he asks, "Will you teach my fiancé, my brother, my husband, and so forth." If not, ask God for another fresh opportunity.

3. BE INTENTIONAL

As believers, we are to be salt and light in the world. But this can only happen as we are among the unsaved. This means the unsaved need to observe our lives. We may be the only "Bible"

our friends will ever read. So we should never underestimate the power of the living letters of our lives. This may mean stepping out of our comfort zone, becoming friends of sinners. It may also mean listening to hours of “empty” conversation and witnessing, firsthand, the spiritual darkness of lives and relationships that are without Christ.

4. BE PATIENT

It can take time to build meaningful relationships—to build trust. This is especially true when those we want to reach have been turned off or offended by negative experiences with churches or overzealous Christians who have tried to force the Bible down their throats. They have inadvertently created a “Christian gag reflex.”

Remember, we are to be ready to give an answer, not push answers to questions they are not asking. Your unsaved friend may not be interested in spiritual things today or even this year, for that matter. But this often changes when a crisis hits them or their loved ones. Often that opens the doors for us to love them and share our hope with them.

Guiding someone through the gospel message

What if your friend comes to you and asks, “So... just what is the Bible all about?” You know this person. You know it would be better if he were taught the Bible, than leave him to read a book about the Bible on his own. Would you be able to teach a Bible course?

GoodSeed has developed a Bible curriculum, accompanied with engaging visual aids, all for the purpose of assisting

believers to explain the good news in a clear, objective way—a way that lets Scripture speak for itself. This curriculum is called *Worldview Rethink*.

It is easy to use. If you can read, you can lead. The leader's guide gives simple instructions, and the many visual aids and video components help keep the student's attention.

Worldview Rethink can be adapted for many different scenarios and needs, such as small groups, one-on-one Bible studies in your living room, or even over lunch break in a coffee shop.

Please explore the *Worldview Rethink* resources on our website at goodseed.com.

May we strive to equip ourselves so we can “always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15).

Featured Resources

This anthology of true-life accounts features a number of GoodSeed resources. All of them were designed to communicate the gospel. Each one begins by describing the Creator as He creates. Then, progressing chronologically through key Old Testament stories, they give the context necessary to understand who Jesus is and what He accomplished on the cross.

The tools are worldview-sensitive. As each tool presents the gospel, it quietly answers specific questions arising from each worldview. They are also designed for various learning styles and needs: videobooks, audiobooks, picture books, large print, translations and EasyEnglish editions.

The right tool for the right audience helps communicate a clear gospel. When the gospel is understood, it is life-changing.

The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus

For those influenced by Christianity—whether Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox. When they hear the word *God*, they think of the God of the Bible.

All that the Prophets have Spoken

Twenty-five percent different from *The Stranger*. For those influenced by Islam, but not necessarily Muslim by belief.

By This Name

Sixty percent different from *The Stranger*. For those influenced by polytheism, pantheism, atheism, agnosticism and animism. Also includes those with New Age, post-modern, post-Christian or secular ideas.

The Lamb

For children ages four and older. Enjoyed by many ages and backgrounds.

What are Christmas and Easter All About?

An illustrated book written in EasyEnglish, which means all ages can benefit from it. For those who find English difficult.

Worldview Rethink

A robust curriculum for both believers and unbelievers. Complete with leader's guide, textbook, workbooks, training DVDs, visual aids and promotional media, this curriculum is a must-learn for those desiring to live a lifelong lifestyle of sharing the good news.

TERM Seminar

TERM is a time to stop and rethink evangelism in the context of our diverse, ever-changing world. The seminar takes participants into Scripture to see what it has to say about evangelism methodology. In the process, there springs to light an approach that Jesus used on the road to Emmaus. The architecture of "The Emmaus Road Message" (TERM) has proven effective—whether engaging the confused, the seeker or the hardened.

For more information, visit goodseed.com

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About GoodSeed

GoodSeed International is an equipping ministry. We provide tools and training to enable believers to share the gospel as a lifelong lifestyle.

We are a fellowship of men and women who recognize that the biblical account of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ holds immense implications for all people. With this in mind, we work together to facilitate a clear explanation of these two significant events, using a creation-to-the-cross overview of the Bible.

Our team creates resources for a variety of different learning and teaching needs and we run training both live and online to help believers become confident in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. We partner with missionaries, pastors, churches, organizations and ordinary believers to help them in their work of sharing the gospel.

GoodSeed has members, associates, volunteers and interns, all working within its organizational umbrella. All of them are missionaries, bringing with them their own supporters.

If you would like more information about GoodSeed or are interested in partnering with us, please visit goodseed.com.

For more stories go to: goodseed.com/blog

Do you have a story to share?

Write to us at yourstories@goodseed.com