

4xfourchallenge



4xfour Small Group Curriculum

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Lessons in this curriculum are based on Church *Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge*, by Greg Wallace. All quotes in this curriculum are used with permission.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scriptures in this curriculum are from the New International Version.

Dear Church Leaders,

We hope you find this curriculum useful as you begin your efforts to teach your small groups the relational-evangelism method known as **4xfour**. This method was developed by Greg Wallace, Senior Pastor of Woodridge Baptist Church in Kingwood, Texas out of his desire to help people find a way to share their faith in an easy and unintimidating way.

Simply stated, 4xfour is a way for people to use their relationships and circles of influence as a launching pad for reaching others with the saving message of Jesus Christ. It's broken down into the four "I's" of Identify, Intercede, Invest, and Invite – all explained in the following lessons.

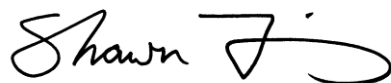
Our prayer is that these lessons can be used to encourage your groups to share their faith with others by understanding that witnessing to people can be as simple as building intentional relationships.

We are excited for your church as you begin this journey! May God bless your efforts with this curriculum by moving in the lives of your people. Don't be afraid to get creative with the lessons. If there's a movie clip, YouTube video, or song that makes the point well for a lesson, use it. Use objects or stories to illustrate ideas. With just a little effort and a lot of openness to the Holy Spirit, don't be surprised if you see many people coming into a life-changing relationship with Jesus!

In Christ,



Mark Barnhill



Shawn Finney

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****All Scripture is New International Version unless otherwise noted.***

Lesson One: “Intro to 4xfour” and “The Condition of the Heart”

(This lesson corresponds with pages 8-15 of “Church Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge”)

Central Themes:

1. People are lost without a relationship with Jesus.
2. God often uses normal, everyday people like us to reach people with the gospel.
3. We are called to be broken-hearted over lost people.

Scripture Passages: [Matthew 9:36-38](#); [1 Peter 3:15](#); [Matthew 28:18-20](#); [2 Corinthians 5:16-20](#)

Opening Question: What’s the one thing you own/possess that you would spend serious time looking for if you lost it – where you would be heartbroken if it were never found? Why would you be so upset about losing it?

- Allow time for answers, which may range anywhere from “my remote control” or “my grandfather’s pocketwatch,” all the way to “my children.”
- **SAY:** If we’re that heartbroken over losing our (insert one or two answers), then imagine how heartbroken God is over people He created who are “lost” to Him (who don’t have a relationship with Him through Jesus)!

(NOTE: Ask this before giving the lesson intro, so as to ‘set up’ the reason for what we’re going to be studying for the next five weeks)

Introduction to 4xfour:

You might want to introduce the concept of 4xfour, since you may have some relatively new people in your group. Consider saying something like this:

Over the next five weeks, we’re going to be taking a deeper look behind “4xfour,” which is Woodridge’s strategy for helping our church members reach out to the people in their lives who need Jesus, as well as build intentional relationships with the people around them for the purpose of reaching them with the gospel.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." - Matthew 9:36-38

ASK: *Most of us haven't been around a lot of sheep, but what do you think sheep without a shepherd do? {Allow for responses}*

- They wander, have to fend for themselves, may starve, etc.

ASK: *In what ways are people without Jesus like sheep without a shepherd? {Allow for responses}*

The great news is that God desperately wants these people to have a relationship with Him, and He wants to use us! We are to be the “workers” Jesus is sending out into the “field!” That may be intimidating to some people, but by the end of this lesson series, we’ll experience at least two different ways to share your faith that are simple and relational.

{If you're looking for a story to match up with this point, consider Greg Wallace's story about the Swopes and Sanders on pages 8-9 of the handbook. You can read this story to the group, or share one of your own about a believer reaching out to you to share the gospel.}

Some people may ask, “Does God really expect me to be able to share my faith?” The answer is a resounding “yes!”

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... 1 Peter 3:15

ASK: What stands out to you about that verse? {Allow for discussion, possible answers are below}

- We should always be ready to give an answer
- We should be able to realize that Jesus is the source of our hope
- We should share Christ with other people with gentleness and respect.

ASK: Why 'gentleness and respect?' Why are those important aspects of sharing our faith? {Allow for discussion}

- Christians are to be known for our love
- Nobody is going to want to have a relationship with Jesus if we act like jerks or we're superior because we know Jesus and they don't, etc.

The Condition of the Heart:

ASK for one or two volunteers to tell about a time when they were lost or share a time when you were lost (actually, directionally lost – not knowing where you were or how to get where you were going). It could be that they got turned around on a trip, took a wrong turn on a dark road, or got separated from a parent in the store as a child. Follow up their story by asking them how they felt when they were lost and how they felt when they either got found or figured out where they were going.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY (FOR GROUPS WITH MORE TIME): Split into groups of three to four people. Give each group a cheap plate that has had the word "LOST" written on it and been pre-broken into several pieces. Each group is tasked with re-assembling the plate. The first group to do so is the "winner" (a small prize can be awarded, if desired). Explain that this lesson will focus on the brokenness God calls us to have for the lost/un-saved as believers.

ASK: “What’s one thing that you own (a possession) that, if you were to lose it, you would spend serious time and/or resources looking for it?”

“There’s only one thing worse than being lost – being lost when no one is looking for you.”—Greg Wallace

As Christians, we have a Savior who models a brokenness over people who are lost, and a joy when unbelievers are saved.

- **Luke 19:1-10** (Zacchaeus)
- **Luke 15:1-7** (parable of the lost sheep)
- **Luke 15:8-10** (parable of the lost coin)
- **Luke 15:11-32** (parable of the prodigal son)

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now those who reap draw their wages, even now they harvest the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.” –John 4:34-38

Jesus spoke with a deep urgency in this passage. You can practically feel the tension as he speaks these words. What happens if ripe fruit is left on the vine and goes unpicked? It begins to rot and lose its life! Jesus is saying that there are people all around us every day that need him desperately, and he desperately wants to use us to reach them! How great a motivation is that?

Jesus wants to use us! And he promises he’ll be with us as we take the gospel to others:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^{a]} the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” –Matthew 28:18-20

The question, then, is this: are we ready? Is our heart broken over a lost world? Is our heart broken over lost people in our city? What about on our street?

Make the point to your group that everything we do has spiritual aspects: our work, our family, our leisure time, and *especially* our relationships!

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. –2 Cor. 5:16-20

Let’s break these verses down into bite-sized chunks, shall we?

- v. 16 – *we regard no one with a worldly point of view.* All relationships have spiritual aspects for the believer in light of the cross, whether it’s your next door neighbor, a co-worker, or the person behind the counter at your coffee shop (Greg Wallace, creator of 4xfour, visits two different coffee Starbucks: one in the morning, and one in the evening, because he’s developed a relationship with two different *baristas* for the purpose of sharing Christ with them.)
- vv. 17-19 – *the new creation has come...gave us the ministry of reconciliation.* Because Jesus has saved us from what we used to be (sinners) and made us in right standing with God (“reconciled”), he has entrusted us with the duty of helping others find that same forgiveness and reconciliation.

- v. 20 – *Christ’s ambassadors...God were making his appeal through us.*
An ambassador is an emissary or representative to a group on behalf of someone else. Our job, then, is to represent Christ to those who do not know him, sharing the good news of reconciliation through the cross that we read about in verses 16-19.

ASK: In light of these commands of Jesus and the urgency for reaching lost people that we see throughout the New Testament, why is it difficult for us to feel this brokenness for people who don’t know Jesus? {Allow for discussion}

- We ignore the “fringe” people in our life (people at coffee shops or grocery stores) because we don’t think of them as important
- It’s just easier/less complicated to live life with a few close
- We are afraid of rejection if we share our faith
- We don’t know what to say or how to share our faith (we’ll tackle that problem in lessons four and five).

BRING IT HOME: What are some ways we can become more aware of lost people this week? How can we begin our journey as ambassadors for Christ?

ONE LAST THING: Distribute “Memory Verse” cards (Romans 6:23) to the class and explain that this will be the passage used for the “one-verse evangelism lesson in a few weeks. Encourage the group to begin memorizing the verse.

Close the group in prayer by asking God to give your group a burden for lost people in your community and to open your eyes to opportunities to be used as an ambassador for Jesus in the coming week.

Lesson Two: “Identify” and “Intercede”

(This lesson corresponds with pages 16-26 of “Church Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge”)

Central Themes:

1. We can't reach people we have not identified.
2. We need to be intentional about developing relationships with people who do not have a relationship with Jesus.
3. We need to pray consistently for those whom we have identified to come to a saving knowledge of and relationship with Jesus.

Scripture Passages: [Luke 5:27-32](#); [1 Peter 3:12](#); [John 17:20](#); [John 3:16-18](#); [Romans 10:9-11](#); [2 Peter 3:9](#); [Psalm 66:18](#); [Isaiah 59:2](#)

Opening Question: It's time for a little word-association! Write the word “intentional” on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or a large sheet of paper on an easel. Ask the group what they think of when they hear that word (good or bad), and write their answers below (remembering that there are no wrong answers in word-association). Then ask what some things are that they do intentionally. Answers could range from picking outfits to the route they drive to work or school to mowing the grass at a certain time of the day to avoid an annoying neighbor. Explain that our activities aren't the only thing we should be intentional about – we are clearly called to be intentional about making relationships with people who are outside of a relationship with Jesus.

THE FIRST “I”: IDENTIFY

ASK: Is it easier for you to share your faith with total strangers or with people you know well? Why? {Allow for answers}

ASK: What are the benefits of sharing your faith (witnessing) to strangers? What are the benefits of witnessing to someone with whom you have an ongoing relationship? {Allow for answers}

There is absolutely nothing wrong with sharing our faith with a stranger, but we can have long-term spiritual impact on people if we are willing to establish a friendship with them. The key to this long-term spiritual impact is the first step in the 4xfour process: Identify.

What do we mean by “Identify?” It’s pretty simple really: pick out four people and/or families that are realistically in your circle of influence with whom you feel God is leading you to share your faith. These people are easier to find than you might think.

ASK: What are some places you go or organizations to which you belong where you interact with the same people on a regular basis? {Allow for answers. Possible answers include: work, school, the gym, sports leagues, PTA, neighborhood homeowners’ associations, etc.}

Those are great possibilities for people with whom you can share your faith! They are people that you are already influencing and have a natural situational- or interest-based connection to.

Often one objection shared is, “Everyone I know at (work/school/etc.) is already a believer. There’s no one for me to share my faith with where I am.” Let’s take a look at a story from Greg Wallace, Pastor of Woodridge Baptist Church in Kingwood, TX:

“I am a ‘Starbucks junkie.’ Sometimes I walk in and just hang around until I meet someone to talk to. If they don’t recognize me, sooner or later they ask me what I do. Once I tell them I am a pastor, that immediately opens the door for my next question (which is): ‘Where do you go to church?’ I take it from there. I don’t build a relationship with everyone I meet. Only one, maybe two people out of ten will I be able to move to the next level

with. We may have coffee several more times, exchange information, and all of the time, I am praying for them. I am not just hanging out at Starbucks! I am hanging out with a purpose to identify people who need Jesus!" (4xfour leader's handbook, p. 18)

Obviously, not everyone is going to be the best at striking up a conversation with a total stranger, but some people really enjoy that rush of meeting new people. The point is, whether it is with a person at work, a neighbor across the street, or a person you happen to strike up a conversation with at a coffee shop, you can be intentional about the relationship! Being relationally intentional is simply this: *viewing every relationship with an unbeliever as gift from God and a chance for Him to use you to reach that person with the gospel message of Jesus!*

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, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. 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?" Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." –Luke 5:27-32

Do you see what Jesus did there? He went and identified a tax collector by the name of Levi and began a conversation with him. In today's world, we're no fans of paying taxes, but recognize them as a necessary part of the way our country is run. But back in Jesus' day, tax collectors were flat-out despised. Not only were they well-known for being corrupt, they were also symbols of the Roman occupation and a reminder that Israel was not a completely self-governing people group. Notice the Pharisees' words: "with tax collectors and sinners." It was as if they were saying there were regular sinners, and then there were tax-collectors!

But Jesus was ready to begin a relationship with someone that the world didn't want anything to do with. He was being intentional. He didn't choose Levi randomly. It was an act of love and compassion!

THE SECOND "I": INTERCEDE

There are lots of definitions for the word "intercede."

- Intervene
- Mediate
- Ask on someone's behalf
- Step in
- Insert one's self into a situation

These are all phrases that are synonyms for the word "intercede." For the purposes of 4xfour, the word "intercede" is used to mean "to pray to God for a person by name four times a week."

ASK: How is our 4xfour definition of "intercede" like those other definitions?
{Allow for answers}

Just like Christ interceded for us by standing between God and our sin, we can intercede for others by praying to God for them to come into a saving relationship with Him through faith in Jesus.

Let's answer a few questions that some people are probably already thinking:

- Does God really hear my prayers?
 - YES!
 - Have a volunteer read **1 Peter 3:12**
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer...
- Do they really do anything?
 - YES!
 - Have a volunteer read **James 5:16**
...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

In short – God does hear your prayers and they do matter to Him!

ASK: How is this knowledge encouraging to you? Is there any warning in those passages for the way we live and how it affects our prayers? {Allow for answers}

Some people have never been great pray-ers. They're just never sure what to say or how to say it. Prayer is just conversation between you and God. Talk to Him like He's right there in front of you. But, in keeping with the "Four" theme, here are four things to keep in mind while interceding on behalf of your 4xfour relationships (see pages 22-25 of the 4xfour leader's handbook):

1. Confess your sin.

We've already seen in the Scripture how prayers of righteous people are powerful and heard by God, but can unconfessed sin hamper your efforts? Have volunteers read the following verses:

*If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened...
–Psalm 66:18*

*Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.
–Isaiah 59:2*

2. Base your requests on God's character.

We can't just pray anything we want and expect God to do it. Our prayers need to be in line with who God is and what He wants. Consider a sample prayer like this: (taken from 4xfour leader's handbook, p.22)

"God because of who you are, because You never change, and because I know You want everyone to accept Your Son and to have a relationship with You through Him, I pray that _____, _____, _____, and _____ will come to know you."

3. Pray, claiming the promises of God

Have volunteers read the following passages, being sure to pause after each one and identify the promises made (we've underlined them for you):

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one

and only Son. –John 3:16-18

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." –Romans 10:9-11

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. –2 Peter 3:9

4. Pray specifically

God wants us to share our specific needs and desires with Him. Being specific will help bring a deeper level of intimacy with God. Instead of this: "God, save our community," try this: "God, George (or whoever you are praying about) really needs a relationship with Jesus. Please give me an opportunity to speak to him about spiritual things this week. Soften his heart so that I can share your Son with him. "Do you see the difference? The first prayer is fine, but is kind of nebulous and unspecific. The second prayer has a purpose and is asking God for His direct intervention in your relationship!

BRING IT HOME: What are some ways we can be more intentional in our encounters with people this week? Where are some places we already go that we can identify people who need Jesus?

ONE LAST THING: Remind people to be working on memorizing Romans 6:23 for the one-verse evangelism lesson in a few weeks. It's a simple verse and easy to learn, but it carries a powerful message! Pass out 4xfour bookmarks.

Close the group in prayer by asking God to show each member specific people He wants them to begin a "God-discussion" with this week, and for the wisdom and boldness to act when the situation presents itself!

Lesson Three: "Invest and Invite"

(This lesson corresponds with pages 27-43 of "Church Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge")

Central Themes:

1. It's not enough for us to find people who need Jesus and pray for them. Jesus wants us to actively engage them by investing ourselves in the relationship!
2. It is often easier to invite people to church/church-based activities once we are invested in people and have earned their trust.

Scripture Passages: [Matthew 22:37-40](#); [Luke 10:25-37](#); [John 1:43-46](#),
[1 Peter 3:15-16](#)

Opening Question: Let's pretend that someone handed you a million dollars, free and clear, with the only stipulation being that you had to invest it instead of just putting it in a bank account. What would you invest it in? {Allow for answers}.

We may not all have a million dollars to invest, but each of us has one thing nobody else can offer to give: ourselves!

THE THIRD "I": INVEST

*He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."
-Matthew 22:37-40*

So Jesus tells us that we show our love for God by loving others. The biblical language here implies that these two commands are tied so closely together that you can't do either well without the other!

ASK: How do you "love your neighbor as yourself?" What do you think that means?

This is the next step in the 4xfour process: Invest.

It's simple, really. At least four times a year, invest your time, energy, money, etc. into the lives of the people you've Identified. Have them over for a meal. Invite them for a backyard BBQ. Go to their kid's basketball game with them. Help them with a project around the house. You get the idea...

"In most cases, they have to trust you before they will trust your God, AND you must be real! They must sense you care about them. If you will invest your life in the lives of your 4xfours, when that 3 a.m. phone call needs to be made, it will be you they are calling because they trust you and know you really care for them. Invest your lives in their lives." (4xfour handbook, p. 27)

Let's re-read what is probably a familiar Bible passage with a fresh perspective:

Just then an expert in the law stood up to test Him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the law?" He asked him. "How do you read it?"

He answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.

"You've answered correctly," He told him. "Do this and you will live."

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus took up [the question] and said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and fled, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down that road. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way, a Levite, when he arrived at the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, and

when he saw [the man], he had compassion. He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him. When I come back I'll reimburse you for whatever extra you spend.'

"Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

"The one who showed mercy to him," he said.

Then Jesus told him, "Go and do the same." --Luke 10:25-37 (HCSB)

ASK: What did it cost the Samaritan to invest in this wounded man? {Allow for answers}

ASK: Why is it difficult investing in other people?

ASK: What are some things we risk by investing in lost people? {Allow for answers}

- Time
- Money
- Reputation
- Safety
- Rejection
- Etc.

So how do we do it? How do we begin talking with people who don't know Jesus? What is a good way to start that relationship so we can invest in them?

Two words: honest conversation.

Don't try to sound super-spiritual. Don't try to use big "churchy words." Don't try to turn every conversation into a chance to sell the other person on Jesus. Talk about family. Talk about common interests. Talk about Jesus. Talk about similar struggles you've been through. Talk about current events in the news.

You can reflect your values and your faith in everyday conversations and glorify God through your speech and reflect the difference Christ has made in your life. Just be yourself!

But be prepared! Most of the time, you will have a chance to share your faith with the people in whom you are investing! (We'll cover a few ways to do that in the next two sessions).

And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. –1 Peter 3:15-16 (NLT)

ASK: What are some “churchy” words you might want to avoid when beginning a relationship with someone? *{examples below}*

- Savior
- Salvation
- Fellowship
- Atonement
- Inerrant
- Apologetics

THE FOURTH “I”: INVITE

The next day He decided to leave for Galilee. Jesus found Philip and told him, "Follow Me!"

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the One Moses wrote about in the Law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth!"

"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathanael asked him.

"Come and see," Philip answered. –John 1:43-46

Once you have earned the trust of your new friends, it's time to take it to the “next level” of the 4xfour process: Invite!

This part takes some persistence. Not everyone will come to a church-related event the first time you invite them, but studies have shown that most people are willing to go to church if invited by someone they trust. The key is to not get discouraged if they turn you down the first time!

Here are some different possibilities for inviting people to your church:

1. **Special Events** – baptism of a family member of yours, Easter services, Christmas services, church picnic, special speakers or concerts at your church, etc.

2. **Small Groups** – this could be a Sunday School class, home-based small group, Bible study, or special interest group your church hosts (like MOPS – Mothers Of Preschoolers, businessmen’s lunches, etc.)
3. **Worship services** – Worship services can be tricky. While they are a great place for your guest to slip in and have some anonymity, some people fear that they won’t know what to do/how to dress/how to act. Do everything you can to alleviate their fears and make them feel comfortable. Sometimes, people have to “work their way up” to a worship service by first coming to a special event or small group before they are comfortable enough to attend a worship service.

BRINGING IT HOME:

What are some ways to creatively spend time with your 4xfour friend?

What are some different events our church hosts that we can invite people to?

What are some things we can do to make our church and small group more “unchurched friendly” without compromising the message of the gospel?

ONE LAST THING:

Do a “memory verse check” on Romans 6:23. If someone missed the lesson where you handed out the cards with Romans 6:23 on it, make sure they get one this week. Also check to make sure everyone has a 4xfour bookmark!

Close in prayer by asking God to break down any fears that may keep us from investing our lives in other people and any fears others may have of accepting our friendship and invitations to church.

Lesson Four: “Using Your Story to Reach People”

(This lesson corresponds with pages 39-42 of “Church Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge”)

Central Themes:

1. We need to be ready to share the hope of Christ that is within us.
2. In order to be ready to share this hope, we need to prepare and practice what to say.
3. The Holy Spirit will help us with what to say when we share our faith.

Scripture Passages: [1 Corinthians 2:1-5](#); [Luke 12:11-12](#)

Pass out 4xfour cards to anyone who does not have one.

Opening Question: What are some situations that could happen or have happened to you where you were extremely scared?

- Allow time for answers, which may range anywhere from “public speaking, rattle- snakes, being robbed”
- **SAY:** Would it surprise you to know that the Apostle Paul was afraid to witness too?
- Turn to [1 Corinthians 2:1-5](#). Notice how Paul witnessed to the people of Corinth.

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. – 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

- Verse 3 says, “Weakness, great fear, trembling, not wise or persuasive words, but with the Spirit’s power.”

(NOTE: You could share a personal short experience about a time when the Holy Spirit brought a truth or scripture to mind when you were talking to someone or teaching a class.)

- Read **Luke 12:11-12** remind the class that The Spirit will help us with what to say.

"When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say." – Luke 12:11-12

Introduction to Sharing Your Story:

Part of our Churches 4xfour evangelism strategy is that every member able to share their story/testimony of how they came to know Christ as their Savior.

ASK your members to think of one person at work, school, neighbor or relative who needs to trust Christ as their Savior. *Hopefully they will think of one of their 4xfour. (Do not ask for these to be shared it would take too much time)*

ASK: What would that person would need to know and be willing to do to become a Christian? *{List these on the board. Possible answers are below.}*

- *Believe that Jesus Christ, God's son died for their sins.*
- *Admit they are a sinner.*
- *Give Jesus control of their life.*
- *Receive forgiveness for their sins and the free gift of eternal life.*
- *Place their trust in Christ.*

Teach them the ABC's of Salvation

Admit that they are a sinner/made mistakes/not lived a perfect life.

Believe what the Bible says about who Jesus is, what He did, and what it means for us:

- God's Son, Jesus Christ died on the Cross to pay the punishment for their sins and everyone's sins
- Jesus proved he was God by coming back to life after 3 days in the grave.
- You can accept that gift of forgiveness

Choose to allow Jesus to be your leader/boss/Lord

NOTE: Pass out the "Share Your Story" Worksheet.

Point out that will need to answer three questions about their experience with Jesus:

- 1. What was my life like before Jesus?**
- 2. How did I come to know Jesus?**

3. How has my life been different since coming to know and follow Jesus?

Show them the example answers on the worksheet (see Appendix A).

Consider sharing your story as an example!

Point out under the “How” question that some people do not know the exact time and place they came to know Christ and that is okay. Remind them that they can confidently share that over time they realized the ABC’s of salvation and **now** know and follow Jesus.

Instruct members to write in outline form or phrases that will jog their memory about their story. Give them 20 minutes to complete their outline. Simply answer the questions: Before? How? Since? Remind them they are not in front of the church but sharing with their friend, neighbor or relative. Blanks and a sample are provided. Keep it short and simple. Remember to avoid “*churchy*” words (see lesson three for examples). Do not be ashamed of your experience with Christ. Rejoice in what God has done!

ASK the group members to share their stories with a partner as if they were sharing with their lost friend.

NOTE: Be sensitive to the needs of your members if they are having trouble writing their story. It is possible they may not be a Christian. Share your story with them and show them what it means to follow Christ!

Bring It Home:

- Encourage group members to take home their story and practice telling their story to a Christian friend or relative.

- Remind the group to practice their Romans 6:23 memory verse and give a copy of the “One Verse Evangelism” card to anyone who has not yet received one.

Close in prayer by asking for boldness to share Christ with our “4xfour” lists!

Lesson Five: “One Verse Evangelism”

(This lesson corresponds with pages 41-43 of “Church Leaders Taking the 4xfour Challenge”)

Central Themes:

1. We need to be ready to share the hope of Christ that is within us.
2. In order to be ready to share this hope, we need to prepare and practice what to say.
3. The Holy Spirit will help us with what to say when we share our faith.

Scripture Passages: [1 Peter 3:15](#)

Pass out 4 x 4 cards to anyone who does not have one.

Opening Question: What is one skill that you could comfortably coach another person?

- Allow time for answers: making a cake, cutting grass, directions to Minute Maid Park
- **SAY:** You may not consider yourself a coach but if you can or have done something several times you can lead or help someone do something also. You just need to think through the steps.
- Turn to [1 Peter 3:15](#).

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, - 1 Peter 3:15

(**NOTE:** You could share a personal short experience about a time when the Holy Spirit brought a truth or scripture to mind when you were talking to someone or teaching a class.)

- Say: As we follow the 4 steps of 4xfour Identify, Intercede, Invest and Invite people will wonder why we care about them. They may even ask why are you helping me or praying for my needs or being my friend. We

need to be prepared to give a reason for the hope you have. We need to do so with gentleness and respect. Sharing Truth in love and let the person of the Holy Spirit draw them to salvation.

- Say: During our last lesson you learned to share your story this week you will learn to share the gospel with Romans 6:23 and be able to discuss it on a dinner napkin or piece of paper.

Introduce the video clip:

We have been practicing the Romans 6:23 memory verse the last several weeks. Watch this simple method to explain the gospel using a piece of paper.

- Show the video: One-Verse Evangelism using Romans 6:23
- Pass out extra One-Verse worksheet, pens and paper so students can practice sharing with a partner several times.
- Review the ABC's of Salvation from week 4 so they can incorporate it into the one verse evangelism

Bring It Home:

- Encourage group members to go home and practice sharing with their children in order to share the gospel with them and be an example to them of your commitment to practice 4xfour. Say: I learned something at Sunday School/church/small group that sums up the main message of the Bible can I show it to you?
- Encourage group members to share this with someone this week at work or one of their 4xfours. Go home and practice sharing with their children in order to share the gospel with them and be an example to them of your commitment to practice 4xfour. Ask your friend how was your weekend? When they ask how was yours say: I learned something at Sunday School/church/small group that sums up the main message of the Bible can I show it to you?
- Consider downloading the "Steps2Peace" app for iPhone/iPad. It uses a very similar method of sharing the gospel.

Close in prayer by asking for boldness to share Christ with our "4xfour" lists!

APPENDIX A

SHARING YOUR PERSONAL STORY - WORKSHEET

Write in outline form or phrases that will jog your memory. Simply answer these questions:

- What was your life like **BEFORE** you met Christ?
- **HOW** did you come to know and follow Jesus?
- How has your life been different **SINCE** knowing and following Jesus?

Remember, you are not in front of the church but rather sharing with your friend, neighbor, or relative – so don't be nervous! Keep it short and simple.

Remember no “*churchy*” words. Do not be ashamed of your experience with Christ. Rejoice in what God has done!

The following is a sample outline. Feel free to incorporate these transitions and/or scriptures into your story or just use the blanks provided. You may also make copies of this material.

Share truth using your story/testimony.

UNDER EACH HEADING ("Before", "How", "Since") YOU WILL FIND AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THAT PORTION OF THE GOSPEL CAN BE SHARED THROUGH YOUR STORY/TESTIMONY.

*The main headings are to help you learn the story/testimony flow, but should not be quoted as you share your story/testimony

I. BEFORE

Instructions: In the space below write the first part of your personal story/testimony, "My life before I made a commitment to follow Jesus." This section should include your feelings i.e., emptiness, loneliness, lack of purpose, etc. and how you came to realize you were a sinner in need of a change. You can start with statements like, "I used to believe/feel..." or, "I used to act this way..." to describe your life before you came to know and follow Jesus.

Opening: "Before I made a commitment to follow Christ..."

Moving from “BEFORE” into “HOW.”

Consider using a transitional statement such as, "Then I realized I needed a change in my life. I discovered the Bible says, 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.' (Romans 3:23) I realized that "all" included me and that the consequence of sin is spiritual death. 'The Bible says, the wages of sin is death.'" (Romans 6:23)

Example: "Before I made a commitment to follow Jesus I found myself at the age of 12 asking, 'Why am I here?' I remember wondering if the only purpose that a man had was to spend 20 years of his life getting an education, going to work every day, coming home, reading the newspaper, watching TV, and going to bed only to get up and start all over again the next day for the next 30 plus years. That question created a thirst for an answer. And even though my parents seldom attended church, they made sure my sisters and I attended. It was through attending Sunday School and Church that I realized I needed a change in my life. I discovered the Bible says, 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.' I realized that "all" included me and that the consequence of sin is spiritual death. 'The Bible says, the wages of sin is death.'"

II. How

The following truths should be communicated as accurately and clearly as possible as you share the second part of your story/testimony. We call them the “ABC’s of beginning a relationship with Jesus.”

TRUTH 1: Admitted that I had sinned (done wrong, not lived as I should, made mistakes)

TRUTH 2: Believed that Jesus was God’s son and died for my sins and proved that by rising from the dead after 3 days on that first Easter morning. “Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures and that He was buried and rose again the third day.”(I Corinthians 15:3-4)

TRUTH 3: Chose to except God’s free gift of forgiveness for my past sins (mistakes) and follow him as leader of my life.

Instructions: In the space below complete the statement and share the second part of your personal story/testimony, "How I came to know Jesus personally."

OPENING: This is how I came to know Jesus personally...

"And since then, He has brought purpose and meaning to my life."

"And since then, He has been a daily source of strength and encouragement to me."

OPENING: And since then...

Transition: "You see Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.' (John 10:10) And I have certainly found that to be true."

[Example:] "And since then, He has brought a great sense of direction and purpose in my life. He has set me on a journey that is exciting and fulfilling. He's become a friend who is always there to give me wisdom, encouragement and strength. You see Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly' (John 10:10). And I have certainly found that to be true."

IV. FOLLOW UP

Instructions: Having shared your personal story/testimony, ask them if anything like that has ever happened to them. If they say "no," ask them if they would like to start a relationship with Jesus.

Invite them to begin exploring a relationship with Jesus talking to God in prayer about Admitting, Believing and Choosing.

If they say that they are not ready or interested in following Jesus at that time, remember not to consider it a failure. It is your job to share the truth about Jesus, but it's the Holy Spirit's job to work on the person's heart and their job to respond to the Spirit's leading. Don't be discouraged. Keep talking to your friend about Jesus when the opportunity arises. You never know when they might say "yes!"

Regardless of if they choose to follow Jesus right then or not, provide your 4x4 friend with information about your church; invite them to join you for Sunday School/Bible study/small group and worship. Offer to furnish transportation or meet them at the church on Sunday.

APPENDIX B
ONE VERSE EVANGELISM WORKSHEET

For the wages of sin is
death, but the gift of God
is eternal life in Christ
Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

