

LESSON **2** Be Prepared

Do you remember the day you started learning to read? You may have had a difficult time. At first you knew nothing about reading. Then you were taught to read the first letters of the alphabet. Soon you could read a word, then a sentence. Step by step you learned to read, until now it is a very natural thing.

Perhaps you remember also the time when you were being trained for your job. You did not learn everything in one day. You learned a little at a time. You practiced what you learned until you were able to do your work well. It is the same in your Christian witnessing. There is much to learn as you prepare to share Christ with others.

The Plan

- A. Learn to Know Christ
- B. Be Filled With the Spirit
- C. Use the Best Tools

The Goals

1. Explain how we can know Christ better.
2. Describe how the Holy Spirit can help you in personal evangelism.
3. Explain what tools are needed to resist the devil and share the good news about Jesus.

A. LEARN TO KNOW CHRIST

Goal 1. Explain how we can know Christ better.

You and I have been saved for a purpose. We have been called to witness, to share what the Lord has done in our lives. But before we can witness for Christ, we must learn to know Him personally. To know Him, it is necessary to spend time with Him. For how can we speak of someone we do not know?

It is true that Jesus sent His disciples into the whole world to spread the good news. But He told them to wait until they were fully prepared. And preparation takes time.

It may not take a lot of time to memorize certain Bible verses or to study ways to approach people. Watching how other workers have brought people to Christ may not take long. But learning to know Christ, to know the power of His resurrection and the depth of His love, requires spending time with the Lord.

We desire to know Him better when we are working for Him. The apostle Paul wrote about this to the Corinthian

church. He had made up his mind to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified. (See 1 Corinthians 2:2.)

The disciples also had their time of schooling. And this learning time was the key to their success in spreading the good news about Christ, their Lord. There is no doubt that from the very day Christ called His disciples, they believed in Him. It just takes a moment to believe in Jesus and to accept Him. But just as a baby cannot grow up and walk in one day, it took the disciples a long time to learn to know Jesus. It took all of their lives!

We read in the Bible that Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding ceremony. When His disciples saw this, they believed in Him. When He spoke to the wind and to the raging sea, the wind stopped blowing and the sea was quiet. His amazed disciples asked themselves, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” (Mark 4:41). They came to know Him better that day. They saw more of His power, and this knowledge of the unlimited power of their Lord gave them peace.

Later, at the closing of Jesus’ ministry on earth, many of His disciples left Him. But the 12 disciples who had come to know Him so well did not leave. Peter, on their behalf, told Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). This knowledge kept them close to their Lord.

Thomas, one of the disciples, was completely shocked by the death of Jesus, in whom he had believed. Overnight he became a confused doubter. He refused to accept the fact that Christ was risen from the dead. But when Christ showed himself to Thomas, he fell down and said, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). That personal knowledge of Christ drew Thomas closer to his Master.

Peter had seen all the splendor of Jesus on the mountain during the transfiguration (Luke 9:29). God had revealed to

Peter the true nature of His Son Jesus. Three times Peter was given a charge by Jesus to help other believers. He spoke with power and authority concerning Jesus' name. Yet he did not know the extent and the greatness of God's love. He did not know that God's love was for all people, no matter what their race or color. God had a hard time getting Peter to go to the house of Cornelius. It was not until then that Peter realized God treats everyone on the same basis (Acts 10:34).

Thus, it was through their continuing experience of being with Jesus, listening to Him, and talking with Him that the disciples got to know Him. We must learn to know Jesus in the same way before we can share Him with others.

Application

1 Circle the letters in front of the correct answers to this question: How can we best learn to know Christ?

- a)** Spend time with Him
- b)** Memorize facts
- c)** See how He worked in people's lives
- d)** Listen to Him
- e)** Talk to Him
- f)** Talk to people

2 List two things the disciples learned as they got to know Christ better?

They learned about His _____ and
His _____.

3 How long does it take someone to really know Christ?

.....



B. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Goal 2. Describe how the Holy Spirit can help you in personal evangelism.

You Need Power

To see results in our personal service for Christ, we need power. Before Christ could start His ministry, He was given the power of the Holy Spirit. (See Luke 4:18.) Christ knew that His disciples would face difficulties and would need help. Before leaving them to go back to His Father, He promised the disciples, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit has been sent to give us boldness and power. He helps us in our daily personal witness for Christ.

When I was a college student, my country experienced a great revival. On weekends, we would go out to witness. We saw many churches grow, and many new ones were started. It was the power of the Holy Spirit that caused this to happen.

So how can you be filled with the Holy Spirit? Simply open your heart before the Lord. Tell Him of your weakness and of your desire to share His good news with others. He will fill you with His Spirit and power, and you will know the joy of being well equipped for the task. This promise is for ALL who believe in Jesus Christ. (See Acts 2:1–4, 39.)

Application

Choose the correct answer from the two given in the parentheses, and write it in the blank space.

4 The result of being filled with the Holy Spirit is that we receive

..... and we become
(power/good news)

effective
(apostles/witnesses).

5Christ told His disciples to wait until they were filled with the Spirit. He did this because He knew they would have

..... and would need help.
 (more fun/problems)

You Need Leading

The command of Jesus is to go throughout the whole world. His working field is large. To avoid wasting time, we need the leading or guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus assures His disciples that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will lead them into all the truth (John 16:13).

People everywhere want direction. Some turn to their dead ancestors for leading. Others are trying to find direction from the stars, the horoscope, fortune-telling, or other means. But as we look for places to serve Him, our leading comes from God. No matter where He leads us, we can know that it is right, for He is the way.

The Holy Spirit leads believers to the right people at the right time. For instance, Philip the evangelist was led by the Spirit to a hungry, seeking man in the wilderness (Acts 8:29). The apostle Paul was led by the Spirit to the right place so that he could hear the cry of the man from Macedonia and help him (Acts 16:9). So many other believers throughout time have ministered to lost and hurting people because of the Holy Spirit's leading in their lives.

In 1921, the Holy Spirit led the first Assemblies of God missionaries to the West African country of Sierra Leone. From there they moved across French-speaking Guinea, through Mali, and into the heart of West Africa to Burkina Faso. If the Holy Spirit had not preceded these missionaries, the gospel would not have been spread to many people in Burkina Faso and neighboring countries who believed and accepted Jesus.

Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to those who will listen as you share the good news about Christ with them. I am glad that God led evangelists to my country even before I was born, so that I could know Jesus.

Application

6 Answer this question with YES or NO.

..... **a)** Can our dead ancestors help us know what to do in life?

..... **b)** Should we worship the stars and seek them for direction?

..... **c)** Will the Holy Spirit always lead us if we ask Him?

7 We have talked about different times when people allowed the Holy Spirit to lead them. What was the result each time?

C. USE THE BEST TOOLS

Goal 3. Explain what tools are needed to be able to resist the devil and share the good news about Jesus.

The Sword of the Spirit

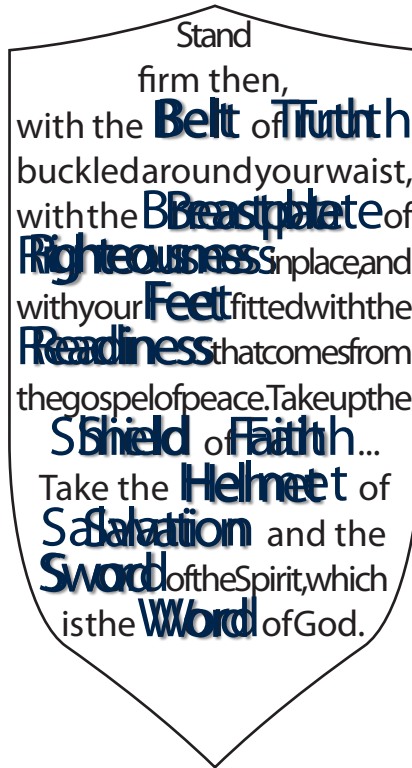
Jesus has not sent us empty-handed into the world. He has given us tools to work with. The task is great, and we cannot do it with our own strength.

We must be alert because the devil is trying to stop us from sharing the good news of Christ. He stopped Adam, the first man, from doing God's will. He stopped the people of Israel from obeying God. He even tried to stop Christ from sharing God's love with humanity. Jesus fought the devil in the wilderness and at the Cross and won the victory over him. In defeating the devil, Jesus used the Word of God. If we use the Word of God—also referred to as the sword of the Spirit—we, too, will have victory over Satan. Hebrews 4:12 affirms,

The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Jesus himself used that sword, God's Word, when He was tempted in the desert (Matthew 4:4). Stephen, the evangelist,

used the same sword and his accusers were filled with conviction and confusion (Acts 7:54).



Paul instructed the Ephesians to put on all the armor of God, for the battle against Satan is great. We are not fighting against human beings, but against wicked spiritual forces. Paul gave the illustration of a soldier putting on his armor, which protected him from the enemy. He lists the armor in Ephesians 6:14–17.

When you believed in Jesus as your Savior, you received the helmet of salvation. Your faith is your shield. As you speak the truth, you put on the belt. Your new life is clean and pure; it is your breastplate of righteousness. Your shoes are your desire to share the good news about Christ. The Bible is your sword of the Spirit. Without this armor, it is impossible to win the battle!

The Name of Jesus

Sharing the good news about Jesus Christ is a privilege. We speak not in our own name, but in His name. An ambassador does not speak of himself or herself, but on behalf of his or her country.

It is the name of Jesus that saves. In defense of the Gospel, Peter proclaimed, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Therefore, outside of His Name there is no salvation. If we go to God through Jesus’ wonderful name, God will hear and answer our prayers. No wonder thousands of Christians all over the world sing joyfully about the name of Jesus.

Application

8 What tool did Jesus use to keep the devil from stopping His work?

.....

9 What special tool did Jesus leave with us?

.....

10 Put an X in the blank space to show the armor you have put on.

	Yes	No
Belt	_____	_____
Breastplate	_____	_____
Shoes	_____	_____
Shield	_____	_____
Helmet	_____	_____
Sword	_____	_____



I hope you have enjoyed Lesson 2. Before you go on with your study, think of someone whom you would like to help find Christ. Pray that God will help you to share with this person your experience of accepting Christ as your Savior. Write the person’s name here, and pray for him or her. _____

Check Your Answers

- 1** All but b) and f) are true.
- 2** power, love.
- 3** A whole lifetime.
- 4** power, witnesses.
- 5** problems.
- 6**
 - a)** No
 - b)** No
 - c)** Yes
- 7** They led other people to Christ.
- 8** The Word of God
- 9** His Name
- 10** If you could not put an X under Yes for all of this armor, ask God to help you now to put on all of His armor.