

EVERYDAY EVANGELISM

*PURSUING HEARTS,
NOT ARGUMENTS*

PRESTON PERRY

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Preston Perry

Preston Perry is an author, podcaster, poet, performance artist, teacher, and apologist from Chicago. By the grace of God, Preston has become a formidable communicator of the gospel. His love for people inspires him to pair transparency and vulnerability with his creativity in a way that promotes freedom. Preston pursues engagement with people from various faith backgrounds. He has a palpable passion for God's Word and stands on biblical truth amid his study of other religions. Preston's writing and teaching has been featured on ministry platforms like The Gospel Coalition, Desiring God, the Poets in Autumn Tour, and Legacy Disciple. In 2017, Preston founded Bold TV and Bold Apparel as avenues to engage the public in theological discourse. Currently, he cohosts the *With the Perrys* Podcast with his wife, Jackie Hill Perry. Though Preston shares God's desires for humanity publicly, he considers his family his primary ministry. Preston resides in Atlanta with his wife and their three beautiful daughters and son.

How to Use This Study

This Bible study provides a guided process to help individuals and small groups step into the calling of evangelism. Six weeks of study give a biblical framework and practical guidance to help prepare believers for effective evangelism. Through the study, we will learn the foundational heart posture, principles, and apologetics necessary to win hearts for the sake of Christ.

GROUP STUDY

Regardless of what day of the week your group meets, each session of content begins with the group session. Each group session uses the following format to facilitate simple yet meaningful interaction among group members and with God's Word.

START

The group session will begin with a few questions designed to help you introduce the session's topic of study and encourage everyone to engage with the study.

WATCH

This page provides space to take notes on the video teaching. Codes to access the videos are included with your purchase of this book and can be found on the insert located at the back of this book.

DISCUSS

This section is the main component of the group session. The questions provided are designed to facilitate group discussion on the session's topic. The goal is to help you better understand God's perspective on evangelism and apply the biblical teaching to your life.

PERSONAL STUDY

The group and personal studies are paired together to help you grow in your understanding of the topic for each session. Two days of personal study are provided after each group session, along with an evangelistic exercise to help you apply the week's teaching to your evangelistic efforts. With biblical teaching and introspective questions, these lessons challenge individuals to grow in their understanding of God's Word and to respond in faith and obedience.

Tips for Leading a Small Group

Follow these guidelines to prepare for each group session.

PRAYERFULLY PREPARE

Review the weekly material and group questions ahead of time. Be intentional about praying for each person in the group. Ask the Holy Spirit to work through you and the group discussion as you point to Jesus each week through God's Word.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Create a comfortable environment. If group members are uncomfortable, they'll be distracted and, therefore, not engaged in the group experience. Plan ahead by considering details like seating, temperature, lighting, food and drink, surrounding noise, and general cleanliness.

At best, thoughtfulness and hospitality show guests and group members they're welcome and valued in whatever environment you choose to gather. At worst, people may never notice your effort, but they're also not distracted. Do everything in your ability to help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with one another.

INCLUDE OTHERS

Your goal is to foster a community in which people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually. Always be aware of opportunities to include any people who visit the group and to invite new people to join your group. An inexpensive way to make first-time guests feel welcome or to invite someone to get involved is to give them their own copies of this Bible study book.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small group experience has the following characteristics.

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES. Encourage everyone to ask questions, share responses, or read aloud.

NO ONE DOMINATES—NOT EVEN THE LEADER. Be sure that your time speaking as a leader takes up less than half of your time together as a group. Politely guide discussion if anyone dominates.

NOBODY IS RUSHED THROUGH QUESTIONS. Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People often need time to think about their responses to questions they've just heard or to gain courage to share what God is stirring in their hearts.

INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP. Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build community with follow-up questions, asking how other people have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. People are less likely to speak up if they fear that you don't actually want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer.

GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL. Opinions and experiences can be helpful, but to work in people's lives. You can't change anyone, but God can. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.

KEEP CONNECTING

Think of ways to connect with group members during the week. Participation during the group session is always improved when members spend time connecting with one another outside the group sessions. The more people are comfortable with and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When people move beyond being friendly to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending. When possible, build deeper friendships by planning or spontaneously inviting group members to join you outside your regularly scheduled group time for meals, fun activities, or projects around your home, church, or community.

Week 1

Everyday Evangelist

Group Study

START

Welcome to week 1 of Everyday Evangelism.

What comes to mind when you hear the word *evangelism*?

If you're following Jesus, how did you become a follower of Jesus?

Take time to share your testimony with the group.

Why should we share our faith in Jesus with other people?

Most Christians find it difficult to share their faith. It can make us nervous, and we clam up. We worry we'll freeze in the moment. We're afraid we won't have the right words—especially if someone starts arguing with us. If we aren't careful, we'll let these hesitations keep us from the important work God's given us to do.

We have to think about evangelism differently. And that starts with remembering God has called us to be evangelists. If we are willing to engage with this calling, He is more than willing to empower us through the Holy Spirit to give the gospel to anyone we encounter. If you're willing to be used by God, He will use you. This Bible study was designed to help you embrace that truth and equip you with practical tools to be the everyday evangelist God has called you to be.

Pause to pray as you begin this study, asking God to give you passion and boldness to embrace your calling as an evangelist.

WATCH

Use this page to take notes as you watch video session 1.

To access the teaching sessions,
use the instructions in the back
of your Bible study book.



DISCUSS

Use this page to facilitate the group discussion.

All Christians are evangelists. The term *evangelist* comes from a Greek word meaning “a bringer or messenger of good news.” What Jesus has done for us is good news. We should want everyone to know about it. And what Jesus commands us to do, He will give us the grace to carry out with confidence. The God who brought the good news to us will be with us as we share it. Through this study, we will learn how to share our faith wherever God places us—winning hearts like God has won ours.

Read Matthew 28:18-20.

1. These verses are known as the Great Commission. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do? What did He say to encourage them as He sent them out (v. 20)? How do these promises hold true for us today?
2. In the past, what has kept you from being an evangelist?
3. Do you have relationships with people who have different worldviews than yours? If so, what do they believe?

Much of what keeps us from being evangelists is the burden we place on ourselves. We feel as though someone’s salvation is dependent on us having a single conversation with them. Ultimately, salvation belongs to the Lord, and in most cases, God uses several people, planting and watering seeds over time, to open our hearts to Him. It often takes time, multiple conversations, and prayer for someone to come to faith in Christ. When we share the gospel with people, our conversations will never be pointless, even if they do not receive Jesus in that moment. We can trust the Spirit’s work in their lives.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9.

4. What do these verses reveal about God’s process for bringing people to faith in Jesus?
5. Your only responsibility when it comes to evangelism is planting the seed. God is the One who makes it grow. How does this truth impact your mindset about sharing the gospel with others?

6. Read verse 9 again. What does Paul mean when he says we are “God’s coworkers”? In what ways are the people with whom we share the gospel “God’s field, God’s building”?

If you’re concerned about having the right words to say when you share the gospel with someone else, remember you’re not alone in your efforts. The Holy Spirit has everything you need for the task. When you obediently give people the gospel, He will empower you. The Great Commission is not dependent upon your communication skills; it is dependent upon the power of God in you. As you step out in faith, God will give you the words, the courage, and the wisdom you need to share the good news effectively.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

7. How does the Holy Spirit empower believers for evangelism?
8. What do you think it looks like to partner with the Holy Spirit when it comes to evangelism?
9. Do you currently feel comfortable with the idea of sharing the gospel with others? Why or why not?

Hopefully, today’s teaching and discussion have given you a deeper desire to share the gospel with those around you. If you still have hesitations, don’t worry—this is just the beginning! As you dive into your personal study sessions, continue to engage in discussions with your group, and rely on the Holy Spirit throughout this process, your confidence will continue to grow. God is going to do powerful things through your obedience!

Use this time to pray for one another as you close your time together.

PRAYER REQUESTS



Jesus came near and said to them,
“All authority has been given to
me in heaven and on earth. Go,
therefore, and make disciples
of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and
of the Son and of the Holy
Spirit, teaching them to observe
everything I have commanded
you. And remember, I am with
you always, to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:18-20

Week 1 Everyday Evangelist

PERSONAL STUDY 1

Commissioned

All of us who are saved by grace have a story. God uses His Spirit, His truth, and His servants to call people to faith in Christ. In Preston's story, God used difficult life experiences and the faithfulness of ordinary people like Preston's aunt Denise and his friend Gary to open his heart to the gospel. While Preston did not respond immediately, the seeds that Denise and Gary planted and watered eventually bore fruit. God used their faithfulness to give Preston the gospel, and it completely changed his life.

Take a moment to write out your story. How did God win your heart? What people or which truths did He use to call you to Himself?

If there are specific people who played a significant role in your coming to faith in Jesus, write their names below. How did they help you see the truth of the gospel of Jesus?

All followers of Christ are evangelists. Every saint has all that they need to give the gospel to their community. God uses all faithful Christians to go and tell the world that we were once blind, but now we can see—and that they can, too, if they will only repent and believe. God doesn't use us because of ourselves; God uses us in spite of ourselves.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-29:

Brothers and sisters, consider your calling: Not many were wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. Instead, God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world—what is viewed as nothing—to bring to nothing what is viewed as something, so that no one may boast in his presence.

In what ways are you tempted to see yourself as unqualified for evangelism?

What actually qualifies someone to spread the gospel?

Looking back at the people you listed who helped you come to faith in Jesus, what qualified them to share the gospel with you?

God can and wants to use each of us to share the gospel. We do not have to have a certain level of status or education or talent or wealth to be worthy of this calling. We carry an extraordinary power inside us through the Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 4:7). Evangelism is much more about what He is doing through us than what we do. God uses our simple obedience to spread and water gospel seeds. The Spirit brings the fruit.

All we need to become an evangelist is the Spirit's work and Christ's commission. He has commissioned you just as He did the first disciples.

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

Notice that some of the disciples still had doubts about Jesus's resurrection. Why were they struggling to believe?

What did Jesus say in verse 18 to address the disciples' doubts?

Jesus tells us to make disciples of all nations, which means we will encounter people with different beliefs and worldviews. How does Jesus's authority give you confidence approaching those potentially challenging situations?

How do Jesus's words in verse 20 encourage you?

The One who has "all authority" (v. 18) is with us always (v. 20). This is the truth we should hold most tightly to as we step out with the gospel: His calling on our lives is our covering as we step out of our comfort zone and into obedience to His commission.

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

What does it mean that Jesus has "the name that is above every name"?

Why is His authority a necessary part of our evangelism?

Because of Jesus's humility, obedience, and perfect sacrifice for our sins, God has given Him supreme authority over everything. Therefore, Jesus not only has the right to give commands, He also has the power to ensure His commands are fulfilled. Nothing can stand against the name of Jesus. No person or argument or worldview or power we encounter can thwart His purposes.

With this highest level of authority, He has commissioned us to go and make disciples of all nations. Because He has this authority, we respect and obey Him. And because He has empowered us with His authority, by His Spirit living in us, we can confidently carry out the mission. This is the unshakable foundation upon which we can build a life of evangelism, for the glory of God.

PERSONAL STUDY 2

On Apologetics

A common hesitation people have about sharing the gospel is the worry that they won't be able to answer every question people throw at them. Many fear evangelistic conversations will lead to arguments that they won't be able to "win." But the goal of evangelism is to win hearts, not arguments. Before we can have productive conversations about the gospel, we need to cultivate a desire to see people come to faith in Jesus—and desire that more than being right or proving a point.

Of course, many gospel conversations involve talking about our deeply held beliefs. We will inevitably encounter people who have different belief systems and worldviews. And while we must always remain focused on winning hearts, we still have to be prepared to defend our faith—which brings us to apologetics.

Do you currently feel equipped to have conversations about the basic tenants of Christianity? Why or why not?

The term *apologetics* may make you think about seminary classes or scholarly debates. Maybe you think that unless you earn a Master of Divinity degree, you won't be able to effectively engage in apologetics. But you don't have to have a robust theological background or be an accomplished scholar to defend your faith. Apologetics is really about loving the Lord and being willing to tell people about Him.

Read 1 Peter 3:13-17.

What is Peter saying in these verses? Rewrite them in your own words.

How does the tone of these verses contrast with the tone often associated with "defending the faith"?

In this passage, Peter provided vital instruction regarding our posture when we share the gospel. How we speak to people about our faith matters. How they *feel* during our conversations matters, and our approach to these conversations can either invite someone to learn more about Jesus or drive them away from Him.

According to 1 Peter 3:16, what characteristics should mark our conversations about faith?

When people challenge you, do you usually respond with gentleness and respect or defensiveness? Why?

We can defend our faith without being defensive. Preparation is the key. If we are confident in our ability to speak about our faith, we can be calm in the face of opposition. Let's consider some of the opposition you might face as you share the gospel.

Think about the people in your life who don't know Jesus. What are their worldviews? What do they currently believe about God?

What are some common misconceptions about Christianity?

How would you respond if someone brought up these misconceptions in conversation with you?

The more we are genuinely curious and seek to understand what the people around us believe, the better we can engage with them about matters of faith. If you feel like God is calling you to reach out to the Muslim family down the street, it would be helpful to familiarize yourself with the Koran and the five pillars of Islam. You don't have to know everything. If you know the key points, you can go into conversations aware of how

their beliefs conflict with Christianity and study Scripture that addresses those areas in advance.

This kind of preparation allows you to interact with your neighbors without anxiety over where the conversation might go. When you feel ready to defend your faith if the need arises, you can more easily maintain a gentle and respectful disposition. Consider the way Jesus interacted with the lost. He never puffed out His chest or argued with people who disagreed with Him. He simply spoke the truth with conviction and compassion. And His kindness led people to repentance.

God called the apostle Paul, a once-devout Pharisee, to spread the gospel across the Gentile world. He encountered foreign cultures and interacted with all kinds of people with a variety of customs—and always remained on mission to bring people to faith in Jesus. Read his words from 1 Corinthians:

To 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. To 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. To 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.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:20-22

“By every possible means.” A true evangelist, Paul consistently looked for ways to connect with people to have genuine conversations that allowed him to share the truth about Jesus. He took a sincere interest in people and their beliefs. If you want to “become all things to all people,” you have to learn about people.

**What belief systems or worldviews do the people around you hold?
How could you learn about them so you can prepare for conversations
with your neighbors and coworkers?**

**What aspects of Christianity do you feel you need to understand more
fully in order to defend your faith?**

PERSONAL STUDY 3

Evangelistic Exercise

You have spent time thinking about your testimony throughout this first session. Our stories are powerful tools for evangelism because they describe our experience with Jesus, reflecting on the ways He has changed our lives. Testimonies are helpful because we can immediately share them with people who have other worldviews, and they can't really be argued with because they are our lived experience—the stories of our lives. Sharing your testimony is a great way to begin an evangelistic conversation with a stranger or with someone you've known for a while. One way to begin is talking about the way having a relationship with Jesus has blessed your life.

For instance, you might have a friend who is going through a difficult time because of the sudden death of a family member. You may not be sure if your friend follows Christ, but you can take the opportunity to explain to her that one of the blessings of a relationship with Jesus is that He is near to the brokenhearted and gives supernatural comfort in times of need (Psalm 34:18).

In what ways has your relationship with Jesus blessed your life? How can you use those experiences to start gospel conversations with others? The following prompts will help you think through some entry points for evangelistic conversations.

As you go through these questions, think of someone you already know personally but whose spiritual beliefs you don't know. Phrase your responses to these questions as if you were having an evangelistic conversation with that person.

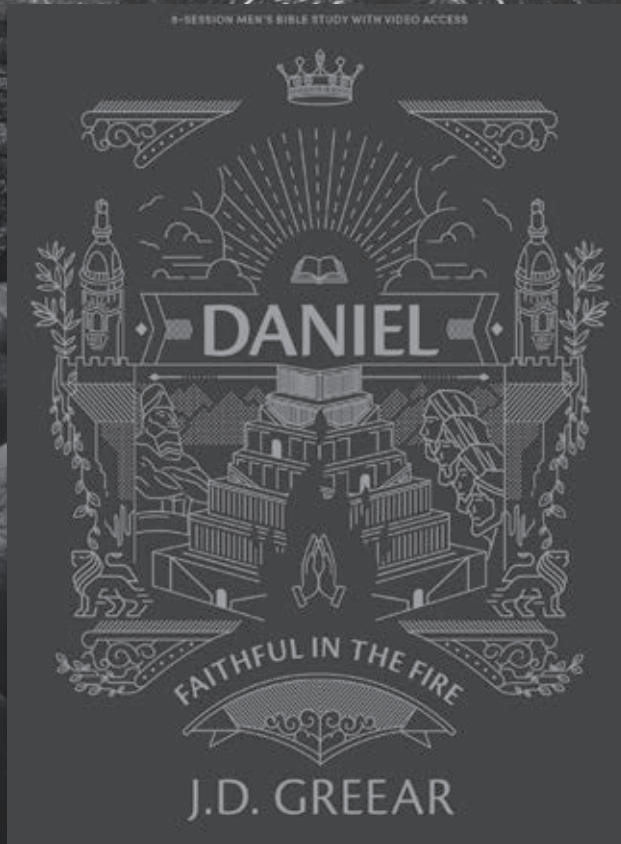
What about your life has changed most positively because of Jesus?

What is something you're learning about Jesus?

What struggles have you experienced in your spiritual life?

What has been the most surprising impact that Jesus has had on your life?

Who is God bringing to your mind that you should begin sharing with? Trust where the Spirit of God is leading. Write their names and a prayer for them below. Include in your prayer a request for God to give you the courage and an opportunity to talk with them about Jesus.

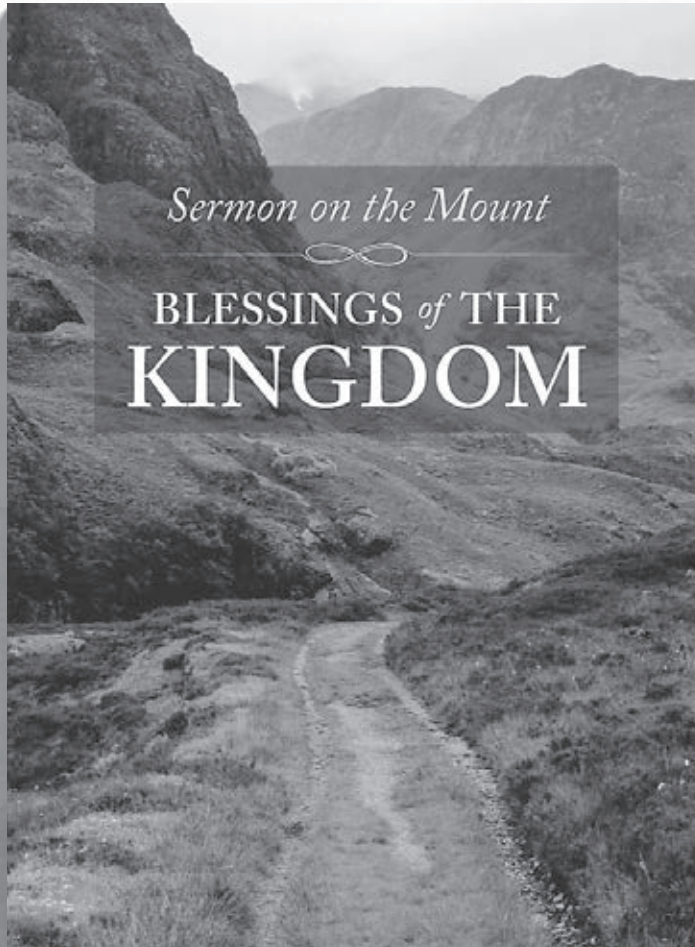


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Sermon on the Mount



BLESSINGS *of* THE
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The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus's most well-known teaching, containing some of the best-loved verses in all of Scripture. In it, Jesus discloses what it means to take part in the good life—the kingdom of heaven that He has brought to the present with His incarnation that will extend into eternity. This new six-session study will challenge your assumptions about this earthly kingdom and help you strive for and participate in a better one.

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Can anyone be an evangelist?

Most Christians know we are called to share the gospel, but many of us hesitate for a variety of reasons. We worry about how the message will be received. We're scared of rejection. We're afraid we won't be able to answer questions. Maybe we don't even know how to start the conversation. But the truth is, we're overthinking it. If you love Jesus and have a heart for people to know Him, you have what you need to be an evangelist.



Evangelism isn't about having a systematic process for sharing the gospel. It's not about being able to answer every question about the Bible. It's about love—having the heart of God for His people. When you care about people, meet them where they are, and show them dignity and respect, the door will be open for you to share the truth in a way that can change their lives forever.

In this study, you'll:

- Learn the foundational principles of effective evangelism
- Develop a desire to win hearts instead of arguments
- Grow in your confidence to explain the essentials of the gospel
- Find the boldness you need to fulfill the calling of evangelism

STUDYING ON YOUR OWN?

To enrich your study experience, be sure to access the videos available through a redemption code printed in this *Bible Study Book*.

LEADING A GROUP?

Each group member will need an *Everyday Evangelism Bible Study Book*, which includes video access. Because all participants will have access to the video content, you can choose to watch the videos outside of your group meeting if desired. Or, if you're watching together and someone misses a group meeting, they'll have the flexibility to catch up.



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