



SESSION

6

LIFE ON MISSION



**WHO DO YOU
LOOK UP TO?**





THE POINT

WE CAN BETTER SHARE THE GOSPEL WHEN WE STEP INTO THE SHOES OF OTHERS.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

ACCORDING TO THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS, THE MAN WITH THE WORLD'S LARGEST FEET WEARS A U.S. SIZE 26. THINK ABOUT WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO WALK A MILE IN HIS BOOTS!¹

The world is not a boring place—that's for sure. Adventures await, as do lazy afternoons. We can behold awe-inspiring mountains, as well as vast oceans. But what makes the world particularly rich is the people. Every one of us is different with unique perspectives and experiences.

➤ **What kind of diversity do you see in your school?**

We often fail to appreciate this diversity and can be critical of others who are different. We all have a unique lens through which we see the world, and can, at times, find it hard to understand others' values.

But God calls us to do just that. His design is that Christians would love others so much that we'd be willing not only to understand others, but to give up our own preferences for the sake of connecting. God's primary purpose for these relationships is that diverse people of every language, nation, color, and class would be united as a part of His family.

There's an old saying that we can't really understand a person until we've "walked a mile in their shoes." How would God have you slip into someone else's sneakers—they may even be uncomfortable—for the sake of the gospel?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?



▶ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-27

¹⁹Although I am free from all and not anyone's slave, I have made myself a slave to everyone, in order to win more people.

²⁰To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; to those under the law, like one under the law — though I myself am not under the law — to win those under the law.

²¹To those who are without the law, like one without the law — though I am not without God's law but under the law of Christ — to win those without the law.

²²To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some.

²³Now I do all this because of the gospel, so that I may share in the blessings.

²⁴Don't you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way to win the prize.

²⁵Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown.

²⁶So I do not run like one who runs aimlessly or box like one beating the air.

²⁷Instead, I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

THE SETTING

The Corinthian church was located in a city that was just about as sinfully indulgent as any place ever was. Many people say Corinth and today's America are similar in many ways.² The church struggled with worldliness, and Paul wrote a letter to help them understand the importance of living God's way, which was remarkably different from the cultural norm. This included laying aside personal rights and comforts so that others would see the power of the gospel change lives.



▶ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19

Every year to celebrate our freedom as Americans, we enjoy quite a festive holiday. In 2016, Americans spent \$6.77 billion on food for cookouts and shot 285.3 million pounds of fireworks.³ I'd say we're serious about our freedom.

And why shouldn't we be? Freedom from control and oppression allows people in America the opportunity to become dentists and doctors, artists and engineers, and in a large way enriches and improves the lives of people all over the world.

➤ **As you've grown older, you've likely been given more freedoms. Which ones do you particularly enjoy?**

Paul appreciated living free as much as anyone. However, he willingly gave it all up, subjecting himself to the most difficult circumstances imaginable, for the sake of others' eternal happiness.

The highest calling of every believer is the same as Paul's: to serve God through advancing the gospel. This is not just something we do; it's our identity in Christ.

**HOW CAN
WE WALK IN
THE SHOES
OF OTHERS
WITHOUT
COMPROMISING
OUR VALUES?**



The highest calling of every believer is the same as Paul's: to serve God through advancing the gospel. #ChristID





▶ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:20-23

Everyone sitting in this group is multi-lingual. You may say, “But I only speak English.” We’re not talking about English versus Spanish. Even when speaking the same verbal language, you have certain words or expressions you use with your buddies that your grandparents certainly wouldn’t understand. With your boyfriend or girlfriend, you use a language you wouldn’t with your teachers. And certain languages you speak much more fluently than others.

➤ **With whom do you sometimes struggle to communicate?**

Paul was compelled to take the gospel to as many people as possible, and in his travels, he encountered people of many cultures. They all had unique perspectives, and it was necessary that Paul adapt his approach to each situation. This often meant giving up his normal, comfortable ways of doing things.

Paul’s attitude of *I have become all things to all people* reflects the attitude of Jesus Himself, who said He came “not to be served, but to serve” (Mark 10:45).

Reaching people with the gospel means getting to know them. How they live, what they appreciate, and connecting with them on their level. In identifying with others this way, we help them to find their identity in Jesus.

“Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell; I wish to run a rescue mission within a yard of hell.”⁴ —C. T. Studd

➤ **What comforts would God have you give up in order to reach others?**

➤ **What risks would God have you take for the sake of the gospel?**

WHAT ARE SOME DIFFERENT APPROACHES CHRISTIANS USE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL?





ACTION POINT

As Jesus' followers, we are called to share the gospel (which means "good news") with people who don't know God. Evangelism is a military term which refers to the message a general sends from the battlefield: "The war is ours. We've won!" Jesus has won the victory over sin, and all who come to Him in faith can be a part of His kingdom. List ways you can share the "good news" with others in each of the following categories?

**RELATIONAL
EVANGELISM**
(building relationships with people for the sake of sharing the gospel)

Blank space for notes related to Relational Evangelism.

**PRACTICAL
EVANGELISM**
(meeting practical needs in order to create opportunities to share)

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**CONVERSATIONAL
EVANGELISM**
(introducing Jesus into everyday conversations)

Blank space for notes related to Conversational Evangelism.

▶ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27

Running. Many love it. Many hate it! But either way, we've all done it. (We've all taken P.E., right?)

Those who succeed are propelled, to some degree, by natural talent. But even the most athletically gifted among us know that, to achieve our full potential, talent alone isn't enough.

The race Paul speaks of is the Isthmian Games. They were similar to the Olympics and were held in Corinth, and the runners were world class. No matter how talented they were, competing required a relentless training regimen.

**WHAT THINGS
DO YOU NEED
TO SET ASIDE
TO RUN THE
RACE OF
FAITH WELL?**



➤ **Describe the training required for a skill you've learned:**

Spiritually, we've been called to strictly discipline ourselves to winning others for the sake of the gospel. In Paul's day, the prize was a ceremonial wreath. Today, many run for a gold medal or even a 26.2 sticker. But the prize awaiting every believer who runs is eternity with Jesus.

There are days we'd much rather relax, but the identity of one who follows after Jesus is that of a toned and primed athlete. You're a runner. Now run!

ACTION POINT

In the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio, nine Olympic records were broken by U.S. athletes.⁵ One was Katie Ledecky's shattering of the previous record in the 400m Freestyle by five seconds.



➤ **How would you describe the training that allowed her to accomplish this?**

➤ **How will you train so that you may run to win in a spiritual sense?**



LIVE IT OUT

“IF YOUR GOSPEL ISN’T TOUCHING OTHERS, IT HASN’T TOUCHED YOU!”⁶ — CURRY R. BLAKE

BIBLE READING PLAN



DAY 1
PSALM 95

DAY 2
PSALM 96

DAY 3
PSALM 97

DAY 4
PSALM 98

DAY 5
PSALM 99

DAY 6
PSALM 100

DAY 7
PSALM 101

▶ CHRIST

Paul gave up freedoms in order to connect with the Jews. In reaching Gentiles, he did the same. To know God, we are called to lay aside things that would separate us from Him. What is God calling you to give up for the sake of knowing Him more intimately? List a few ways you feel closer to God as you let go of the things that keep you from Him.

▶ COMMUNITY

Sharing the gospel is a skill that is learned and developed over time. This week, commit to spending time learning from someone who’s more experienced than you, perhaps your group leader. Record what you learn and commit to putting it into practice.

► CULTURE

When you're excited about something, the joy you feel is multiplied when you share it with others. For instance, if you see a funny video online, you just have to show it to your friends and you laugh harder together. Think about a recent experience you shared with a friend and record your thoughts. Then consider your experience with Christ and how you have shared it with others.

RECENT EXPERIENCE I SHARED:	WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT IT:	RESPONSE OF THE PERSON I SHARED WITH:
MY EXPERIENCE WITH CHRIST:	WHAT I LOVE ABOUT HIM:	RESPONSE OF PERSON I SHARED WITH: