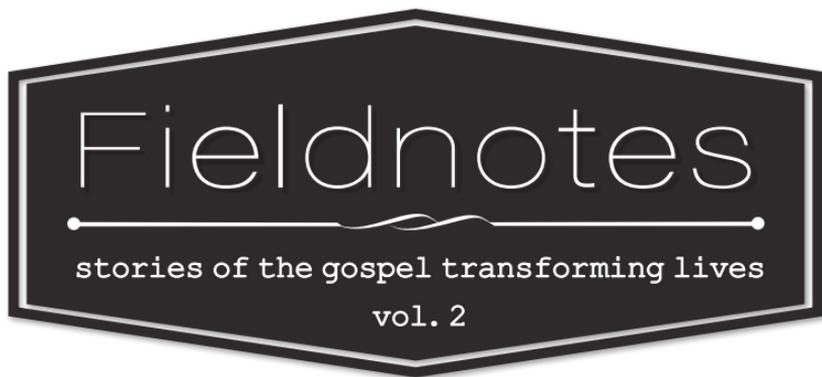


A close-up photograph of a person riding a bicycle. The person is wearing a grey jacket and holding a brown paper coffee cup with a white lid in their right hand. A watch is visible on their left wrist. The bicycle's handlebars and a brown leather saddle are also visible. A dark, semi-transparent overlay is positioned in the center of the image, containing the title and subtitle in white text.

Fieldnotes

stories of the gospel transforming lives

vol. 2



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Fieldnotes, Volume 2

stories of the gospel transforming lives

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Acknowledgments

In this second volume of *Fieldnotes*, we rejoice once more to read about these journeys to faith. We thank the Lord for the work that he continues to do through his Word and we are grateful to all who took the time to share their stories with us. I would like to give my thanks to the GoodSeed staff for gathering these notes from the field.

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General Editor: Amos Kwok

Editors: David Cross

Naomi Johnstone

Michelle Hiebert

Jennifer Kwok

Proofreader: Alan White

Book & Cover Designer: Rachel Bader

Book Formatters: Rachel Bader

Naomi Johnstone

John R. Cross

General Director

GoodSeed International

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Foreword

When we published the first volume of *Fieldnotes*, it was a thanksgiving to what God had done in the lives of people—both those who were actively sharing the gospel and those whose journey to faith in Jesus involved a GoodSeed resource. We saw that *Fieldnotes* was a source of encouragement to those seeking ways and opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those in their lives.

But God has seen fit to use the book in ways we did not imagine. A lady in Singapore wrote us, telling us how she had given *Fieldnotes* to Marion, a friend who had not been to church in nearly 20 years. Marion had not read much of the Bible because she felt daunted by it. After reading *Fieldnotes*, she was struck by how the people in the testimonies started with no knowledge of the Bible but at the end of each story, they had come to put their trust in Jesus.

She found her heart excited at the thought of understanding the Bible better. Marion got a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* and read through it. She wrote:

“A seed was planted in me through [*Fieldnotes*]. It led me to another book, *The Stranger*. And now I have ordered the videobook to do Bible study on my own, with the DVDs to guide me. I’m on my journey to learning more about the Bible ... The Bible makes more sense now than ever before. The rest and the best is yet to come ... I know I’m blessed! Thank you for sharing this book!”

Compelled by her deepened understanding of the Bible, Marion has gone on to give copies of GoodSeed resources to other friends, both believers and non-believers. From someone too scared to read the Bible, she is now an active ambassador for Christ!

We didn't expect *Fieldnotes* to be a little evangelist to Marion! Now with this second volume of *Fieldnotes*, we want to encourage people once more with the power of the gospel to transform lives. In this volume, you'll meet high school students, a dying woman, a drunk driver, a suicidal teen, a veterinarian, newly-landed immigrants, an ex-refugee, prison inmates and others who have come to faith in Jesus Christ. You'll also meet faithful ambassadors: a hospital volunteer, a German school principal, a loving brother, a caring neighbour, a concerned co-worker, a long-lost friend and a prisons ministry worker, among others.

Their stories have given us much to thank God for and they also serve to encourage all of us to continue in our roles as ambassadors for Christ.

"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity."

Ephesians 5:15-16

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.

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



I grabbed onto grace

I grew up in a very religious family. Everything in our lives centred around church. If the doors were open, we were there. Our religion was based on fear, and the number one fear was the fear of going to Hell. We were afraid of not going to church because we were afraid of going to Hell. We were afraid of being outside that “group,” because if we were outside that group, we were going to Hell. That’s what church was, that’s what God was: a list of things you couldn’t do.

I remember very vividly one night, a Wednesday night, when I was in grade four. I was already in bed and I had a dream that I was in Hell. The devil was right there, and there were flames coming up and I realized that I hadn’t made it to Heaven. I went to my parents’ room, woke them up and told them about my dream. Immediately my father grabbed the phone and called our pastor and the next thing I knew I was in the car in my pajamas, along with my brother and sister. Apparently I’d now reached the age of accountability, where I was responsible for knowing the truth. We headed to our church, and I prayed the whole way that my dad wouldn’t have an accident, because I knew I’d go to Hell if I didn’t get to the church and get baptized first.

I remember vividly that night at the church and the look of the sanctuary. The only light on in the church was in the baptistery; everything else was black and shadowed. My parents were there; my brother and sister were standing quietly to the side. I was nervous and shaking, because I was convinced that everything would be different. Everything was going to change this momentous evening.

And that was my salvation. I was so disappointed.

My dad wanted to be the one to baptize me, so both of us climbed down into the baptistery. The preacher stood to one side, coaching my dad with what to say and how to go about the baptism. My dad said what he was supposed to, then I remember dipping down under the water and coming back up. I was convinced that I'd experience something special—maybe the voices of angels or a trumpet or something—but as I came back up out of the water, what I heard instead was the pastor saying to my dad, “Billy, you’re going to have to do it again, because you didn’t go all the way under.”

And that was my salvation. That was it. I was so disappointed.

I remember that every day began the same. I'd think to myself, “Today I'm going to do everything right. I'm not going to fail today.” And every day I'd find myself ending the same way, with trying to remember all the things I had done wrong and making sure I prayed and asked forgiveness. Because if I died, even though I was baptized and was considered a Christian, I knew I'd go to Hell. Later, I married my high school sweetheart, Melissa, and we started a family. I felt a

terrible weight of responsibility to make sure my wife and son made it to Heaven. So I did what I knew; I made sure they went to church.

My poor wife was already a believer. She was so gracious. She would encourage me to try attending a different church, but I thought, “No way!”

At night, after Melissa had gone to sleep, I’d take her Bible and go sit in the closet with the light on. I’d flip to the areas where she’d underlined passages about being saved by God’s grace alone, verses that she often talked about, like Ephesians 2:8-9. I’d try to figure out how to convince her that she was wrong and it couldn’t be that simple.

It ended up that I had to move to a new job far from our family. There we were, in a town where no one could see where we went to church. We began attending a small church in town. People were friendly and we got involved in a Bible study on Romans. A little while later, I heard about the TERM Seminar put on by GoodSeed in Alberta, Canada.

I didn’t know anything about the seminar or the location, but thought a road trip with a bunch of guys sounded like fun. So, we loaded up in a van and headed north.

We arrived in Olds, Alberta,

I felt a terrible weight of responsibility to make sure my wife and son made it to Heaven.

at a little church, got settled in with our materials and met our instructor who was going to take us through a course called Worldview Rethink. I found out we were there to learn how to clearly present the gospel.

The book we used taught us starting at Genesis. I knew the stories and I knew about the cross, but I didn't see how they connected at all. I didn't realize that the whole point of the story was the cross. At the end of each day, I wanted to keep going and read ahead. I wanted to find out how it all fitted together.

"It's true. It's true! It's *all true!*" In that moment, I grabbed onto grace.

The Holy Spirit was at work, opening my eyes. I was so excited to see what was around the corner, how it was

going to tie together. When we reached the end and closed the book, the instructor told our group that when we taught others, we would get to this point where a choice needed to be made, where there was a decision to make.

When I closed that book, tears streaming down my face, all I could think or say was, "It's true. It's true! It's *all true!*" In that moment, I grabbed onto grace. Grabbed onto the truth of the good news of the gospel.

We talked about the four irreducible minimums of the gospel. We talked about how God was a holy God, how we are helpless sinners, that Christ provided a sufficient substitute, and how there was a personal choice, a personal faith. Back at the hotel room, I told my pastor, "This is great! This grace is just incredible! It's just so overwhelming!" I told him that it was just too good to be true, but it was. I prayed that this feeling of awe, this overwhelming grace, would never get old, never change. And it hasn't.

The next morning, we were given the task to write out what we had learned. My hand couldn't write fast enough to keep

up with what my brain knew—because I did know it. And everything had changed.

We had a long journey home, driving many hours through the night, all piled together in the van. I realized that I had experienced something very different from the other guys in the van. They had gone to the seminar to learn how to use a tool; I was coming home changed by that tool. I was very grateful; I was excited. I couldn't wait to get home to tell my family or anyone who would listen.

The gospel was finally good news.

**I was eager to
tell everyone
what I'd learned.**

I remember driving through the middle of Montana, listening to Christian music. It was new and different to me. I was hearing words like, "Grace" and, "Amazing love, how can it be? That you my King would die for me." Well, now I knew that meant the substitutionary death of Christ. I knew the gospel!

I had the opportunity the morning we arrived back to share in church and I was eager to tell everyone what I'd learned. I got to share the story of the gospel and about those four irreducible minimums. I had purchased books so I could go through the same material with my kids. I wanted to make sure that there wouldn't be any time in their lives when they didn't understand the gospel.

I now loved getting into the Word. I just soaked it up and couldn't get enough. Before it was literally a foreign language. Even though I knew the Bible stories, they didn't mean anything to me. Now the Holy Spirit was shedding new light on the verses that tripped me up, verses that I used to

read while hiding in the closet in an attempt to prove my wife wrong. I read Ephesians 2:8-9 late one night and was so excited that I woke my wife up to share my excitement: “Can you believe this? Do you understand what this means?” She had understood it all along, but hadn’t been able to help me to see the truth.

Now I know. I know, that I know, that I know, that when I leave this world, my home is in Heaven. The only thing that could change that is if Christ suddenly became less perfect and his death wasn’t enough to pay the death penalty I had. And because that’s not going to change, I’m at peace and God’s at peace about me. I’m entrusting my eternal destination to the finished work of the cross and God’s at peace with me. And that’s a good thing.



Ephesians 2:8-9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.





She never ever gave up on me

Rick's drinking and drug use had taken everything from him. It had taken his wife. It had taken his home. It had taken his job. But there was one thing it had never succeeded in robbing from him—Alyssa, his daughter. Somehow that girl never gave up on him. Rick can only shake his head in both thankfulness and bewilderment at her persistent love over the decades.

Rick doesn't remember much from his childhood and the memories he does have aren't happy ones. He struggled through school. He failed at sports. As one of the smallest kids, he was bullied and picked on. At home, his older sister got whatever she wanted, while Rick was the one never quite good enough. He felt inadequate and rejected. In an attempt to boost his self-esteem, he started drinking and smoking marijuana in his early teens. By the time he was 15, he had quit school and moved out of home.

Once out on his own, Rick started selling drugs. He loved the power that money gave him. Suddenly people seemed to like him. He got a girlfriend and they had a baby two years into their relationship. But when she fell in love with another man and

left Rick, their son was given up for adoption. Devastated and angry, Rick moved to another city and drowned his troubles in alcohol. Drugs and drink were the only real life he had.

Then Rick met Paula. They married and had Alyssa. By this time, however, alcohol had full control of Rick. Paula suffered because of his drinking and after four years of marriage, she had enough of Rick's behaviour and divorced him. It shook Rick enough to make him stop the drugs and drink for three years. During that time, he tried hard to be good enough. He even "tried God," but didn't know what it meant to have a relationship with Christ. He finally caved in again to his previous addictions when the effort and loneliness got too much.

Rick describes his addiction as a disease that was "cunning, baffling, and very, very powerful." His life spiralled down even further the moment he picked up a crack pipe and started smoking cocaine. It was the worst thing he could have ever done,

**He even "tried God,"
but didn't know what
it meant to have a
relationship with Christ.**

but it gave him that coveted feeling of competence. Rick finally hit rock bottom. He was homeless and jobless, and without hope.

But not without help. His daughter Alyssa still loved him. She was a believer and she did her best to keep in touch with him. She had prayed for him all these years. Through her persistence, she finally convinced Rick to enter a Christian rehabilitation program.

Each participant of the rehab program went through a study of *By This Name*, regardless of their previous exposure to

Christianity. Some entered the program with absolutely no knowledge of the gospel while others had a confused, muddled understanding. But the program director had found that *By This Name* reached them all. It was a clear overview of the message of the Bible and the person and work of Christ. The director had found that it was the ideal book to lay a biblical foundation for the rest of the program.

Rick read the book and worked through the accompanying workbook as he progressed through the chapters. He ended up putting his trust in Jesus for salvation. Rick now knew that the creator God of the Bible loved him and accepted him—not on his own merit, but on the basis of what Christ had done on the cross.

I was asking him to help me ... I just couldn't do it and he had to help me.

Soon after leaving the program, Rick laid out his life before God. He knew he could not live without God because the pull of the addictions was still too strong for him to face on his own. He got down on his knees and prayed.

“I was asking him to help me ... I could not get through this and beat this addiction or this drinking. I just couldn't do it and he had to help me.” It was then he realized that it was God he had been looking for through the years—in the drink, the drugs and the relationships.

Ever since the rehab program, Rick has been learning and growing in his understanding of God. There are still struggles, but he now has the Spirit of God to give him the strength he needs, and he also has a good family and church support.

He is particularly thankful for Alyssa. Rick calls her “my angel who never, ever, gave up on me through the darkest and toughest times.” Her persistent love had helped him through some of his darkest moments. He says, “Through my daughter and son-in-law, Christ literally pulled me from the dungeons of slavery of addiction and is showing me how to live a family-oriented life while walking with him. I now find my strength in him.” He draws strength particularly from Philippians 4:13—“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”

Isaiah 61:1

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners.*



Remember the road we've travelled

It is 1979. Minh Trang is three years old. In the cover of darkness, his family boards a makeshift boat on the coast of Vietnam. The boat can hold 20 but 70 frightened people are crushed together, shoulder to shoulder. It's dangerous in the rickety vessel because it can capsize in a heartbeat. But to suffer at the hands of the communist regime is worse. Minh's parents decide to risk this flight in the dark.

Thus began more than eight months at sea. Minh has never forgotten that terrifying time. Eventually, after many trials and a circuitous route, his family landed in Canada. They had escaped death but not misery. It was a struggle for Minh's parents to rebuild their lives. They had been doctors in Vietnam but now in Quebec they had to be qualified as Canadian physicians. There was a quota system for foreigners so both parents struggled as they learned French, worked at menial jobs, took care of the children and laboured towards being certified as doctors.

Minh remembers those difficult years. His parents eventually became qualified doctors and inspired by their perseverance, he too has become a doctor. But even as life improved, Minh

was searching for something more. He wanted answers to what life was all about.

He began searching online. Coming from Vietnam, he had an eastern worldview, but he was curious about Christianity. He came across a website for an evangelical church in his city. The church had all their sermons posted online, so Minh began listening to them. After working through ten sermons, he felt

**“Jesus is like
Buddha,” was
his observation.**

the need to talk to the pastor. Would Pastor Gerrard be willing?

The pastor was indeed willing and they met at a restaurant. Minh spoke with Pastor Gerrard at length and at the close of their time together, Pastor Gerrard pulled out a French book and asked if Minh would like to investigate further by reading a book. Although Gerrard knew that *By This Name* was better able to answer Minh’s questions, all he had on hand that morning was a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. Minh willingly accepted the book and promised to read it.

It wasn’t long before Minh contacted Pastor Gerrard again. He was partway through the book and wanted to talk. Back at the same restaurant, Minh was excited to share what he had learned so far. Gerrard was pleased but became concerned when Minh made comparisons between the biblical worldview and his own eastern worldview. “Jesus is like Buddha” was one of Minh’s observations. Gerrard wondered how best to address these syncretistic thoughts but didn’t have the opportunity at that meeting. Minh was extremely intelligent and was a university professor, so Gerrard wondered how to

articulate the difference between Jesus and the many eastern gods in a way that Minh would accept.

Then Minh and the pastor met for a third time over a meal. Pastor Gerrard had prepared some thoughts to share with Minh but sensing the Holy Spirit asking him to hold back, he let Minh do the talking. When Minh articulated what he had learned, it was clear that the Holy Spirit had worked in him, for the doctor now had a more complete understanding of the Bible's main message.

"Gerrard, I was wrong, but I get it now. Jesus is one of a kind, in a category all of his own. He is the One." Minh had not only understood the Bible's message; he had also put his trust in Jesus for salvation. He asked Pastor Gerrard if he could be baptized at his cottage as a testimony to his family. Gerrard was only too happy to oblige.

Minh is now an active member in Pastor Gerrard's church and he is open about his faith in Jesus. Right from the beginning of his new birth, he has been actively sharing the good news. At work, he has gathered the Christian doctors he knows to work out ways to reach their medical students with the gospel.

Jesus is one of a kind, in a category all of his own.

One habit Minh has is to take the time to look back on his life, rather than just looking ahead. "We like to look to the future for happiness, but perhaps real happiness is in remembering the road we've travelled," he says. As he reflects on his own life journey, Minh can see how God orchestrated the events of his life. The Lord directed his family out of the political

turmoil in Vietnam, settled them in Canada, and then gave him the opportunity to become a doctor. The Lord also led him on his search for meaning, leading him to Pastor Gerrard and finally bringing him to salvation in Jesus. Minh is very thankful to God for this journey. Now his desire is that many others will also take the journey to faith in Christ.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.



A scene straight out of the book of Acts

In a quiet German city, the Monday night study had come to an end. Fourteen participants had been coming together once a week for 15 weeks. Several were believers who had wanted to learn more about the Bible. Others were accompanying friends who had never read the Bible before. In this gathering were Germans, Russian-Germans and Italians. And in all the weeks that the group met, no one dropped out.

There was nothing new or radical in what was taught. The study leader simply used the German edition of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* to take the participants through a simple and coherent explanation of the gospel message. For many in the study, they heard the gospel clearly for the first time.

Tomas attended the study with his wife. They came at the invitation of a friend who had attended a previous study. This friend had become a believer and wanted Tomas and his wife to also learn about the Bible. Immediately following the fifteenth session, Tomas piped up.

He said, "I believe in Jesus now. Thanks to the course, everything makes sense. How could I have missed the most

important truth?" His wife, who had been baptized recently, was elated to hear these words from her husband. Six days later, on a Sunday, Tomas stood in church and shared his testimony. As he did so, he asked to be baptized. As others from the group listened, several also expressed the same sentiment and desire.

There were other testimonies as well. Several believers had come away from the study with a deeper understanding of Scripture. They had placed their trust in Jesus some time before but now, for the first time, many things that had been fuzzy in their minds had become clear. This clarity brought a deep joy into their lives.

Still others in the study had initially said they were Christians. Now, at the conclusion, they admitted they had been only cultural Christians. They had talked and behaved as "Christians" but there was no reality, no relationship with God. Now, it was different. They both understood the gospel and believed it.

How could I have missed the most important truth?

One of those in the group was Eileen. She had believed herself to be religious and pious, but the study had brought her new understanding of what it meant to be righteous before God. She said she had been very enthusiastic throughout the course, but now she needed to take some time to give thought to what she had learned. Two other ladies responded in a similar fashion. Each of these continue to stay in touch with the group and show up in church. The Bible study leader prays that they, too, will soon put their trust in Jesus.

Those who are new believers meet together as a discipleship group in the church. Their fellowship is sweet and they've started praying together for their spouses, children and other unbelieving family members. Already they are inviting them to come to a new study that will start soon.

He is constantly amazed at how the participants of one study bring new people to the next course.

Mathias, the study leader, said, "It is such a privilege to teach these different groups." He is constantly amazed at how the participants of one study invite and bring new people to the next course. "To me, this really looks like a scene straight out of the book of Acts."

Acts 2:42-44, 46-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common ... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



She had very little to say

Luc and Rachelle had made the big decision. It was time to sell their house and downsize in order to lower their expenses. The couple began the process of reducing their belongings and they went online to post household items for sale.

One night, a couple responded to one of the furniture listings. Bruno and Therese, a recently-immigrated couple from Africa, were interested in a number of pieces. Arrangements were made, but when they arrived to pick up the items, Bruno realized their vehicle wasn't big enough to hold it all. Luc offered to load some of the pieces onto his vehicle and drive over to Bruno's place. Bruno and Therese were very appreciative as Luc arrived at their place with the items. He even helped them carry the furniture into the house and set everything up.

When the job was completed, Luc took a moment to invite the young couple to a special Christmas outreach program that his church was hosting that very evening. Much to Luc's surprise, Bruno and Therese expressed interest in attending.

They shared with Luc that since their arrival in Canada several months earlier, they hadn't been on any outings; this was going to be their first.

That evening at the Christmas program was the beginning of a friendship with the young couple. As they became better acquainted, Luc and Rachelle had the opportunity to mention a Bible study they often teach that explains the Bible's main message. While the couple was open to hearing about the study, neither expressed interest in attending such a study at the time. However, about a year later, Bruno phoned Luc and said that he was now ready to do the Bible study. Therese was also interested, but wondered how both she and Bruno could sit through a study each week when they had two young children who needed babysitting. Rachelle stepped in and offered to watch the children at a nearby park during the weekly sessions when Luc would do the study. This arrangement worked and Luc prepared

While the couple was open to hearing about the study, neither expressed interest ...

to lead the couple through *Par ce nom*, the French edition of *By This Name*.

And so they began. As the study progressed, Bruno's and Therese's understanding of the Bible became clearer. Bruno had some Bible background because he had studied to join the clergy at one point in his past. But he was not always in agreement with what they were learning. Often, when he was answering questions in the workbook, he would state,

“Well, this is what I think, but the book says...” Luc didn’t confront Bruno’s comments, instead letting Scripture speak for itself. Therese, on the other hand, had very little to say as they progressed through the book. It was hard to know what she was thinking or if the message she was hearing was having any impact.

She was confident in her salvation and understood that it could only be gained through faith ...

Once they had finished the study, Luc gave the couple a short questionnaire in order to gauge their understanding of the gospel message and to clarify if a decision had been made regarding their own personal faith in Christ. Despite her minimal participation and seeming lack of interest during the study, Therese expressed a clear understanding of the gospel and affirmed that she was putting her trust in Jesus’ gift of salvation. She was confident in her salvation and understood that it could only be gained through faith in Christ and not through works. Luc and Rachelle were delighted to hear this and were very thankful to God.

On the other hand, Bruno struggled with what he had learned. His previous study of religion had convinced him that simply trusting in Jesus was not enough. He had to work to earn God’s favour. It wasn’t that he didn’t understand what Luc had taught; he simply didn’t accept it.

Luc and Rachelle have not given up on Bruno. They continue to be friends with him and are praying that he will cease to rely on his own strength and place his trust in Jesus for

salvation. In the mean time, they are encouraging Therese in her walk with God and guiding her as she learns more about the Bible.

2 Timothy 2:24-25

And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.



What were her true intentions?

Rachelle seems to always be guiding someone using the French edition of *By This Name*, or *Par ce nom*. Though she never goes searching for an individual to teach, the Lord regularly brings people her way who desire to understand the Bible's message. Amièle, a young teenager, was one such seeker.

Amièle had a rough start in life. Her home life was defined by upheaval and uncertainty, finally culminating with a move to live with her grandparents. When a friend invited her to attend church, she agreed and began joining the teen class each week. Though she attended for a year and a half, she still understood very little about the Bible. As this became more apparent, her Sunday school teacher asked Amièle if she would like to study a book called *Par ce nom*. The teachers would be Rachelle and the Sunday school teacher and the participants would be Amièle, the teacher's daughter and a friend who was not a believer.

Amièle accepted but as the study commenced, Rachelle kept an eye on her, wondering if she came only as an excuse to hang out with their friends. But Amièle faithfully attended each of the weekly sessions and looked interested in studying the Bible. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the other two

friends dropped out of the study after a month. Now Rachelle would be able to see Amièle's true intentions—would the teenage girl be willing to continue as the only student in the study?

To both teachers' delight, Amièle wanted to proceed. And they did. Rachelle and her co-teacher worked through the book and they finished the study on Good Friday. At that point, Amièle gave one of the clearest confessions of faith Rachelle had ever heard in all her years of teaching others using *Par ce nom*. Rachelle pointed out to Amièle how special it was that she should choose to put her trust in Jesus on the very day that believers around the world commemorate the death of Jesus on the cross.

Rachelle said, "Amièle's whole face lit up. That meant a lot to her." For both teachers, Amièle's expression that day was priceless and etched into their memories. Rachelle encouraged Amièle to write the date down in her Bible and Amièle happily agreed.

Since then, Amièle continues to attend church and youth meetings, as well as a Christian summer youth camp. She has grown in her faith as she builds upon the firm foundation of understanding she now has. Rachelle is thankful she was ready to help Amièle and that she made time in her busy schedule for the study. She continues to keep herself ready for when God brings another person to her who wants to hear the gospel.

John 10:10

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.



This one makes sense!

Lorna had been bedridden for years. The cold walls of hospitals and nursing homes were all too familiar to her as she lived day after day in a routine of doctor visits and prescriptions. Lorna's fragile health was the result of years of physical abuse from multiple men in her life and teenage alcoholism. Lorna had come from a traditionally religious background, but she knew so little about hope and freedom. And with few friends and a family who didn't bother visiting her, each passing day accentuated her loneliness and isolation. She felt like a prisoner in her wheelchair.

Belinda first met Lorna when she was a caregiver in her home. Belinda's heart broke over Lorna and she did what she could for the older woman but they lost touch soon after. Belinda continued to pray that salvation would come to Lorna and her family and hoped that one day they would reconnect.

A year later, Belinda was at the hospital visiting a friend when she was surprised to see Lorna in a wheelchair at the nurses' station. Thankful for a renewed opportunity to reach into the older woman's life, Belinda made a point to spend time with her whenever she visited the hospital. Lorna looked

forward to the visits and Belinda's sincere interest in Lorna paved the way to sharing the gospel.

Belinda had attended a GoodSeed TERM Seminar, during which she had been trained in how to use GoodSeed's tools in evangelism. So when Belinda learned that Lorna loved to read, she gave a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* to her. The older woman loved it. Each time Belinda visited, Lorna asked questions about what she was reading,

Belinda, of all the belief systems I've studied over the years, yours is the only one that makes sense. and Belinda would share answers from the Bible. Before long, Lorna moved to a nearby nursing home and Belinda continued to

visit her there. During one of their conversations, Belinda was going over the gospel again when Lorna interrupted her.

"Belinda, I did that."

Uncomprehending, Belinda asked, "Did what?"

"I asked Jesus to be my Saviour! I'm trusting in Jesus for my salvation." Lorna had understood! She went on to say, "Belinda, of all the belief systems I've studied over the years, yours is the only one that makes sense."

Belinda was overjoyed. Here was the answer to a year-long prayer. Salvation had come to Lorna, and Belinda thanked God for the privilege of being involved, simply by reaching out in compassion and faithfully sharing the good news through giving a book.

Belinda and Lorna's friendship continued to blossom. Lorna thanked Belinda for sharing the good news, and asked Belinda to share it with her family as well. Belinda continued to visit Lorna weekly, and their time together was spent around the Bible and Lorna's new-found hope and trust in Jesus. At one point, Lorna said she was scared to die. Belinda responded by quoting Scripture, reminding Lorna of the promises in God's Word, and then sang and prayed with her. The power of God's truth brought peace again, and Lorna said she was ready to meet her Maker.

Lorna's health continues to be extremely fragile and it is likely she does not have long

to live, but Belinda rejoices that Lorna is trusting in the Saviour of sinners, and that fear and despair no longer have a hold on her. Belinda is the only believer Lorna knows, and because Belinda has been a faithful ambassador of Christ, she has been able to make a huge difference in Lorna's life. But again, it came about by three simple things: prayer, time and the gift of a book.

Belinda rejoices that Lorna is trusting in the Saviour of sinners, and that fear and despair no longer have a hold on her.

John 13:34-35

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."



Time was running out

Nora's sister-in-law, Lucy, knew very little about the Bible's message because of a mental disability. At age 63, without the ability to learn most things for herself, her childlike mind had kept her seemingly isolated from this most essential message. Nora had struggled to find a way to reach this precious family member.

She was excited to find some GoodSeed resources displayed at her church that were available for purchase. When she flipped through *The Lamb*, she felt that the colourful pictures, simple explanation and helpful questions at the end of each chapter would be the most appropriate tool to use.

Lucy was not the most friendly audience as Nora began reading to her, but as Nora began working her way through the book, Lucy became engaged in the message. By chapter three, she was hooked. Slowly the truth dawned and by the end of the book, she was answering every question correctly.

Nora's email arrived in our inbox the day after she finished reading *The Lamb* to Lucy.

"Last night Lucy said yes, she believed God's letter to her, that Jesus took her punishment and she wants to be in Heaven

with Jesus and not the Lake of Fire. Lucy has cancer and it will not be long before she is with her Saviour. Thank you so much for *The Lamb*."

Nora went on to say the doctor had informed the family that with her serious cancer and a blood clot in her lung, it was doubtful Lucy would see Christmas. Indeed, less than a month later, Lucy passed away. But it is not a story with a sad ending. Rather, the family is rejoicing that Lucy is now with her Saviour and can know him fully.

At Lucy's funeral, Nora's son shared some thoughts: "Few know of the dozens of daily calls or the countless nights where [my father and mother] rushed out of a deep sleep to tend to a medical or emotional emergency. Few know that my mother bought a children's book, *The Lamb*, and taught Lucy about Jesus' love. Fewer still know that Aunt Lucy, in her own special way, prayed with my mom to receive Jesus into her heart... As I reflect upon the passing of dear Aunt Lucy, I am thankful for those who cared for her in life, especially near the end, and for the one who cares for her now in Heaven. Thanks be to God that he has defeated sin and death."

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.



No way are you sharing that story!

Sandra is an easygoing person with an affable manner that allows her to easily make friends with strangers. She knows how to tell a story and she can engage in tough conversations without getting into an argument. She has been volunteering at a hospital and gets to meet many types of patients. Not too long ago, she met Erin, who was dying of a serious illness. Having appreciated an earlier visit, Erin wanted another opportunity to talk to Sandra. Fortunately, Erin's doctor, who was sympathetic to her needs, also knew Sandra and so arranged for the two women to have some time together.

What ensued was a three-hour meeting. Sandra had brought along with her a copy of *What are Christmas and Easter All About?* and, with Erin's permission, was able to read aloud the entire booklet. Sandra went on to answer Erin's questions and, by the end of their visit, Erin had put her trust in Jesus for salvation. She was now a believer!

Barely three weeks after this meeting, Erin passed away. She left a letter instructing her young adult sons to invite Sandra to speak at her funeral. Erin specifically requested that Sandra

read aloud *What are Christmas and Easter All About?*, just as she had done during that earlier time together. A furore broke out over her request. Jeremy, Erin's brother, strongly objected to Sandra's presence at the funeral.

"No! No way," was Jeremy's vehement objection. But Erin's sons, wishing to honour their mother's wishes, persuaded their uncle to allow Sandra to be present.

Sandra was nervous about the prospect. As far as she knew, none of the family were believers. However, she accepted the opportunity, taking with her 30 copies of the *Christmas and Easter* booklet. There was no pastor, no other speaker. Just Sandra and her thin little booklet. As Sandra faced the friends and family gathered at the funeral, she recounted her conversation with Erin. Then, as per Erin's request, she read aloud the entire booklet once again. She then indicated that, at the back of the room, there were copies of the same booklet that they could take home. After the service, Sandra was soon caught up in several conversations. It was only later she noticed that all the booklets were gone. Sandra prayed

**There was no pastor,
no other speaker.
Just Sandra and her
thin little booklet.**

that those who had picked a copy would read the gospel message.

A month later, Sandra received a phone call. It was Jeremy, Erin's brother. He wanted to meet and talk. A little nervous about what might happen, Sandra called Erin's doctor and he agreed to accompany Sandra when she met with Jeremy. The meeting was over a meal at a restaurant. They ended up talking for three hours. Jeremy had a lot to

say about God and the Bible and he was hostile much of the time. But Sandra retained her soft demeanour.

At the end of their time together, she simply said to him, "I've told you everything. I mean you've got to make a decision. I can't... I can't make a decision for you." When they parted, Sandra wondered what was going through Jeremy's mind. He had been so belligerent. All she could do was pray for him and leave him in God's hands.

**All she could
do was pray ...
and leave him
in God's hands.**

Some time later, Jeremy called. "I want to see you again," he said over the phone. So, Sandra once more made arrangements to meet him. What a surprise that turned out to be! Jeremy told her he had become a believer! Sandra was so thankful and praised the Lord for what he had done. She could not have foreseen how her simple act of reading aloud the gospel story could have such an impact on not one, but two lives. And what of the other 30 booklets made available at Erin's funeral service? Sandra is praying that those who took a copy would also come to a clear understanding of the gospel message and put their trust in Jesus.

1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.



Reaching out in the halls of a public school

————— PART I OF BENJAMIN & JAKE'S STORY —————

Benjamin was excited to participate in his school's Bible club as he entered middle school. However, as the months went by, it seemed that most of the older students who were responsible for the club's leadership lost interest and it began to fizzle as the year drew to a close. Having grown up in a Christian home, he'd been taught through the Bible's message chronologically as a boy and understood God's overarching plan of salvation. Seeing the need for a strong Bible program in his school's club, the following year, Benjamin and a few of his cousins offered to take on some leadership roles within the group. Discussing where to start, Benjamin remembered a book sitting on his parents' bookshelf—*The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. Though most of those in the club were from Christian backgrounds, he knew that many lacked the foundations so important to a thriving walk with the Lord. Benjamin related, "I knew most kids didn't understand that the Bible was one big story."

So Benjamin and his cousins agreed that a study of the Bible using *The Stranger* was a good place to start. They initially gave away 15 books, encouraging club participants to read

a portion in advance of each meeting, in addition to their use during the study.

Though a few students objected to the basic nature of the material he was teaching, most students appreciated the simplicity of the message, especially as things began to connect together near the end of the book. As time went on, their small numbers grew to about 30 students. Benjamin could see that

The group grew to 100 students and they were meeting in the school's auditorium.

God's Word was having an effect—the faith of his fellow students was becoming more solidified and the Bible was making more sense to them.

Fast forward two years: Benjamin now found himself in high school. There, the small Bible club was also struggling and the leadership was inconsistent, but Benjamin decided to attend faithfully and be supportive of the club. Then, when the following school year rolled around, he and a friend took over the leadership of the group. It didn't take long before they had launched into a study of *The Stranger*. By the time Benjamin was a senior, the group had grown to 100 students and they were meeting in the school's auditorium. Because so many new students were joining the group, Benjamin and his friend decided to use *The Stranger* each year, moving through the content as quickly as they could so no one would lose the overarching context of the material.

Not everyone chose to attend, feeling that the material was too basic for them. As Benjamin expressed, "It wasn't the most popular thing to go through the Bible from start to finish.

The popular thing was to talk about current happenings, show music videos and have a worship band. The study wasn't the biggest recruiting tool. We could have done it a different way and gotten more people, but I think we did it the right way."

And it proved to be a real help to many. Benjamin estimates that over the period of the four years he taught in high school, the majority who attended were from a Christian background. Others were brand new believers. About 10 to 15 percent of attendees were not believers when they first joined the group.

Benjamin shared, "Many felt that this was new material for them; they realized that there was much more to the Bible than they had previously understood. They wanted more books they could pass on to friends."

We could have done it a different way and gotten more people, but I think we did it the right way.

While his leadership was appreciated by many, Benjamin did experience some opposition. Some teachers felt that he was too forward when he publicized the club. Those who were atheists took personal offence to his message and treated him accordingly.

On the other hand, Benjamin experienced great support from teachers who were believers who encouraged him in his role in the club. One teacher even convinced her church to take up an offering to purchase a number of GoodSeed books for use in the club.

Some of the opposition came from fellow students, often stemming from preconceived misunderstandings of the Bible's message. Some thought that Benjamin hated them because of their lifestyle or because of their religious background. It was a challenge for him. Though he tried to demonstrate love to his fellow students, many chose to reject him because of what he stood for.

When he graduated from high school, Benjamin decided to attend Bible school with the goal of being in full-time ministry. Looking back, he can see how the Lord blessed his outreach to his fellow students. (Of those, seven followed him to Bible school.)

Though he sees things he would do differently if he had the chance to do it again, Benjamin said, "Even when I made mistakes, God was still faithful. Even when my heart wasn't in the right place, he still used me."

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.



I feel confident in my salvation now

————— PART II OF BENJAMIN & JAKE'S STORY —————

Paul encouraged Timothy to not “let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

Jake’s older brother, Benjamin, had earlier set an example for him by leading students through a simple explanation of the gospel in the schools he attended. Now, Jake is following in his brother’s footsteps, continuing to teach fellow students.

Currently in the eleventh grade, Jake recently wrote, sharing how he got started teaching the gospel using *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* in his middle and high school Bible clubs.

“In seventh grade we had 15 to 25 kids come to our Bible club after school. During this time we gave out about 10 GoodSeed books to the kids who wanted them. Each week we asked them to read a chapter, then we would talk about it. Throughout the year I would lead a discussion on what they thought about the book or any questions they had about the book. This was very effective because I could talk to kids more one-on-one about the book and how it applies to us today.”

The following year, the school schedule changed—with an unexpected result:

“It ended up that I was teaching 90-100 kids every week. This was so unexpected that I didn’t know what to do. But what kept coming back to my mind was that you can’t over-teach the gospel. And the best, simplest way to do that was to go through *The Stranger* again.”

The previous year, Jake and his fellow leaders had simply given away books to those who requested them, but with numbers more than quadrupled, this was now a challenging prospect. About 50 of the students expressed interest in receiving a copy. Jake explained how the Lord provided: “God was working wonders because two teachers bought those 50 books so that each kid could get one even if they couldn’t afford it.”

“Each week we went chapter by chapter. I would read each chapter twice and take notes before teaching. Then I would go through and teach one chapter a week and every three to four weeks I would bring in a guest speaker to talk about that week’s chapter. For example, I had my brother Benjamin come in, then my dad, my uncle and local youth pastors. One

What kept coming back to my mind was that you can’t over-teach the gospel.

of those pastors was my cousin who summed the whole book up at the end of the year.”

Jake shared that they had a good response to the teaching. A large number, made up of both believers and unbelievers, came regularly each week.

“This book is just so unique because it is a clear presentation of the gospel that is simple enough to share with middle schoolers, yet in-depth enough that an adult could learn tons from it,” Jake wrote. “One conversation I really remember was with one kid who was two years younger. He came up to me after we went through the chapter on Christ and he asked me all of these questions and he said, ‘I feel confident in my salvation now.’”

Jake went on to add: “This book was a great tool for me during this time. I also got to use it with one of my friends; this friend was seeking something out there. He just didn’t know what it was yet. So I gave him the book and each time he read a chapter, we would talk about it and its significance.” This happened a few times, though Jake made sure his friend knew

This book ... is simple enough to share with middle schoolers, yet in-depth enough that an adult could learn tons from it.

that this book simply helped us understand the Bible and in no way could replace the Bible. Jake wanted him to understand that it was God’s Word that was the important book to study. Jake went on to share, “God worked in his life and now this friend is a youth leader at a local church.”

When asked what advice he could offer to other students who might want to try something similar, Jake wrote, “If I was to give advice to someone on how to do this, I would say just pray about it as much as possible and make sure your relationship with God is strong, then everything else will fall in place. That is what my brother always tells me. Sometimes

I don't take it to heart as much as I should, but it really is so true, and the biggest thing is having a relationship with God."

Indeed, God is blessing Jake's willingness to be obedient. Who knows the fruit yet to be harvested as God blesses the seeds planted by Jake and his brother Benjamin.

1 Timothy 4:15-16

Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.



Preacher, can you help me?

It was a warm Sunday in late fall. The church service was over, and Pastor Sam, his wife Karen, and their seven children enjoyed some time of fellowship with their friends before piling into the van. Sixteen-year-old Andrew hopped into the driver's seat of the big 15-passenger van, and Sam settled into the front passenger seat. They only lived a few miles from church, but every little bit of driving practice was good experience for Andrew. Once Karen and the children were settled in, Andrew drove out of the parking lot and onto the highway. It was little Stephanie's fourth birthday, and they were looking forward to an afternoon party at home with family and friends.

One moment there were the happy sounds of the children talking, then CRASH! The deafening screech of tires was followed instantly by the sickening sound of crunching metal. The children erupted in screams. Sam was disoriented but regained his senses quickly. Glancing back, he was shocked to discover the front of a black pickup actually in the van! It had smashed through the two back doors.

The two-vehicle wreck came to a shuddering halt in the ditch. The jolt had broken Sam's seat, but he was thankful he was unhurt. Before he had time to check on his family, the black pickup's driver was at Sam's door.

**You've been drinking.
You could've killed us!**

The man released a torrent of desperate words, culminating with a wail, "What have I done?!" The driver was hysterical.

Sam recognized him. He was Brad Young, a town drunk. And it was obvious that Brad recognized Sam. He was well-known and loved both by those in the church and the community.

Karen clambered out of the van to speak to Brad. "You've been drinking. You could've killed us!"

Nine-year-old Madison was crying in the back seat. Her head had been hit by a flying toy. Sam ignored Brad for a moment to check on his family. Thank God there were no serious injuries. Then Sam heard hollering from the ditch.

"Is the preacher still there? Where's the preacher? Can the preacher talk to me? Please, I need help!"

Sam found Brad rolling around in the ditch in a fetal position. "Please, preacher, can you help me?"

Though intoxicated, Brad was alert enough to realize what he had done. He knew this crash meant jail time for him. He grasped at straws, pleading with Sam. "Can you help me?"

"Brad, of course I'll help you, but I need you to know that change can only come through Jesus." Pastor Sam didn't mince words. He shared what he could of the gospel, but within

minutes, the ambulance showed up. Once the police arrived, Brad was taken into custody. He was not only very drunk, but had been driving at over 110 mph (177 kmh). As Brad was led away, Sam assured him that he would go to see him.

A week later, Brad was released on bail. Sam visited him on his first day out. Brad was floored that Sam would actually come and see him after everything that had happened. He'd thought he would never be able to show his face in public again. After all, he had almost killed the community's pastor and family. Sam talked with Brad about forgiveness, and assured him that his whole family freely forgave him for what he had done.

Sam had gone through a TERM Seminar and ever since then, he'd been using GoodSeed resources in his church. He offered to go through the interactive edition of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* with Brad. Brad was more than willing. His probation officer had wanted Brad to get into a secular rehabilitation program as soon as possible, but Brad asked if he could meet with Sam instead.

"You mean the guy you ran into? You've got to be kidding." The probation officer simply couldn't believe that Sam would really be interested in meeting with the man who had been responsible for the accident. She called Sam to clarify, and Sam assured her that he was more than willing to meet with Brad

The probation officer couldn't believe that Sam would be interested in meeting with the man responsible for the accident.

and that, as a family, they had fully forgiven him. Sam used the opportunity to share the gospel with the officer, telling her about God's forgiveness.

Brad simply couldn't get enough! ... the lights had started to go on for him.

Brad was starving for spiritual things. At his first session with Sam, they spent five and a half hours reading

and discussing *The Stranger*. They continued twice a week, meeting for two to three hours each time. Brad simply couldn't get enough! It was as though the lights had started to go on for him. He had so many questions and Sam answered each one.

During one session when they were near the end of the book, Sam was explaining more about faith and trust. He reviewed how being righteous before God wasn't about a person's actions or about keeping rules. Instead, it was trusting in what Jesus had accomplished on the cross. Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient to take care of a person's sin problem. Sam linked it to the illustration from the Old Testament of the blood sacrifice covering a person's sin.

Brad stopped Sam and said, "That is exactly what I believe! I believe that!" The lights of understanding and personal faith had dawned.

A month later, Brad stood up in Sam's church and was baptized upon confession of his faith in Jesus. He had become a faithful attendee at church, bringing his children with him, and he continues to learn what it means to take God at his word in his new-found life of faith.

Sam still has weekly Bible studies with Brad and now Brad's wife has tentatively started to attend as well. Brad is the only believer in his family, but his transformed life is a testimony to the power of the gospel. But it is not just his family who has seen it. Sam was able to get Brad into community service instead of jail time, and seeing Sam and Brad working together in town has made a profound impact on the whole town. Complete strangers from other states have called Sam to ask about the car wreck, the subsequent Bible studies, and Brad's changed life. It was through one of these contacts that a man was so blessed and encouraged by the testimony that he and his friends sent enough money to purchase a replacement vehicle for Sam's family as well as pay for a family holiday.

Brad's probation officer has also seen the remarkable change in Brad. She recently called Sam to ask if he would be willing to take another alcoholic through the same study.

Sam told her, "I'm not a counsellor and I don't do therapy. But I give Jesus and his Word. It's all about God and it's only Jesus who will save and change him." Time will tell whether this second man will be willing to sit down with Sam and discover the liberating truth of the gospel as well.

Sam's thrill is to teach believers and see them gain a sure footing on Scripture through

systematic, foundational creation-to-Christ resources. "It is incredibly profitable for their growth and learning about

Complete strangers from other states have called to ask about Brad's changed life.

their God,” he says. For Brad, that clear teaching has meant his salvation from both a rough lifestyle of sin and an eternity separated from God.

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.



I know I've broken all ten commandments

As Philip walks down the corridor lit by harsh fluorescent lights, he quickly prays to prepare himself for what lies ahead. The prison guards are expressionless as they check him and his belongings. Satisfied that he is clean, they open the heavy gate and let him through.

Another guard leads the way. Philip knows his way around the prison but understands this is protocol. In this higher security facility, Philip is not allowed to bring in any books, papers or visual aids. All he has is what's in his head and the set of DVDs he is carrying with him.

He is ushered into a spartan room with tables and chairs. At the front is a TV set and DVD player which he quickly sets up. Before too long, a door on the far end of the room opens, and inmates shuffle into the room. Philip looks up and smiles broadly at them. They smile back.

"Hello again," he greets them. "Shall we continue with our study?"

Prison ministry is hard work. Philip faces men of every kind, men who have committed every conceivable crime—and

others which are inconceivable. These are men who have made a string of poor choices and have seen the worst of life. For many, they've hit rock bottom and they don't have any expectation of anything better. For them, this is the end. There is no hope. But Philip wants to tell them of the hope that God is offering to everyone.

They come to class and sit easily in their chairs, listening. They don't argue because they're learning.

Philip conducts Worldview Rethink courses in all kinds of prisons—from medium to maximum security correctional facilities. In medium security prisons, he is able to hand out

the interactive edition of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* as well as use the workbook. In situations where security is stricter, not only is he barred from handing out books but he also isn't allowed to take in any visual aids. Prison authorities mention how even simple staples can be twisted into sharp points which, when stuck into the eraser ends of pencils, become transformed into weapons. In such tight security settings, Philip relies on the use of *The Stranger* videobook or teaches from memory.

"This study is beautiful," he says, referring to the Worldview Rethink curriculum. He tells the men in the study, "I'm not here to argue with you. I just want to tell you what the Bible says. I'm just sharing." Because the study itself strives to be objective, it disarms the men. They come to class and sit easily in their chairs, listening. They don't argue because they're learning.

“It’s a lot of trial and error to find out what works in prison ministries,” explains Philip. “The videobook is my greatest asset. The on-location video clips have a real impact as the men realize that the stories in the Bible happened in real time, in real places.”

If the prison authorities give permission, and with the blessing of the prison chaplains, Philip will hand out copies of the interactive edition and workbooks to the men. Often, chaplains will assist by being his co-teacher. One chaplain he knows well enjoys covering the workbook sections with the class after each video segment. The chaplain goes through it question by question, checking to see if the men are tracking along.

When he can, Philip also brings in the visual aids. The tabernacle model is very helpful. And the rubber rat is one of the best visual aids. “It’s been one of the most powerful representations of sin,” Philip notes. “It’s driven home how God views sin.”

The on-location video clips have a real impact as the men realize that the stories in the Bible happened in real time, in real places.

The study brings out many questions that the men often wonder about and Philip is glad for the opportunity to answer them.

Once, a prisoner asked, “Just because of my parents’ sin, I sin?”

Philip explained, “You’re responsible for your sin, but you inherited a sin nature.”

On another occasion, a prisoner asked, "I thought God was a loving God."

Philip nodded in agreement. "Yes he is, but you need to understand that God is also just. We'll be finding out later what God does for mankind to resolve this dilemma."

It's this hope of seeing how God will help them that keeps the men coming back to the study each week. Because many of the men only have a 45 minute attention span, Philip finds that reviews are necessary.

They are intensely interested in learning how God deals with the Israelites when they fail to keep the Law he has given them.

One part of the curriculum that makes the men sit up is the section on the Law. They've faced the law in their country and are suffering the consequences of failing to keep the law. So, they are intensely

interested in learning how God deals with the Israelites when they fail to keep the Law he has given them. At this point in the narrative, the story seems quite hopeless but Philip reminds them good news is coming.

The approach the curriculum takes has been valuable in helping explain the gospel. There's no arm-twisting, no proselytizing. Philip says, "It simply presents the truth. I tell the class, 'I believe every word in the Bible, but now you have the chance to know what it says and decide for yourselves whether or not you believe it.'"

Philip prepares for the studies using the leader's guide. Sometimes he feels like he's "cheating" because of all the built-in helps that make it easy for him. However, he doesn't bring the guide to the studies because he wants to model for the men how they can simply use their books to guide a friend through the gospel message.

In some of his studies, the class starts small. But word soon spreads that it's an interesting learning experience and then it grows and grows. Some classes

have 50 attendees. The largest number he has taught was 90 men! Word even gets around to other correctional facilities and Philip now finds himself doing as many as five studies a week in different prisons.

The most moving moments are at the end of the study when men come up to him and tell him how the course has changed their lives. They've come not only to understand the gospel message, but also to the point of trusting Jesus for eternal life. For Philip, seeing the Lord bring these men to salvation is why he keeps doing the studies. These are men whose lives are in abeyance but, after understanding the gospel, they now have a hope that will sustain them for the rest of their lives. Whenever he's on the road, shuttling from prison to prison, he encourages himself by bringing to mind some of the testimonies he's received. One inmate had told Philip, "I've broken all ten commandments. But I

After understanding the gospel, they now have a hope that will sustain them for the rest of their lives.

know that Jesus died for me. I know he has paid the price for me." It's testimonies like these that keep him faithful to his task.

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful on the mountains

are the feet of those who bring good news,

who proclaim peace,

who bring good tidings,

who proclaim salvation,

who say to Zion,

"Your God reigns!"



He was contemplating suicide that very morning

Some years ago, 19-year-old Reuben attended a Bible study. He was not a believer but he wanted to learn the message of the Bible. He was given a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* and, over a number of weeks, was taught the gospel message. At the end of the study, he put his trust in Christ for salvation.

After telling his family that he was now a believer, his younger brother Conner became very spiteful and gave Reuben a nasty time. Though this caused Reuben to struggle with his faith, he never gave up what he believed. In the meantime, Conner simply made things worse. He terrorized his brother, both verbally and physically. What Reuben didn't know at the time was that Conner was struggling to find any meaning in his life.

One morning, Reuben found his brother upstairs, sitting with his head in his hands. Reuben paused at this sight, unsure what to do. Feeling led to go over to his younger brother, he spoke to him gently.

"Conner, these past weeks... I know you've been very hard on me, but I want you to know that I'm at absolute peace with what I believe and I know that it's true."

To his surprise, Conner began to cry. It wasn't the reaction he expected and he wondered what he should do. Little did he know that Conner was in a dark place, contemplating suicide that very morning.

Reuben hurried to his room and returned with his copy of *The Stranger*. He offered it to his brother, saying, "If you want to understand what I understand, then you need to read this book."

Through tear-filled eyes, Conner took the book and went to his room. As Conner would later reveal, he sat on his bed and read through the book, cover to cover. Then he read it again. And again. Over the next few days, he read it a total of five times, beginning to end. Finally, he understood the message of hope and, like his older brother, he placed his trust in Jesus.

That dark morning was more than a decade ago. Since then, the light of truth and hope has entered into Conner's heart. From a suicidal teenage boy, he has grown into a man who walks closely with the Lord. In fact, to see him today, one would not imagine he was once a suicidal young man. As a friend described him, "Conner is on fire for the Lord. He is an amazing witness and always ready to share the gospel."

Hebrews 7:25

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.



Sometimes it takes many believers

The journey of a person from knowing nothing about the God of the Bible to being able to put one's trust in him for salvation takes many forms. Sometimes, it's a straightforward journey; other times, it takes many believers along the way, each providing another piece of the puzzle—explaining a little more about who Jesus Christ is and what he accomplished on the cross for all people.

During a long journey, Jian Hui met Nick and Lisa, a missionary couple on their way to Southeast Asia. They had a wonderful chat and agreed to keep in touch via email. Nick and Lisa wrote about their lives and Jian Hui described hers.

She revealed that she had gone to take up an internship in the US. Prior to her trip, she knew nothing about Christianity or the Bible. However, soon after her arrival, she started attending a nearby church because she wanted to learn more about American culture. She ended up in a Bible study group hosted by an elderly couple. She grew close to them and treated them like her own grandparents. Jian Hui related that she studied the Bible in English with the elderly lady and learned a lot from her.

Later on, she met some Chinese Christians and they took her to a Chinese church. Though she continued attending the English church, she found her understanding of the Bible growing by leaps and bounds now that she was learning it in her heart language. She related to Nick and Lisa that she was touched by what she was learning. She revealed that she had always believed there was a God overseeing her life but she had no idea who or what he was. Once she started learning what the Bible had to say, she found the God who was in control of everything. She understood enough to put her faith in Christ for salvation.

Immediately, she began to think of her family. She told Nick and Lisa she was doing her best to explain the good news to her parents and they have been open to learning the truth.

To help Jian Hui, Nick and Lisa sent her a Chinese edition of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. Jian Hui read it with interest. She wrote to Nick:

“Thank you again for your helpful book. Now I can explain many tough questions to unbelievers after reading the book. I’ll keep reading it and learn more from it.”

She was learning it in her heart language.

Jian Hui had started with no knowledge of God and now was a believer seeking to explain the gospel to her family. The change God has worked in her life has been so remarkable that her family certainly took note. In fact, when Nick and Lisa were in China on a trip, they managed to meet up with Jian Hui’s cousin. He remarked to Nick that the family had noticed the positive changes in

Jian Hui and were moved to learn more about her faith. Nick and Lisa also left him with a copy of *The Stranger* in Chinese and he promised to read it.

What a remarkable story of faithful believers who do not know each other, each having a role in helping Jian Hui come to faith in Christ. Not only that, God is making such a change in Jian Hui that her family—even a cousin—can notice the transformation. Praise God for what he has done. And pray with us that Jian Hui's family will soon come to faith as well.

Now I can
explain many
tough questions
to unbelievers.

Romans 10:14-15

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?... As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"



This simple, unassuming book changed my life

A while ago, we received an email from Hayden who lives down under in Australia. His story was a good reminder of two important factors in our outreach with others. First, our testimony in a community really does have an impact—for better or for worse. Second, we were reminded that simply giving a book away can also make a big difference in a person's life.

Hayden shared how he had grown up attending church with his family, one of the few in his small community. While he was taught a lot about the Bible, he found himself ultimately rejecting God's Word based upon what he saw in the lives of his fellow church members.

"I didn't see the face of Christ in that place and the fruitlessness—in both numbers and maturity—was very confusing."

Because the truths of the Bible didn't seem to be working in either his own life or in the lives of those around him, Hayden found himself spurning its message.

Then at the age of 21, Hayden was handed a book. "I was given a copy of *The Stranger*. The simple, unassuming and authoritative

nature of the book changed my life and gave me—for the first time—an understanding of the redemption story.”

Since then, Hayden has taken others through the message found in *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*, finding it effective with both believers and unbelievers.

In his email, Hayden shared how both his and his wife’s grandfathers were failing in health. Both were very hostile to the message of the Bible and refused to have any conversation about it. Hayden shared how he hoped they would be receptive to receiving copies of *The Stranger* to read on their own.

Hayden knows from personal experience that sometimes the Lord uses such simple acts of obedience to bring about a big change—a change that can make a difference for eternity.

Hebrews 10:23-25

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



These are miracles for us

Ada and Konrad told our German staff, “These are miracles that we’ve personally experienced... we can only marvel at them!”

Konrad is the principal of a school in a German city. Though it is a Christian school, he could clearly see that many of the students and their families had little understanding of the Bible. He wondered how he could help them know God better and understand the gospel message.

He recalled how he and his wife, Ada, had gone through a Bible study that used the German edition of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus—Der Fremde auf dem Weg nach Emmaus*. That course had helped them both in their faith, and now Ada was regularly leading ladies’ studies with it. Konrad began informing the students’ mothers about Ada’s studies. Were they interested in attending?

They were! Thus it was that Ada began leading a study with a group of mothers on Fridays. While their children attended a Sunday school program, the ladies met to study *Der Fremde*. They did this regularly and, by the end of the book, nearly

all of the women put their trust in Jesus and they began to tell others about the study. Praising the Lord for what he had done and encouraged to go on, Ada started a second study, this time including relatives and friends of the original ladies.

Seeing how well her studies were going, Konrad began to offer the fathers the same opportunity. Several of the men signed up and Konrad began leading a men's study. Among that first group was Konrad's friend. Konrad was happy to see that by the end of the study, he had come to faith in Jesus for salvation.

Konrad and Ada related that many of those who attended the studies knew very little about the Bible. Many had grown up without having seen one. But through the step-by-step approach of *Der Fremde*, a foundation of understanding was laid that allowed the study participants to learn who the God of the Bible is. Konrad and Ada know it isn't their ability or know-how that made the difference. They simply taught as they had been taught and they only had to marvel at God's saving work. Their summary of it all: "It is so exciting and they are all so precious!"

Acts 18:25-26

[Apollos] spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.



Three churches reach their communities

Holidays are excellent times to reach out in a community. Many churches do this through concerts, productions and other special events. But such occasions are dependent upon members of the community being willing to darken the doorway of a church, and often many aren't willing.

Some time back, we received a report about three churches who wished to bless their towns in a practical way by providing them with a clear gospel presentation.

Located in a rural area, these churches were the gospel witness to two small towns. They'd heard of the booklet *What are Christmas and Easter all About?* and felt that the book's explanation of the gospel was both concise and clear. By reading the small booklet, a person could come to a good understanding of the gospel. And because it was priced to be given away in large quantities, purchasing a large number only required a modest budget.

The church groups had three specific goals as they set out on this journey. First, they knew God had called them to reach out to their neighbours with a missionary spirit. God had not

meant for them just to extend an invitation and expect the world to show up; they were to actively reach out into their world and share the gospel. These believers had a desire to be obedient to the Lord in this way, specifically desiring to reach both towns in their entirety. With such a tool as *Christmas & Easter*, they felt this goal was very achievable. They determined that they would assemble in a bag the booklet with some church-related information. Then, in one evening, they would hang a bag on the door of each household of the two towns.

Secondly, they wanted to cooperate together to make their communities aware of the programs available to them through these churches. One church had a strong ministry to young children; another had developed a thriving outreach to seniors; and the third had built up a strong youth group. A flyer was created to highlight these ministries as well as others. Also included was contact information and service times for each church.

The third goal was to involve as many as possible from each congregation, with an emphasis on the youth. Children aged ten and up were organized into small groups of two or three. The plan was to have one or two adults accompany each group as they distributed the bags.

A question they had to consider was, "How many households are we looking to reach?" The information was easily learned through the local newspaper office, which was happy to provide exact numbers as well as details regarding its paper routes. This was a huge help for the churches to efficiently make their deliveries.

Finally the night came, a cold wintry evening at the end of November. Dozens of individuals, young and old, began

their routes. One church family, who lived in a centralized location, opened their home to those making deliveries. It became not only a place to stop and enjoy some hot chocolate, but it provided a natural impetus for giving quick reports to an appreciative audience. Excited teenagers and their adult chaperones came and went all evening, telling of barking dogs, the blackness of the night and the excitement of being a part of something much larger than themselves. Despite the cold and dark, each one was serious about the mission and committed to finishing the job. One teenager said in a moment of quiet revelation, “We’re missionaries, you know!” This was the Great Commission in action and each was thrilled to be a part.

One teenager said in a moment of quiet revelation, “We’re missionaries, you know!”

In all, the three churches delivered 1300 bags to the two communities. That meant 1300 homes received a gospel presentation. Many booklets were read. Others were put away on bookshelves, perhaps to be re-discovered later as the Lord prompts hearts. Some may have been tossed aside. Regardless, each church member came away with the confidence that they had been obedient to the Lord. They had spread the seed of God’s Word; now, it was time to pray and see what the Lord would do in each home.

Slowly, encouraging reports began to surface about the impact of the outreach. One elderly congregant, Edith, related a conversation she had with a neighbour a couple of weeks later. The lady expressed a real fear of death. But then she made an observation about Edith, “You’re not afraid to die, are you?”

"I'm not eager to die, but no, I'm not afraid of it either," was the calm response.

The lady confided, "I'm terrified of dying."

"Do you remember receiving a bag at your door a couple of weeks ago, with a booklet in it?" Edith asked. "Did you ever read that book?"

"No," her neighbour replied. She had tucked it away on the shelf with barely a glance. Edith assured her it would give her some answers about death and life after death.

A week later, Edith heard from her friend again. This time, a sense of relief and appreciation was expressed for the booklet the lady had received at her door. "Now I understand about death and life after death."

Other such encouraging stories continue to trickle in, demonstrating to those involved that the Lord is indeed at work. God is blessing their obedience and will be faithful to nurture the seeds that have been sown.

Ephesians 4:11-13

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.



That's not going to work

Anne grew up in a family that was fairly religious. Her mother would read and teach the Bible to her four children. Anne remembers Mom rousing the children early on Sunday mornings to get them ready for church service.

But as she grew up, Anne fell away from Sunday school and, by the time she reached high school, she had dropped out of church. The crowd she hung out with were troublemakers. They introduced her to alcohol and she ended up getting into trouble with the law. Though there were people who cared enough to ask her why she was walking this path, she turned a deaf ear to them. She simply didn't care to listen or to change.

As an adult, Anne married twice, ending up with a daughter and five step-children. With so many young ones to care for, she tried to clean up her life. Anne modelled her mother's behaviour—she took the children to church, started reading her Bible and did her best to be a good person.

When her daughter was baptised, Anne felt a strong desire to find God. But how? She had thought that being a good person—helping others and doing good things—would make

her acceptable in God's eyes. But there was a nagging doubt in the pit of her stomach that she wasn't succeeding. However she didn't know where to find answers.

Ann was puzzled. Then tragedy struck—one of her stepsons died. At his funeral, Anne
What other way was there? was re-acquainted with old friends, a dear couple named Steve and Mavis. Anne took the opportunity to tell Mavis about her life and her search for God.

When she explained how she was trying hard to be good enough to please God, Mavis told her, "That's not going to work." Anne was puzzled. What other way was there?

Mavis saw that her friend was confused. So she asked, "Would you like to do a Bible study with me?"

Anne nodded. Having made arrangements to meet, Mavis began to take Anne through the Worldview Rethink curriculum. She began explaining to Anne what God was like. She walked Anne through creation, showing how man was created innocent, but then how his nature had become corrupt because of sin. All men are "in Adam" (Romans 5:12) because all have inherited his sin nature.

Though Anne had some Bible background, this was the first time she was grasping these truths. She was only partway through the book when John Cross, the author of *The Stranger*, came to speak at the church she was attending. He explained how people were all "in Adam" and helpless to save themselves because of their sin nature. But because of what Jesus did on

the cross—dying on mankind’s behalf, people everywhere could now put their trust in him and move from being “in Adam” to become one who is “in Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:22). In other words, a person is declared righteous in God’s eyes because of faith in Jesus Christ.

This was the moment when the gospel clicked into focus for Anne. She understood for the first time! It wasn’t her effort that made her look good before God, it was what Jesus did on her behalf. She just had to trust in who he was, and what he had done for her.

“Only trusting in Christ could save me, and this understanding was cemented in me when John Cross came to teach,” she later related. “I realized that day, I wanted to be in Christ, not in Adam. I prayed for forgiveness and asked Jesus to save me.”

That was the day when life turned around for Anne. She went on to finish studying *The Stranger* with Mavis and she continues today to study the

She just had to trust in who Jesus was, and what he had done for her.

Scriptures regularly. She is growing in her knowledge and understanding of God. On the morning of her baptism, Anne stood up in the front of the church to share her testimony. Speaking with a voice brimming with emotion, she said, “My baptism today is the day that I let everyone know that I’m a believer in Jesus Christ our Saviour and that I’m trusting him alone to save me and that, one day, I will see him.”

There is so much rejoicing for Anne. She had found how to be reconciled with God. Through a tragedy, the Lord had brought back into her life two faithful friends. And Mavis, being caring and alert, took the time to lay a biblical foundation for Anne so she could understand the gospel.

Ephesians 2:4-7

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.



Just throw me down the stairs

Candice's emotional life was in a free fall. Her thoughts were consumed by wanting to escape from work and from her life. One day at work she approached a flight of stairs. Glancing down at the steps before her, Candice turned to her co-worker and said, "Just throw me down the stairs!"

She got her wish the next day when she fractured her tailbone while snowboarding. Her injury gave her time to reflect on her life. For months now, she had been a zombie at her workplace. To protect herself, she realized she had "turned off" her emotions every time she was at work. Now Candice discovered that she could not turn them back on. She felt she was becoming a robot, at risk of losing all her humanity. Candice was in complete misery. She felt trapped, with no way out.

Her best friend, Renee, was well aware of her fragile emotional state. She invited Candice out for dinner and after the meal, they took Candice's dog out for a long walk. As they wended their way through the neighbourhood streets, Renee spoke.

"You know how much I care about you—how much I love you, right?" said Renee. Candice wasn't sure where Renee

was headed with the conversation but she continued to listen. Renee mentioned how she had observed Candice's depression and wanted to offer her hope.

By trusting in the God of the Bible, you can find peace in the midst of the storm.

"Do you know Jesus Christ?" asked Renee. Candice's eyebrows knitted together in puzzlement. She really had no idea where Renee was headed

with their talk. Why was she bringing up this Jesus? Who was he? What did he have to do with her problems?

Renee began to explain who Jesus was, providing her friend with essential information that is often termed as the irreducible minimums of the gospel. She explained first about God's holy character and then how people, who were God's creation, had been separated from him because of sin.

Renee asked her friend, "Have you ever lied, stolen or hated? I've done these things, too." She went on to explain that these sins had separated her from God. But Renee had learned that God offered a way of reconciliation, a way that can lead to peace.

"Would you like to have your heavy burden lifted? You can trust God to help you. It wouldn't be easy and things won't change suddenly overnight, but by trusting in the God of the Bible, you can find peace in the midst of the storm."

Candice listened but didn't quite understand all that Renee was saying. This was all new information for her. She had never heard of the things that Renee was talking about. Her family had no religious background. She knew nothing about

Christianity. Holidays like Christmas had no significance for her. And what was this peace that Renee was speaking of? For so much of her life, Candice had struggled to find happiness and peace. Joy was ephemeral and Candice felt the weight of the world on her shoulders.

As Candice's house came into view, Renee asked, "If I gave you a book, would you read it? It explains in greater detail what I've tried to talk about this evening."

"Sure," Candice responded.

Renee gave her a copy of *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus*. Candice found it fascinating, because everything in it was completely new to her. Then she hit a road bump in her reading. She got to chapter eight and learned about the Ten Commandments for the first time. She had a hard time reading through this section. God's standard of perfection dealt her a blow. She felt devastated. She called Renee and told her how upset she felt.

**I volunteer, I'm selfless.
I'm good to my friends,
good to my family. But
at this moment, I realize
I am a sinner.**

"I cannot believe what a horrible person I am! I thought I was a good person. I volunteer, I'm selfless. I'm good to my friends, good to my family. But at this moment, I realize I am a sinner."

After this realization hit her, Candice put the book aside. She could not read on. It was easier not to face what the Bible was saying about people's hearts—about her heart.

Renee sent a text message some time later. "How's the book going? Do you have any questions?"

That message jolted Candice. She realized she never found out the rest of the message of hope. She was determined to finish God's story. She picked up the book once more and read it till the end. She closed the book and set it aside again. She believed she understood what she had read, but she wasn't ready to accept it.

It wasn't until her grandpa ended up in the hospital that she started praying to the God of the Bible, asking for understanding. Her grandpa's illness resulted in death and Candice took his passing extremely hard. She felt desperate.

Picking up the phone, she called Renee. "Could I come to church with you?" she asked.

Renee gladly welcomed the request. A couple of Sundays later, the pastor approached Candice to introduce himself.

She believed she understood what she had read, but she wasn't ready to accept it.

"Hi! I'm Pastor Daniel," he said. They started a conversation and he asked her what church she attended.

"Um, I don't," was Candice's honest reply. He nodded and continued the conversation. He asked about her

and she found herself opening up. The more they talked, the more she felt that he was talking right to her soul. He understood the struggles she was going through. In fact, he described his own similar journey of pain and darkness. Candice was shocked that he, a pastor, knew exactly how

she felt. When the conversation ended, she realized they had talked for close to three hours. Candice cried during the entire journey home.

A week later, Candice called Renee. "I'm ready," she announced. "I want salvation but I'm nervous. Can you come and share this moment with me?" Renee was more than delighted. She joined Candice and watched as her friend put her trust in Jesus for salvation. She listened as Candice prayed, asking Jesus for forgiveness.

Now a believer, Candice discovered life was ... still quite difficult. But for the first time in her life, she saw her situation with clarity. In some ways, life hurt more. People whom she thought were her friends turned out not to be. But she found she could forgive them, now that she herself had found forgiveness. At long last, she had found true peace.

I want salvation but I'm nervous. Can you come and share this moment with me?

As she put it, "I was unaware that anyone could feel this much happiness, especially me. I could not stop smiling because I don't have a reason not to. Since I've been saved, I feel incredibly blessed to see how the Lord is working in my life."

Candice now came to see that living a life without the Lord had no purpose. But by trusting him, her life took on meaning and direction. She expressed it this way:

"I look forward to serving him every step of the way and I cannot wait to see how he continues to work in my life."

God worked a miracle in Candice's life, giving her hope, peace and meaning. In the course of this miracle, he used the efforts of Renee and Pastor Daniel, both of whom were faithful in sharing with Candice the gospel message and who both spent time to help Candice. Thank God for such ambassadors.

Romans 8:15-17

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Be ready to share the gospel

Scripture advises us to “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).

While many of us would like to share the good news, the reality is that not all of us feel gifted at it. Most of us really just don’t know what to do or say.

In this book, we have encountered regular believers who, in the course of their everyday lives, shared the gospel with friends, loved ones and even perfect strangers. How did they do it? All of them did one of two things: give or guide. Both are doable. Both are easy. Both can be done by most people. People just like you and me.

Would you, too, like to prepare yourself to be ready to share the gospel?

GIVE AWAY THE GOSPEL

Just give away a book.

Our resources are deliberately designed to explain the gospel clearly, even to those who have had no exposure to the Bible. Giving a book allows a person to take the time to learn the gospel message at his own pace, in the privacy of his home. Alternatively, if your friend is not a keen reader, you can give him a videobook to watch.

Give the gospel to unbelievers, so they can gain a clear understanding of the message. Also give a book to believers and they can refresh themselves in the good news or use it to disciple others.

Prepare a “Be Ready Box”

Have a box of gospel tools ready to be given away. We call this your “Be Ready Box.” It is just a place for you to store your giveaway tools. It can be:



- A sturdy cardboard box.
- A padded zipper pouch for your work bag.
- Your glove compartment.
- A convenient shelf at home.

To fill your Be Ready Box, think of the type of people you come across in your daily life, and then pick out a number of tools that will be helpful for them. Aside from resources in your community’s primary language, include translations that are meaningful to those you may encounter. For example, if there are people in your neighbourhood with an Asian or Middle Eastern background, you may want to include Arabic, Chinese or Korean translations.

Put your Be Ready Box in a place where you will have opportunity to meet people, have conversations and give away the gospel. A few places or scenarios you can consider:

- Near the main entryway of your home for salesmen, neighbours and friends who may drop by.

- In your car for your server at the restaurant or service staff at the gas station or auto shop.
- In your backpack for times when you are riding the bus, train or plane and are able to get into conversation with a fellow passenger.
- On a shelf in the office for co-workers and business partners.

The next time God gives you the opportunity to give away the gospel, grab one of these prepared resources from your Be Ready Box and pray that God will use it to reach the recipient.

GUIDE SOMEONE THROUGH THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Just read a GoodSeed book with a friend

Some people feel there is absolutely no way they can teach a friend about the Bible. They have not done it before, they are shy or they are not experienced teachers.

However, we like to say, “If you can read, you can lead.” You can guide any one of your friends to a good understanding of the gospel if you make the time to sit and read with them. GoodSeed resources are designed to be read aloud, so you can read the text out loud while your friend reads the Bible verses.

Often, friends will find it easier to finish reading a book when they have someone to do it with. You can also check their understanding as you read together.

If you are apprehensive about reading aloud, an alternative is to watch *The Stranger* videobook together. Many people have found this method to be effective.

Use the Worldview Rethink Curriculum

If you would like more teaching support, you can use the Worldview Rethink curriculum. The leader's guide gives the leader a wealth of insight, teaching helps and beneficial suggestions gleaned from decades of experience.

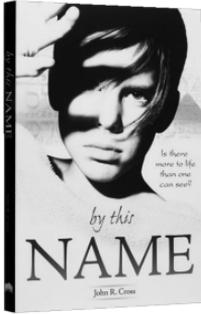
Here are a few ideas you may want to try:

- Lead a small group of youth or believers.
- Do a one-on-one study with a friend, family member or neighbour.
- As a couple, conduct a study with another couple.
- Invite newcomers in church to go through a study with you.
- Share with your co-workers at a lunchtime study.

PRAY FOR OPPORTUNITIES

After preparing yourself for giving and guiding, ask God for one person you can reach out to. And be on the lookout for the person God is sending your way. Do not be discouraged if this takes some time. Continue to be ready and continue to be watchful and perhaps you too will soon have a *Fieldnotes* story to share.

Featured Resources



BY THIS NAME

By This Name is our premier evangelism and discipleship resource and one that we would most recommend. In today's world, many adopt their own brand of spirituality to make God out to be anything they want. As believers, we often wonder how to respond to these assorted worldviews. *By This Name*

utilizes a seldom-used but solidly biblical method to set apart the God of the Bible from other forms of spirituality, all the while answering two questions: "Who is Jesus?" and "What are the cross and tomb all about?" It establishes the authority of Scripture and gently compares the biblical worldview with other worldviews in an objective, non-arm-twisting way. The interactive edition supplements the text with 66 video clips.

Similar resources are: *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* for people with a Christianized worldview. *All that the Prophets Have Spoken* for people with an Islamic worldview.

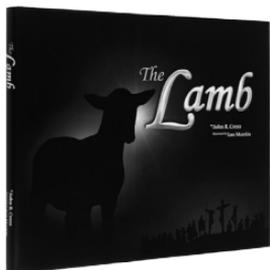


THE STORY THAT MATTERS

This small 64-page booklet can be read in under an hour. Designed to be handed out like a gospel tract, it explains the gospel in a chronological manner from creation to the cross. Using line art illustrations and carefully controlled text, the core message

of the Bible is explained in simple-to-understand English so that even someone with English as a second language can clearly understand. Used with appropriately captioned sleeves, it makes a good giveaway and can be used on different occasions. Visit our website for the sleeve templates and give away ideas. (We encourage those who read this booklet to move onto one of our more comprehensive resources such as *By This Name*.)

Similar resource: *What are Christmas and Easter all About?* has the same text as *The Story that Matters*, but with colour illustrations.



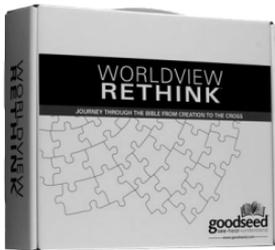
THE LAMB

Written for children ages five and up but perused and appreciated by all ages, *The Lamb* takes readers on a journey through the heart of the Bible's message. It explains the gospel accurately but simply, without watering down the details. Complemented by full-colour illustrations, *The Lamb* starts with the creation of the universe, explaining key biblical concepts: Who is God and what is he like? What is sin? Why do we need a Saviour? The book concludes with a clear explanation of the identity of Jesus and his amazing provision as our Saviour. Each book comes with an audio CD of the story.



THE STRANGER VIDEOBOOK

This is ideal for those who prefer to learn by watching. In this 11-hour video series, John Cross takes you on an unforgettable journey, bringing to life the greatest stories of the Bible. Filmed on location and in the classroom, the viewer is led through *The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus* with the use of over 70 visual aids. This works very well for guiding someone through the gospel when used with the companion workbook.



WORLDVIEW RETHINK

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

**For more information and to see
more resources, visit: goodseed.com**

About GoodSeed

GoodSeed International is an equipping ministry. We provide tools and training to enable believers to clearly and respectfully 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 a variety of resources for different needs and we provide both live and online training 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 of whom 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.

If you would like to support our staff or projects, please visit oneinsixty.com.

For more stories go to: goodseed.com/blog

Do you have a story to share?

Write to us at yourstories@goodseed.com

More stories to tell...

All around the world, ordinary believers are taking their roles as ambassadors for Christ seriously. In their everyday lives, they keep their eyes and ears open for opportunities to share the gospel message. Sometimes, the encounters are brief—all they do is give away a book. Other times, believers are given the time to lead a friend through a study. In many instances, these opportunities result in people coming to faith in Jesus Christ. We are thankful that these testimonies involving GoodSeed resources have come to us and we rejoice in what God has done.

This second volume of *Fieldnotes* shares more of these precious stories. Read them and be encouraged. Praise God and rejoice with us, and glean ideas on how you, too, can be an ambassador for Christ.

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