

**BIBLE  
STUDIES  
FOR LIFE®**

*Personal*

Study Guide

ADULTS • CSB  
SUMMER 2026

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

ESSENTIALS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

## A PROMISE THAT'S NEVER BROKEN

We know what it's like to make promises, and we know what it's like to break a promise. It can't always be helped. We can have the best of intentions in keeping a promise, but sometimes we forget. Or circumstances outside our control prevent us from doing what we said we'd do.

Most of us have been on the receiving end of a broken promise more than once. It hurts. It can make us angry. However, when God makes a promise, He keeps it. Without fail.

We are sinners. We don't deserve forgiveness. We don't deserve freedom from condemnation. We don't deserve a relationship with God. But in His grace, God has made a promise.

**“For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).**

His promise is for you, but it calls for belief and trust. If you would like to have a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God that you are a sinner. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

**“Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I'm sorry for all the wrong I've done and ask You to forgive me. I accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus's name, Amen.”**

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in your faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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## WELCOME

When life is slower for my wife (as in, not working full-time while pursuing a graduate degree), she absolutely loves Summer. Me? It's a struggle. There's no college football and even college basketball is in the rearview mirror. But our family vacation is still a highlight, as are our church's Vacation Bible School and our youth's Campout for Christ. This summer, our church is looking forward to a mission trip in June.

Another opportunity I'll have to look forward to this summer is teaching through Bible Studies for Life with my men's Sunday school class. Our team has developed two very strong Bible studies that we're super-excited about. In "Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did," we'll spend time in the Gospel of Luke, walking with Jesus as He meets needs, makes others a priority, shows love, calls out sin, speaks truth, and extends grace. Jesus set a wonderful example for us, and He empowers us to live out these truths through His Spirit.

Then, in "Essentials for Christian Living" we'll dive into the Book of 1 Corinthians to see how our lives can point others to Jesus, helping each person in our groups live a life that truly matters. We'll consider fellowship with believers, wisdom from God, a servant's heart, a humble attitude, an outward focus, a way to serve, and a love for others. These are essential aspects for leading lives that bring glory to God.

I'm praying that God will use these lessons to help your church grow—and mine. Let us know how things went; we always love a good testimony!

Have a blessed summer.

—Brian

### **R. Brian Gass**

Content Editor, *Bible Studies for Life Adults*





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**How This Study Supports the Discipleship Plan** (see page 129).

**BUILD RELATIONSHIP.** Two markers of growing disciples are the disciplines of sharing Christ and building relationships. How we relate to those around us is an essential element in sharing Christ and discipling others.

**CONNECTING WITH OTHERS LIKE JESUS DID**

- Session 1** Meeting Needs • Luke 5:12-16,27-32
- Session 2** Making Others a Priority • Luke 7:36-48
- Session 3** Showing Love • Luke 10:25-37
- Session 4** Calling Out Sin • Luke 11:37-46; 12:1-3
- Session 5** Speaking Truth • Luke 18:18-30
- Session 6** Extending Grace • Luke 19:1-10

# INTRODUCTION

## CONNECTING WITH OTHERS LIKE JESUS DID

My nephew has become one of the leading hand-crafted pipe makers in the world. Early in his career, he was a one-man show. His shop was in his home, and he sold his pipes online. He could build, sell, and ship his handmade pipes without coming in human contact with anyone. And he is not alone. The societal changes brought about by the pandemic have led many companies and corporations to employ people who can work from home. All they need is a computer and a good internet connection. The pros and cons of working from home are debatable, but one thing is sure: working from home can limit human interactions.

Believers, however, have been called to a work that demands human connections. Believers must therefore be intentional in connecting with others. This sounds simple enough until we realize that people are different. What connects with one person may not connect with another. What should we do?

In this study, Jesus models for us different ways to connect with others. In each session we will see Jesus demonstrating the priority of building relationships. We will discover ways to connect with others by following His example. As you engage with God's Word, let the Holy Spirit guide you to connect with others like Jesus did.

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*Session 1*



# Meeting Needs

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## THE POINT

*Meeting needs is an opportunity  
to introduce others to Jesus.*

## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

The Bible makes it clear that believers should meet the needs of others. Yet, we sometimes hesitate, unsure of who has a need that should be met. Did you know there is a test to see if a person has unmet needs? There is! Simply hold a mirror directly under a person's nose and watch what happens. If, after a few seconds, the mirror fogs, that means they have unmet needs. The point: Every living, breathing person has unmet needs. I wouldn't recommend carrying a mirror around in your pocket every day, much less placing it under the noses of people you meet, but we can begin to develop a willingness to help others by seeing and meeting their needs.

In our session today, we see Jesus modeling this for us. He connects with two men who had unmet needs. Through His willingness to meet their needs, their lives were changed dramatically. Believers can do the same by meeting needs and pointing others to Jesus.

### QUESTION 1:

***What are some needs you especially enjoy meeting for others?***

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## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

### LUKE 5:12-16

<sup>12</sup> While he was in one of the towns, a man was there who had leprosy all over him. He saw Jesus, fell facedown, and begged him, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” <sup>13</sup> Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, “I am willing; be made clean,” and immediately the leprosy left him. <sup>14</sup> Then he ordered him to tell no one: “But go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them.” <sup>15</sup> But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. <sup>16</sup> Yet he often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.

Jesus’s primary mission was “to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). But anyone who has read the Gospels knows that Jesus physically healed many people during His earthly ministry. It wasn’t necessary to fulfill His primary goal, but He did it anyway. This tells us something important about Jesus: He had compassion toward all people. Jesus wanted to help people in need. Here’s an important principle—compassion moves us to help. Jesus was willing to help others because of His compassion for them.

Luke recorded an instance when a man with an unmet need sought out Jesus for help. Luke tells us the man had “leprosy all over him” (Luke 5:12). Leprosy in the Bible can include a variety of skin diseases, some serious in nature and others less so. Yet any form of leprosy in that day presented a huge problem. Not only was there physical discomfort, but for the Jew, it also meant being ostracized from society. Lepers were cut off from their families, the synagogue, and from any social interactions. The clean/unclean laws of Judaism demanded

that lepers shout “Unclean, unclean!” whenever they moved about publicly (Lev. 13:45-46). Anyone coming into physical contact with a leper could potentially be infected, so it’s no wonder that the leper, upon seeing Jesus, fell facedown and begged for healing.

Notice the leper’s statement to Jesus: “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean” (Luke 5:12). The leper didn’t express doubt about Jesus’s capability of healing his leprosy; of that, he was sure. However, this man had been ill-treated by others; he had seen the revulsion and fear in the eyes of the people around him. He had experienced the rejection and isolation his disease had caused. When the leper said, “if you are willing,” he wanted to know if Jesus was going to be like the others. He wanted to know if Jesus cared enough about him to help him.

Verse 13 is a beautiful picture of compassion. Who knows how long it had been since this man had been physically touched? Jesus wanted this leper to know that He cared for him, so

Jesus did the unthinkable—He reached out His hand and touched him. Jesus also declared His concern for the leper by saying “I am willing; be made clean.” The concrete evidence of Jesus’s compassion for the leper is seen in these words: “and immediately the leprosy left him.”

Jesus commanded the leper to complete the restoration by fulfilling the requirements of the law. “But go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them” (v. 14). By showing himself to the priest and participating in a week-long cleansing process, the man could be reintegrated into society. Jesus commanded the man to do so because Jesus wanted to see the man’s life fully restored.

In recent years, there has been a slow but steady push within society to become more isolated and distant from others. Many factors have contributed to this: a worldwide pandemic, a lack of trust in information services, and the rise in scams and digital piracy. If believers aren’t careful, we can easily become apathetic. When that happens, helping others becomes nothing more than checking the box on a to-do list, a feeble form of works righteousness.

We’ve all been there. Recently, I encountered someone asking for help as I was walking out

of the grocery store. My mind was far away. Her cardboard sign, with its handwritten message, explained the reason for her predicament and stated what she needed—but it didn’t really matter; I knew the drill. I pulled out my wallet and handed her a few bills without making eye contact or saying anything more than, “You’re welcome.” I had checked the box and relieved my guilt—now, back to business as usual. But is this what Jesus wants?

Compassion can change that. Compassion is an emotion that can be a strong motivator. It moves us to act. It moves us from good intentions to concrete action. When we truly care about the circumstances of others, it will motivate us to do something. Compassion causes us to think unselfishly and act sacrificially. Compassion motivates us to meet needs completely instead of taking a surface-level approach.

#### QUESTION 2:

***What obstacles do we sometimes face in helping others?***

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## LUKE 5:27-28

<sup>27</sup> After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, “Follow me.” <sup>28</sup> So, leaving everything behind, he got up and began to follow him.

In Luke 5:12-16, Jesus was approached by a man who asked Him for help. In Jesus’s connection with Levi the tax collector, we see Jesus taking

the initiative by inviting Levi to follow Him. There’s no indication of a prior connection between Jesus and Levi. It’s not out of the realm

of possibility that the commanding presence and reputation of Jesus, a rabbi who spoke with authority and purportedly could do miracles, was enough to compel Levi to respond immediately and with finality. But it's also possible that Levi had been aware of Jesus's ministry. He had likely previously seen an authentic picture of who Jesus is and was ready to follow Him when the invitation came.

This can happen today. When people get an accurate picture of Jesus, it can help them make the decision to follow Him. One of the ways of portraying Jesus to people who are not Christians is by compassionately meeting the needs of others. Our help shows we care and opens the door for us to share that Jesus cares for them as well. In fact, we should intentionally let others know that it is God's compassion toward us that leads us to have compassion for them. That's a strategy believers can follow today.

One of the unfortunate results of society's drift toward isolation and distancing from others is an increased level of cynicism, especially

at first contact. Most people I know use a call filter on their phones—and for good reasons. We are bombarded by automated calls that try to sell us all kinds of services we don't need or try to scam unsuspecting individuals out of money. Our society has become cautious, even suspicious of unsolicited help.

That's why meeting the needs of others can be so effective in sharing the gospel. Once a person understands we are helping because we genuinely care about them, they might be more inclined to respond to the gospel. But we must not forget to share the gospel. Remember Jesus's example of inviting Levi to follow Him. Let's compassionately help others and also invite them to follow Jesus.

### QUESTION 3:

***What has it cost you to follow Jesus?***

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## LUKE 5:29-32

<sup>29</sup> Then Levi hosted a grand banquet for him at his house. Now there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were reclining at the table with them. <sup>30</sup> But the Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>31</sup> Jesus replied to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are sick. <sup>32</sup> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

I love this part of Levi's story. After leaving everything to follow Jesus, Levi hosted a banquet in His honor—a fitting first response.

Not only that, but Levi also invited people just like him to attend—tax collectors. What should have been a great celebration was marred by

# Engage

## HOW DO I SEE AND MEET NEEDS?

Rate yourself on how you see and meet needs. Then offer a prayer for God to help you grow in each of these areas.

**When there is a person in front of me who asks for help,  
I have a heart that is ready and willing to help.**

NOT YET — RARELY — SOMETIMES — CONSISTENTLY

**I often turn to the Lord in quiet prayer to recharge,  
so that I am strengthened by God and ready to help others.**

NOT YET — RARELY — SOMETIMES — CONSISTENTLY

**When I see people who are not currently trusting God,  
I seek ways to connect with them about spiritual matters.**

NOT YET — RARELY — SOMETIMES — CONSISTENTLY

**I am willing to boldly invite others to turn to Jesus  
and follow Him with me.**

NOT YET — RARELY — SOMETIMES — CONSISTENTLY

**When I hang out with unbelieving friends, I feel burdened to share  
Jesus with them and point them to turn to Him in repentance.**

NOT YET — RARELY — SOMETIMES — CONSISTENTLY

the complaints of the Pharisees and scribes. They couldn't celebrate because the "wrong" people showed up.

**QUESTION 4:**

***What do you appreciate about Levi's response to following Jesus?***

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Tax collectors were despised by the population for a variety of reasons. The Roman government typically employed people from the native population to collect taxes, which meant many tax collectors in that region were Jews. Their jobs often tempted them to demand more than what was actually owed, keeping the excess for themselves. Additionally, tax collectors gathered payments from both Jews and Gentiles, placing them in regular contact with Gentiles. So, tax collectors were viewed by many as traitors, thieves, and ceremonially unclean.

On the other hand, scribes and Pharisees were diligent toward the keeping of the law, with great emphasis on the clean/unclean laws. Their zealous desire to be ceremonially clean led them to distance themselves from anyone they considered to be a sinner, which in their view meant someone who had violated the law. In addition, sharing a meal was viewed by them as an important event. It was a form of fellowship that took on religious meaning and it displayed agreement among the participants.

These views caused the scribes and Pharisees to voice their complaint in the form of a question: "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (v. 30). In fact, this

wasn't a question; it was an accusation. Their view was that a true rabbi would not eat with sinners because it condoned their behavior. Inviting Levi to be a follower meant that Jesus's ministry would allow the thief, the traitor, and the unclean to participate. They believed no true rabbi would do that.

Jesus responded wisely to their accusation. Here we see Jesus's definition of *sinner*, which is very different from the Pharisees' definition. To the Pharisees, a sinner was anyone who did not keep the law. To Jesus, the sinner is that person in need of repentance and forgiveness.

Someone has rightly said, "Lost people act like lost people." Meeting the needs of lost people may reveal to us their lost behavior and, unfortunately, cause some believers to follow the path of the Pharisees. We might even defend our inaction by saying we don't want to appear as if we condone sinful behavior. So, instead of helping anyone God places before us, we look for the "right" people to help.

But Jesus wanted to connect with people who were displaying all the signs of spiritual sickness so He could help them both physically and spiritually. The disease of sin is terminal. Believers have the cure and can share it, but it requires that we connect with those who are sick and in need of help. We can connect with them initially by meeting their needs.

**QUESTION 5:**

***What are some barriers we face in reaching out to people who are far from God?***

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## LIVE IT OUT

Meeting the needs of others is a great way to build relationships and may lead to an opportunity to share the gospel. Choose one of the activities below to sharpen your awareness of the needs of others.

- **Confess.** Pray and ask God to reveal sinful thoughts or prejudices that might negatively impact your compassion for people. Confess your sin to God and genuinely repent.
- **Assess.** Prayerfully consider your circle of family, friends, and acquaintances. What unmet needs do they have? Select one person to help and develop an action plan to meet the need compassionately.
- **Express.** Share your desire to serve with your pastor, a church staff member at your church, or a mature believer, and consider ways you can meet unmet needs in the church and in your community.



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