

MyFriends 07: Release with Lifestyle Practice

START COURSE

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Welcome to **MyFriends**.

This course material is designed to be used with your facilitated course. Use it on your device in your session. A printable version of this module is also available in the Resources section.

This seventh module is about Release and what it looks like to release our friends to God.

The key objectives are:

- As our friends share their experiences in their social networks, whole groups of people may be interested in learning more.
- How to take a stand against the enemy.
- Review the vision to see reproduceable movements everywhere.

Release

Read the following passage twice

Note: These two events took place months apart in the same region.

¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰ So

the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

¹ During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, ² "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance."

⁴ His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?"

⁵ "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven," they replied.

⁶ He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. ⁷ They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. ⁸ The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ⁹ About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away, ¹⁰ he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

Mark 5:18

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

Social Networks

What kind of a social network do your friends have? When they share their experiences within their social network, whole groups of people may get interested in getting to know Jesus (as we read in Acts 10:19-24 and Acts 16:12-15).

Acts 10:19-24

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.

Acts 16:12-15

¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. 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.

We “release” our friends by encouraging them to:

1. **Share** their experiences of God with their friends, family, and across their social spaces.
2. Pray with their friends, colleagues, family, neighbours, so they may **experience** God’s love as well.
3. Invite them to **connect** with Jesus or **Discover the Basics** of God’s story with their friends.

Why is it important to release our friends to process their experience with others?

Spiritual Battle



At this point on the journey, the enemy will often seek to attack us or our people, steal from us or distract us from what God is doing. He uses the weapons of lies, fear, and confusion.

Remember that God has “**not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline**” (2 Timothy 1:7 NLT). Jesus said, He is our shepherd, and the enemy has no right or authority to do this to us when we are

following Jesus (John 10:27-30). We encourage you to stand strong by praying the Word of God, focussing on His love and constant presence with you.

When the enemy attacks you or your people, **“Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Do everything in love.”** (1 Cor 16:13-14 NIV).

- What does spiritual attack often look like in your life?
- How can we take a stand against the enemy?

Remember the Vision

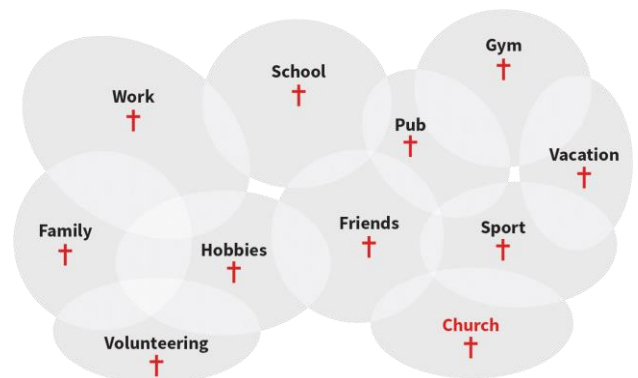


Remember the Challenge

Aussies are interested in spiritual things, but not often interested in going to church. So how will they get to know Jesus?

Our Social Spaces

While each of us have our social spaces, so do our friends whom we are connecting with. As our friends connect to God's story, how might that impact their social spaces?



The goal is not necessarily how can I remove people from their spaces and bring them to church but how can we help these spaces experience Jesus as they discover God in their own community?“.

If we learn the way of Jesus in love and mission, could we see every community have every opportunity to know Jesus and gather around Him?

“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

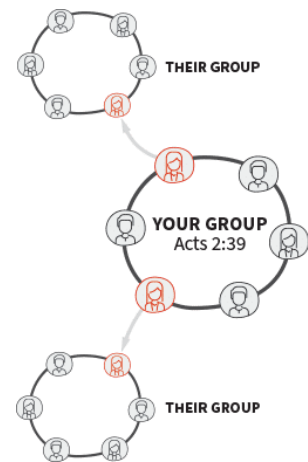
God's Heart



God's heart is for us, our families and our communities as well as those communities that are far off.

Our Prayer

We are motivated by God's heart (Acts 2:39) to develop a lifestyle over time that mobilises participants to live a disciplemaking lifestyle that connects people in their relational circles to Jesus and helps them do the same. Our goal is to give participants confidence that they can form a bible discovery group around God's story with the DNA for second and third generation groups to form.



Look Back



"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?
4. What keeps us from relying fully on Jesus?

Look Up

Read John 15:1-5

¹⁵ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

1. What stands out to you in this passage?
2. What do you learn about God or people?
3. What principle of mission did you discover that you can apply today?

Relying on Jesus

- As you love, pray, and care for people, sharing Jesus' life with them so that they can experience that God is real and connect with Him, remember that your role is to take the initiative in the power of the Holy Spirit and leave the results to God! Trust His heart is to see groups forming who are learning to follow Jesus.
- Believing that it is up to us to bring people to Jesus can have negative consequences. If people do not respond to the gospel, we can feel defeated. If they do turn to Jesus we can feel proud taking the glory way from God.
- Spend some time praying for the people on your daisy chain, asking the Holy Spirit to soften their hearts to the gospel, and for opportunities to take the initiative to connect them to Jesus. Ask the Lord to work through you to help the people in your social circles experience Jesus.



Look Forward

1. How is the Holy Spirit prompting you to grow in your reliance on Jesus?
2. What practical steps will you take to get there?
3. Who on your daisy chain is the Holy Spirit prompting you to take the next step within the coming week?
4. What practical next steps do you need to take? Share this step 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. Look at your daisy chain. Where do you see SHARE, EXPERIENCE, CONNECT, RELEASE happening? What is your next step?
2. Ask God who He wants you to share your story or Jesus' story with over the next few weeks. Share this in your social messaging group and start praying for opportunities to connect these people to Jesus.
3. Please complete this Form below to help you be accountable for implementing your MyFriends actions. Your responses will be emailed to you.