

SUMMER 2026

YOU[®]

CONNECTING WITH
OTHERS LIKE JESUS DID

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ESSENTIALS FOR
CHRISTIAN LIVING



A PROMISE THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN

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It hurts when people break a promise. Some people make promises they have no intention of honoring. Others sincerely mean well, but circumstances interfere and they're unable to do what they said they promised they'd do.

God is not like us. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Period. He is always faithful to His word. For example, He promises an abundant and eternal life to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9,13).

But we don't automatically enjoy the benefits of this wonderful promise. We must understand and believe Jesus died on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself, and then rose from the dead, making a new, eternal life possible for us. As we believe, we also acknowledge His lordship, turning from sin and surrendering our lives to Him.

God's promise is for you. If you would like a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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ON THE COVER

Milia Tina Johnson was born and raised in the Northeast section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1999. She is the daughter of William Johnson and Patrice Moore.

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Milia became a member of First Baptist Church of Crestmont in 2014 at 14 years of age. She currently serves as a servant leader of the Young Adult Ministry, The Rock Ministry, an usher and was recently ordained as a deacon.

Milia's favorite Scriptures are:

"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" (Ps. 34: 8) and "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do You not see it?" (Isa. 43:19 NLT).

Milia loves Jesus, people and witnessing for Christ.

The YOU Bible Study is currently being used for the young adult Wednesday night Bible study.



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EDITORIAL

MARK CROSTON

You know the old question; how do you eat an elephant? And the answer, one bite at a time. The Bible is 66 books with two testaments, 1,189 chapters, covering about 4,000 years. By the time of Jesus, Jewish teachings had developed 613 commandments, plus traditions in the Mishnah. All the teachings and ideas could seem overwhelming. You might ask, how can we be faithful to God when there is so much information? Micah 6:8 says focus on three ideas – be just, merciful and humble. Jesus points out two – Love the Lord and love your neighbor (Matt. 22:37).

This issue of the YOU Bible Study will dig into some helpful issues for simplifying how we can live the Christ-life successfully. We will be studying Essentials for Christian Living and Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did. In addition to these studies, get extra insights and teaching tips from our **YOU Blog** at you.lifeway.com and listen to our Lifeway YOU Podcast on your favorite podcast app.

The Black Church Leadership and Family Conference is right around the corner. This is the one conference where you don't have to leave your family at home. There is a full program for every member of the family and all your church leaders! Join us for this all-in-one, equipping and energizing week, **July 20 through 24, 2025**. I'm sure this year will be just the time of relaxation, refreshment, and revival we need.

Learn more at lifeway.com/blackchurchconference.

Thanks for joining me as we dig into this study. Now grab your Bible because you never know how God will speak through YOU!

Be Blessed!

Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr.

YOU General Editor

National Director of Black Church Ministries

lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife

Lifeway **black church**

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU

YOU is a three-in-one learner and leader resource with inspirational and educational features to enhance Bible study that leads to spiritual maturity and life change. Here is information to help you get the most out of *YOU*.

LEARNER PAGES

The first half of *YOU* includes pages for personal study. These should be read by the learner and leader prior to group time. Included in each session:

Memory Verses encourage filling the mind with the Word of God to strengthen every aspect of spiritual life.

Keywords identify and define words or phrases to add clarity to the biblical text.

Digging Deeper provides a deeper look at a word, character, or other aspect from the session.

Did You Know? provides an urban or African-American cultural or historical fact or update connected to the session.

Live It sums up the session and offers applications points to challenge daily living.

DAILY READINGS

Included with each session are five devotionals to be read by the learner and leader. The benefits of a daily devotion are innumerable. Their primary purpose in this resource is to focus attention on the biblical content of each session for application of and conformity to the Word of God.

LEADER PAGES

The second half of *YOU* includes pages to guide the teaching of each session. Leaders can use the leader pages to guide learners through the passage and its key emphases as detailed on the learner pages. Here are suggestions on how to teach:

- Prior to the session, read and study the Bible passage, keywords, and learner pages.
- Plan teaching using the leader pages. Keep in mind that because of time, it may not be possible to use every teaching suggestion. **Also the teaching suggestions are in sequential order for easy use.**
- Features to use when teaching include: The Point, which is readily recognizable on the learner and leader pages; The Question at the top of the first page of each learner session; Keywords on the Scripture pages; "Digging Deeper"; "Did You Know?"; Pack Items* (see next page); "Object Lessons"; and Commentary at the end of each session on leader pages.
- Refine your teaching plans when necessary.

Get more teaching help at you.lifeway.com.

PRAY

Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to "rightly divide the word of truth" as you teach your group. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.



FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER



The **Advanced Bible Study** is written for group members who desire more extensive commentary. It includes exposition of each session's Scripture passage, an examination of keywords, an introduction to the setting of the passage and biblical life and times, questions to guide the study, and interactive responses to help readers apply God's truths to their lives today.



The **YOU Leader Pack** is a collection of teaching aids designed to help leaders provide a visual and interactive experience for learners. Each pack contains posters, charts, maps, and handouts that can add another layer to teaching and engender needed variety that makes learning more interesting.

The **YOU** Leader Pack is located at lifeway.com/YOU



YOU podcasts provide a candid overview of each YOU Bible Study session. General editor Mark Croston and content editor Natasha Meniffee casually discuss each biblical topic from an urban perspective with a strong theological and biblical emphasis. The intent of these podcasts is to provide listeners with a time-efficient overview of each session and creative tips for study group leaders.



Social Media: Connect with a community of *YOU* users.

- Post responses to questions, share teaching ideas at **Facebook.com/YOUBiblestudy**
- Learn more about *YOU* and link to great blog content at **YOU.lifeway.com**
- Shop *YOU* at **www.lifeway.com/YOU**

YOU DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

The Pathway of Discipleship

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? Lifeway's research reveals eight markers consistently present in the lives of believers who are growing spiritually. Each year, the YOU Bible Study engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit www.lifeway.com/you for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2026.

8 SIGNPOSTS	Summer 2026	Fall 2026	Winter 2026-27	Spring 2027
Build Relationships	Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did			
Living Unashamed	Essentials for Christian Living			
Obey God & Deny Self		How God Speaks		
Share Christ		The Beauty of Forgiveness		
Engage with Scripture			Jesus, God with Us	
Exercise Faith			The Lifestyle of a Witness	
Seek God				Shaped By Prayer
Serve God and Others				Serving Like Jesus

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS LIKE JESUS DID

INTRODUCTION

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Build Relationships.

Two markers of growing disciples are the disciplines of sharing Christ and building relationships. How we relate to those around us is an essential element in sharing Christ and discipling others.

Writer Bio

Robbie Peay

has served in local churches in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia. He is currently the pastor of First Baptist Church of Ray City, Georgia, and lives with his wife, Terri, in Nashville, Georgia.

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Alexis Lewis

wrote the Daily Readings for this study. She regularly leads Bible Studies, small groups, women's & leadership conferences and hosts a monthly webinar entitled "Living in Victory." She and her husband Dwayne Lewis, are founders of Loving Without Limits, a marriage strengthening ministry.



A BIBLE STUDY ON LIVING IN CONNECTION WITH OTHERS

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We live in a society that increasingly develops ways for people to go without meaningful social interaction. The advancement of technology has only accelerated this reality. The use of apps that allow us to order groceries, take-out meals, and virtually anything else we want without having to see or speak to other human beings is seen as a normal part of our daily lives. The societal changes brought about by the pandemic led many companies and corporations to employ people who can work from home. All they need is a computer and a good internet connection. The pros and cons of working from home are debatable, but one thing is sure: working from home can limit human interactions.

Believers, however, have been called to a work that demands human connections. Online worship, while it has its place, is no substitute for what Christ is calling us to – human connection.

Believers must shift from the involuntary internet, to intentional in connecting with others. Our faith places a strong emphasis on connection.

Our connections are not meant to end with those inside the church. The people we encounter as we go about the day, who are not part of the body of Christ, need us to reach out to them so they can have the opportunity to know Christ. Connecting with others sounds simple enough until we realize that people are different. The thought of what we are to do can be overwhelming.

In this study, Jesus models for us different ways to connect with people. In each session, we will see how Jesus demonstrates the priority of building relationships. We will discover ways to connect with others by following His example. As you engage with God's Word, let the Holy Spirit guide you to connect with others like Jesus did.

MEETING NEEDS

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
MEETING NEEDS IS
AN OPPORTUNITY TO
INTRODUCE OTHERS
TO JESUS.

LUKE 5:12-16, 27-32

¹² While he was in one of the towns, a man was there who had leprosy all over him. He saw Jesus, fell facedown, and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

¹³ Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, "I am willing; be made clean," and immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁴ Then he ordered him to tell no one: "But go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them."

¹⁵ But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. ¹⁶ Yet he often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.

.....
²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, "Follow me."

²⁸ So, leaving everything behind, he got up and began to follow him.

.....
²⁹ Then Levi hosted a grand banquet for him at his house. Now there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were reclining at the table with them.

³⁰ But the Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹ Jesus replied to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are sick."

³² **I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."**

MEMORY VERSE

KEYWORDS

Leprosy (v. 12)—Is used to describe several different skin diseases, including what is now known as Hansen's disease.

Go...to the priest (v.14)—The Mosaic law gave the priests the responsibility of identifying leprosy and also of declaring a person clean or unclean (Lev. 13-14).

Tax Collectors (v. 27)— Worked for the Roman government. They were allowed to keep any additional charges they collected. Jewish people viewed them as thieves and traitors to Israel.

Repentance (v.32)— This is a word that means to change the mind and heart.

HOW CAN WE POINT OTHERS TO JESUS BY MEETING THEIR NEEDS?

The Bible makes it clear that believers should meet the needs of others. Yet we sometimes hesitate, unsure of who has a need that should be met. Did you know there is a test to see if a person has unmet needs? There is! Simply hold a mirror directly under a person's nose and watch what happens. If, after a few seconds, the mirror fogs, that means they have unmet needs. The point is that every living, breathing person has unmet needs. Now we don't need to carry a mirror around in our pockets every day, much less place it under the noses of the people we meet, but we can begin to develop a willingness to help others by seeing and meeting their needs. Keep this in mind as you interact with the people you encounter each day.

In our session today, we see Jesus modeling this for us. He connects with two men who had unmet needs. Jesus demonstrated both awareness of their needs and concern about those needs. Through His willingness to meet their needs, their lives were changed dramatically. Believers can do the same by meeting needs and pointing others to Jesus.

Heal the Sick // Luke 5:12-16

Jesus's primary mission was "to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). But anyone who has read the Gospels knows that Jesus physically healed many people during His earthly ministry. Healing people physically was secondary to healing them spiritually, but He did both. This tells us something important about Jesus: He had compassion toward all people. Jesus wanted to help people in need. Here's an important principle: compassion moves us to help. Jesus was willing to help others because of the compassion He had for them.

Luke recorded an instance when a man with an unmet need sought out Jesus for help. Luke tells us the man had "leprosy all over him" (Luke 5:12). Leprosy in the Bible can include a variety of skin diseases, some serious in nature and others less so. Yet any form of leprosy in that day presented a huge problem. Not only was there physical

discomfort, but for the Jew, it also meant being ostracized from society. Lepers were cut off from their families, the synagogue, and from any social interactions. The clean/unclean laws of Judaism demanded that lepers shout "Unclean, unclean!" whenever they moved about publicly (Lev. 13:45-46). Anyone coming into physical contact with a leper could potentially be infected, so it's no wonder that the leper, upon seeing Jesus, fell face down and begged for healing.

Notice the leper's statement to Jesus: "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean" (Luke 5:12).



THE POINT: MEETING NEEDS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INTRODUCE OTHERS TO JESUS.

The leper didn't express doubt about Jesus's capability of healing his leprosy; of that, he was sure. However, this man had been ill-treated by others; he had seen the revulsion and fear in the eyes of the people around him. He had experienced the rejection and isolation his disease had caused. When the leper said, "if you are willing," he wanted to know if Jesus was going to be like the others. He wanted to know if Jesus cared enough about him to help him.

Verse 13 is a beautiful picture of compassion. Who knows how long it had been since this man had been physically touched? Jesus wanted this leper to know that He cared for him, so Jesus did the unthinkable: He reached out His hand and touched him. Jesus also declared His concern for the leper by saying "I am willing; be made clean." The concrete evidence of Jesus's compassion for the leper is seen in these words: "and immediately the leprosy left him."

Jesus commanded the leper to complete the restoration by fulfilling the requirements of the law: "But go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them" (v. 14). By showing himself to the priest and participating in a week-long cleansing process, the man could be reintegrated into society. Jesus commanded the man to do so because Jesus wanted to see the man's life fully restored.

We've all been there. We might have looked away to avoid making eye contact with the person holding a sign and asking for money while sitting at a red light. Then we rationalized that decision by telling ourselves we didn't know how the person would have spent the money anyway. Or maybe we actually did share a few dollars with the person so we could get on with whatever we had to do that day. In either case, we moved on from the encounter without fostering a connection with a person who was in need. But is this what Jesus wants?

Compassion can change all that. Compassion is a strong emotion that can be a strong motivator. Compassion moves us to act. It moves us from good intentions to concrete action. When we truly care about the painful circumstances of others, it will motivate us to do something about it. Compassion causes us to think unselfishly and act sacrificially. Compassion motivates us to meet needs completely instead of taking a surface-level approach.

WHAT OBSTACLES DO WE SOMETIMES FACE IN HELPING OTHERS?

Help Some Get Started // Luke 5:27-28

In Luke 5:12-16, Jesus was approached by a man who asked Him for help. In Jesus's connection with Levi the tax collector, we see Jesus taking the initiative by inviting Levi to follow Him. There's no



DIGGING DEEPER A PAINFUL CONDITION

In the Bible, someone described as having leprosy could have been subject to a number of skin diseases. Regardless of the specific type of disease, those identified as lepers certainly suffered dis-ease. They literally were not at ease physically or socially. In the Old Testament, the focus was on maintaining the purity of the people, so those with leprosy were kept apart from everyone else. Chapters 13 and 14 in Leviticus prescribe the specific actions a person with leprosy had to take. The stories of Miriam in Numbers 12 and Naaman in 2 Kings 5 describe two instances of leprosy. When we look at the New Testament, we find that Jesus reveals God's compassion by healing individuals with leprosy. In addition to the story in today's passage, Luke also records a story of Jesus healing ten men of leprosy, one of whom returned to express gratitude (Luke 17:11-19).

How might God use painful conditions for our benefit and His glory?



indication of a prior connection between Jesus and Levi. It's not out of the realm of possibility that the commanding presence and reputation of Jesus, a rabbi who speaks with authority and purportedly could do miracles, was enough to compel Levi to respond immediately and with finality. But it's also possible that Levi had been aware of Jesus's ministry. Levi had most likely seen or at least heard of Jesus teaching in the synagogue, driving out an unclean spirit, or healing a man with leprosy. He had previously seen an authentic picture of who Jesus is and was ready to follow Him when the invitation came.

This can happen today. When people today get an accurate picture of Jesus, it can help them make the decision to follow Him. One of the ways of portraying Jesus to people who are not Christians is by compassionately meeting the needs of others. Our help shows that we care and opens the door for us to share that Jesus cares for them as well. In fact, we should intentionally let others know that it is God's love and compassion toward us that leads us to have compassion for them. That's a strategy believers can follow today.

One of the unfortunate results of society's drift toward isolation and distancing from others is an increased level of cynicism, especially at first contact. Most people we know use a call filter on their phones—and for good reason. We are bombarded by automated calls that try to sell us all kinds of services we don't need or try to scam unsuspecting individuals out of money. Our society has become cautious, even suspicious of unsolicited help.

That's why meeting the needs of others can be so effective in sharing the gospel. Once a person understands that we are helping because we genuinely care about them, they might be more inclined to respond positively to the gospel. But we must not forget to share the gospel. Remember Jesus's example of inviting Levi to follow Him. As verse 28 makes clear, Levi immediately left his tax booth and started following Jesus. Let's compassionately help others and also invite them to follow Jesus.

WHAT HAVE YOU GIVEN UP TO FOLLOW JESUS?

Hang Around with Sinners

// Luke 5:29-32

Take a good look at Levi's story. After leaving everything to follow Jesus, Levi hosted a banquet in His honor—a fitting first response. Not only that, but Levi also invited people just like him to attend—tax collectors. What should have been a great celebration was marred by the complaints of the Pharisees and scribes. They couldn't celebrate because the "wrong" people showed up. To understand their complaints, we need to learn about the status of tax collectors and the views of the Pharisees and scribes.

Tax collecting often tempted individuals to demand more than what was actually owed, keeping the excess for themselves. Additionally, tax collectors gathered payments from both Jews and Gentiles, placing them in regular contact with Gentiles. Therefore, tax collectors were viewed by many as traitors, thieves, and ceremonially unclean.

On the other hand, scribes and Pharisees were diligent toward the keeping of the law, with great emphasis on the clean/unclean laws. Their zealous desire to be ceremonially clean led them to distance themselves from anyone they considered to be a sinner, which in their view meant someone who had violated the law.

In addition, sharing a meal was viewed by them as an important event. It was a form of fellowship that took on religious meaning and it displayed to some degree agreement among the participants.

These views caused the scribes and Pharisees to voice their complaint in the form of a question:

THE POINT: MEETING NEEDS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INTRODUCE OTHERS TO JESUS.

"Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (v. 30). In fact, this wasn't a question; it was an accusation. Their view was that a true rabbi would not eat with sinners because it condoned their behavior. Inviting Levi to be a follower meant that Jesus's ministry would allow the thief, the traitor, and the unclean to participate. They believed no true rabbi would do that.

Jesus responded wisely to their accusation: "It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (vv. 31-32). Here we see Jesus's definition of sinner, which is very different from the scribes and Pharisees' definition. To the Pharisees, a sinner was anyone who did not keep the law. To Jesus, the sinner is that person in need of repentance and forgiveness.

Part of the struggle is our sense of worthiness. Sometimes we make the decision to help someone because we believe they are worthy or we withhold help because we deem them unworthy. Jesus's logic is flawless. The disease of sin is rampant and terminal. Those who are suffering from the disease of sin need the cure. Believers have the cure and can share it, but it requires that we connect with those who are sick and in need of help. We can connect with them initially by meeting their needs.

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS GOD COULD USE YOUR BACKGROUND TO DRAW PEOPLE TO JESUS?

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a saying that "people can be so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good." The saying expresses the idea that individuals who are overly spiritual either don't know or don't care about what's going on down here on earth. This is not the case for followers of Jesus. In the Bible and throughout history, Christians have shared their time, talents, and treasures with other people precisely because of their love for God. Our truly being heavenly minded results in doing good on earth. We pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10) and then we live it out. The two are not at odds with each other, or at least they don't have to be. Jesus modeled the balance for us: He proclaimed that the kingdom of God was at hand, and He met the earthly needs of people by feeding and healing them.

Biblical Truth: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

How will you let the light of heaven shine in you so that you can do Christ's good on earth?

LIVE IT

Are you demonstrating your love for Christ by meeting the needs of others?

Our love for God and our love for others go hand in hand. Meeting the needs of others acts as a bridge, not the destination. Meeting the needs of others is a great way to build relationships and may lead to an opportunity to share the gospel. As you meet others' physical needs, look for ways to move the conversation to how Jesus meets our spiritual needs. Below are some steps you can take as you seek to meet the needs of others:

+ + +

- **Confess.** Pray and ask God to reveal sinful thoughts or prejudices that might negatively impact your compassion for people. Confess your sin to God and genuinely repent.
- **Assess.** Prayerfully consider your circle of family, friends, and acquaintances. What unmet needs do they have? Select one person to help and develop an action plan to meet the need compassionately.
- **Express.** Share your desire to serve with your pastor, a staff member at your church, or a mature believer, and consider ways you can meet needs in the church and in your community.

DAILY READINGS

1. VALUABLE TO GOD // PSALM 139:14

We have infinite value to God. Think about it. We have been created in the image of God. Oftentimes we find ourselves in moments of need. During those times of need, we can lose sight of our value to God. Maybe we are facing a matter impacting our emotional or physical health. Maybe we are facing a financial or personal need. If we earnestly call on Jesus during our most vulnerable times, Philippians 4:19 declares that “my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory.” Jesus cares about the things that affect us. There is no issue, problem or concern that He cannot handle. Jesus is not a respecter of persons.

Seek God in our issues and trust they will be met with mercy and compassion.

2. EACH ONE REACH ONE // ROMANS 12:6

Often, we feel that we are not equipped or good enough to reach others and connect them to God. However, God has given each one of us an ability to make a meaningful impact in the life of someone else. In fact, imagine what might happen if each of us reached out to help one person. When we help others, we are displaying the love of Jesus Christ. When those who are in need experience the love of Christ, that experience will guide them toward a life-transforming relationship with Him as well. So, we must never doubt how valuable we are to God. Realizing our value to God breaks down walls and connects others to their value.

You have everything it takes through Christ to help others.

3. THE POWER OF AGREEMENT // MATTHEW 18:19

Jesus was led by a passionate desire to lead others to victorious kingdom living. When we work together, unified by a desire to connect others to Christ, it will result in a successful outcome. There are many people waiting to be reached and need to feel that they matter. God helps us to show others that their lives have meaning. When we are led by

a desire to help those in need, we can reach the unified goal of changing lives. There is power in agreement. We must remember that no matter the need, when we come into agreement with the will of God, He takes care of that need.

Agreement with God and working with others results in transformed lives.

4. EMPOWERED TO CONNECT// PHILIPPIANS 4:13

We are blessed to be empowered to serve and help others. We have many opportunities to reach out to the lost and hurt. However, it can be uncomfortable stepping outside of our comfort zone. Personality differences, preferences, family upbringing, fears and other factors can present barriers to making connections to those who need a life-changing encounter with Christ. During a key ministry moment, Jesus responds to a ministry request in Luke 5:13 by saying, “I am willing.” Christ strengthens us and helps us to be willing to connect and make a difference in the lives of others. While we may find it difficult to overcome our shortcomings or trepidations, through Jesus Christ, we receive the ability to make a difference.

His strength empowers us to connect with others in meaningful ways.

5. LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD// ROMANS 8:14

How we choose to live our life is a reflection of the influences in our lives. We are constantly bombarded by things that are in competition to influence our thoughts and behaviors. Amid the chaos of life, it is important to remember that God cares. He has called us to be His representatives to those who need Him. God’s Holy Spirit leads and guides us to be effective witnesses for Him. He shows us that when we are unified in the mission of witnessing about the hope of Christ, He is glorified. Firmly adhering to Jesus’s model of compassion and mercy effectively reaches the heart and changes lives.

Following the Holy Spirit can never lead you in the wrong direction.