

Love Your Friend to Faith

Becoming A Commissioned Christian

Instructor's Guide

*Southern Nazarene University
Church Growth Research Center
in cooperation with the
Division of Church Growth
Church of the Nazarene, International*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Becoming a Commissioned Christian

The table below identifies each module section, the time allotted for each section, and a brief description of the section's objectives. When you are familiar with this module, you may want to teach from this page rather than the detailed information.

Module At A Glance

SECTION	TIME	PAGE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
I. Module Intro	5 mins.	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce module, objectives, outline.
II. Lecture	25 mins.	6	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator presents information to encourage participants to become commissioned Christians.
III. Small Group Exercise	20 mins.	13	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants consider how the Holy Spirit's preparation, intercession, and empowerment can equip them to be commissioned Christians.
IV. Discussion	5 mins.	14	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants share thoughts about the information presented and insights about how the information will assist in their leadership.
V. Action Planning	15 mins.	14	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants work in small groups to determine how their church members can be emboldened by the Holy Spirit's preparation, intercession, and empowerment. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will report the results of the activities at the next workshop.
VI. Module Wrap-up	5 mins.	15	<input type="checkbox"/> Close the module with your final comments regarding the topic.
Total Module Time: 75 mins.			

Preparation Checklist

The following information will help you prepare to instruct this module:

- ☛ Review the material and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis:
 - The instructional material includes a copy of each slide.
 - The material includes suggested narrative at points where instructions or transitions are important. The suggested narrative is the *italics*. Even experienced facilitators might want to use the suggested narrative to insure the key information is communicated. However, you may feel more comfortable using your own words as you become more familiar with the module.

- ☛ Check to ensure the following materials are available:
 - Transparencies (transparency masters are provided)
 - Participant booklet original

- ☛ Gather the following materials:
 - Transparency markers
 - Pens and/or pencils
 - Other material you want to use

- ☛ Make copies of the following material (one for each participant):
 - Participant booklet

- ☛ Check the classroom for:
 - Overhead projector
 - Chalkboard or flip chart
 - Sufficient number of tables and chairs for the participants

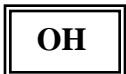
- + Arrange the room so that each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

Your instructor's manual contains the following icons:

+ Special instructions or suggestion



Time suggestions



Overhead transparency with its corresponding number

**I. MODULE INTRODUCTION
(5 Minutes)**

- + If this is the first module of the day, refer to Session Introduction for suggestions on beginning the day.
- + Distribute participant material.

Let the participants know the material is theirs to keep and encourage them to take notes. The participant material includes:

- purpose
- objectives
- “fill in the blanks” for the lecture
- application exercises

The purpose of this module is to encourage Christians to witness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The objectives for this module are:

- To remind ourselves that witnessing is a divinely authorized activity.
- To draw upon God’s power to become effective.

Review the process for this module:

- Introduction
- Lecture
- Small Group Exercise
- Discussion
- Action Planning/Reporting
- Module Wrap-up

II. LECTURE (25 Minutes)

+ The underlined text represents the blanks in the participant booklet.

Ask two participants to read the scripture passages (Luke 24:36-49 and Acts 1:8) for this module. The scriptures are NOT included in the participants' handbook.

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.

He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things; I am going to send you what my Father has promised, but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:36-49).

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

A. Introduction

1. Jesus saw in His first followers what we experience now as His disciples.
 - a. Then, as now, Jesus' presence is available to us.
 - b. Then, as now, Jesus' presence calms our fears.
2. Jesus knew their and our own fears, uncertainties, and hesitations.

- a. Jesus used the greeting “Peace be with you” (Luke 24:36) when he appeared to the disciples.
- b. Though a traditional greeting, its use took on new significance because Jesus anticipated and understood the doubts and fears of His followers.
- c. Jesus still anticipates the needs of His followers.
- 3. Jesus prepared His disciples in the same way He wants to prepare us.
 - a. Jesus spoke the Word of God to prepare His disciples.
 - b. We have the Word of God in written form to prepare us.
- 4. Jesus empowers us to witness.
 - a. We also have the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Holy Spirit gives us official authority to witness.

OH #1

Place transparency #1 (How Jesus commissions personal witnesses) on the projector.

- 5. Learn with me about how Jesus commissions personal witnesses.
 - a. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ presence.
 - b. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ preparation.
 - c. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ provision of forgiveness.
 - d. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ promise.
- B. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ **PRESENCE**.
 - 1. “Jesus himself stood among them” (v. 36).
 - a. Witnessing disciples **CARRY** with them the personal presence of Jesus.
 - i. Jesus is in fact “God **WITH** us” (Matthew 1:23) and he promises to be with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).
 - ii. Jesus’ presence **ACTIVELY** goes with us. “. . . For the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you or forsake you” (Deuteronomy 28:6).
 - b. Witnessing disciples hear Jesus speak **PEACE** to them.
 - i. The peace Jesus speaks **GUARDS** our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7).
 - ii. The peace Jesus speaks transcends our **HUMAN** understanding (Philippians 4:7).
 - c. We experience **FEAR**.

Illustration:

Virgil sent a letter to the church where Lyle was associate pastor saying he wanted to be saved. Lyle phoned Virgil and made an appointment to meet him at his apartment one afternoon. After visiting for a while, Lyle inquired about Virgil's relationship with God. Virgil was very receptive to the scriptures Lyle presented, and was soon ready to pray and receive Christ into his life. The two prayed together, then talked about how to maintain a relationship with the Lord.

As Lyle started to leave, he opened the door and proceeded to walk into Virgil's closet! Noticing that the exit door was nearby, Lyle said, "With these two doors being so close together, I imagine others have made this same mistake."

"No," Virgil said, "you're the first."

Embarrassed, Lyle at first determined never to tell anybody about his blunder. Not until later did he realize that he was experiencing continual fear about witnessing.

The disciples had similar fears and anxieties, as do most people in the church. The presence of Jesus can reassure us by giving us the words and the confidence we need to be bold and effective witnesses.

1. Jesus **SPOKE** to them (v. 38).
 - a. Jesus still **REASSURES**.
 - i. The disciples were reassured by Jesus' **SENSITIVITY**.
 - ii. We are reassured because the Jesus who became flesh and blood for us still speaks to us **TODAY**.
 - b. Jesus continues to help us with our **FEARS**.
 - i. Jesus helps us even when we cannot put our fears into **WORDS** (vv. 37, 41).
 - ii. Jesus tells us how to **HANDLE** our fears. While witnessing in Corinth, Paul was encouraged by these words from the Lord: "Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you" (Acts 18:9-10).
 - c. Jesus addresses our **DOUBTS** (v. 38).
 - i. Jesus does not **SHAME** us for doubting (v.38).
 - ii. Jesus quells our doubts with **EVIDENCE** (v.40).
 - d. Jesus deals with both our fears and our doubts by **REVEALING** Himself to us (vv. 39-43).

C. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus'

PREPARATION.

1. "Then He opened their minds so they could understand the **SCRIPTURE**" (v. 45).
 - a. Before the crucifixion Jesus had **TAUGHT** His disciples.
 - i. Jesus taught from Old Testament **PROPHECY**.
 - ii. Jesus taught using New Testament **PARABLES**.
 - b. But Jesus' disciples did not **COMPREHEND** His teaching.
 - i. The disciples could not understand Jesus' teaching on their **OWN**.
 - ii. The disciples still had doubts and fears and **QUESTIONS**.
 - c. Learning requires **RECEPTIVITY**.
 - i. Receptivity requires a **READINESS** to listen.
 - ii. Receptivity requires a **DESIRE** to understand.

OH
#2

Place transparency #2 (God opens our minds) on the projector.

- d. God opens our **MINDS** (Luke 24:45; Matthew 11:4-5).
 - i. God opens the **SCRIPTURES** (Luke 24:32). We understand that Jesus is the fulfillment of everything in the scriptures.
 - ii. God opens our **HEARTS** (Acts 16:14). We experience the presence of Jesus.

Illustration:

When Jesus opens our minds, He opens them completely. Perhaps the best way to understand Jesus' power to open is to compare His healing of a deaf and mute man as recorded in Mark 7:31-35 to His healing of the blinded disciples in Luke 24:31. In both instances, Jesus uses the same word for open. When Jesus opens our minds, He gives us a vision so new and complete that we cannot help but see the world through His eyes: Only then do we see a world that is worth saving.

2. Jesus told them, "This is what is **WRITTEN**:" (v.46).
 - a. Jesus wanted His followers to **UNDERSTAND** the scriptures (v.45).
 - i. Jesus' **LIFE** mirrored the Scriptures.
 - ii. Jesus' **TEACHING** opened the Scriptures.

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3. Jesus **TAUGHT** from the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms (v.44).
 - a. In Luke 4:18-19 Jesus read from the scroll of the prophet **ISAIAH**: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
 - b. Then Jesus said, “Today this scripture is **FULFILLED** in your hearing” (Luke 4:21).
4. Scriptures **POINT** to Jesus (v.44).
 - a. Reading the Scriptures **PREPARES** our hearts to accept Jesus.
 - b. Through the power of Jesus’ preparation, our lives point **OTHERS** to Jesus.

OH
#3

Place transparency #3 (Jesus fulfilled the forecasts of the Old Testament) on the projector.

5. Jesus fulfilled the **FORECASTS** of the Old Testament.
 - a. Through His **DEATH** (Isaiah 53).
 - b. Through His **RESURRECTION** (Psalm 16:9-11).
 - c. Through His **SALVATION** (Isaiah 49:6).
 - d. Through His **HOLY SPIRIT** (Joel 2:28-29).
- D. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus’ **FORGIVENESS**.
1. Jesus suffered, died, and **ROSE** from the dead (v.46).
 - a. This truth is to be proclaimed **EVERYWHERE** (v.47).
 - i. Jesus commissioned the disciples to be witnesses to all nations, beginning at **JERUSALEM**.
 - ii. Jesus commissions us to be His witnesses everywhere, beginning with our own **NEIGHBORHOOD**.
 - b. **EVERYONE** is to know about Jesus and what He did for us.
 - i. Jesus preached the Gospel to **BOTH** the Jews and the Gentiles (Romans 1:16).
 - ii. We are to preach the Gospel without showing **FAVORITISM** (Acts 10:34-35).
 2. Jesus wants us to repent in order to find **FORGIVENESS** of sins.

- a. This message requires **SPOKESPERSONS**.
 - i. Jesus has **CHOSEN** us to be His spokespersons.
 - ii. Jesus' **FINAL** words before His ascension commission us to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- b. "You are **WITNESSES** of these things" (v.48).
 - i. The disciples were physically present to be **SPIRITUALLY** changed.
 - ii. We are witnesses of the **ONGOING** spiritual change.
 - iii. What Jesus did then He does **NOW** in us.
 - iv. Let's **TELL!**

Illustration:

Jim was the Navy captain of a large transport and was making his way across the Atlantic during World War II. His transport was loaded with hundreds of boys on the day that an enemy submarine rose in the sea close by. A torpedo was headed directly toward his ship. With no time to change course, he shouted through the loudspeaker, "Boys, this is it!"

Jim was traveling with a smaller escorting destroyer. When the captain of that destroyer saw the torpedo, he gave the order, "Full speed ahead." The escort destroyer plunged into the path of the torpedo, deliberately taking the place of the large transport. The weapon hit its target and every man on the destroyer was lost.

The skipper of the destroyer was Jim's best friend. Jim witnessed the most incredible sacrifice a friend can make: to give his own life for a friend (John 15:13). Jim could not keep silent about what his friend had done for him. We are witnesses to a sacrifice even more incredible because Jesus took our place so that we might live eternally. We must not keep silent about what Jesus has done for us.

- E. We are commissioned through the power of Jesus' **PROMISE**.
 1. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to His followers (v.49).
 - a. The **HOLY SPIRIT** comes because God promised and Jesus prayed.
 - i. Even in the Old Testament, God foretold the **COMING** of the Holy Spirit. In Joel 2:28-29, He promises to pour out His Spirit on all people: sons and daughters, old and young men, servants, and both men and women. No one is excluded from the promise to be filled with the Spirit.

- ii. God **WILL NOT** change the promise of His Word: “God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill?” (Numbers 23:19).
- iii. Jesus **PRAYED** that all future believers would carry on a new ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. His prayer is for all “those who will believe in me through their [the disciples’] message” (John 17:20).

Illustration:

Immediately after World War II many hungry and homeless children were placed in large camps. In their new makeshift homes, the children were lovingly fed and cared for. But at night the children were too restless and afraid to sleep.

Finally a psychologist suggested a solution. At bedtime, and after an abundant meal, each child was given a slice of bread to hold. The slice of bread was a success: the children began to sleep peacefully because they believed there would be something for them to eat the next day.

God has deposited His Holy Spirit with us. His Spirit in us is the very signature of God, sealing His promise to empower us. “Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (II Corinthians 1:22).

- b. We **WAIT** and welcome the Holy Spirit.
 - i. We wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit with joyful expectancy.
 - ii. We welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit with hearts that are prepared.



Place transparency #4 (Jesus’ Spirit provides power to Witness) on the projector.

- 2. Jesus’ Spirit provides **POWER** to witness (Acts 1:8).
 - a. We do not **WITNESS** on our own.
 - i. Jesus’ Spirit **GOES** before us (Ephesians 2:10).
 - ii. Jesus’ Spirit **SPEAKS** for us (Romans 8:26).
 - iii. Jesus’ Spirit makes us **BOLD** (Acts 4:29-31).
 - iv. Jesus’ Spirit never **LEAVES** us (Matthew 28:20).

- b. We are not **POWERLESS**.
 - i. Jesus promised, “You will be **CLOTHED** with power” (v.49).
 - ii. The Holy Spirit is an **UNENDING** source of power for witnessing disciples.
- c. We are to go everywhere to **EVERYONE**.
 - i. Two thousand years have passed since Jesus poured His Spirit out on us. Has enough time passed for everyone, everywhere to hear the gospel?
 - ii. How long would it take to convert every person in the entire world if we started with one believer winning one convert the first year? Then there would be two converts. Suppose that during the next year these two made one convert apiece, then there would be four. Suppose that the next year these four made one convert apiece, and then there would be eight, and so on. Starting with just one and doubling each year, at the end of just 32.5 years there would be 6 billion souls, an amount equal to the world’s population, won to Christ.
 - iii. Fulfilling the great commission requires that each one of us do our part.

III. SMALL GROUP EXERCISE (20 Minutes)

Commissioned Christians have the power to witness available to them. But how would our witnessing power be impacted if we claimed the power Jesus has promised to us?

God is calling all of us to be witnesses to the people in our neighborhoods and workplaces. As you divide into church teams to take turns answering the following questions, focus on the specific people you know who need Jesus. Then consider how the Holy Spirit’s preparation, intercession, and empowerment can make you a witnessing disciple to those specific people.

- Read Ephesians 2:10: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” How has God prepared us in advance to do the good work of a witnessing disciple?

- Read Romans 8:26: “*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*” How does the Holy Spirit help us to overcome any of our weaknesses in witnessing?

- Read Acts 4:29, 30: “*Now, Lord consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God boldly.*” How does the Holy Spirit embolden us as witnessing disciples?

IV. DISCUSSION (5 Minutes)

The discussion portion of the module provides an opportunity for people to share their thoughts about devoting themselves to doing good.

- If you’re ahead of schedule, the discussion can go a few extra minutes. However, it’s easy to lose track of time so watch the clock.

Open the floor for discussion. If the group is hesitant to discuss, refer to the small group exercise.

V. ACTION PLANNING/REPORTING (15 Minutes)

Everything that Jesus accomplished while He was on earth was made possible by the Holy Spirit. The key to Jesus’ amazing life is summed up in Scripture: “Jesus returned to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit*, and news about him spread through the whole countryside” (Luke 4:14).

Similarly, the witnessing power of our church is only as powerful as the Spirit that directs each individual member. Therefore, we need to ask the following questions:

- How can we encourage our church members to draw near to the Holy Spirit’s work of preparation in their heart?

- How can we encourage our church members to utilize the Holy Spirit's intercession to help them in their witnessing weaknesses?
- How can we encourage our church members to claim the Holy Spirit's power to embolden them as witnesses?

**VI. MODULE WRAP-UP
(5 Minutes)**

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

- Ask participants to share their thoughts about the module.
- Remind the participants to record their results and be prepared to share their progress at the next session.
- Answer any questions and provide encouragement.

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