

THE INS AND OUTS OF FOLLOW-UP

Purpose: The purpose of this session is for you to understand the scriptural principles of follow-up and to understand what to do on a follow-up appointment.

Objectives: This session will help you to:

1. Understand the role of follow-up in leading new Christians toward growth and maturity.
2. Understand God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in following up new Christians.
3. Understand the elements of effective follow-up.
4. Visualize the overall process of a follow-up appointment.

The instructor will need copies of the followup material to give to each student.

Instructor may want to share an example of how follow-up helped him/her to grow in Christ, or how they have seen it work in other people's lives - helping them to grow in maturity in Christ.

Key Verse: I Thessalonians 2:7-12

I. Introduction

We began talking about follow-up last week. We've looked at Introducing the 4 Laws, Handling Responses to the circles and the prayer, closing the 4 Laws, and motivating new believers to meet for follow-up. Now let's look at follow-up.

Just as caring for a newborn can be messy, so can follow-up be a messy job. It can be hard, take many hours, but it can still be very fulfilling. There is always something new that takes place in each person that you will follow-up. But God will use you in the person's life.

II. Follow-up is the beginning of a process that has two objectives:

- A. To help new believers grow to full maturity in their relationship with Christ (Philippians 3:10; Colossians 1:28,29; 2:2,3).
- B. To help new believers become "multiplying disciples" (2 Timothy 2:2).

There are three active partners in the follow-up process: God, you and the new believer. For follow-up to be successful each must do their part. What are these parts?

III. God's Part in Follow-up

What do these verses (Philippians 1:6, 2:13; 1 Corinthians 3:6) tell us about God's part in the process of follow-up?

Instructor can ask the students what answers they came up with. After hearing their answers, summarize that God is the prime motivator and developer in follow-up; He causes the growth.

IV. Our Part in Follow-up

Read I Corinthians 3:6 and I Thessalonians 2:1-13.

What did Paul do for the Thessalonians and how did he relate to them? What can we learn from Paul about our part in the follow-up process?

Ask students to share what answers they came up with. After some answers, summarize that Paul gave his life to them as a parent. He taught them what they needed to know. He was there for them when they fell down. He corrected them when they were disobedient.

V. The New Believer's Part in Follow-up

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7; 2:13-14a. What is the new believer's part in follow-up?

Ask students to share answers. Summarize by saying that the new believers need to be willing to follow God through the teaching and lives of older Christians.

VI. The First Follow-up Appointment.

A. Preliminaries

1. Focus on Assurance of Salvation.

Only God brings assurance of salvation. But we can help new believers put their trust in God's Word. As you go through Follow-up #1, make sure that the new Christian has the assurance of Christ's indwelling presence. Ask the questions from the lesson, listen, evaluate and clarify answers until the new Christian understands. Remember, your objective is not just to cover the content of the lesson, but to help the new believer understand biblical principles. If time is running out and you're only half way, stop and continue at the next meeting.

2. The Right Attitude and Approach

- Be enthusiastic
- Be a friend
- Seek to create a desire in the new believer to grow in Christ.

3. Establish Rapport

It is important to establish rapport during the first few minutes of the appointment. Ask how things have gone since you last met. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you sensitivity to the needs of your new friend. As needs are expressed, share your own experiences and answers from God's Word. Tell how God has worked in your life.

B. The Appointment

1. Inquire if they . . .
 - a. Read the Four Spiritual Laws booklet.
 - b. Thanked Christ for coming into their life.
 - c. Read John 1-3 (if you asked him to do so).
 - d. Have any questions.

Instructor can ask the students why we ask these questions. (Answer: Because we assigned them in the previous meeting - see class session called "Motivating New Believers.")

2. Go through Follow-up Lesson #1. Here is a procedure to follow as you go through the questions.
 - a. You or the new Christian read the question.
 - b. Look up the verses in your Bible.
 - c. The new Christian reads the verse.
 - d. You read the question again.
 - e. The new Christian answers the question. Discuss it if necessary.
 - f. You restate the answer correctly.
 - g. The new Christian writes the answer in the lesson.

This should help you easily go through the follow-up lesson. Now, let us look at how to close the first follow-up appointment.

VII. How to Close the Follow-up Appointment.

- A. Be relaxed but attentive to the person's needs.
 1. Be aware of the time. If the person has other obligations, cut the time short.
 2. The new believer may be more open to talk about personal problems and interests now, than before the lesson. Be open and ready. Do not hurry away if the person wants to take more time. Don't schedule something immediately on the heels of a follow-up appointment.
- B. Let the new believer know that you enjoyed your time together.
- C. Communicate your desire to meet again to talk more about God and the Christian life.
- D. Set a specific time and place for the second follow-up appointment.

If you have a number of people who are ready for Follow-up #2, meet with them as a group.

Personal follow-up is a bridge to group follow-up. Without the support of a group of disciples, very few Christians grow to spiritual maturity. It is important to involve new believers with other Christians because usually most of their friends are non-Christians.

- E. Invite him/her to go witnessing with you.

Witnessing is an important tool for discipleship. Take new believers witnessing with you as soon as they are ready. Reassure them that they can come along and observe as you share the gospel.

- F. Close in prayer.

VIII. Action point

- A. Two-by-two practice of the first follow-up appointment. (see Appendix A)

Depending on the time left in class, the instructor can demonstrate doing follow-up. Plan ahead before class to have one of the students help in the simulation. Set the stage by explaining that "...we have already talked for a while establishing rapport. I will now begin the follow-up lesson with the new believer." The Appendix gives guidelines for the follow-up conversation, but don't read off of the notes in the simulation.

After the demonstration, ask the class about any observations they made.

If there is enough time, the students can pair up and practice doing follow-up. Have the "new Christian" write their answers in the follow-up booklet. After a few minutes, have them switch and continue where they left off.

- B. Use the follow-up lesson with those you are currently following up. Also apply the principles you learned from Follow-Up Lesson #1 in your own life.

APPENDIX

Sample follow-up conversation

The following sample conversation should be used as a guideline. Do not feel bound to use it word for word. Communicate the content in a natural way.

You: "(Partner's Name), I am glad we were able to get together again. Have you thought more about our discussion yesterday?"

Partner: "Yes, I have. But I am still trying to understand all that this will mean in my life."

You: "I identify with that. As I mentioned yesterday, when you invited Christ into your life, you began a new relationship. It takes time to get to know God. I had the same thoughts you have. That is why I am excited about getting together with you and explaining some ways you can know God better. I had a friend who did that with me and it really helped. Did you have a chance to read the *Four Spiritual Laws* and thank God for coming into your life?"

Partner: "I briefly reviewed the *Four Spiritual Laws* last night."

You: "Did you read any of the Gospel of John?"

Partner: "I fell asleep before I read it."

You: "I understand. (Partners Name), I want to encourage you to begin reading through the Gospel of John. It gives a clear picture of who Christ is. Do you have any questions about anything we talked about yesterday?"

Partner: "Not right now."

You: "All right. What I want us to do today is go through this lesson, 'Beginning Your New Life With Christ.' Let's go through the questions together."

Read the introductory material regarding the follow-up lesson to your partner, then turn to page one.

You: "(Partner's Name), I will read the question and look up the verse in my Bible. Then we will discuss the answer and write the correct answer in your lesson."

Partner: "Alright."

Read the first two paragraphs on page one.

You: "(Partner's Name), let us look at the first question. Have you received Christ into your life in this way?"

Partner: "Yes."

You: "You can write the answers as we go along."

Have your partner write the answers in the lesson.

You: "If so, where is Jesus Christ right now in relation to you?"

Partner: "In my heart."

You: "On the basis of Revelation 3:20, how do you know that Christ is in your life?"

Partner: "He said He would come in."

You: "That is right."

Again stop to write the answers in the lesson.

You: "Let's continue to go through the questions."

Partner: "OK."

Finish the follow-up booklet in the same manner as the first section. At the end of the material say:

You: "(Partner's Name), I enjoyed going through these questions with you. I hope it was helpful."

Partner: "Yes, it really was."

You: "(Partner's Name), as I mentioned earlier, right after I received Christ, a friend helped me learn how to get to know Christ better. It helped to have someone show me new things about God and to answer my questions. When we meet again, I would like to help you the way my friend helped me. Are you interested in that?"

Partner: "Yes, I am, but what is involved?"

You: "I want to meet with you again next week for about 45 minutes or an hour. We will talk about any questions you have. I have some additional lessons for you that tell more about knowing God. We also have some other activities in which you might like to participate."

Partner: "That sounds fine."

You: "Great, how about meeting here again next Tuesday at 3 p.m.? Is that good for you?"

Partner: "Yes, I'll be here."

You: "Please write down the time and place in your notebook, and I will do the same in my schedule."

Partner: "Good idea."

You: "(Partner's Name), I really enjoy talking with others about my faith in Christ. I would like to invite you to go with me and listen as I explain about Christ as I did with you yesterday. Do you have another free hour next Tuesday or Thursday afternoon?"

Partner: "Yes, I have two free hours after 3 p.m."

You: "Also, some of my friends and I are going to the basketball game Saturday afternoon. Would you like to come?"

Partner: "Yes, I would."

You: "Good. We will come by and get you at your room around 1:30 p.m."

Partner: "Thank you. I will be waiting. See you on Saturday."

Discussion Questions:

1. How has this lesson helped you better understand the role of follow-up in leading new Christians toward growth and maturity?
2. How has this lesson helped you understand God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in following up new Christians?
3. What are the elements of effective follow-up?
4. How do you visualize the overall process of a follow-up appointment?