

4 LIFE SAVING TOOLS

Tool 1: Missional Living Plan

Warm-Up Questions

Have you been reconciled to Christ (2 Cor 5:19)?.....

Do you realise God has committed to me the message of reconciliation?
(2 Cor 5:2)?.....

Are you willing and available for Jesus to make you into a fisher of men?.....

Am I part of a missional church? (i.e. one that lovingly provokes and equips me to be a missionary, and one that is accessible to unbelievers and new believers?)

Am I part of Life Group in my church?..... If not, join one. You can't do mission solo.

My Arena of Mission

Who are groups of people/individuals amongst whom God has placed me? (List the groups of people and individuals names)

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Using Regular Rhythms

What regular rhythms can I use to greater missional effect?

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Some ideas include:

- Gym: go same time each day.
- Petrol: Fill at same station each time.
- Hairdresser: use same one each time.
- Coffee shop: use same one regularly and get to know manager/staff.
- School: sit with parents at school matches; tarry in the car park.
- Teachers: get to know your kid's teacher.

- Kid's parties: hang can you leverage these for contact with other parents.
- Church: invite people to come along – you are going every week! The number one reason why people say they do not go to church is because...no one has ever invited them. Be relaxed about it. Say 'I would love to see what you make of it'. Or 'We are in a series at the moment about...' Or, 'Let's get a bite to eat afterwards'. Or 'A mutual friend is getting baptised and I reckon we should support him'. Or, 'Our church is doing something cool for Mums on Mother's Day...'
- Sport: Switch from running solo to running with a running club.
- Work: How can I better spend my lunch hour? Attend more work parties?
- Rugby: If you are already watching the rugby at home, invite people to watch with you.
- Meals: 21 meals per week. Just ask neighbours and friends – they will say 'yes'.

Introducing New Rhythms

What new rhythms can I introduce? And when will I action them?

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Some ideas include:

- Walk your dog regularly around the same time in your neighbourhood and meet other dog owners.
- Invite neighbours over for dinner
- Attend and participate in neighbourhood functions
- Attend the parties invited to by neighbours
- Start a weekly open meal night in your home, or at the braai area in your complex / street.
- Agree that you will give one night per week to inviting unbelieving mates over. Meal? Poker league? Wine-tasting club? Book club? Or, join an existing club.
- Create a block / street email and phone contact list (for safety) – great way to meet people.
- Host a coffee and dessert night
- Start a walking/running group in the neighbourhood
- Start hosting a play date weekly for other stay at home parents
- Organise a school carpool for your neighbourhood to help save petrol
- Volunteer to coach a sports team
- Team up with fellow believers to host something together in our street/complex e.g. Monday Marriage Night?

Tool 2: Testimony

What is a testimony?

Andrew said to Peter, "I think I have found the Messiah". The woman in John 4:29 told her friends "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did". The man born blind said, "Since I met Jesus I can see" (Jn 9:25). Testimony means "to bear witness to". You are now able to "bear witness to" what Jesus has done for you. Your testimony is powerful because it is you telling people that God really works today in a real world in your real life. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you" and preparing a testimony means you will be ready to do just that. You need to be able to share it in either a 30 second or 3 minute version, depending on the conversation that you are in.

Things to avoid

1. Although many things in your life will have no doubt improved since coming to Christ, make sure that your testimony helps reveal the **actual gospel** and not just the **side benefits** of the gospel.
2. Although **behavioural change** has happened in your life since coming to Christ, do not major on that as it reinforces the prevailing faulty belief that Christianity is a list of things to do rather than news to be believed. Also, this is what most other religions promise, so it could suggest that Christianity is just another option rather than *the way*.

A gospel-centred testimony

The following table gives examples of 30 second gospel-centred testimonies that can be expanded to give a longer, more colourful 3 minute version. Please read all of them carefully (left to right) to catch different approaches to a gospel-centred testimony is, and then do your own version. It is highly likely that you can apply elements of these testimonies to yours – all good. Make sure your testimony is gritty and honest – no super-spiritual, sleezy, cheesy, holier-than-thou vibe! You want to present yourself a 'fellow journeyer' in the gospel, whilst still emphasising the moment that you crossed the line of faith.

	A key aspect of your life before believing	The process leading to belief	An aspect(s) of your life since believing
Kim	I regarded myself as something of an intellect, and rejected Christianity based on the lack of factual evidence.	Then I started coming across highly intelligent Christians. I began to investigate the rational basis for Christianity and was completely won over.	What started as cerebral has moved to my heart. I am now enjoying the transforming work of Jesus in many aspects of my life.
Bill	I had a significant fear of death.	When I heard that believing in Jesus meant receiving the promise of eternal life, I leapt at it.	Since then I realised that Jesus was not just about a ticket to heaven but about transformation on earth, and knowing God right now. Man, I am enjoying that ride.
Rob	I was a hard-working, moral guy who was better than most, and I just assumed that God would accept me on the basis of my morality.	Then a mate of mine explained that the gospel was not a code to live by, rather a gift of forgiveness to receive. It was about believing rather than doing.	I am gradually getting the gospel idea that good works are done in <i>response</i> to salvation not as a means of <i>gaining</i> salvation.
Aby	I thought I was a Christian because I went to church, gave money away, read my Bible and prayed. I was even a Small Group Leader in the church.	I read the Parable of the Two Sons and to my horror realised that I was the older brother who assumed he was accepted by God because he was a do-gooder. But he was actually rejected by God!	I am relishing the reality that I am accepted by God, not on the basis of my 'good' life, but on the basis of Jesus' perfect life that is now credited to me! I am less critical of others, less driven, and more secure.

Al	<p>I was living a life a crazy sin, and to my amazement a Christian mate never, ever told me to change the way I behaved. When I asked him why he didn't, he replied 'Because until you get the power of Jesus in you, you will have no motivation or power to live differently.'</p>	<p>I was so blown away by that non-critical and intriguing response that I listened to a sermon DVD he gave me called 'A Dog's Faith' about how to become a Christian. I then went through a booklet with him in our lunch hours called 'Get Started in the Gospel'. Somewhere through that process I believed in Jesus.</p>	<p>I am only feeling new bit by bit. I guess it is like driving into a new country: your passport gets stamped 'new life' but the landscape only changes gradually. But I am thrilled that I am a completely righteous child of God, although learning to live righteous is taking a while!</p>
Ric	<p>I was living flat out, 100% for my career. I thought that the recognition of success and the big bucks would be the secret of happiness. I told my Christian friend that I was not a worshipper like him. He replied, 'Of course you are. You just worship something different.'</p>	<p>He explained that we 'worship' (direct our energies towards) the thing that we think will make us feel complete. I realised that success and money would never quite do it...</p>	<p>I feel free. I now worship Jesus. I still love my job but I am not looking to that as my saviour (the thing that makes be feel 'saved' and good about myself). I now look to Jesus as my Lord and Saviour.</p>

Jill	I went through a tough time.	I was amazed at the selfless care of some Christian family members and friends. My heart softened towards God and I became aware of my sin, and I asked Jesus to forgive me.	I am learning to keep applying the gospel to different areas of my life. Most recently, I realise that my stingy attitude to money was based on fear that God would not look after me. But in the gospel he gave his life for me, so I reckon he will look after me just fine going forward!
Ali	I went through a tragedy.	I came to realise that the tragedy didn't create my need for God, but rather revealed it.	What began as a 'help me God project' is growing into a deep relationship with God.
Ozo	My life was boring.	I went to church and heard this preacher say that serving Christ was the greatest adventure ever. I signed up for Christianity just for that!	And I have found it to be true. The thrill of God inside me, changing me, the fight against sin, and the thrill of telling my mates about Christ is epic.
Bo	I gradually became friends with a Christian.	I gradually met his church mates, started to hang out with them, and responded to the Gospel at a church meeting.	I think the biggest challenge since believing that Jesus was Lord is to accept Him as Lord of all of my life. I find I am still in rebellion in some areas of life...I seem to have a lot to repent of, but I am secure in His unconditional love, and am loving introducing others to Jesus.

Tool 3: Gospel Outline

Here is an outline to explain the essence of the Gospel to a friend in a few minutes. You might say, 'So mate, could I show you a few verses that briefly explain exactly what it means to be a Christian?' Then, pull out a card from your wallet with the verses on, and explain each to him along the lines of the bullet points under each verse.

The 'Sin-Death-Gift-Believe' Outline

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23)

Explain that they are a sinner, and that the standard is the 'glory of God' so being 'better' than others doesn't count.

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23)

Explain that the consequence of sin is death. "Death" means spiritual death in this life because we can't have a relationship with God, and eternal separation in living hell from God when we die.

But...God wants to give us the **gift** of eternal life. It is free. It is not based on moral living. It cannot be earned. This gift comes 'in' Jesus. Therefore, if a person receives Jesus into their life they also receive eternal life.

Yet to all who received Him...He gave the right to become children of God (Jn 1:12)

Explain that if they receive Christ into their life they will immediately become a child of God. God is their Father and they can enjoy a relationship in this life with Him, and then when they die they can continue this relationship with Him in heaven forever. The final verse tells us about that....

Believe in your heart and confess with your mouth and you shall be saved" (Rom 10:9)

The choice is yours. Gratefully believe that Jesus is Lord.

Then get doing 'Get Started in the Gospel' with them.

Tool 4: Resources

It can be very helpful to give an enquirer a resource that they can read, listen to, or watch, especially if it is prefaced with, "I found this particularly helpful and I think you might too."

A Dog's Faith (DVD/CD)

What is it? This is a clear and engaging presentation of the Gospel. It clearly explains our desperate state as lost sinners, and the unmerited grace of God that takes us from undeserving 'dogs' to children of God.

Who is it for? For someone who is close to crossing the line of faith, or who recently has.

How to use it? Why not get 10 copies and keep available to give out.

Get Started in the Gospel

What is it? This is a booklet to help someone understand and apply the Gospel to their lives, starting with crossing the line of faith.

Who is it for? It is useful for a potential believer, a new believer and indeed for every believer because, although the Gospel begins with the moment of crossing the line of faith, gradually applying the Gospel to every area of our lives is a life-long journey.

How to use it? It has five chapters, each with a study guide. Get your friend to read a chapter per week and do the study guide, and then spend a 30 minutes with them weekly to discuss the learnings from that chapter.

Note: Available end of Feb 2012.

Tough Questions

What is it? A short booklet helping answer the common objections to Christianity.

Who is it for? It can be given to a seeker, and also used to help equip a believer to answer these tough questions.

How to get it? It is available through GodFirst as of end of May 2012.

The Reason for God

This is a superb book by Tim Keller that serves the same purpose as 'Tough Questions' but is longer and more detailed. Available through GodFirst, in most Christian bookstores, or online.