***How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written:***

***“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”***

***(Romans 10:14-15 NIV)***

**Teacher’s Introduction**

Thank you for your desire to share the Gospel through the One-on-One Conversation Partners curriculum. The goal of this curriculum is to help English as a Second Language (ESL) learners with their conversational English skills, while also sharing with them the love and truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Through this program you will establish friendships which, many times, will last for the rest of your life. We welcome you to this unique Christian approach to caring for and sharing with others.

**Teacher & Student Versions of Each Lesson**

There are two versions of each lesson - a “Student Version” and a “Teacher’s Version.”

The only difference between the Student and Teacher versions are the notes added to the Teacher Version. These notes are designed to help teachers learn “best practices” in teaching ESL students, help teachers understand some cultural differences that may impact how your student understands a particular topic, or to give suggested answers to questions that appear in each lesson.

Teacher notes will appear in **RED**. Other than the red notes, the Teacher Version is exactly the same as the Student Version.

**Preparation Time**

Please take 30-60 minutes to prepare for each lesson. You should review the questions and red teacher notes prior to meeting with your student. Being prepared can save you and your student a lot of time, help keep the lesson flow intact, and make sure you don’t miss any key concepts.

What we are doing is important! Please be prepared.

**Teacher Tune-Up**

In some lessons in the Teacher Version, you will find a “Teacher Tune-Up” section at the beginning of a lesson. This section is designed to help you be better prepared for Biblical and cultural issues you may encounter while studying with students from foreign cultures.

**Example:**

**Teacher Tune-Up**:  Reading the Bible with Non-believers

**“As Christians, we believe that…”**  -  When we share our faith as Christians, we need to be careful that we do not come off sounding judgmental or appearing to have an attitude of superiority to non-believers. It is true that as believers we know something they don’t, but it is not because we are smarter, special, or superior. It is only through God’s grace that we have received what we know.

When studying with a student, try to uses phrases like, “as Christians we believe that…” or “we believe that God is telling us that…” The goal is to let them know we are only trying to inform them about Christianity and why we believe what we believe, not judging them through what we are reading and talking about.

Convicting a person of their sinfulness is the Holy Spirit’s job, not ours. The Holy Spirit might do this in week two of your study, in week twelve of your study, or two years from now back in your student’s home country as they are studying with someone else.

Example: It does little good to tell a student they are “living in sin with their boyfriend/girlfriend” until the Holy Spirit has prepared their heart to be convicted of sin.

As sharers of God’s Word with non-believers, it is always useful to reflect on 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 NIV:

***“What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. ‘Expel the wicked person from among you.’”***

**Additional Notes to Teachers**

When studying the Bible with someone who has no Biblical background knowledge, here are some points to be aware of:

1)  **Context:** Your student will typically have no context in which to view passages you are reading each week.

For example, if you do not tell your student the passage you are reading happened almost two-thousand years ago in Rome, Italy during the period of the Roman Empire, your student may literally think the apostle Paul is in prison, right now, somewhere in America.

Most lessons will contain material to help you explain basic background and context information to your student.

2)  **Biblical Meaning of Words and Phrases:** Your student will have memorized thousands of English words in order to pass the tests necessary to qualify for study in the United States. However, the Bible sometimes uses words differently than how they are used in everyday speech. The Bible also has some words that are unique to the Bible.

Your student will need help understanding words like “Savior,” “repentance,” or “forgive” in a biblical context. We try to introduce most of these words in the “***Vocabulary***” and “***Bible Vocabulary***” sections at the beginning of lessons. So please take your time and talk about the vocabulary words.

You will also need to stop and help them understand many phrases we find regularly in the Bible. “Well advanced in years…”, “Handed down to us…”, “He who has ears…” etc., are not phrases they will have heard before. Although they understand every word in the phrase, you will need to explain the overall meaning of the phrase.

Look at vocabulary words and phrases as opportunities for teaching more deeply:

***Explaining Biblical meanings of words and phrases provide***

***great teaching opportunities****!*

3)  **Does Your Student Really Understand?**  New students are typically slow to admit they don’t understand something; especially if they are in a group. (This is one of the main reasons we suggest you not take on more than two students in a study) Even though they do not understand what you are talking about, often a new student will sit, smile and nod their heads, giving you the impression that they do understand.

The first few lessons are the hardest in this regard. After you have studied together a few times, your student should start to feel more comfortable sharing personal insights, asking questions, and admitting they don’t understand something.

If your student isn’t asking very many questions, voluntarily explain important or difficult words and phrases you think might be hard to grasp. Don’t just “keep going” if they aren’t interacting very much.

4)  **Don’t go into too much detail!** Each lesson will have one or two key points or concepts you need to make sure your student understands. Adding too much “other knowledge” can become very confusing.

Part of teaching core concepts well is understanding, “just because we know something else, doesn’t mean we have to introduce it right now.”

**Please, resist the urge to “brain-dump” on your student.**

The Gospel will be fully and clearly explained over the first half of the lesson series, so don’t worry about what might appear to be missing as you go through the first few lessons. During the first five to six lessons, concentrate on getting to know your student, building a level of trust, and building a solid base of understanding on the basic concepts that each lesson presents.

5)  **PLEASE DO THE LESSON BEFORE GOING “OFF SCRIPT.”** There is a thread running through all the lessons that will lead your student to a clear understanding of the Gospel and many key Christian concepts if you stick with the lesson plan.

Some common reasons people go “off script”:

a.)  You feel a great need to answer every question your student may ask.

Your student WILL ask questions like, “Where did dinosaurs come from?” or “Do you really not believe in evolution?” Our first desire is to try and answer these kind of questions fully and competently - which can take weeks or even months. Be aware that this kind of discussion will seldom bring your student any closer to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Also, many of your students know more about biology, genetics, and other sciences than you ever will, so your answers many times will prove ineffective and may make your student question why they are studying with you. You will seldom know their thoughts, though, since they will typically sit and smile at you as you give them what you ***think*** are satisfying answers.

**It is OK to tell your student, “*I don’t know*” or “*I’ve never really studied that subject too much.*” or “*That is a great question. If we have time at the end***

***of the Lesson, let’s talk about this more then.*” and then return to your lesson plan.**

b.)  As the teacher, you feel you have a good enough grasp of science to quickly   
“enlighten” them about the creation of the world, dinosaurs, evolution, etc.

In a very few unique cases, this may be true, *but please realize this is typically not where the Holy Spirit will be found working*. The study of Jesus and His teachings is where you typically find the Holy Spirit working in a non-believer’s heart.

If your student wants to learn about Christian views on creation, evolution, etc., please volunteer to meet with them outside of class time or send them links to some of the great web pages that are available, or suggest books for them to read. If they are truly interested, they will follow up on their own.

c.) Teachers, don’t forget how precious and limited our time is.

You may only have a chance to study with a student for a few weeks, months, or, at best, a year. Do you want to spend this time talking about dinosaurs, or introducing them to Jesus’ teachings?

There is literally no end to the discussions on most scientific subjects. Not even non-believers agree on most scientific questions you will run into during a Bible study, so the chances you will convince someone of your particular view is doubtful.

Contrary to many people’s personal opinions, it is interesting to note that trying to convert people through science is very seldom successful. The vast majority of persons come to Christ through reading Scripture, hearing testimonies of people’s changed lives (including yours), or seeing Christianity lived out in the local body of believers. No one can argue with the story of a changed life or with the love displayed through authentic Christian living!

**Once a student has received the Holy Spirit, the science questions that they were initially asking or stumbling over seldom seem to be of much importance to them anymore or, through their new perspective on life, they understand the answers within a Biblical context that allows them to move on from these questions.**

6)  **Resist the urge to go into “conversion mode.”** Once again, it is not our job to convert a person. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. In fact only God, through the Holy Spirit, can change a person’s heart and lead them to faith in Christ. Any other method (i.e. – our own personal efforts, pleadings, and explanations) may well result in false conversion and will produce very frustrated “new believers” who aren’t really believers at all.

***3At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:3-7 NIV)***

 Your goal should be: Read and explain the Bible with your student while leaving LOTS of room for the Spirit of God to speak to them through His words. Think of yourself more as a Bible *guide* rather than a professor of theology.

**Don’t feel overwhelmed or discouraged that your student hasn’t accepted Christ. You can relax in the knowledge that no one who is going to accept Christ is going to end up in hell because YOU didn’t move fast enough or say “just the right words.” This would make your student’s salvation based upon you and your efforts. Rest in the knowledge that God is sovereign and His will *will* be done.**

**Question: If you can’t save yourself through your own efforts, why would you believe you can save someone else through your efforts?**

7)  **Your student will be very eager to please you**. Combine a student with a desire to please and a teacher who is always in a pleading, intense conversion mode, and you have set the stage for “false conversions.” This happens a lot more than most people ever realize in the mission field.

Example: A student “accepts” Christ after two or three studies!

This is what we all like to hear and see, but it is also highly unlikely that they understand what they are doing. These type of conversions are many times the result of your student trying to please you, fit into the group, or they may have come to your church with the express intention of “trying out” Christianity (like joining a Yoga class).

If your student feels they want to accept Christ, try to get a native language speaking Christian to have an in-depth discussion with them in their own language, *before* announcing the new conversion. It is amazing how many “conversions” do not hold up upon further investigation in the person’s native tongue by a person from the same cultural background.

Can a person come to Christ with very little knowledge of the Bible or Biblical concepts? Absolutely! But are some people just “sorry” for doing bad things and want to clear their conscience, or be desirous of pleasing you and not really want to be a life-long follower of Christ? Absolutely!

**General Format for Study Time – 90 minute session**

First and most important, *Don’t Feel Like You Have to Complete One Lesson Each Week!!*

In fact, if you are completing a lesson each week, and/or finishing lessons well ahead of your planned lesson time, you are missing a lot of opportunities for sharing with and loving your student.

As you can see from the anticipated flow of each lesson outlined below, and the time it takes for each module of each lesson, many weeks you will probably not finish a lesson. That’s OK. Just pick up the next week where you left off.

The **first** priority for our one-on-one program is for you to spend time sharing the love of Christ with your student and getting to know them well. Our **second** priority is helping with English pronunciation and understanding. Our **third** priority is “getting the lesson done”.

Covering numbers 1 and 5 below are the priorities of each lesson. How much you get done on numbers 2, 3, and 4 each week will probably vary greatly. You may start a lesson with general conversation, find out that your student is struggling with a huge problem and spend the rest of the lesson time talking with them about their problem and then praying with them about the problem. This is actually when you know your student is listening and trusting you – when they start to share their life issues.

General Format:

1.) 10-15 Minutes for General conversation

2.) 10-15 Minutes answering any unanswered questions from the week before

3.) 10-15 Minutes for review of vocabulary and Ice Breaker

4.) 40-60 Minutes for lesson

5.) 10-15 Minutes for prayer time

Here is some deeper discussion on the points above:

1.) **10-15 Minutes for General conversation** – This is where you “take the lid off the jar” each study time. Many mentors say their students don’t want to talk during the lesson. Following are some questions that might help start your student talking:

- Anything encouraging happen this week?

- Anything discouraging happen this week?

- How is your stress level this week?

- How is your research/project/paper coming along?

- Did you learn anything new about American culture this week?

- Any questions about conversations you had with Americans this week?

- What are your plans for the summer/upcoming break?

- How are your mother and father (family members) doing?

- What do you really want to do when your graduate?

- What has been the hardest part of adapting to life in America?

- What do you miss most about your hometown/country?

This initial 10-15 minutes is the opportunity to get to know your student personally, what they are struggling with, what their dreams are, where they are spiritually.

2.) **10-15 Minutes answering any unanswered questions from the week before** - It is doubtful you will be able to answer all your students questions each week. Or your student may have thought about last week’s lesson and have some new questions.

So set some time aside before you begin the new lesson to answer questions from the past lesson. Start of by asking a question like, “Last week you seemed really interested in the parable of the lost son. Did you think anymore about the story this week?”

Or, “You said last week you felt pretty sure God doesn’t love you. Did you want to talk a little more about that before we get started on this weeks lesson?”

**It is important to answer your student’s questions, or to follow up on their thoughts from**

**the prior. It shows you are listening, and that** **you really do respect them and care for them.**

3.) **10-15 Minutes for review of Vocabulary and Ice Breaker**  The vocabulary is of immense importance to your student. Do not pass over it lightly. It is probably one of the primary reasons your student is studying with you, and, if they do not understand the Christian explanation for words in the vocabulary, they may well misinterpret the lesson you are getting ready to read.

The ice breakers are meant to be fun, personally informative, or set the tone for the upcoming lesson. Please envision in your mind, “How am I going to use this ice breaker to help my student understand the lesson better.”

4.) **40-60 Minutes for Lesson** – Remember, no hurry here! If your student is 15 minutes late, and you take 60 minutes to cover the first 3 points above, you may be running out of time and need to move on to prayer time and just start on the new lesson the next week.

5.) **10-15 Minutes for prayer time** – You may well be the first person who has ever offered to pray with or for your student. So yes, it may be a little awkward for them to engage in prayer time initially.

On the other hand, some of your students may already have prayer lives that are more intense than many Christian’s prayer lives, but are misdirected. Many Buddhist, Hindus, and even non-believers (yes, hard to believe) pray regularly.

To help with the process:

First, please don’t ever “insist” that your student pray. We have literally had students refuse to return to One-on-ones after a well-meaning mentor insisted they participate in prayer time.

Second, you may need to explain to them why you pray and what a person can pray for. We

many times assume a person knows all about prayer. Some students actually know little

to nothing.

Third, if your student is already praying regularly, use this as an opportunity for discussion and sharing. What a person prays for or what their views on prayer are, can tell you an awful

lot about them and where they are spiritually.

Fourth, you may have figured out some things to pray for from your opening 15 minutes of discussion, but if not, you will need to do a little digging. Ask them how their parents or grandparents are doing. Ask them if they have any friends having troubles you can pray for. Ask if they are struggling with anything in particular. Ask them if there is anything going on in their home-country they would like you to pray for. Ask them if they are getting along alright with their roommates or lab mates. Ask them if they are having any trouble adapting to America/Purdue. Ask them if they are feeling a lot of pressure, frustrated, tired, anxious, etc.

Fifth, write down any prayer items you identify each week so you can ask your student about those items the next week in your intro discussion. You may be the first person in their lives who consistently shows real concern about what is going on in their lives. This is part of “loving”

your student intimately.

***The more love you show, the deeper your conversations will go!***

Sixth, don’t turn your prayer into a plea for conversion. You can pray for your student’s conversion during your own personal prayer time. If your student hears you asking for their conversion during prayer intensely or repeatedly, they may start questioning your intentions in studying with them – a very valid concern on their part.

**Remember Why You are Studying with Your Student** - So why are we studying with our students? To show them the love of Christ and to open up the Bible for the Holy Spirit to work in their lives.

**Other Helpful Instructions**

**Let Your Student SPEAK –** The only way people can learn to speak a new language is *to speak the new language*. If you, the teacher, is speaking all the time, you are not helping your student with the main purpose they are probably attending your study – practicing conversational English. If they are not getting to practice this skill, they may quickly decide not to attend any further studies, and you will have lost a great opportunity to share Christ with them.

80-20 Rule – Student speaks 80% of time, teacher speaks 20%

To accomplish this, you will need to become a good listener, and good at asking questions. It is a skill to be able to teach without talking all the time. But with language learning, it is imperative to allow the student the opportunity to speak the majority of the time.

It is OK that we prioritize conversation practice above sharing the Gospel initially with non-believers. You are helping them with the number one problem they perceive they have in their life at that particular time – the language barrier.

As your student experiences your love and desire to help them week after week, and they are exposed to Biblical teachings, God will move their hearts and they will typically become more open to theological discussions.

**Write it Out –** Most of your students will know how to read English much better than they speak it. Understanding your student’s ability to read English is a tool that you can use to help keep your conversation moving and help your student with understanding.

Simply writing out a word or a question can help the “light bulb come on” much quicker than just repeating a word over and over, or assuming they understand what you are saying.

**If they can see a word or question written out on paper, the vast majority of times, they will get it.**

By the time your session is over each week, you should have a page full of words and questions that you have written out during the period of your lesson to help you student with pronunciation and understanding.

The less skill your student has in speaking English, the more you should be writing things down for them. Most of the students you study with will have had several years of English training. They will have memorized thousands of words in English. Just a little prompt by “seeing” the word written down can jog memories and move the conversation ahead very quickly. This kind of prompting can also help instill a confidence in your student as they “reawaken” words that have sat dormant in their minds for many years.

***What translation to use -*** It is important that you have a discussion with your local Church leaders about what translation you use to teach students. Some Churches will only allow specific translations in their building or denomination. They may make exceptions for you though since the one-on-one program is a very specific program with very specific language needs. Starting off a non-native English speaker with the NLT, NIRV or some other simplified version may be acceptable to all.

There are many good translations of the Bible available to us today. But, it is important to settle upon a single translation to use in your studies for you and your student. It is confusing to non-Christians when they are following along with the reading and you are using a different translation than they are. It is distracting, does not allow them to concentrate on the text, and gives them a feeling that the Bible is not consistent.

The New Living Translation (NLT), although not a Bible for mature believers, is a Bible that is an excellent tool for the non-believer whose native language is not English.

The NIV is also very practical, but not as easily understood.

The NIV is used as the translation for most bi-lingual Bibles. Ordering bi-lingual Bibles for your program would be a great blessing to your students and teachers, so you may find yourself using the NIV version by default.

It is also good to note that many students today will download the version of the Bible they will use. The old “hard copy” days of Bible study are quickly disappearing. Spending $30 on a hard-copy Bible for your student to take home with them will many times be a waste of your dollars. Todays students travel light and are tech savvy. Carrying around a Bible, or any book, is not something they are going to do.

Some students will not want a hard-copy version of the Bible for other reasons. They may come from a country that doesn’t allow Bibles or their family may have anti-Christian biases.

For actual study time though, you will find it beneficial to carry two Bibles with you. One for you, and one for the student you are studying with. This guarantees that you and your student will be using the same translation, and that you are familiar with the translation being used in the lesson.

**Final Words –** As you go out into the fields to share the Gospel, remember to pray for guidance, opportunity, and for God to fill your hearts to overflowing with the love, care, and compassion that He feels for every soul.