

The purpose of this material is to make it easier to testify about Jesus and make him known. By looking at what God does in your everyday life (flashback) and reading the Bible (Bible Study), it is hoped that it will be easier to move forward toward witnessing about Jesus. Because Jesus is both for you and them.

The material is meant to be used during the lunch break at campuses of Christians.

Therefore, it is divided in two:

1. Flashback + Forward (30 min.)
2. Bible Study + Forward (30 min.)

so you can take the first part one week and the other part another week if the break is no longer than 30 min. If there is time for it, you can do both parts.

It is recommended to go through the material in smaller groups of 2-3 persons, so everyone can say something and deeper conversations occur more easily. But adjust the group sizes and material to your group.

Start by setting a framework for this to be a safe place, and you have come together to be there for each other and encourage and inspire each other. It may be some challenging questions but give time for people to think about them.

FLASHBACK

The purpose is to think about and become more aware of what God is doing in your life and that the others' stories will be encouraging. It doesn't have to be great miracles that you tell about. Everything God does is worth telling others and thank for.

BIBLE STUDY

Through Bible reading, we learn more about who God is and who we are. God speaks to us through the Bible, and what He tells us we can tell others.

FORWARD

The hope is that through Flashback and Bible Study, you will think more about how testify of Jesus can look like in a practical way. And then actually do it! Pray that God will create opportunities for you and to have courage and that God will give you the words.

Colossians 4: 2-6

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Flashback (20 min)

- What have you experienced with your faith in God this past week?
 - Has it strengthened you in a certain situation?
 - Has God surprised you?
 - Have you received an answer to a prayer?
 - Has something happened that you are thankful for?
 - Have you read anything in the Bible that spoke strongly to you?
 - Has something happened that reminded you of something in the Bible?
 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Luke 15:11-32

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- What do the sons expect from their father? And what will Jesus tell us about the Father's heart in this parable?
- Do you feel more like a servant or a son/daughter of God? Are there situations where one of the feelings is stronger than the other?
- Do you believe that your Heavenly Father truly wants you to have what you desire with all your heart? Read Psalm 37: 3-4; Philippians 4:12-13. Are there areas in your life where you doubt that?

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray that our Heavenly Father fills you more with his love and gives you a deeper understanding of it.
- Action point: Think about yourself as a son/daughter of God as often as possible during the next week. Are there situations where it has a particular importance?

Bible text

Luke 15:11-32

11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. 13 Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. 17 When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' 20 So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. 25 Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your

orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

Psalms 37: 3-4

3 Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Philippians 4:12-13

12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Scripture Comments

Jesus told this parable to unveil something about the heart of our Heavenly Father. The younger son was convinced that he is no longer worthy to be considered a son by his father. The older son saw himself as a servant of his father. Silently, he was waiting for a sign of recognition and benevolence for doing his work obediently. This is the "normal" worldly perspective. We are quick to think: if we fail, we've lost and need to redeem ourselves. Whether consciously or subconsciously, we often think that to receive God's favour, to be accepted and loved by him, we need to do something. But the father corrected both his sons in their thinking. He does not want us to be exposed in our shame. In his eyes we are unconditionally loved, accepted, chosen. If you know in your heart you are a son/daughter of God, you will be at peace. From this, God's life, love and strength will start to flow. But if you are insecure about God's love for you, confusion, doubt, fear, frustration and sorrows will find their way into your life. Do you hear that God calls you as his son/daughter?

Flashback (20 min)

- What have you experienced with your faith in God this past week?
 - Has it strengthened you in a certain situation?
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 - Have you read anything in the Bible that spoke strongly to you?
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 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Joshua 1

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- After 40 years in the desert, the people of Israel are about to cross the river Jordan and conquer the Promised Land. God keeps his promise and they obtain their land. When have you experienced that God keeps his promises?
- Are you facing new ground like the Israelites? What do you need from God to conquer it? What does he promise in his word? (see Joshua 1)
- What does God's challenge in Joshua 1:8 ("Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips.") mean to you?

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Thank God for the times you have experienced, he has kept his promises. Ask for God's help to conquer "the new land".
- Action point: When you read in the Bible during next week, then read it out loud to yourself. What significance does this have for you?

Bible text

Joshua 1

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: 2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. 3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. 5 No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. 7 "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." 10 So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: 11 "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own.'" 12 But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, 13 "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you after he said, 'The Lord your God will give you rest by giving you this land.' 14 Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, ready for battle, must cross over ahead of your fellow Israelites. You are to help them 15 until the Lord gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land

the Lord your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise." 16 Then they answered Joshua, "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. 18 Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!"

Scripture Comments

Jews read the Bible out loud because they believe that the word should not cease coming from their lips (in reference to Joshua 1:8).

The Old Testament is referred to as "the Law" (see Matthew 12:5 and John 10:34).

God's word does not solely consist of words but it always contains the reality of his kingdom. It contains transformational power! (see Hebrews 4:12a) Jesus compares the Word of God to seeds being planted in Luke 8:4-15. If we hear it (example from our own lips) and hold on to it with perseverance it will bring fruit. This means it will release faith, certainty, power and God's plans in our life! (Luke 8:15)

One way you can practice holding onto God's Word is by reading the verses you wrote down that encourage you out loud each morning when you wake up. Additional scriptures: Psalm 23:1-5; Deuteronomy 31:8; Jeremiah 29:11; Joshua 1:9; Psalm 27:1.

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Bible Study (20 min)

Matthew 4:18-22 and 1. Kings 19:19-21

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- What similarities do you see in these two stories?
- What does it mean to be a disciple? Also read Matthew 10: 24-25a
- Do you think of yourself as a disciple of Jesus? What made you decide to follow him? Why are you still doing that?
- How would you describe your journey as a follower of Jesus right now?
- Are you moving (with Jesus), or are you standing still?

Forward (10 min)

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 - Do they give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Do they give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Do they give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Silent prayer: Ask Jesus if there is something that keeps you from fully trusting and following him (e.g. a habit, a false commitment, an attitude, a certain way of thinking). Express that you want to be a disciple of Jesus, that you want to trust him fully and follow him.
- Action point: Disciple means "pupil" or "apprentice". Keep an eye on what Jesus will teach you during the next week.

Bible texts

Matthew 4:18-22

18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

1. Kings 19:19-21

19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. 20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" 21 And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

Matthew 10:24-25a

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master.

Scripture Comments

Following Jesus requires us to cut all ties to things that keep us from doing that. To start a relationship with him means to be with him constantly and to let him form you; to learn from him, and to learn how to move in dimensions of his kingdom. Our "training" as his disciples also has a clear purpose. We should become fishers of men and are called to connect people to Jesus and make them his disciples as well (Matthew 28:19-20).

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Bible Study (20 min)

John 7:37-39 and Ephesians 5:18-20

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Why does Paul compare being filled with the Holy Spirit with drunkenness?
- How does the Holy Spirit work in your life? (See Scripture comments)
- How can the Holy Spirit flow freely through you? What could hinder him? (Consider separately: where are you struggling? Write it down)
- Are you ready to hand over all aspects of your life to God? (your expectations, ideals, attitudes, efforts, defeats, shortcomings etc.)

Forward (10 min)

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 - Do they give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Silent prayer: Confess to God that you have acted or thought against his will. Tell that you want to trust and listen to him. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and take control of all areas of your life.
- Action point: Pray daily this week that God will fill you with the power of the Holy Spirit, his fruits, and his guidance. Look for what happens.

Bible texts

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Ephesians 5:18-20

18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture Comments

The Holy Spirit can work in many ways in our lives.

The Holy Spirit helps us to recognize God and to understand the Bible (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

He speaks to us (Acts 13:2)

He reminds us of important things (John 14:26).

1 Corinthians 12: 8-10 describes the gifts of the Spirit like this:

8 To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

(See also Romans 12: 6-8; Ephesians 4: 11-12; 1 Peter 4:11)

Galatians 5: 22-23 describes the fruits of the Spirit:

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Verses 18-21 from Ephesians 5 are one sentence in the Greek original: "Be (continuously) filled by the Holy Spirit, speaking to one another ... sing ... give thanks ... and submit to one another." Verses 19-21 hence are specific actions you can take to position yourself to be filled by the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, he replenishes us with life from the Lord Almighty; with his love, wisdom, patience, hope, steadfastness, resilience, peace, joy, inspiration, ideas and gives us the inner strength to face challenges courageously and faithfully.

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Bible Study (20 min)

John 10: 27-28 and Acts 9: 10-19

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Do you believe that God can speak to you personally?
- How have you experienced God speaking to you? Has there been a time in your life when you've struggled to hear God's voice?
- Prayer 1: Where do you need God's help and wisdom? Now pray for it. Listen and write down what you think God will answer to the following:
 - I can see you ...
 - I can hear you ...
 - I understand what you're going through ...
 - I am happy to be with you and will treat your weakness gently ...
 - I can do something about what you are going through ...

Forward (10 min)

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- Prayer 2: Thank God for one thing in prayer. Listen and write down on the back of the paper what you think God will answer.
- Action point: Try the two prayer ways during the next week.

Bible texts

John 10: 27-28

27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

Acts 9: 10-19 10

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. 11 The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight." 13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name." 15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." 17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord - Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here - has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Scripture Comments

God can speak to us in many different ways. Through the Bible, prayer, worship, other people, art, nature, etc. Hearing God's voice on an every-day basis is important as it helps us to get wisdom for our daily decisions, to understand God's Word (Luke 24:45), gaining the Lord's heart and mind for people, to see how we can serve others or to be alert regarding the attacks of the enemy (1 Peter 5:8).

Jesus is our role model in everything. He did only what he saw the father do (John 5:19). We are called to live the same way. Therefore it is vital that we learn to hear and discern God's voice.

- In many specific situations we do not find a direct answer in the Bible so it is important to develop sensitivity for God's will over time. Our recognition of his will grows alongside our familiarity with God (Romans 12:2).
- "Your Kingdom come" (Luke 11:2) should be our first and foremost thought in decision making

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Bible Study (20 min)

Lukas 5:27-32

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- How would you describe your friendships with people who are not Christians? How do you see them? How do you treat them? Do you prioritize them?
- What could you organize as a group for such a purpose? What upcoming event would be appropriate for it? Write down ideas. Write down the names of 5 people you would like to invite.
- Plan your event and invite your friends!
 - Place and time
 - What is going to happen?
 - What do you need to buy? Etc.

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray for your planned event and for your guests: That your relationship with them becomes stronger and you gain mutual trust.
- Action point: Invest in your non-Christian friends. You might have to cancel a Christian event to spend time with them.

Bible texts

Lukas 5:27-32

27 After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, 28 and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

29 Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. 30 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Scripture Comments

Birthday party, graduation party, anniversary or wedding – all these events are great opportunities to invite your friends that don't know Jesus yet. It's a great way to honour and deepen your relationship with them. Matthew got to know Jesus and immediately threw a party for his fellow tax collectors. He honoured them with generosity and gave them an opportunity to get to know Jesus and his disciples themselves.

Apparently Jesus was Matthew's role model, since Jesus ate and celebrated often with people that didn't conform to behavioural standards or who had a shady reputation.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees often pointed out others' mistakes, but people felt comfortable in the company of Jesus. He encountered them with appreciation by regarding and treating them as some God loves (as he does!). In such an atmosphere of honor and freedom, people opened up to the truth. This in turn leads them to reflect on their actions, to repent and start over (Luke 19:7-8).

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Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Daniel 6:1-17

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Is your trust in God big enough that you can obey him without anyone around to support and encourage you? If not, who do you have to support and encourage you?
- Is God's will your first priority? If not, where do you make compromises when facing opposition or resistance? How can other people recognize that in your life?
- Daniel and his group were given new names by the Babylonians (see Scripture commentary). Where and how do you let yourself be influenced by your environment?

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray for the situations where you face adversity or where your environment has too much influence on your life. Pray that it is God who first and foremost will shape you.
- Action point: Think about each day during next week to put God as your first priority. What influence does it have?

Bible texts

Daniel 6:1-17

1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, 2 with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. 3 Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4 At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. 5 Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.” 6 So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: “May King Darius live forever! 7 The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. 8 Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” 9 So King Darius put the decree in writing. 10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. 11 Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. 12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?” The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” 13 Then

they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” 14 When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. 15 Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.” 16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!” 17 A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed.

Scripture Comments

Daniel was probably still a teenager, when he was brought to the Babylonian court, maybe 15 or 16 years old. Even at this young age the Babylonian program for re-education did not work on him and his group (Daniel 1:1-16)! They remained faithful to the God of Israel and his values. The only thing that the Babylonians could change were their names: Daniel (“God is my judge”) was named Belteshazzar (“Bel to protect the King”), Mishael (“Who is like God?”) was named Mesach (“Who is like Aku – The God of the moon”), Hananiah (“God is gracious”) was named Shadrach (“command of Aku”), Asarja (“Jahwe will help”) was named Abed-Nego (“Nebo’s slave”).

Flashback (20 min)

- What have you experienced with your faith in God this past week?
 - Has it strengthened you in a certain situation?
 - Has God surprised you?
 - Have you received an answer to a prayer?
 - Has something happened that you are thankful for?
 - Have you read anything in the Bible that spoke strongly to you?
 - Has something happened that reminded you of something in the Bible?
 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Luke 11:5-13

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Are there any limits to the promise our Heavenly Father gives us concerning answering prayers? (see James 1:5-6; 4:3; Psalm 37:4; 1 John 5:14-15 and Hebrews 11:6)
- When did you last receive an answer to a prayer?
- Are there any prayers that you have not yet received an answers to? What are you doing in the meantime?

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Read Colossians 4:3-4 high. Pray for open doors to speak about faith in your school. Pray for your non-Christian friends; that you will have opportunities to share your experiences with Jesus with them.
- Action points: Think about what you are doing while you wait for an answer from God and what you could do instead.

Bible texts

Luke 11:5-13

5 Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7 And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity[a] he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. 9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for[b] a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

James 1:5-6

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

James 4:3

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

Psalms 37:4

4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

1 John 5:14-15

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him.

Hebrews 11:6

6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Colossians 4:3-4

3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Scripture Comments

"One Saturday morning Bill Bright was alone on his knees in his office, praying for an urgent need the ministry had over \$485 [about 2945 DKK]. He heard a knock at the door; it was the mailman, carrying a registered letter. 'It's a good thing you were here,' the mailman said, or I wouldn't have been able to leave this letter.'

Bill signed for it and went back into his office where while I was praying, God suggested I open the letter.' Inside he found a \$500 [about 3035 DKK] bill sent by a couple in Zurich, Switzerland, whose entire family had become Christians through Bill's ministry when they were in California. They wrote that they simply wanted to express their appreciation for what God was doing in and through their lives as a result of Bill's ministry. The need over \$485 was met."

From: Amazing Faith, The authorized Biography of Bill Bright, by Michael Richardson, 2000, page 105.

Flashback (20 min)

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 - Has something happened that reminded you of something in the Bible?
 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
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- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Matthew 6:25-34

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Read the scripture comment: Is there a word or sentence that sticks out for you and that is important for your life? Share it in the group.
- In groups of 2-3: What concrete steps can you take to tie your heart to God's kingdom? Do you need to reset your priorities and stop doing something (an activity, a commitment)? Share in small groups and then pray about it.

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Take time to individually express your trust to God in prayer. Tell him that you trust he will provide you with everything you need (see Psalm 37:3-4 and 1 Peter 5:7). Tell him in your prayer what you need.
- Action point: Is there one thing you could do differently to prioritize God and His kingdom higher?

Bible texts

Matthew 6:25-34

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? 28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Psalms 37:3-4

3 Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

1 Peter 5:7

7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Scripture Comments

How are we supposed to deal with worries and sorrows? If someone told you right now that you should just stop worrying – would you be able to do so? Presumably your answer would be ‘No!’ Worry and sorrow are a matter of the heart and cannot be solved by the mind.

This is why Jesus first introduces God to us. He calls him ‘father’ and we should call him that too. First of all this challenges our human perception of God: The creator of the universe is so good, so much more merciful, loving and closer than we could ever imagine! (Interesting side note: He even delegated the judgement to Jesus, he’s not judging himself, see John 5:22). Jesus challenges us to fully commit to this relationship to the Heavenly Father, to trust him and to bind us to him. Only then will our hearts come to a rest. What does that mean for us practically?

- **Shift your focus to Jesus and pray for a fresh encounter with him: “Jesus, let me see you clearly. Let me live in response to your presence.”**
- **Continuously proclaim who God is for you over your life. Hold fast to how the Bible describes Jesus or God respectively. E.g. “God is my mighty saviour, healer, deliverer, defender, provider, comforter, helper, loving father, restorer, friend, refuge, encourager.” Remember: God’s Word does not solely consist of words but contains the reality of his kingdom and thus has transforming power (John 8:31-32).**
- **Ask full of faith and expectation for what you need rather than worrying about it (Philippians 4:6-7; James 1:5-6).**
- **Make his kingdom your first priority and invest your treasures there (time, energy, money). (Luke 12:32-34). How could it practically look like for you?**

Flashback (20 min)

- What have you experienced with your faith in God this past week?
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 - Has something happened that you are thankful for?
 - Have you read anything in the Bible that spoke strongly to you?
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 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

Luke 3:21-22, 4:1, 4:14 and Acts 1:4-8

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Which connections can you find in the passages?
- Why does Jesus emphasize the word "wait" in Acts 1:4?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in Stephen's life? Read Acts 6:5-10.
- Are you ready to submit fully to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to be empowered by him? To do so, the concept of "Spiritual Breathing" (see Scripture Comments) can help you.

Forward (10 min)

- How do these texts help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Do they give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Do they give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Do they give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Try "Spiritual Breathing" individually.
- Action point: Try "Spiritual Breathing" at least once during next week.

Bible texts

Luke 3:21-22

21 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

Luke 4:1

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Luke 4:14

14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

Acts 1:4-8

4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with[a] water, but in a few days you will be baptized with[b] the Holy Spirit.” 6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 6:5-10

5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented

these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. 8 Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. 10 But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

Scripture Comments

Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot be true witnesses of Jesus as it is the Holy Spirit who empowers and authorizes us. It is him that proclaims to the spiritual realm that we are acting on behalf of King Jesus. In this world Jesus was fully God and fully human. Jesus submitted himself completely to the Holy Spirit and did nothing out of his own (human) will. In doing so, he is our role model and shows us how we should live our lives.

“Spiritual Breathing”

- Similar to biological breathing, exhale “bad air,” confess to God where you acted or thought against his will. Take time to do this on your own right now.
- Inhale “fresh air” submit yourself fully and anew to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Ask God to fill and empower you with the Holy Spirit anew.

This could be your prayer: “Holy Spirit, please fill me anew, take control over all areas in my life. I decide to trust you and listen to you.”

You can “breathe spiritually” anytime. You not feel completely different after every spiritual breath and that’s okay! Even though emotions are important, they don’t define what is true. Therefore it is wise to trust God and his promise to renew you if you ask for it, even if you “don’t feel it”

Flashback (20 min)

- What have you experienced with your faith in God this past week?
 - Has it strengthened you in a certain situation?
 - Has God surprised you?
 - Have you received an answer to a prayer?
 - Has something happened that you are thankful for?
 - Have you read anything in the Bible that spoke strongly to you?
 - Has something happened that reminded you of something in the Bible?
 - Is there something in your life that challenges you where you think God wants you to change or examine some things?
- In the last few days, did you have the opportunity to testify about Jesus with someone close to you who doesn't know Jesus yet? What did you do? (talked about your faith, prayed for them, helped them practically)

Forward (10 min)

- How do these experiences help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can share?
 - Does it give you a new view of the world, yourself, others or God?
- Pray together: give thanks for your experiences. Ask God for help to see what he is doing in your life and for help where you need it.

Bible Study (20 min)

1 Kings 17:8-16

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- What can we learn about Godly principles of giving through the passage in 1 Kings? Also read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 and Luke 6:38 for more ideas.
- Do you have faith that God is your provider? (Psalm 23:1). Do you doubt this in any way or are you acting more out of fear in some areas (regarding finances, work, relationships, etc.)?
- What principles do you live by when it comes to giving? What did you learn today and how can you apply it to your life? Note down your 2-3 most important points and share them in the group.

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- Thank for what God has provided for you today. Pray that your attitude must be that what you have, you have been given by God and something you can pass on.
- Action point: What can you pass on? Are there people in your life who need something that you can give them?

Bible texts

1 Kings 17:8-16

8 Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9 “Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” 10 So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” 11 As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” 12 “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.” 13 Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’” 15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. 16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Luke 6:38

38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Psalms 23:1

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

Scripture Comments

Elijah was in great despair because he was on the run from King Ahab, who reigned northern Israel from approximately 871 – 852 BC. God helped Elijah by sending him to a widow in Zarephath, in the region of modern day Lebanon.

Many people feel like they never have enough but that perception changes when we consider the widow who helped Elijah. When we read about the widow who was at the stage of using up the last of her resources with no more food to eat, our argument that we first need to have enough for ourselves before we can start giving away loses its validity. Elijah gives the woman an interesting promise: if she feeds him now, she will never ever run out of flour and oil again but for the promise to become reality, she has to bake Elijah a small flat bread first. Jesus is challenging us to a very similar lifestyle: “Give, and you will receive” (Luke 6:38). This statement is inconsistent with the principles of the world we live in. Here we learn: if you give something away you’ll have less. But if we are connected to Jesus we live in new dimensions. We’re not on our own anymore. Instead we are connected to the giver of all good gifts, who loves to provide for us (James 1:17; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Psalm 23:1). The widow experienced a miraculous multiplication of her flour and oil because she trusted Elijah’s promises and did as he told her, even though it probably didn’t appear reasonable to her at first. Likewise, we will experience God’s provision if we are ready to give what God challenges us to give.

Flashback (20 min)

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Bible Study (20 min)

Luke 8:4-15

- Pray together: that you would discover new aspects of God today and that your relationship with him would be strengthened and deepened.
- One person reads the passage out loud
- What words or phrases stick out for you?
- Of the four situations described, which do you think best describes yourself right now? What about the students at your university?
- What are the requirements that the Word of God needs to develop its power in our lives? Read also John 8:31-32.
- Do you meet these requirements? What would you like to apply from what you read? Note this down individually, then share it in the group: "I will..."

Forward (10 min)

- How does this text help you to testify about Jesus?
 - Does it give you a certainty of something you need?
 - Does it give you something concrete you can tell on?
 - Does it give you a special look at the world, yourself, others or God?
- In groups of 2-3 pray that God would help you to apply what you learned to your lives.
- Action points: Do a new thing over next week that will help you stay in God's word.

Bible texts

Luke 8:4-15

4 While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: 5 "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. 6 Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown." When he said this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear." 9 His disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10 He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.' 11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. 14 The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. 15 But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

John 8:31-32

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Scripture Comments

The Word of God is the written (Bible) but also the living Word (Jesus). We hear God's Word when we read the Bible and when the Holy Spirit speaks to us.

The Word of God is compared to a seed. Similar to a seed, all the essentials are encompassed in the Word of God, including the necessary power to grow. Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is alive and active (...)."

Jesus tells another parable relating to seeds in Mark 4:26-29. The man is completely clueless how the seed grows exactly; it 'simply happens' after the seed was sown. Many Christians try hard to grow spiritually but don't see the results they want. The New Testament teaches us that the Holy Spirit will provide growth if we are faithful to our part of the equation. By hearing God's Word – his promises for us, descriptions of what he's like and how he sees us – and holding onto it perseveringly (Luke 8:15), we give room for the Holy Spirit to help grow us.