

MyFriends 05: Share & Experience with Lifestyle Practice

Welcome to **MyFriends**.

This course material is designed to be used with your facilitated course.

This fifth module is about Sharing and how we can share our experiences of God with others and how we can help our friends Experience God in their lives.

The key objectives are:

- To recognise that the first step to helping people experience Jesus is to help show them how we experience Jesus.
- Help our friends build bridges in their life that connect to the spiritual - it's about them; not us!
- To be able to enable others to experience Jesus before they fully understand who He is - this launches them on a path of further investigating Jesus (heart before head).
- Practice a short prayer for someone to help them experience Jesus.

Sharing our Experience with Others



Share a story about how you have experienced Jesus work in your life?

What are some ways that a relationship with God practically helps you in everyday life?

Read the passage below twice

Jesus interacting with the Samaritan woman

²⁷Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.

⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

John 4:27-30, 39-42

- What stands out to you in this passage?**
- What do you learn about God or people?**
- What principles of mission did you discover that you can apply today?**

We don't want our friends to just know facts about Jesus but to begin a relationship with Him. When we share short stories about how Jesus impacts our everyday life, it helps our friends learn what a relationship with Jesus is like.

Three forms of witness

1. Sharing how you experience Jesus in daily life (everyday witness).
2. My story (personal testimony).
3. Jesus' story (gospel presentation).
- 4.

In the MyFriends Lifestyle, SHARE refers to opportunities that we have to communicate our experience of Jesus with our friends. This is the first form of witnessing listed above and can lead to opportunities to share the gospel in more detail in future conversations. We will unpack this more in EXPERIENCE and CONNECT.

Creating Bridges

“More than half of Australians (55%) talk about spirituality or religion (often or occasionally) when they gather with friends. Generation Z is the most comfortable of all generations talking (often/occasionally) about spirituality or religion (65%).”

Faith and Belief in Australia Report, McCrindle, 2017, p9.

Here are some tips to help you share...

- **Sharing your everyday experiences of Jesus** is a key way for people to get to know Jesus. It is best to keep your story short (max 30 seconds). Short stories are easy to listen to and engage with.
- **Share your feelings:** Being vulnerable and authentic is important for people to connect with your story.

- For example: "I was really scared of an exam. A friend prayed for me and asked Jesus to help me feel calm. I went into the exam and felt peaceful and focused. It was amazing!"
- **Take context into account:** Share stories that have something in common with the listener's experiences and which they will find easy to identify with. Telling a father about how God helped you in your relationship to your children will communicate better than if you tell the same story to a teenager who doesn't have kids.
- **Be honest, real and personal:** It's not about impressing people. You can be honest about your weaknesses and difficulties. People need to know that God can help us in our brokenness. Your listener will find it easier to be honest and more open to prayer if you are.
 - For example: "I was driving the other day and someone cut me off. I got really angry. Instead of driving aggressively I asked Jesus to help calm me down and I let it go."
- **It's about them; not us:** Learn to help our friends build bridges in their life that connect to the spiritual - it's about them; not us!
- **Don't use Christian lingo:** The Christian subculture has a lot of language that is very foreign to those outside the church. It's best to use everyday language that our friends use in their regular vocabulary.
 - For example: Discipleship = mentoring; fellowship = gathering with friends, etc.

What are some common conversation topics that you have with people in your social circles that provide opportunities to share how Jesus has worked through those areas in your life?

"Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him."

Luke 8:39

Experience - How People Connect with God

Experiencing God in Biblical History



Most people's understanding of God came out of an experience of Him meeting them in their point of need. So throughout Biblical history, people gave names to God out of their experience of Him. For example, in Genesis 16:13, Hagar gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: **"You are the God who sees me,"** for she said, **"I have now seen the One who sees me."**

"You are the God that sees me"

Genesis 16:13

How About You?

How have you experienced God in significant ways where God has shown you a bit more of who He is?

Think of a close relationship you have - what experiences have led to that level of close intimacy? Why do you think these experiences have had that effect on your relationship?

Heart before head

While people need to understand intellectually who Jesus is in order to have personal relationship with him, the activating event in their lives that engages their interest is often through an experience of Jesus - this launches them on a path of further investigation. An experience of Jesus could be through practical love, prayer, or care in their life.

Praying with Others

Tips for praying with people



1. Experience and Understanding

MyFriends seeks to connect people to Jesus through experiencing Him in their lives and understanding things about Him intellectually.

2. Join WITH God

Our goal is to join God in what He is doing in the person's life, so listen to their points of need and pray with them. As we listen to the Holy Spirit and to people we can discover the questions to ask and the prayers to pray (1 Cor 2:10-16).



3. Ask is it OK to pray

Ask the person if it would be okay if you prayed for their need. Pray in the name of Jesus when you do (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, and Philippians 2:9-11). God is a term used in many religions, but Jesus is our Saviour and the way to the Father in heaven.

4. Ask for permission

If you're praying for someone, ask for their permission before you touch them. A shoulder is always a good option.

5. Thank God for His Love for them

When you pray, thank God for His love for them and ask that they can experience that love. For example, "Jesus, thanks for how much you love Shannon, please help him feel your love for him today."

6. Short, Simple and Specific

Make your prayer short (15 seconds), simple, and specific. If the situation allows, let your friend pray too.

7. How are you feeling?

Ask immediately afterwards how the person you prayed for is feeling.

Praying with People Out Loud

How can you overcome the fear barrier of praying out loud with someone?

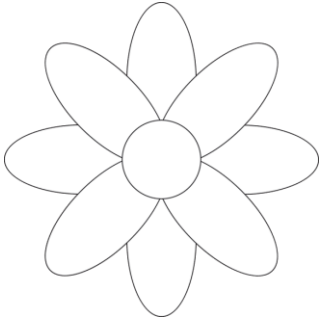
What if nothing happens after I pray?

Two things people will always experience when you pray:

- ✓ You have a personal relationship with God.
- ✓ They feel Jesus' love through your prayer.

"If it happens, you can thank Him. If it doesn't, you can trust Him."

Unknown author



Challenge

Have a look at your daisy chain. Is there someone you could call or text right now who the Holy Spirit has identified that you could pray with?



Look Back



Me

My family

My Community

"The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." - Acts 2:39

Consider Jesus' principles of love and

mission (as summarised on the **MyFriends disc**) and your **daisy**

chain as you reflect on these questions.



Reflection Questions

1. How have you experienced God at work in and through your life this week?
2. What did you learn about God, yourself, or others this week?
3. What points from the last MyFriends Training session challenged you or prompted questions?



Look Up

Read the following passages

¹¹ Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. ¹² As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. - **Matthew 10:11-14**

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to

heal the sick. ³ He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. ⁵ If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." - **Luke 9:1-5**

What do we discover about who Jesus wants us to intentionally spend time with?

The Person of Peace

A Person of Peace acts much like a doorway. They may or may not be open to the gospel but they help open up the community or a social group to God's message. God often uses them as a key influencer to help enable the gospel to be spread throughout their sphere of influence. We see this principle at work across the Gospels and Acts.

John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus - Mark 1



¹ The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way"—

³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,

make straight paths for him.'"

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well John 4

⁴ Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— ² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

¹¹ "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹ "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

²⁵ The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

³³ Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

³⁴ "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵ 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. ³⁶ Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷ Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. ³⁸ 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."

Many Samaritans Believe

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.

⁴² They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

Andrew John 1:35-42

John's Disciples Follow Jesus

³⁵ The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. ³⁶ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

³⁷ When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"

³⁹ "Come," he replied, "and you will see."

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹ The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

Paul and Lydia Acts 16:14-15

¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Peter and Cornelius Acts 10:19-35

¹⁹ While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. ²⁰ So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

²¹ Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?"

²² The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to ask you to come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." ²³ Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

Peter at Cornelius's House

The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the believers from Joppa went along. ²⁴ The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. ²⁶ But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

²⁷ While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. ²⁸ He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. ²⁹ So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

³⁰ Cornelius answered: "Three days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me ³¹ and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. ³² Send to Joppa for Simon who is

called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' ³³ So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism ³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.



Look Forward

1. Look at your daisy chain and identify the people who have a red, yellow, or green light.
2. If you have any people of peace in your community, highlight them on your daisy chain. How can you best use them in movement building?
3. What is the next step you need to take with the person of peace?
4. Share this with the group and ask someone to pray for you as you take this step in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Action Steps

1. Think through 3-5 ways that you have experienced God in the last week.
2. Share with someone on your daisy chain how you experience God in everyday life in a 30 second story this week.
3. Pray for your friends and for where they are at spiritually.
4. Reflect on how you have experienced God and the impact that has had on your life.
5. How can you help other people have an experience of God?
6. Who is the Holy Spirit encouraging you to pray for and with? When can you call, text or meet with them this week to do this?
7. All your churches results will be aggregated so you can celebrate together at your next session.