

# A One By One Approach To Ministry



## To get us started

Share one thing that makes you hesitant to invite someone to our church.

Share one thing that makes you eager to invite someone to our church.

## God's Word

The following passages from God's Word either contain key messages of Scripture, or detail what the Scripture claims about itself. In your group, read through them and underline key truths from or about the Scriptures. *(you should be doing a lot of underlining as you read!)*

Isaiah 43:25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

John 5:39,40 "<sup>39</sup>You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, <sup>40</sup>yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

Romans 10:17 "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

2 Timothy 3:14-17 "<sup>14</sup>But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup>and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

The following passages demonstrate the difference between the one who values Scripture as the Word of God, and those who do not. What jumps out at you the most?

Job 23:11-12 <sup>11</sup>My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. <sup>12</sup>I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread."

Matthew 15:7-9 <sup>7</sup>You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: <sup>8</sup>" 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. <sup>9</sup>They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules."

### ***Digging Deeper***

*If there's time, dig into the following Scriptures. What do these portions teach you about the Word of God?*

*Isaiah 55:1-11*

*1 Peter 1:17-25*

### **Application - Use**

Now that you've had a few minutes to review some samplings of God's Word, answer the following questions.

Who is "God?" What is a "Word?"

Triune. Present everywhere all the time, All-knowing, infinitely powerful, etc. Unpack and ponder each of these concepts. Marvel at our GOD!! Words are used for communication. Animals can communicate, but not like we can with WORDS!

What words might you use to describe the simple truth that "God" wants to communicate with sinful human beings like you and me?

GRACE! WOW! Remarkable! Earth-shattering! Life-altering! GOD wants to communicate with... ME!?!? Yes. Words are SO POWERFUL! What good news!

Review the two questions in the "**To Get Us Started**" section. If the Word of God is truly the *!!Word!!* of *!!God!!* that will have a tremendous impact on answers to questions like these. After a simple review of what God's Word is, in what ways might the flavor of your answers change?

### Example 1

Pastor David Rosenau is a second career WELS pastor with a very unique story. This week's video is about 12 minutes long and provides a story from Pastor Rosenau's vicar year about the simplest ministry plan imaginable.

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*watch video*

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### Application - Use

Reflect on the following quote which describes the ministry plan during Pastor Rosenau's vicar year.

For the next 364 days let's use the Word of God and see what it can do. Either we will gather here again, and we will make headlines and prove that God does not do what he says he does. Or we will rejoice with a room full of people, because he does.

What jumps out at you?

In your opinion, what does it mean to "use the Word of God?"

Every application section in this lesson has the heading "Application = Use" What does it mean to apply God's Word? It means to use it! "How do I use Law and Gospel here?" "What does God say (WOW! He talks to us!? YES!) about this?" Etc.

Congregational ministry models often become far more complex than this. Oh, we may be using the Word of God in all our efforts (Sunday School, Catechism, Bible Class, Worship, VBS, etc.), but are we using the Word of God as individuals? In a recent survey amongst WELS members, the following question was asked. "Do you participate in your congregation's evangelism program?" 71% responded "Yes." Those 71% were asked a follow-up question. "Have you shared your faith or invited at least one person to church in the past year?" 83% answered "No." 13% said 1 to 2 times.

A congregation made up of people who use God's Word, is very different from an organization called a congregation that uses God's Word on behalf of its people. In your opinion, which best describes Mt. Olive? For what reasons did you answer the way you did?

## Example 2

Pastor David Rosenau is a second career WELS pastor with a very unique story. This week's video is about 5 minutes long and shares the story of Pastor Rosenau's early days at his church in Florida.

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*watch video*

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## Application = Use

How easy it is for us to hide behind the group. "We" are using the Gospel can easily mean "So, I don't have to" or even "I won't."

Study Isaiah 2:1-5. Consider what it means for the Church to be the Church. (hint: focus especially on verse 3)

Glancing at 2 or three different translations will be very helpful. The Mountain of the LORD is the Holy Christian Church. Idol worship in Isaiah's day took place on the "high places." The Holy Christian Church will be far above all the other "high places" (aka mountains and hills). Like rivers flowing to it, people from every nation on earth will "stream" into it. The many peoples streaming toward it will say, "All Y'All! Come! (2<sup>nd</sup> person plural command!) Let us go up to the mountain of the house of the LORD! He will instruct us about his ways and we will walk in his paths." God's Word will go out from his church. How? Through preachers/teachers? Yes! But also through all the people in it who bring others to hear the Word! Once Christians hear the Gospel, they invite others to come hear the news of God's grace shown to us all in Christ! "All Y'All! Come!"

Let's let the Church be the Church. Yes, there is only one pastor preaching at a time. Perhaps there are multiple Sunday School classrooms, but only one person can teach each class at a time. (Two people talking at the same time just doesn't work!) In any congregational context, there is often only one human being sharing the Gospel with other human beings at a time. What might God do if every Christian in a congregation was fed as preachers and teachers used God's Word, and then went back out into the world and put the Word of God to use themselves? (hint: re-read Isaiah 2:3 to get some ideas of what this might look like!)

Dream a little. What might God do?