

Come, you do have a boarding pass into a whole new world!

A whole new world awaits your discovery - a new Father, a new Lord, a new family, a new way of living and a new way of relating! It is so new that sometimes you can feel a little lost finding your way around. Who will help you? Who will show you the way? Who will accompany you? This study is just like a compass, pointing you to God and His Word as the first step to understanding this whole new experience. Come, be ushered into forging new relationships.



FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS, MALAYSIA

Working amongst youth of college and university-going age, FES has many years of experience and many stories of young people who have grown and matured in the Lord. This series is just an extension of our ministry to encourage the encounter of God through the Word.

BREAKTHROUGH SMALL GROUP SERIES

6 in the series for Individuals or Groups

"**BREAKTHROUGH**" based mainly on the Gospel of John, reveals Jesus at his most radical, bringing timely breakthroughs into lives and situations. In each encounter, he seems to scratch where people itch, revealing to them that God does not remain at a distance. Here we meet Jesus making outrageous claims about himself, though they do not seem so outrageous on closer examination. His life when it seemed to come to an end, merely signified a new beginning. He left behind a legacy of new hope and light for us to journey on, unravelling a new way to live!

1. Not From A Distance
2. Scratching Where It Itches
3. I AM 4 U
4. The End Or The Beginning?!
5. Light For The Journey
6. A Whole New World

ISBN 983-2393-05-1

A WHOLE NEW WORLD

BREAKTHROUGH
SMALL GROUP SERIES



fes
FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS
RESOURCES

A WHOLE NEW WORLD

By :



Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Malaysia

10 studies for Individuals or Groups

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47100 Puchong, Selangor, Malaysia.

The Journey ~ "BREAKTHROUGH"

You must be wondering by now, why this series is called the "Breakthrough series" and what "Breakthrough" is all about. Well, "Breakthrough" is nothing more than our journey with the students in trying to bring the "euangelion" or Good News to our friends.

Challenges Open Doors To "BREAKTHROUGH"

We were stuck!

"What does FRIENDSHIP evangelism look like in real life? After friendships, what next? After sharing the Gospel outline, what next? How does one ease in to share the Gospel with a friend? It seems like nothing is happening!"

These were often heard complaints amongst the students we minister to. It began with the challenge of helping our students evangelise through friendships and making it intentional. What seemed a challenge then, opened doors to this "Breakthrough"! Hearing what our friends in the UK were doing gave us ideas to start our own.

Reaching Out Through Enriching Friendships


We did not want to treat people as targets, but rather persons whom God is interested in. Genuine, enriching friendships is one way we can "build highways" for the Lord to breakthrough into people's lives.


Thus, "Breakthrough" is a holistic endeavor focusing on FRIENDSHIPS, bearing the VOICE of the Gospel wherever God places us, and in sharing the MESSAGE of Jesus (through the gift copies of the Gospel of John). This also means that we are not in a hurry with our friends but are willing vessels in this process.

What Have We Here?

The "Breakthrough series" are Bible study guides intended as companions to the gift of the Gospel of John. Having given the gift, we hope to pray for opportunities for our friends to "investigate" this Jesus.

Our vision and prayer is that the guides become vehicles in order that

 you may behold the Lamb of God!

 you may see and believe!

The TEAM That Journeyed On

Yes, the team has journeyed on. We first mooted the idea in FES (*Fellowship of Evangelical Students*) in late 1999. When we felt that this was the way the Lord was leading us, we started work on getting the copyrights, working out campus strategies, writing the Bible study guides, etc. This has taken us more than one year in "brewing the stew"! We thank God for good partnership with both the UK and Malaysian Bible Societies. More than that, we thank God for each other in the FES team who have worked tirelessly just to see others given the opportunity to encounter the Word of life! The greatest glory and thanks goes to our very God Himself who moved mountains for us and brought in much needed resources.

"Breakthrough" - JOHN'S Gospel

1. Printing the John's Gospels in Malaysia - Mary Vergis
2. Anglicised Contemporary English Version of John - UK Bible Society
3. Malaysian Copyright Holder - Malaysian Bible Society

"Breakthrough" - Bible Study Series

1. Team of Writers - Annette Arulrajah, Audra Darshini, Chan Yoke Yee, Dan Fong Shin, Evelyn Wong, Kong Lee Ang, Loh Kim Cheng, Michael William
2. Layout for Guides - Dan Fong Shin & Evelyn Wong
3. Series Editors - Annette Arulrajah & Loh Kim Cheng
4. Proof Readers - Elisa Dass & Chan Yoke Yee

Bringing "Breakthrough" To The Campuses

1. Paper on Sharing The Idea With Leaders - Loh Kim Cheng
2. Campus Strategies - Annette, Darshini, Fong Shin, Evelyn, Lee Ang, Kim Cheng, Michael
3. Publicity Handbills - Paula Wong & Kevin Thomas (SU)
4. Preparation of Training Modules - Annette, Darshini, Yoke Yee

* All names mentioned above are fulltime FES staff during the period of our production.

Foreword

One never knows what the e-mail may bring - a delightful surprise or more work! A polite message from FES Malaysia was both. "Before you come to Malaysia in August would it be possible for you to pre-edit a series of Bible studies we have written?"

I knew it would take many hours and much effort if it were to be helpful to the writers. But I didn't even pray about it. I knew it was the right thing to do. It has been the passion of my life to encourage young student workers anywhere in the world to make Bible studies the foundation of their evangelistic and discipling ministry.

It's g-r-e-a-t when these young workers can train their students in Bible studies. I think it's even greater when churches ask them for help in this same area. Over the decades from country to country I have seen churches revitalized or planted by graduates who learned to take the Bible seriously when they were students.

Last month I was in Poland for training university students in evangelistic Bible studies. The president of a fast-growing biblical seminary asked if I could do the same course for his theology students. It was a privilege. But what equally delighted me was to discover that we had met some 23 years ago when he was a student. "It was in that inductive Bible study course (at a European leadership conference) where I first learned to study the Bible. I didn't know it could be so exciting. That excitement for God's Word keeps growing. I want our students to know the same excitement so they can pass it on."

At our church this morning I started a new class. I dared to call it "In-depth Gospel Studies", because I think that our church is typical. People sincerely believe Jesus but know him only in bits and pieces. At best they have an album of popular Jesus photos. They need to see the down-to-earth Jesus as in a video, a moving drama. With that title I didn't know if anybody would come. To my surprise they kept coming and coming. What hunger these longtime Christians expressed! One of them, a lawyer, expressed it as "I want to know God more deeply, not just have a good feeling when I'm singing praise songs with others." At the end of the study in Luke 1, Tony asked if he could bring his not-yet-Christian girlfriend next week, because "I think she will dig this kind of study."

That's what the Bible studies in this series are about - scratching people where they're itching. When I did get to Kuala Lumpur last August I sat down with the writers for oral editing. It was a pleasure to work with them. They were highly teachable. And industrious. The sessions were fruitful. After that they re-worked their studies and helped each other in further editing.

Nothing pleases me more than to commend these Bible studies for your individual or group use on campuses, in homes, in workplaces, and in Sunday classes. If Bible studies are authentic (objective yet warmly personal), anybody - Christian or seeker - will benefit. For each study takes the biblical text seriously in helping people to see what it really says (not what they have pre-concluded); to think carefully about its meaning and to consider honestly its practical implications.

May this labor of love for our Lord and His church bring fruit, much fruit.

Sincerely in Christ,

Ada Lum
Honolulu, Hawaii
January, 2001

Introduction

"A Whole New World." As we decide to believe in Jesus, we become children of God. We are entering into a whole new world - God's Kingdom. The kingdom is already here but it is for us to discover, understand, appreciate and to grow into it more and more. This is a process of growing - by changing the old into new progressively. Hence, I would agree with C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity, pp.86-87),

"Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature: either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with self, or else into one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with its fellow-creatures, and with itself. To be the one kind of creature is heaven: that is, it is joy and peace and knowledge and power. To be the other means madness, horror, idiocy, rage, impotence, and eternal loneliness. Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other."

Thus, as you stand at this threshold, are you ready to embark into a whole new world?!

Using The Guide



Want to immerse yourself in the Word of God?



Want to leave the door open for SERENDIPITY (personal discovery) to take place?



*The Breakthrough Bible study guides are for you then!
Using the inductive approach, the process of O-I-A gives you the opportunity for such happy encounters.*

O for Observation

To look at the text and pick up the facts (both obvious and hidden), searching for details. Asking questions of the text helps us see more facts.

I for Interpretation

To discover the implications and meanings of the facts, particularly to the original writer or hearers of the Bible. Knowing the background and context will sharpen the interpretation process.

A for Application

To find the meaning for us today, and see how we can put it to practice in our lives. We apply truth and principles that are timeless and universal.

Our format ...

This approach comes alive in our format and the phases we take you through.

Getting Started draws you into the study. Be free to share but do not spend too much time on this.

Come and See gets you to observe the text and see its implications. We have included as much background information you need to see the context and help you to understand the meaning of the passage.

What About You - A Breakthrough? helps towards making the study personal to your life. This is the most important part of the study, so please do not skip it.

ENJOY!

Study One

Little By Little Everyday

1 Thes 5:16-24; Rom 14:8-9

Getting Started

Sharing over a cup of tea was the needed catalyst for David to talk about some of his struggles with Jon. David : "I have been a Christian for about six months. I still do the things I used to do even though I know I should not do them. I do not feel at all like a different person even though I have trusted Jesus."

① David isn't unique. You too may have similar struggles. Share one or two of your difficult experiences as a new Christian.

Come and See

② Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." Perhaps you have experienced what Paul is describing here. What in your life has become new since you became a Christian?

In actual fact, the Holy Spirit who lives in believers is working in us. This has to do with God's transformation of us into persons whose actions in daily life are expressions of the Lord. This is the PROCESS of SANCTIFICATION, which means we cannot be totally different persons overnight.

3 Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24.

In these verses, Paul shows us how sanctification works - a balance between what we do and what God does.

a) Which of the eight commands in the verses 16-22 challenges you most?

b) Now look at God's part in verses 23-24. What aspect especially encourages you?

4 Now, read Romans 14:8-9. Paul motivates us to further allow God to sanctify us. Try putting these verses in simpler terms.

Notes

Sanctification in this study refers to the working of the Holy Spirit to equip us to be morally blameless until Jesus returns.

The Greek word 'kyrios' when translated into English is 'LORD' which is equivalent to 'master', 'owner', or even 'Sir'. When we decided to allow Jesus to come into our life, we have invited him to be the Lord of our life. In other words, he is now the Captain. This is a growing process where we increasingly allow Jesus to be Lord in more areas of our life.

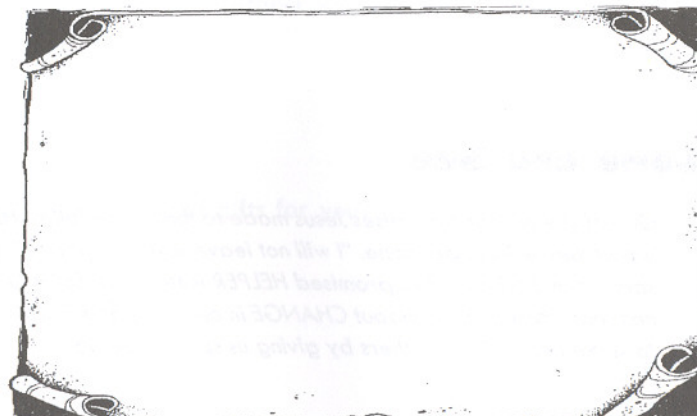
Notes (cont'd)

Paul was once called Saul. He was a Pharisee from Tarsus, an active persecutor of the church. Then came his Damascus encounter. He saw a vision of Jesus on the way (Acts 9:4-9; 26:12-18) and became a follower of Christ. He was the writer for the books of Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians and many other books in the Bible.

What about you - a breakthrough?

5 As you seek to allow Jesus to be Lord in more areas of your life, identify two or three areas that you would like to ask him to change.

6 Bring before God your struggles, in a written prayer. Writing our prayers helps us in thinking and committing ourselves to Him.



Study Two

I Am Not By Myself

Jn 14:16-17,26; Gal 5:22-26; Rom 12:6-8

Getting Started

Li Jun has always found his friends helpful in solving problems and giving sound advice. But lately they seemed busy and did not have time for him, especially at peak assignment periods. Sometimes, they did not seem to understand his struggles. He tried to figure out how and why his Christian friends made certain decisions. He found himself even more helpless when he was asked to help in the Christian Fellowship. He started to wonder if he was good in anything at all, as he felt he had so much to catch up with the others.

- ① When you need help, whom do you go to? Why?

Come and See

One of the greatest promises Jesus made to those who follow Him is that they will not be alone. "I will not leave you as orphans," he said (John 14:18a). This promised HELPER is the Holy Spirit God has sent. He will bring about CHANGE in our lives, and enable us to serve and build up others by giving us specific GIFTS.

- ② Read John 14:16-17, 26. Discover how the Counsellor (Helper) will help those who believe.

- ③ Now, read Galatians 5:22-26. We now belong to Christ. What does this call for in our lives (vv.24-26)? If we do so, what will we increasingly see in our lives (vv.22-23)?

We are given a list of the fruit of the Spirit's work in the lives of believers. Transformation in our character will become evident to those around us.

- ④ Also, read Romans 12:6-8. The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts to help and build others up. Try to identify your own gifts.
a) Which gifts are you already using?

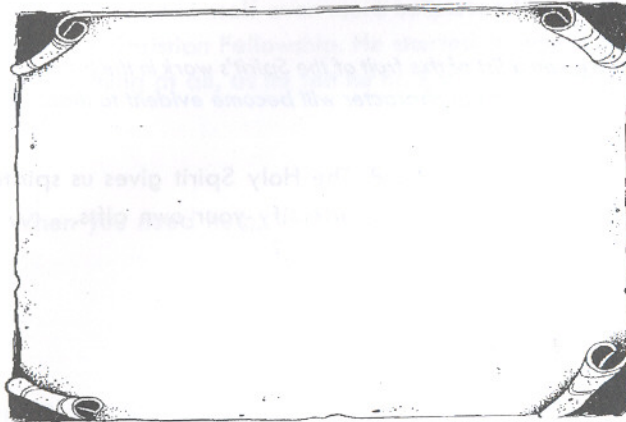
- b) Which are potential gifts for you?

What about you - a breakthrough?

5 Reflect on these three areas: seeking the Spirit's help, showing the fruit of the Spirit and using the Spirit's gifts for others. In each of these areas, identify specific things you would like the Spirit to help you with in the area of :

- a) Help needed b) Fruit of the Spirit c) Spiritual Gifts

6 Write a prayer to God and express your desires to Him.



Study Three

In Touch With Our Father

Matt 6:5-15

Getting Started

Siew Tin has been attending different meetings in the Christian Fellowship and the church. She enjoys meeting and spending time with fellow Christians. She has found the teaching meaningful, but, the prayer meetings are not so interesting. She finds it a frightening experience to pray, and often she's at a loss for words. Sometimes, it's almost like saying meaningless words.

1 Imagine you are in the position to set some new rules for churches and one of your wishes is to ban praying in meetings. List at least 5 reasons why you would want to do that.

Come and See

2 For Jesus, praying was a very natural thing to do. Read Matthew 6:5-15. It records what he has to say about prayer. What impacts you?

The idea in verses 5-6 is a follow up from verse 1 when Jesus instructed them not to do their acts of righteousness before men (there are three acts: giving, prayer and fasting). Jesus is not then saying we can only pray behind closed doors. Instead, the emphasis is on our attitude of prayer.

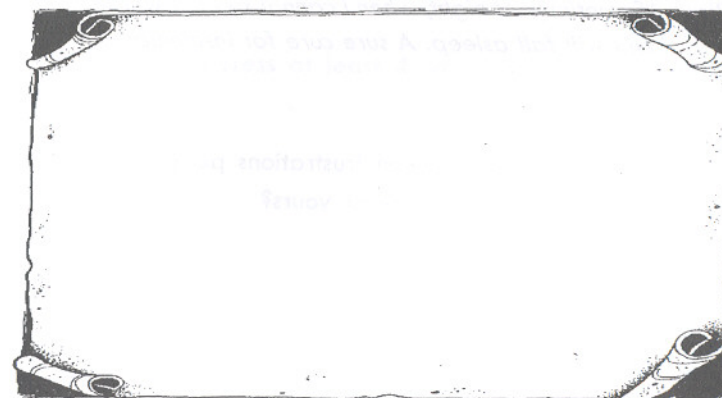
- ③ What attitude do you think Jesus is talking about here?
- ④ In verse 7, we are asked not to babble like those who don't know God. They think their prayers are answered only by repeating their words again and again. Verse 8 says our Father knows what we need even before we ask Him. Yet, we are to continue to pray. If God knows our thoughts, why do you think we should still pray?
- ⑤ Jesus then sets them an example by going on to pray very naturally and calling God 'Our Father'. How is it different from what you are used to?
- Jesus first talks about honouring our Father and inviting his Kingdom to come and his will to be done. Only then does he go on to make personal requests of his Father (v.11-13). Also note the "us" instead of me.*
- ⑥ Jesus asks for food for the day (v.11). Why does he not ask for more?

- ⑦ He also goes on to the issue of forgiveness and temptations (v.12). Discuss
- a) the possible difference between:
- forgive our sin, so that I can forgive others and
 - forgive us our sin, as we also have forgiven others' sin

- b) what do we do about the temptations we face?

What about you - a breakthrough?

- ⑧ Think about how you usually pray. What changes would you consider making about the way you pray?
- ⑨ What is one specific request you would like to make to your Father in Heaven. Write it down and see how He answers you.



Study Four

Out Of The Shell

2 Tim 3:16-17; Ps 19:7-14

Getting Started

During a Small Group meeting, there was a discussion on studying the Bible (also referred to as the Word of God).

Kok Lee : "Everyday I spend about half an hour reading the Bible. I am reading the book of Numbers now but I find it so dry. Names, names and more names!!"

Andy : "Hey, I had a problem that day and I remembered I was told that I should find my answers from the Bible. But how? Where do I begin?"

Susan : "I actually think that a lot of things in the Bible were written for those days, they are not relevant for us."

Piau : "Sometimes at night, when I cannot sleep, I will read the Bible and then I will fall asleep. A sure cure for insomnia!"

1 These are some common frustrations people have in coming to the Word. What are some of yours?

Come and See

The Bible is written by different authors over many centuries. God chose the writers and inspired them to write in such a way that their words revealed His character and plans.

God breathed meaning without dictation or blocking out the individuality of the human writers. God the Spirit bore them along as they wrote, so that the product is the "Holy Scriptures", the Word of God.

2 We will discover some 'usefulness' of the Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3:16 & 17. List down the functions of the Word mentioned here.

3 Scripture is meant to help us experience God speaking to us. As a result, we change. Let us explore Psalm 19:7-14 together and see how this can happen.

a) The psalmist gets all excited and uses at least 4 different words to refer to the Word of God. List them and try to discover their meaning.

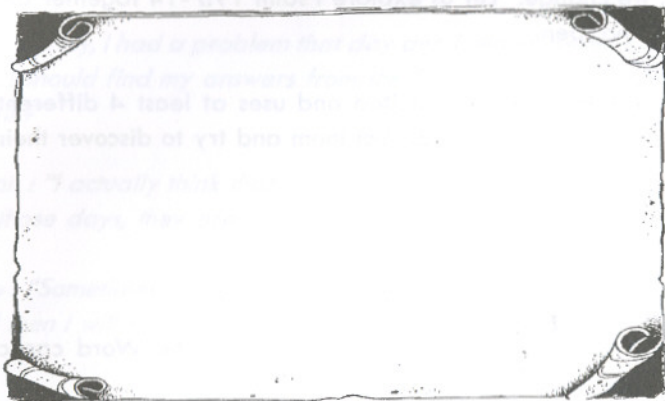
b) He goes on to express at least 4 ways the Word can change us. What are they?

What about you - a breakthrough?

The Bible is a serious book. God speaks to us on our terms through the experiences of men and women. It contains some of the world's best stories. It is a book to enjoy and understand.

- ④ How has the Word made a difference for you so far? (refer to findings in question 3). Share in the group.

- ⑤ The psalmist having encountered God's love, responds in a prayer, expressing his desires to God (vv.12-14). How would you like to improve your relationship with God? Express your desires in a prayer to him now.



- ⑥ Make a month's plan on how you can read the Bible regularly.

Study Five

We Belong Together

Acts 2:40-47

Getting Started

One day Guna expressed to his small group, "Can't I be a Christian without going to church? As long as I know that I am a Christian, isn't that enough?" Candy's answer to him was, "I guess it must be okay! I attend the Christian Fellowship meeting every week so I feel I do not need to go to church!" James, on the other hand was very uneasy with both their responses.

- ① What about you? How do you feel about going to church?

Come and See

The first church came into being soon after Jesus' death and resurrection. The believers then, gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12 - 14). From there the group just grew and multiplied. Often too, it was trials and life-threatening situations that made them grow faster.

Read Acts 2:40 - 47

- ② The believers seemed very moved to meet together regularly. What are at least 5 things the believers did when they met (vv.42-47)? What do you think motivated them?

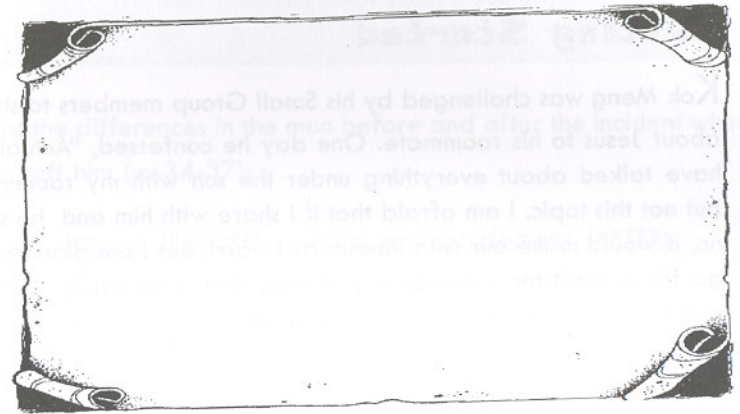
Notes

The breaking of bread was mentioned twice (vv.42,46). We find it again in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Breaking of bread and drinking of the cup is a practice initiated by Jesus. According to Paul, "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." This is the way we remember Christ's death on the cross for us, and also the fact that he is coming back again. This is practised in the church, not in the Christian fellowship. The Christian fellowship is not church, and is not meant to be a substitute.

- ③ What seemed to be the general attitude of the believers (vv. 42, 43 & 46)?
- ④ Besides fellowship with fellow believers and apostles(v.47), they were also praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. What would be the possible reasons that they found favour with the people?
- ⑤ Having read Acts 2:42-47, share some things that you see already existing in your church and some things that seem to be missing.
- ⑥ "The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (v.47). That was the result of the life lived together by the believers.

As church members, we all play a part in making our church like the one we read in Acts. What would be the one or two most important attitudes you would want to adopt for yourselves?

- ⑦ Write a prayer to God and commit your church and your life to Him.

TO THINK ABOUT

If you are choosing a church, the beauty of the building or its architecture is really irrelevant! Find a church which is:

- committed to teaching and obeying God's word
- a group of people who show God's love in action

Another issue to consider is BAPTISM, the public sign to others that you have entered the family of God. This is also a public sign to you of God's acceptance. BAPTISM is called a sacrament. A sacrament is an outward act with an inner spiritual meaning ordained by Jesus Christ. Something ordinary like water has special significance because it represents spiritual truths like the forgiveness of sins and the beginning of new life. Sacraments are part of the church's functions to the believer. You may want to consider being baptized if you aren't already.

Study Six

I Am His Ambassador

Luke 8:26-39

Getting Started

Kok Meng was challenged by his Small Group members to share about Jesus to his roommate. One day he confessed, "Actually, I have talked about everything under the sun with my roommate but not this topic. I am afraid that if I share with him and he says no, it would make our relationship awkward. But I am planning to go for a short-term mission trip. I think that is an easier way to share the gospel, with a stranger instead of with people you know".

- 1 Share how you became a Christian. Highlight significant moments.

Come and See

There were many whose lives were touched by Jesus. Let's read about a man in desperate need and his transforming encounter with Jesus. Read Luke 8:26-39.

- 2 Jesus had barely reached the shore when a man, possessed by demons, came to meet him. Why do you think he approached Jesus (vv.28-29)?

Notes

v.29 explains to us why the man was not wearing clothes. This seemed to be the destructive effect of the demons on him. A demon-possessed person had super human strength and often endangered himself. Usually he lived in tombs. In v.30, Jesus had a conversation with the 'Legion' and ordered it out into a herd of pigs. The demons left the man and as a result the man's life was transformed.

v.30 Here the name suggests that the man was possessed by numerous demons. According to the NIV Study Bible, a Roman legion was made up of 6,000 men.

- 3 List the differences in the man before and after the incident when the demons left him (vv.34-37):

Man with demons (BEFORE)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Man without demons (AFTER)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

- 4 Like any person who went through a life changing encounter, the man wanted to be with Jesus. But Jesus thought otherwise. After being sent home by Jesus, the man was seen all over town, telling how much Jesus had done for him. Why do you think Jesus sent the man back to his own people?

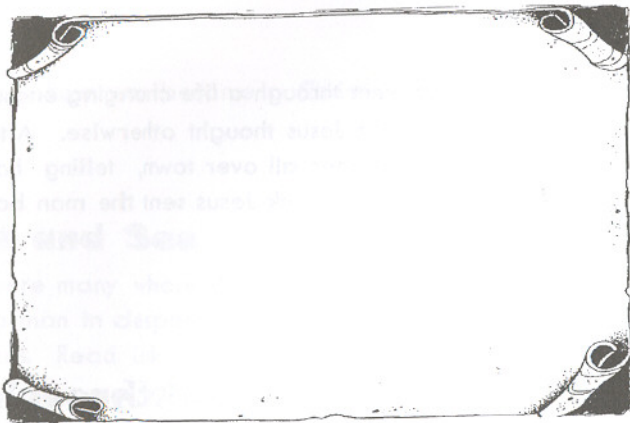
What about you - a breakthrough?

You are encouraged to see yourself as a missionary on campus sent by your church. You are a student here not by chance but with a purpose. The campus is your harvest field. There is lots you can do to reach out to fellow students.

⑤ Think again about what Jesus has done for you. Like the demon-possessed man, what are the changes you see in your life?

⑥ Who would you like to share Jesus with right now? Consider the people you would meet naturally.

⑦ Begin to ask God to open the doors of opportunity, and help you overcome your fears/difficulties in talking about Jesus to your coursemates/roommates/friends.



Study Seven

The Path I Chose

Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-60

Getting Started

Jack's family was very angry and disappointed when he decided to become a Christian. They warned him not to get committed and not to be baptised. His friends could not accept him and started to tease him. When he was eating in public, many times his food was stolen and he was laughed at because he closed his eyes to give thanks. He was given nicknames and had to make difficult decisions when school activities clashed with church on Sundays. Often he wondered whether it was worth all the trouble to follow Jesus.

① Share your experiences or that of your friends' which seem similar to Jack's.

Come and See

Jack's experience isn't new. Many Christians in the Bible also face persecution for their faith. The person we will look at, Stephen, did not just suffer, he was actually painfully put to death!

- ② Read Acts 6:8-15. How would you describe Stephen and the others present there?

Stephen

1. full of grace and power

2.

3.

4.

Others

1. provoked opposition to Stephen

2.

3.

4.

- ③ How did the people respond when they realized they could not stand up against Stephen?

- ④ Read Acts 7:54-60.

The people's anger seemed to take control of them and it eventually led to Stephen's gruesome death. Identify the progression of events which took place.

Stephen

Looked up to heaven

Saw God's glory

People

gnashed their teeth

- ⑤ We see Stephen praying even as he was dying. What is your picture of Stephen? What seemed to give him the courage and strength?

In Matthew 7:14, the Christian life is described as, "But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." This implies that the Christian life is one of difficult choices and usually comes along with sacrifices and suffering.

What about you - a breakthrough?

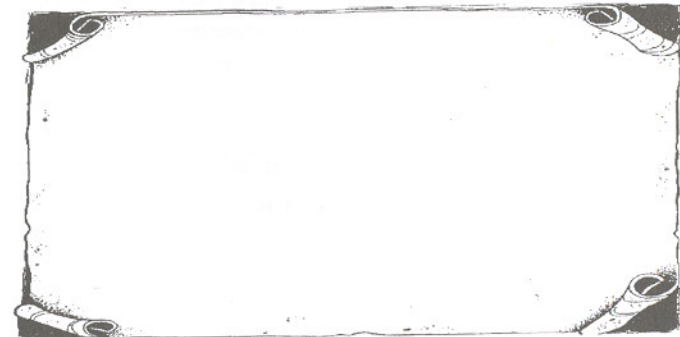
- ⑥ We most probably will not go through what Stephen did. But sometimes, we too have to make difficult choices. What are some of the difficult experiences or choices for you?

- ⑦ Reflecting on Stephen's life, what would be your personal reasons for enduring persecution or suffering as a Christian?

- ⑧ We are not alone on this narrow road.

a) Identify at least one person whom you can share your problems with and take the initiative to share.

b) Like Stephen, share your difficulties with God.



Study Eight

Shining As Stars

Luke 12:13-21, 27-33

Getting Started

Li-Li grew up in a nice Christian home. She furthered her studies in a local university. She was given a place in the hostel and it was the first time she was away from home and sharing a room with two other girls. She felt overwhelmed as she tried to cope with the demands to do well academically as well as socially, and to continue with her involvement in the Christian activities. Increasingly, she also felt that she was giving up some of her core values and was no different from her other friends.

- ① What has been increasingly difficult for you in your (student) life?

Come and See

Read Luke 12:13-21

- ② What seems to be the intentions of this younger brother that Jesus sees through (v.15, refer also to the notes)?

- ③ The parable (vv.16-20) explains this statement : " A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions".

a) Looking at the rich man, how would you describe his attitude and perspective to life?

b) From the implications seen in this passage, what do you think our life should consist of?

Notes

In those days, an elder son received double the amount of a younger son's portion of the inheritance. Disputes over such matters were normally settled by authorised teachers of the Jewish Law. So, the younger son here is asking Jesus to be an arbitrator. He wants his portion.

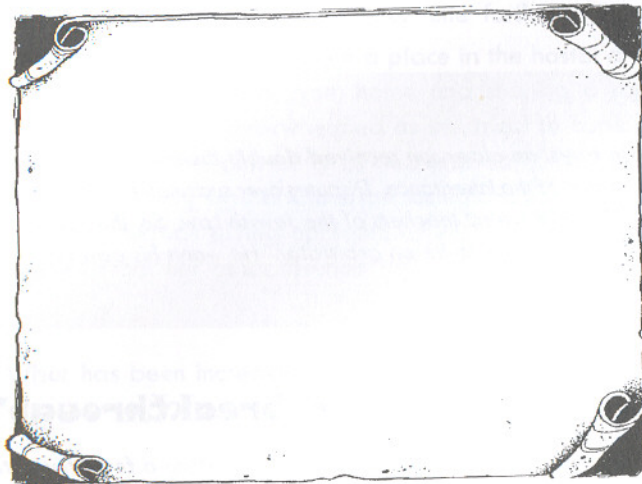
What about you - a breakthrough?

A Malaysian YUPPIE's dream of success is getting a few titles after one's name (Masters or Ph.D. thrown in if possible), 1 wife/husband, 2 kids, a 3 bedroom-house for a start, 4 wheels and a 5-figure salary. Anyone would be crazy to reject this!

- ④ What 'dreams' are you working towards in your life?

- ⑤ Read verses 27-33 of the same chapter because it gives an incentive and a better understanding of being rich in God. As a student, give one example how this can be practical in your life.

- ⑥ Write a prayer to God and express your desires to Him according to what you have learned from today's lesson.



Study Nine

Red & Yellow, Black & White

Luke 10:25-37

Getting Started

Here are different scenarios of loneliness, rejection and prejudices.

A girl from a particular ethnic group (X), shared at the end of a camp, "when I first found out that I was the only "X" coming for the camp, I didn't want to come..."

In a particular campus, the new regulation was to put people of different races as roommates. As a result, many people of a particular ethnic group (including Christians) moved out immediately.

- ① Are you aware of similar issues happening in your campus? Share one.

Come and See

In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus tells a story of people from different backgrounds. He was giving an answer to a self-righteous expert who was trying to test him.

② According to the Law, what are the requirements in order to inherit eternal life (vv.27-28)?

③ What would be some possible reasons for the Priest and the Levite not to help the wounded man?

④ What do you think is the cost the Samaritan would have had to pay in helping the wounded man? Include possible consequences that could have befallen him.

Notes

The Samaritans had much in common racially and in religion with the Jews. But there was animosity between the two. The Samaritans were viewed as half-breeds and so, seen as unclean by the Jews. Most often they were looked down upon.

Priests were Jews who taught the law. Their role was to call on God's people to be holy and to offer the prescribed sacrifices that testified to God's acceptance of the sinner on the basis of shed blood.

Levites were the ones who served in the temple and made sure the worship took place.

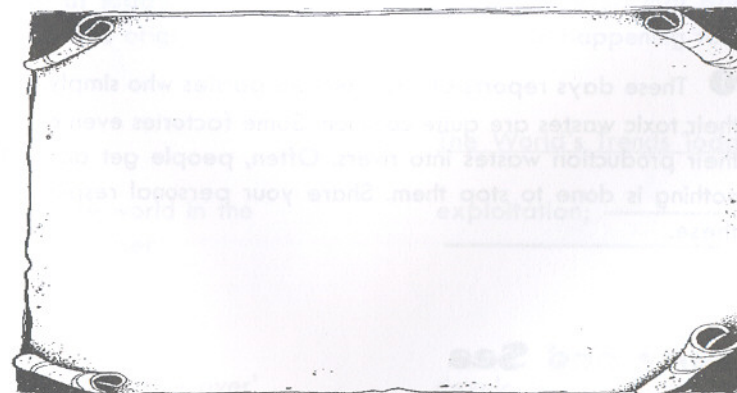
For both Priests and Levites then, they were forbidden by the law to touch anything dead. It was of utmost importance to keep their ceremonial purity.

What about you - a breakthrough?

⑤ For the Samaritan, his neighbour was anyone who came his way and needed his help. Who is your immediate neighbour in your context and what can you do for him/her?

⑥ List the costs involved for you to love this neighbour.

⑦ Commit this person and your concerns for him/her to the Lord. Pray that you can be a good neighbour to him/her.



Study Ten

This Is My Father's World

Gen 1:1-24, 26-28

Getting Started

Malaysia is one of 20 countries with the highest list of animals facing the threat of extinction. We also top the list where endangered plant species are concerned. Our rivers are among some of the most polluted. Hardly any living thing can survive in the chemically polluted waters. The next generation will not get to see many of these animals and plants that we have now. Let's see if the Bible has anything to say about this.

① These days reports of irresponsible parties who simply dump their toxic wastes are quite common. Some factories even channel their production wastes into rivers. Often, people get angry but nothing is done to stop them. Share your personal responses to these.

Come and See

Read Genesis 1:1-24.

② We see God playing the fatherly role in creation. He made everything ready for the existence of man. Having read the day-by-day creational acts of God, what would have been your own response if you were there too?

Now read Genesis 1:26-28.

③ God entrusted man to rule over different categories of livestock (v.26). List each category and for each, what do you think ruling over them would entail?

④ Now, imagine yourself as a manager or a caretaker of the world. What characteristics do you think you ought to have as a guardian over nature?

⑤ God saw all that he had made and declared it as "very good"! Looking at today's trends, we seem to have distorted that goodness. Compare the original intention with what you see happening today.

God

Created the world in the
Fatherly manner

Asked man to 'take over'

In return man gets food
from this 'responsibility'

The World's Trends Today

exploitation; _____

development, industry, more
land _____

money, _____

What about you - a breakthrough?

- 6 Identify specific areas of nature where you can play your part as a steward or a caretaker. How will you do this?
- 7 In order to fulfill our call as managers/caretakers over nature, we need to be different, moving against the trends of the world! It can be costly. Write a prayer to God and express yourself as you try to shine the light of Christ in such surroundings.

