

## HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

**Purpose:** The purpose of this session is to enable you to know how to confess your sins and experience God's love and forgiveness.

**Objectives:** This session will help you to:

1. Understand who Jesus is and why He came to earth.
2. Understand three kinds of people described in 1 Corinthians 2:14 – 3: 3.
3. Understand confession.

### HELPFUL HINTS

1. It is recommended that you prayerfully reread the Transferable Concept “How to Experience God’s Love and Forgiveness” in preparation to lead this session.
2. For many participants this may be the first time they have been exposed to the description of the 3 kinds of people, so you want to be sure that you **present a clear summary** of each kind of person.
3. This is a 1 ½ hour session. Be careful that you do not spend too much time on the beginning of the session and slight the important issue of identifying which circle represents the life, the importance of confession, and how to confess.
4. Do not skip the **ACTION POINT!** This is “landing the plane.” Allow enough time to give them time to make a sin list.
5. Pray as you prepare, pray as you deliver, and pray as they make their sin list.
6. Be sure there is no unconfessed sin in your own life and that you are filled with the Holy Spirit before you attempt to give this message.
7. Don’t forget it is very important that you “land the plane.” 1M01



**Campus Crusade for Christ International**  
**International Training Office**  
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## HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

### I. Introduction

#### CORE BELIEF

KNOWING JESUS CHRIST IS THE GREATEST ADVENTURE ANYONE CAN EXPERIENCE.

- ☒ SHARE BRIEFLY WHAT KNOWING CHRIST HAS MEANT TO YOU.

[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: IF YOU USE THE SAME ACTIVITY IN THE FOLLOWING TASKS, USE DIFFERENT WAYS TO REPORT BACK.]

#### TASK

TO SAVE TIME, COVER POINTS II AND III SIMULTANEOUSLY BY DIVIDING THE CLASS IN GROUPS AND ASK THE GROUPS TO ANSWER THE TWO QUESTIONS. THEY MAY REFER TO THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES, BUT THEY ARE NOT LIMITED TO THEM. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 7, 10, 14 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE, FOLLOWED BY 42).

REMEMBER TO COVER THE QUESTION "WHAT IS AN ABUNDANT LIFE?" UNDER POINT III.

### II. Who Is Jesus Christ?

John10:30-33, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 24, Matthew 28:1-10 and Romans 1:4

- ☒ [THE FOLLOWING IS BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE FACILITATOR TO HELP ENHANCE THE GROUP DISCUSSION ON FULFILLED PROPHECY. INCLUDE THIS INFORMATION ONLY IF IT WILL ENHANCE THE DISCUSSION.]

"HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE HIS BIRTH, PROPHETS OF ISRAEL FORETOLD HIS COMING. THESE PROPHECIES WERE FULFILLED IN THE LIFE OF JESUS DOWN TO THE VERY LAST DETAIL, INCLUDING HIS MIRACULOUS BIRTH, LIFE, TEACHINGS, MIRACLES, DEATH ON THE CROSS AND HIS RESURRECTION. HE CLAIMED TO BE THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD. THOSE WHO KNEW HIM BEST DIED AS MARTYRS. THEY TOLD THE GOOD NEWS THAT GOD IN CHRIST BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US TO EXPRESS HIS LOVE AND FORGIVENESS FOR EVERYONE."

### III. Why Did Jesus Christ Come to Earth?

John 3:16, Romans 8:1, 2 and John 10:10

#### What is an abundant life?

##### **TASK**

ARRANGE A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY WHICH WILL ALLOW THE GROUP TO DEVELOP A DEFINITION OR DESCRIPTION OF AN ABUNDANT LIFE. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 10, 14, 42 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). HAVE THEM REPORT BACK IN \_\_\_ MINUTES.

AFTER THEY REPORT BACK ASK THE NEXT QUESTION LOOKING FOR A "YES" OR "NO" RESPONSE.

#### Think about Christians you know. Are most Christians experiencing the abundant life?

### IV. Most Christians Are Not Experiencing the Abundant Life.

A. Unfortunately, most Christians are not experiencing a life of joy and victory as taught in the Bible by our Lord and the Apostle Paul.

☒ "J.B. PHILLIPS IN HIS INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES WRITES: 'THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE FIRST CENTURY AND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. TO US, CHRISTIANITY IS ALL TOO OFTEN A CODE OF ETHICS, A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE, A STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE, BUT TO THOSE FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIANS, IT WAS A NEW QUALITY OF LIFE ALL TOGETHER, AND THEY DID NOT HESITATE TO DESCRIBE THIS AS CHRIST LIVING IN THEM. 'PERHAPS,' HE CONCLUDED, 'IF WE BELIEVED WHAT THEY BELIEVED, WE COULD ACHIEVE WHAT THEY ACHIEVED'."

B. The first century church made a mighty impact for God upon the world.

☒ "IT IS A MATTER OF HISTORICAL FACT THAT NEVER BEFORE HAS ANY SMALL BODY OF ORDINARY PEOPLE SO MOVED THE WORLD."

1. "THEY KNEW THE REALITY OF BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."
2. "THEY HAD MET GOD'S REQUIREMENTS OF SUPERNATURAL CLEANSING FROM THEIR SINS. KING DAVID WRITES THESE WORDS IN PSALM 51:

"OH, WASH ME AND CLEANSE ME FROM THIS GUILT. LET ME BE PURE AGAIN. FOR I ADMIT MY SHAMEFUL DEED--IT HAUNTS ME DAY AND NIGHT. CREATE IN ME A NEW, CLEAN HEART, O GOD, FILLED WITH CLEAN THOUGHTS AND RIGHT DESIRES. RESTORE TO ME AGAIN THE JOY OF YOUR SALVATION, AND MAKE ME WILLING TO OBEY YOU. THEN I WILL TEACH YOUR WAYS TO OTHER SINNERS, AND THEY--GUILTY LIKE ME--WILL REPENT AND RETURN TO YOU."

- C. Today we are greatly challenged as we face, what may be, the most desperate yet exciting hour of all human history.

**TASK**

ARRANGE A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY WHICH WILL ALLOW THE GROUP TO COME UP WITH SOME WORDS OR CONCEPTS TO DESCRIBE THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD TODAY. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 10, 14, 42 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). HAVE THEM REPORT BACK IN \_\_\_ MINUTES.

SUMMARISE THEIR THOUGHTS AND BE PREPARED TO ADD YOUR THOUGHTS IF NECESSARY.

**TASK**

ARRANGE A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY WHICH WILL ALLOW THE GROUP TO COME UP WITH REASONS WHY THE GOSPEL SHOULD BE ABLE TO SPREAD FASTER TODAY. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 10, 14, 42 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). HAVE THEM REPORT BACK IN \_\_\_ MINUTES.

SUMMARISE THEIR THOUGHTS AND BE PREPARED TO ADD YOUR THOUGHTS IF NECESSARY, I.E., MEDIA, INTERNET, EASIER TRAVEL.

- ☒ SUMMERIZE BY STATING THAT "MOST CHRISTIANS HAVE BECOME A PART OF THE PROBLEM RATHER THAN A PART OF THE SOLUTION."

## V. The Bible Talks About Three Kinds of People

The fact that many Christians are part of the problem of our society rather than part of the solution can best be understood if we realize that there are three kinds of people in the world (1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3).

**TASK**

ASK THE CLASS TO CLOSE THEIR WORKBOOKS. IN SMALL GROUPS, HAVE PARTICIPANTS READ 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14-3:3 AND FIND THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE. HAVE THEM REPORT BACK IN \_\_\_ MINUTES. AS PARTICIPANTS REPORT BACK TO THE MAIN GROUP, TITLE THREE SHEETS OF LARGE PAPER WITH EACH KIND OF PERSON (ONE PERSON PER SHEET) IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT TASK.

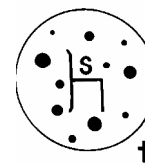
**TASK**

ARRANGE A GROUP ACTIVITY WHICH WILL ALLOW THE GROUP TO ARRIVE AT DESCRIPTIONS OF THE THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE (IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU USE ACTIVITY NUMBER 16, SAFARI, FOR THIS TASK). GIVE THEM \_\_\_ MINUTES TO WORK ON THIS TASK.

AFTER THE PARTICIPANTS COMPLETE THE TASK, ASK THEM TO OPEN THEIR WORKBOOKS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE NOTES AS YOU SUMMARISE THEIR FINDINGS. SUMMARISE WHILE DRAWING THE CIRCLE DIAGRAMS, USING THEIR ANSWERS AND MAKING ADDITIONS WHERE NEEDED. USE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO PREPARE YOUR SUMMARY.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURAL PERSON**

"THE CIRCLE REPRESENTS THE LIFE OF THE PERSON. THE CHAIR REPRESENTS THE CONTROL CENTRE OF THE LIFE. SELF IS ON THE THRONE OF THIS LIFE. CHRIST, REPRESENTED BY THE CROSS, IS OUTSIDE THE LIFE. THE INTERESTS OF THIS LIFE, REPRESENTED BY THE DOTS, ARE DIRECTED BY SELF OFTEN RESULTING IN FRUSTRATION AND AIMLESSNESS."

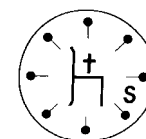


The Natural Person

1. "HE DEPENDS SOLELY UPON HIS OWN RESOURCES."
2. "SPIRITUALLY, HE IS DEAD TO GOD--SEPARATED FROM GOD BECAUSE OF SIN."

**DESCRIPTION OF THE SPIRITUAL PERSON**

"THE CIRCLE REPRESENTS THE LIFE OF THE PERSON. THE CHAIR REPRESENTS THE CONTROL CENTRE OF THE LIFE. CHRIST IS IN THE LIFE AND ON THE THRONE. SELF IS YIELDING TO CHRIST. THE INTERESTS OF THIS LIFE, REPRESENTED BY THE DOTS, ARE DIRECTED BY CHRIST RESULTING IN A GROWING HARMONY WITH GOD'S PLAN FOR THAT PERSON."

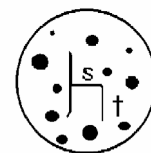


The Spiritual Person

1. "HE/SHE DRAWS CONTINUALLY UPON THE UNLIMITED RESOURCES OF GOD'S LOVE AND POWER."
2. "HE/SHE IS ALIVE TO GOD, FOR THE SON OF GOD IS LIVING IN AND THROUGH HIM."
3. HE BRINGS GLORY TO GOD BECAUSE OF HIS FRUITFUL LIFE AND WITNESS."

## DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLDLY/CARNAL PERSON

“THE CIRCLE REPRESENTS THE LIFE OF THE PERSON. THE CHAIR REPRESENTS THE CONTROL CENTRE OF THE LIFE. SELF IS AGAIN ON THE THRONE OF THIS LIFE. CHRIST, REPRESENTED BY THE CROSS, HAS BEEN DETHRONED. THE INTERESTS OF THIS LIFE, REPRESENTED BY THE DOTS, ARE DIRECTED BY SELF AND ONCE AGAIN RESULTS IN FRUSTRATION AND AIMLESSNESS.”



The Worldly Person

1. “HE IS A DEFEATED AND FRUITLESS CHRISTIAN.”
2. “HE DOES NOT ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO MOLD HIM INTO THE KIND OF PERSON GOD CREATED HIM TO BE.”
3. “HE LIVES IN ENDLESS FRUSTRATION.”
4. “SADLY, HE IS USUALLY A PERSON WHO DOES NOT REALIZE THAT HE IS IN THE WORLDLY (CARNAL) CATEGORY.”

[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: SHARE AN ILLUSTRATION FROM YOUR OWN LIFE OR A CLOSE FRIEND’S LIFE, IF THIS POINT WAS TRUE OF YOU OR YOUR FRIEND.]

5. “HE LIVES IN SLAVERY TO SIN (ROMANS 7:14-20).”

### TASK

ARRANGE A GROUP ACTIVITY FOR REVIEW OF THE THREE CIRCLES. THIS MAY BE DONE WITH A HANDOUT OF THE CIRCLES DRAWN AND LABELED AND THEY MUST PLACE THE CROSS, SELF AND DOTS IN THE APPROPRIATE PLACES, OR THEY MAY DO THIS IN GROUPS. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 5, 8, 12, 24 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). ALLOW \_\_\_ MINUTES FOR THIS ACTIVITY.

## VI. God Has Provided the Solution for the Worldly/Carnal Christian.

The worldly (carnal) Christian can cease being carnal and experience God's love and forgiveness by faith (Romans 7:25-8:4).

[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: READ OR HAVE A PARTICIPANT READ ROMANS 7:25-8:4.]

### A. The Holy Spirit is the source of power.

The Holy Spirit is able to liberate us from the vicious power of sin and death. Self-imposed religious disciplines lead only to defeat and frustration. Only the power of the Holy Spirit gives victory.

## B. Faith is the key.

By faith we can experience Christ's resurrection power and life through us as we walk in the Spirit.

"IN HEBREWS 11:6 WE READ; 'YOU CAN NEVER PLEASE GOD WITHOUT FAITH, WITHOUT DEPENDING UPON HIM. ANYONE WHO WANTS TO COME TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A GOD AND THAT HE REWARDS THOSE WHO SINCERELY LOOK FOR HIM.'"

1. "FAITH IS ANOTHER WORD FOR TRUST, BUT TRUST MUST HAVE AN OBJECT."
2. "THE OBJECT OF THE CHRISTIAN'S FAITH IS GOD AND HIS WORD."

"IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH, WHO HAS BOTH THE POWER AND THE WILLINGNESS THROUGH THE ENABLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO DELIVER US FROM WORLDLINESS (CARNALITY)."

"WE DO NOT HAVE FAITH IN FAITH ITSELF. WE PLACE OUR FAITH--EVEN A FAITH THAT MAY BE VERY WEAK--IN A TRUSTWORTHY GOD AND HIS WORD. THE BETTER WE KNOW GOD, THE MORE WE CAN TRUST HIM, AND THEREFORE WE EXPERIENCE THE REALITY OF HIS LOVE, GRACE AND POWER. FAITH IS LIKE A MUSCLE; IT GROWS WITH EXERCISE."

**[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: DEVELOP A CULTURALLY RELEVANT ILLUSTRATION THAT STRESSES THAT FAITH IS NOT THE ISSUE, BUT THAT THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH IS THE ISSUE, I.E., BRIDGE, CHAIR, AIRPLANE, ICE.]**

3. "IT IS TRAGIC THAT THE AVERAGE CHRISTIAN IS A PRACTICAL ATHEIST, PROFESSING TO BELIEVE IN GOD AND YET ACTING AS THOUGH GOD EITHER DOES NOT EXIST OR IS UNWILLING TO HELP HIM."

- C. The worldly Christian (Worldly Person) can appropriate the solution.

The carnal man can appropriate God's solution and become a spiritual Christian by practicing "spiritual breathing," which is exhaling (confessing our sins) and inhaling (appropriating the power of God's Holy Spirit as an act of our will by faith).

- ☒ "THIS IS A SPIRITUAL CONCEPT MUCH LIKE THE BIOLOGICAL PROCESS OF BREATHING. LET US FOCUS FOR NOW ON CONFESSION (THE EXHALE PART OF SPIRITUAL BREATHING). WE WILL CONCENTRATE ON INHALING DURING THE SESSION: HOW TO BE FILLED WITH HOLY SPIRIT."

## VII. We Exhale Spiritually When We Confess Our Sins (Agree With God Concerning Our Sins), According to God's Promise in 1 John 1:9.

[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: READ OR HAVE A PARTICIPANT READ 1 JOHN1:9]

- A. What is confession? Confession simply means agreement with God regarding our sins.

[NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR: PLEASE MAKE CERTAIN TO CAREFULLY READ AND EXPLAIN THE FOLLOWING 3 POINTS. THIS IS THE CORE OF THIS SESSION.]

1. We acknowledge that our sins are wrong and are grievous to God. We should not try to excuse our sins, but admit that we were wrong.
2. We acknowledge that God has forgiven our sins--past, present and future--on the basis of Christ's death and the shedding of His blood for our sins on the cross.
3. We repent, or change our attitude towards our sins, through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, which results in a conduct change.

### TASK

ARRANGE A GROUP ACTIVITY FOR REVIEW OF CONFESSION. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 28, 30, 40 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). ALLOW \_\_\_\_ MINUTES FOR THIS ACTIVITY.

- B. What is the basis of our forgiveness according to Hebrews 10:10, 14? The basis of our forgiveness is Christ's substitutionary death on the cross for our sins.
1. "IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN, YOUR SINS--PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE--HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN."
  2. "YOU CANNOT ADD ANYTHING TO WHAT CHRIST HAS ALREADY DONE FOR YOU ON THE CROSS."
  3. "YOU MUST ACCEPT GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND CLEANSING BY

## FAITH (1 JOHN 1:9).

**VIII. Why Do We Confess Sin?****TASK**

ARRANGE A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY WHICH WILL ALLOW THE GROUP TO ANSWER THE ABOVE QUESTION. USE ONE ACTIVITY (NUMBER 7, 8, 14 OR ANYTHING THAT YOU CREATE). HAVE THEM REPORT BACK IN \_\_\_ MINUTES. ONLY INCLUDE POINTS A-E BELOW IF THE CLASS DOES NOT MENTION THEM.

- A. CONFESSION IS AN EXPRESSION OF FAITH.
- B. CONFESSION DOES NOT RESULT IN MORE FORGIVENESS, SINCE CHRIST HAS ALREADY FORGIVEN US ONCE AND FOR ALL, ACCORDING TO HEBREWS, CHAPTER 10.
- C. CONFESSION IS A RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE FOR US.
- D. CONFESSION IS AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE, WHICH RESULTS IN GOD MAKING REAL IN OUR EXPERIENCE WHAT HE HAS ALREADY DONE FOR US THROUGH THE DEATH OF HIS SON.
- E. CONFESSION KEEPS US WALKING IN FELLOWSHIP. IF WE REFUSE TO CONFESS OUR SINS, WE BECOME WORLDLY (CARNAL) AND WALK IN THE SHADOWS INSTEAD OF IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS (1 JOHN 1:7).

**IX. Action Point.**

[NOTE TO FACILITATOR: MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS PAPER AND PEN OR PENCIL. PROVIDE A DUSTBIN IN AN OBVIOUS PLACE FOR THEIR DESTROYED LISTS. COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION.]

☒ "PERHAPS YOU HAVE COMMITTED SINS AND HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED GOD'S FORGIVENESS. PERHAPS YOU HAVE VIOLATED SOME OR ALL OF THE LAWS OF GOD. PERHAPS YOU HAVE LOST THE JOY OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST. YOU PRAY, AND YOUR PRAYERS DO NOT SEEM TO REACH GOD. YOU READ THE BIBLE, ONLY TO GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS. YOU WITNESS FOR CHRIST, BUT NO ONE RESPONDS."

"SIN SHORT-CIRCUITS THE POWER OF GOD. GOD IS HOLY AND WILL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH SIN. BUT GOD LOVES US EVEN THOUGH WE MAY HAVE UNCONFESSED SINS IN OUR LIVES. HE HAS FORGIVEN US. ALL THAT WE NEED DO TO EXPERIENCE AFRESH THE WONDER OF HIS LOVE AND THE JOY OF HIS PROMISES IS TO CONFESS OUR SINS--EXHALE SPIRITUALLY--AND EXPERIENCE THE REALITY OF HIS CLEANSING POWER."

- A. Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to reveal every sin in your life.
- B. Write each sin which He reveals to you on a sheet of paper and then confess

each one to God.

☒ "REALIZE THAT THIS LIST IS JUST BETWEEN YOU AND GOD, SO BE COMPLETELY HONEST."

- C. After you have confessed these sins, write out God's promise of forgiveness in 1 John 1:9 across the list.
- D. Destroy the list and thank God that He has forgiven every sin.

☒ "TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO MAKE YOUR LIST, CONFESS YOUR SINS AND DESTROY YOUR LIST."

- E. Make restitution where appropriate, e.g., in areas where you have wronged someone.
- F. After you have confessed all your known sins, any guilt which remains will come from Satan, not from God, for God's forgiveness is complete. In Psalm 103:12 God promises, "He has removed our sins as far away from us as the east is from the west."