



# BIBLE STUDY TIPS

A Toolkit

## ABSTRACT

In this workshop we will explore giving experiential Bible studies, with the view of allowing one's spiritual experience of God to make sense of Biblical doctrines.




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How to Give Bible Studies Series

# GIVING BIBLE STUDIES

## A Toolkit

### TASK FOR THE DAY

-  Giving Bible studies is primarily a witnessing method
-  We witness out of the anvil of our experience with God
-  God's witness in our lives speaks to the message of the text

#### A. Introduction

This workshop is a safe space for you to ask your questions. It's ok not to know. There are no silly questions. The more questions you ask, the better your questions will be. It's not just about the answer, per se, but what we do with it So, let's reflect and ask and decide and act.

##### i. Method of Learning and Development

We want to hear your lived experience, discuss questions, brainstorm ideas, identify problems, make decisions, and develop visible and tangible solutions. We will do this through presentation, visual media, multiple choice, note taking, discussion, feedback and face-to-face.

Members are encouraged to discuss topics respectfully while learning to sit together in the discomfort of their uneasiness. The desired outcome is for all participants to take individual and collective responsibility of their own discipleship journey and their respective roles, be engaged, be enabled, be empowered to operate at a high level of excellence.

#### B. Programme Overview

The focus of the Bible Study workshops is to inspire and equip its participants to reach out to the unchurched, through bible studies. It will be discovered that giving bible studies to the unchurched is about emphasising one's experience of God. One's existential walk with God must be evident when we discuss biblical truths with our friends.



Therefore, the proposed topics of the sessions are:

### SESSION 1

I saw the Lord...

### SESSION 2

Toolkit for giving Bible studies...

## SESSION TWO

### C. AIM: To introduce us to a method of giving bible studies

- ii. **LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of the session, we will be able to demonstrate:
- That the Holy Spirit brings conviction of truth
  - Acknowledge that/what we bring something to the text
  - Paying close attention to the details
  - That the bible was not written TO us but FOR us
  - That the bible was not written for private consumption but for community / plural listening and action
  - That meaning is dependent on historical context and the purpose of the text – the bible was written under postcolonial conditions
  - Applying what the text says as opposed to making it say what it doesn't say

## ELLEN WHITE ON READING THE BIBLE

- The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. [...] The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is NOT God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

SM 1:20-21

Notes



## YOU ARE A DISCIPLE: DISCIPLES MAKE DISCIPLES

### D. The Great Commission: Matthew 28 (Praise, Confession, Forgiveness, Call, Response)

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

### E. How do you make disciples?

The Task – main verb?

Make disciples (Greek: mathēteuō; μαθητεύω)

The Means – 3 participles

- i. Going
- ii. Baptising
- iii. Teaching – Mentoring

Notes





Notes



## F. The Cultural Gap

The Afroasiatic culture of Jesus's time is hugely alien to the culture of the Global North:

- Global South (East) vs. Global North (West)
- Time: chronos vs. kairos
- Global South (East) vs. North (West) thinking
- Collectivism vs. individualism
- Extended family vs. nuclear family
- Colonised – Roman Empire vs. postcolonialism
- Functional ('how should it be done?') vs. Form ('what do you think?')

## G. Making Disciples:

- You are a Witness (discipler)
- You have a saving experience
- You have a story
- You can mentor
- Your student will soon become a discipler



## H. Who are we baptising and discipling?

- Immigrants
- Other Christians
- Our Children
- Returnees

## I. Not reaching Unchurched

Notes

## J. Characteristics of Unchurched

- Indigenous (incl. 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> generation unchurched (im)migrants/settlers) — no concept of Christianity, Jesus, religion...
- Secular / digitalisation
- Spirituality > Religion
- Universe: orderly, privileging human life
- People should be good, nice & fair
- Goal: be happy and feel good about oneself
- No divine one needs to be involved in one's life
- Good people have the best rewards
  
- Truth = Lived reality (Spirit vs Facts) – experience
- Organism (people) vs Institutionalism (things)
- Stories: complex, not one!
- Globalism (critique of power structures)
- Diversity of options (equal opportunity)
- Nationalism vs. Multiculturalism (emancipatory, justice)
- Pluralism

### Notes

## WHY BIBLE STUDY

- Word = Jesus (person) = TRUTH
- Word is God's voice
- It's all about God
- God through Jesus (Word/flesh)
- My story of Jesus's Love
- People are not into rational truth as an absolute (Do you know God?)
- Into POWER



## K. What do we do?

19

# What would You Do?

- God of OT – genocide
- Don't get the NT
  - Paul – sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, condones slavery
  - Gospels – I only get Jesus!



### Notes

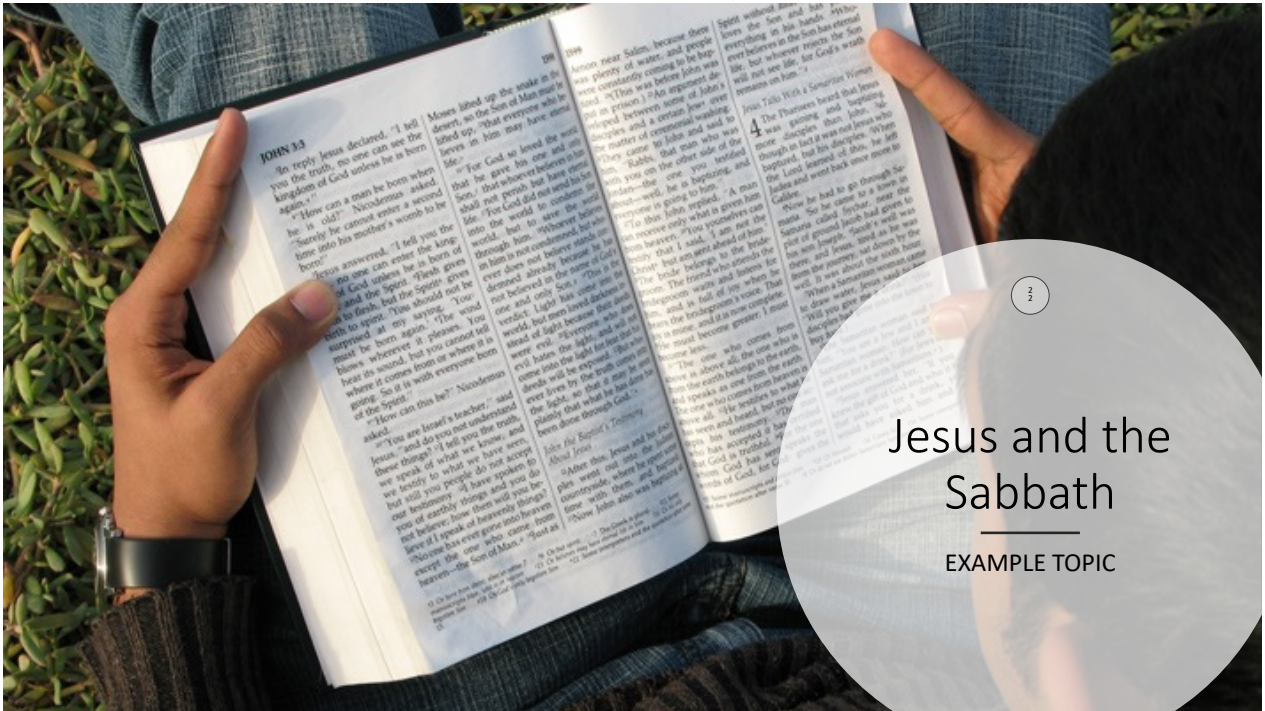


## You Count

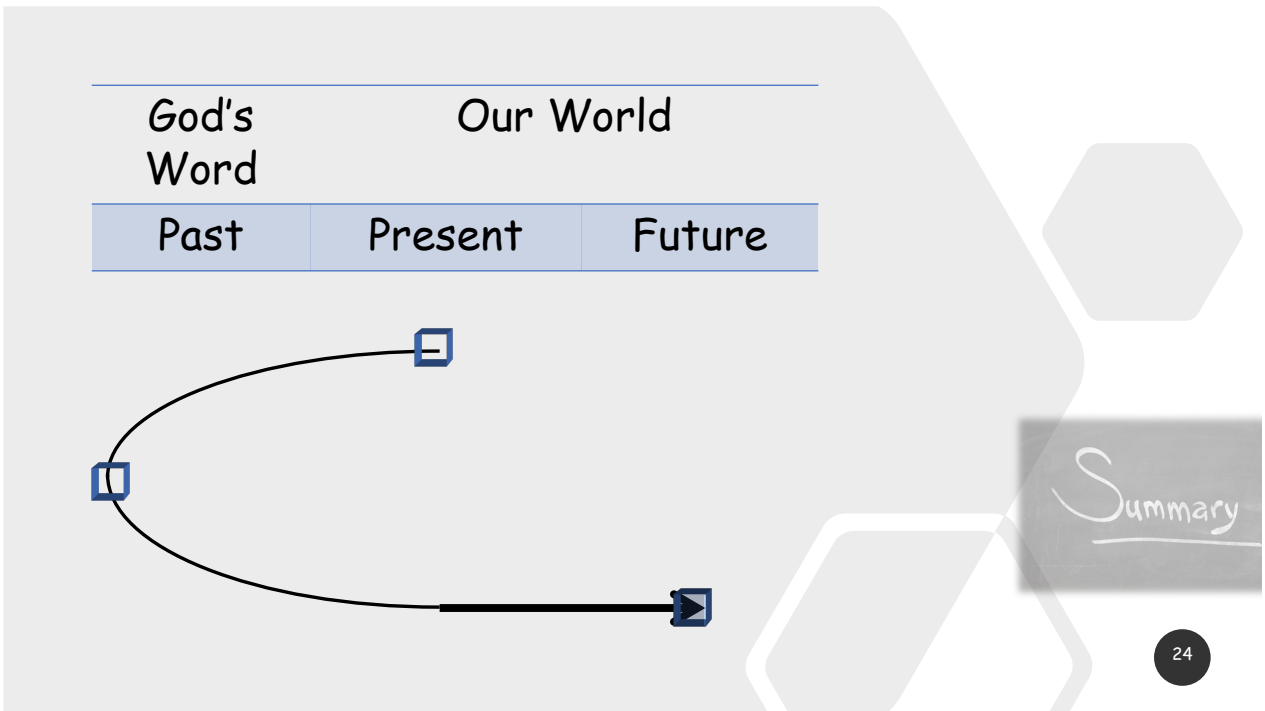
- You are loved
- Your strength is made from your weakness
- You are human – beggar telling other beggars where to find bread; sinner telling other sinners where to find a Saviour
- You are humble
- You are giving and receiving



## L. Case Study: Jesus and the Sabbath



iii. What is your experience?



Notes



# START WITH JESUS: THE SABBATH IN THE GOSPELS

- **Matthew 12:1-14:** picking grain and healing on the Sabbath.
- **Matthew 24:20:** pray that their flight from Jerusalem during the end times does not occur on the Sabbath.
- **Mark 1:21:** Teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath
- **Mark 2:23-28:** Accused of breaking the Sabbath
- **Mark 3:1-6:** Jesus withered hand on the Sabbath
- **Mark 6:1-6:** Teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath.
- **Mark 15:42:** Jesus is buried on the Sabbath.
- **Luke 4:16:** Worship in synagogue on the Sabbath
- **Luke 6:1-11:** Accused of breaking the Sabbath
- **Luke 13:10-17:** Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath
- **Luke 14:1-6:** Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath
- **Luke 23:54-56:** Jesus is buried on the Sabbath.
- **John 5:1-18:** Jesus heals on the Sabbath, and the Jews accuse him of breaking the Sabbath.
- **John 7:22-24:** Jesus defends himself against accusations of breaking the Sabbath by pointing out that circumcision is performed on the Sabbath.

#### iv. What are some of the key texts in the Old Testament on the Sabbath?

- Gen 1 & 2 – Creation
- Exodus 20:8-11: The fourth commandment
- Exodus 31:13-17: The Lord declares that the Sabbath is a sign between Him and the Israelites
- Leviticus 23:3: The Sabbath is one of the feasts of the Lord, and it is to be observed as a holy convocation. No work is to be done on the Sabbath day.
- Deuteronomy 5:12-15: The fourth commandment – redemptive
- Isaiah 58:1-14: The Sabbath to be celebrated for the poor
- Ezekiel 20:12-13: The Lord declares that the Sabbath is a sign between Him and the Israelites, and that it is a distinguishing characteristic of His chosen people.

Notes



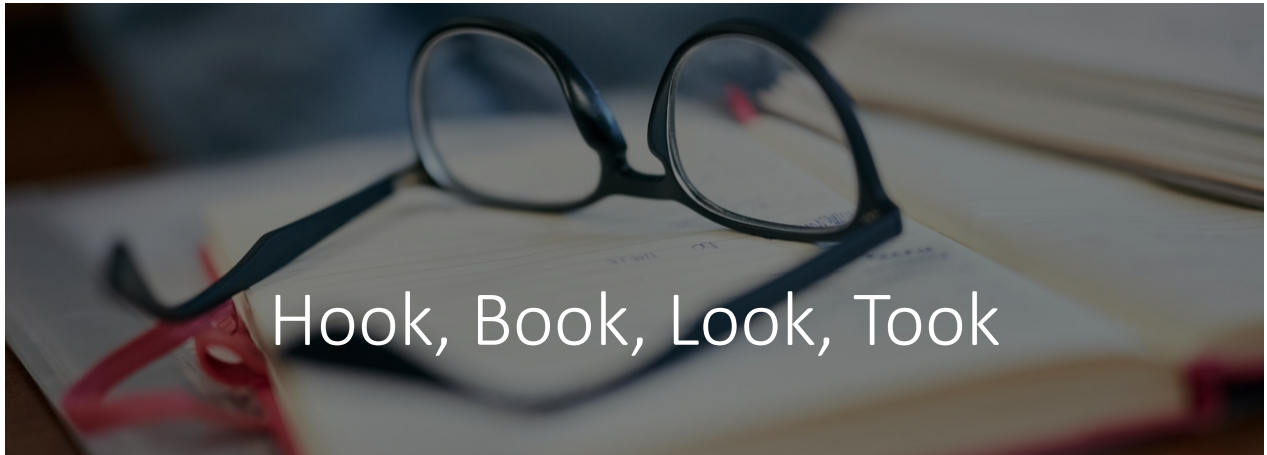
v. **One way of Approaching this Topic**

**Using Matthew 11:28–30 to 12:1–13**

- **28** "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.
- **29** Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.
- **30** Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."
  - 1 One Sabbath, Jesus was strolling with his disciples through a field of ripe grain. Hungry, the disciples were pulling off the heads of grain and munching on them. 2 Some Pharisees reported them to Jesus: "Your disciples are breaking the Sabbath rules!" 3 Jesus said, "Really? Didn't you ever read what David and his companions did when they were hungry, 4 how they entered the sanctuary and ate fresh bread off the altar, bread that no one but priests were allowed to eat? 5 And didn't you ever read in God's Law that priests carrying out their Temple duties break Sabbath rules all the time and it's not held against them? 6 "There is far more at stake here than religion. 7 If you had any idea what this Scripture meant - 'I prefer a flexible heart to an inflexible ritual' - you wouldn't be nit-picking like this. 8 The Son of Man is no lackey to the Sabbath; he's in charge." 9 When Jesus left the field, he entered their meeting place. 10 There was a man there with a crippled hand. They said to Jesus, "Is it legal to heal on the Sabbath?" They were baiting him. 11 He replied, "Is there a person here who, finding one of your lambs fallen into a ravine, wouldn't, even though it was a Sabbath, pull it out? 12 Surely kindness to people is as legal as kindness to animals!" 13 Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." He held it out and it was healed.

Notes





## HOOK

Aim and objectives:

1. Aim – is goal you as Bible guide want to achieve – keep it specific and simple
2. Objective – is what you want your friend to learn by the end of lesson – keep it experiential

### 1. Purpose of Hook

- Your *Hook* is your introduction (Story)
- Find a contemporary problem that one can relate to
- Icebreaker
- Establishes your credibility
- Piques interest
- Introduces MAIN POINT OF TOPIC

### 2. There are three basic qualities of a good hook (Story)

1. it gets attention because they can relate
2. it gives the students a motive to go through the whole lesson as set by the goal (aim) and learn the lessons they are meant to learn (objective)
3. it leads naturally into the Bible study.

### 3. How do you find a good hook?

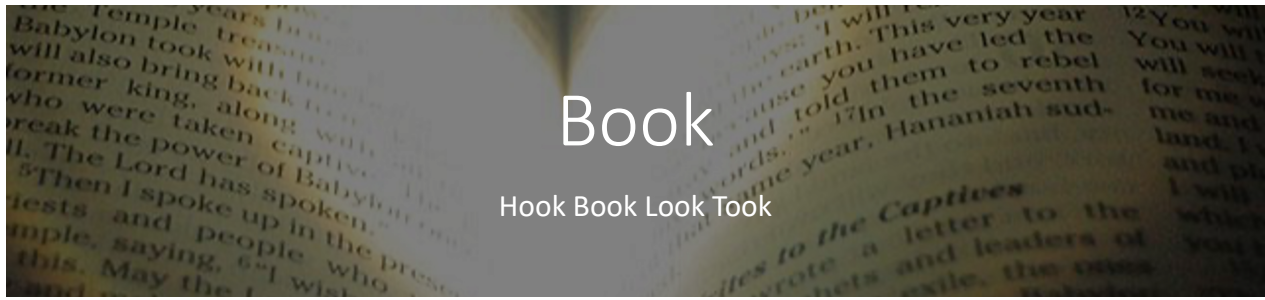
- Brainstorm ideas, key issues, observations, etc.
- Try to answer the question given in the topic in as many ways as possible.
- Find an experience that relates to it

### 4. What is Your Experience?

- The 3 m/h God

Notes



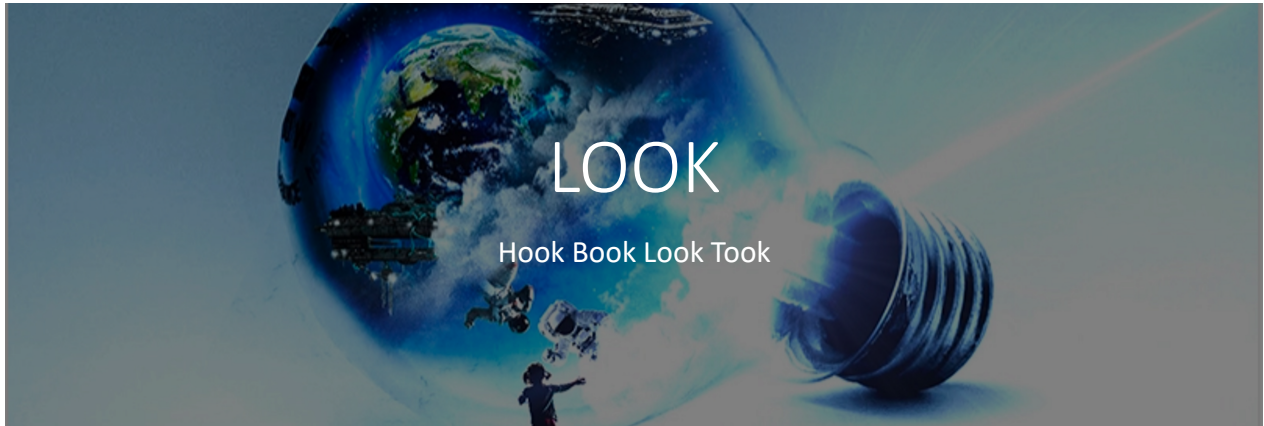


## BOOK

1. In the **book** section the main subject is investigated and explained. Many methods could be used, but the purpose remains constant: a deepening understanding of the passage.
2. Remember:
  - For the unchurched the bible is just a book!
  - They see it as the living word through your transformative experience
  - Identify and write down Key Words
  - Check Concordance, Write down all verses, Look at context of OT, Look at context of NT, Remember NT (Christ) interprets OT, Living Word
3. Therefore:
  - Check Bible Commentary
    - E.g., SDA Bible Commentary
  - Check other Bible study lessons on topic
  - Select texts, explanation and experience according to topic
  - Check EGW
  - Arrange order of texts
  - Logical flow towards aim and objectives of study
  - Logical flow towards the decision you hope your student will take from your experience of God
  - Get student to read the text
4. What is your Experience?
  - Matthew 11:28–30 — Jesus as Jew – 3 m/h God
  - Two examples
    - Matt 12:1–7 (Disciples and Cornfield)
    - Matt 12:9–13 (Withered man)
    - What is Jesus's attitude to the Sabbath?
    - What are his relationships like?

### Notes

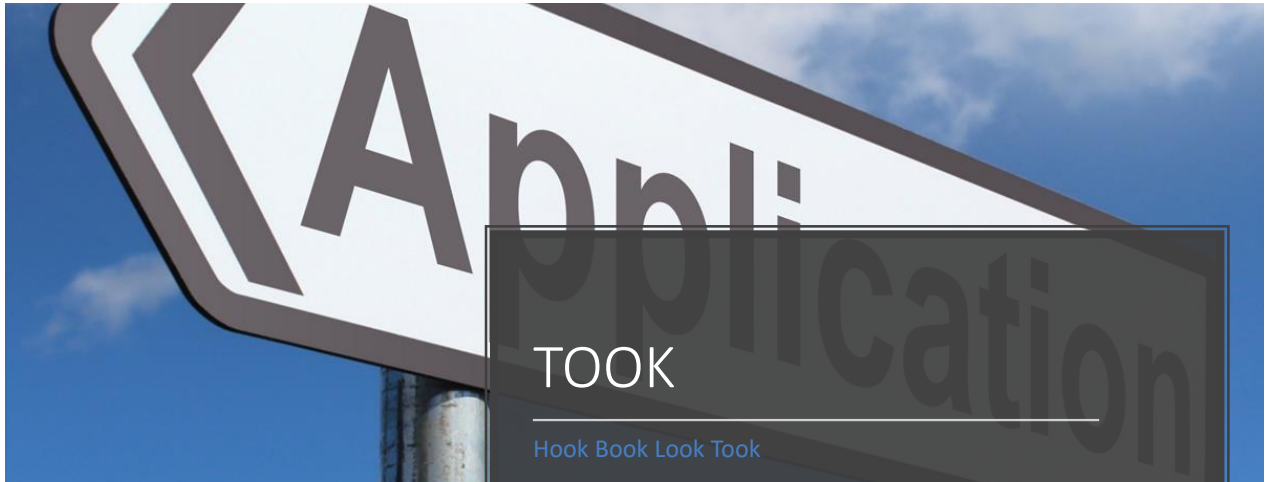




## LOOK

1. The disciple guides the friends to deeper insight into the relationship of the truth to life. The look segment addresses the question: 'In general terms what are the implications of the text for our lives today?'
2. Book/Look: Every Question
  - Use Bible concordance/dictionary/encyclopaedia to find related Scripture passages
  - Write down the main point you want to make. (You may find that your material invites several main points. Each should be dealt with in a separate lesson.)
  - Organise the most important material
  - Design challenging questions/ relate them to experience
  - Design a practical personal application - it's your witness
  - Consider creative methods for presentation
  - Get them to read and reflect (not about wrong answers)

Notes



## TOOK

1. The Scriptures are largely worthless without active response. While response may take place in session, even better is when the 'took' can move out of the setting into everyday life.
2. Took
  - Appeal – human story
  - Decision of how Jesus turned it around for you
  - Hope – that through trusting in God you will experience His power
  - This is your experience

### Notes



## CONCLUSION

1. Making disciples is a process.
2. It requires you...
  - Befriending ⇒ belonging ⇒ believing ⇒ becoming ⇒ growing ⇒ maturing
3. Process
  - » Stranger
  - » visitor
  - » contact/friend
  - » participant
  - » member
  - » minister
  - » mentored
  - » disciplined/discipler
4. Remember:
  - You are loved (transformative love)
  - The strength of your story is made from your weakness
  - You are human – beggar telling other beggars where to find bread; sinner telling other sinners where to find a Saviour
  - Your difference is what makes a difference
  - You are giving and receiving (listening, learning)



Your leaders working  
**better as rockstones.**



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