

Doxa Men's Ministry 2025-2026 Base Camp for the Great Commission



#7 – What Is the Gospel?

April 18, 2026

Testimonies

Table Book Discussion

At your tables, each man share with your brothers two or three insights from the reading (chapters 2, 4, & 6) that you found helpful and why (E.g., How were you convicted? How were you encouraged? Did you see something new or from a new angle? Etc.)

Table Bible Study

Acts 10:34-44 (ESV)¹

³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.

¹ Scripture quotations are from The ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. ESV Text Edition: 2016. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

1. How does Peter prepare his listeners for the gospel (vv. 34-37)?
2. What is Peter's focus as he shares the gospel (vv. 38-43)?
3. What data points does he include?
4. (In the large group) What are some practical applications for us from Peter's example here?

Large Group Book Discussion

Chapter 2: What Is the Gospel?

On page 32, Dever writes, "That which passes for the gospel too often becomes a very thin veneer spread lightly over our culture's values, becoming shaped and formed to its contours rather than to the truth about God. The real story, the real message, becomes lost."² What are some ways you've seen this happen / what are some dangers we should watch out for?

Interestingly, in a chapter titled, "What Is the Gospel?," Dever spends most of his time talking about what the gospel is *not*. How does each of these fall short of the gospel?

1. "The good news is not simply that *we are okay*."

² Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 32.

2. “The good news is not simply that *God is love.*”

3. “The good news is not simply that *Jesus wants to be our friend.*”

4. “The good news is not that *we should live rightly.*”

Gospel Outline

The Gospel Message³

1. God

- a. **God is ___loving_____.**
 God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16b)
- b. **God is ___holy_____ (absolutely pure).**
¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Pet. 1:15-16)
- c. **God is ___just_____ (a good judge).**
¹³And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:13)

2. Us

- a. **We were created ___good_____, but became ___sinful_____.**
²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ³¹And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. (Gen. 1:27, 31a)
²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Rom. 3:23)
- b. **We deserve _____death_____ (physical and spiritual).**
²³For the wages of sin is death, (Rom. 6:23a)
- c. **We are spiritually ___helpless_____ (morally bankrupt).**
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. (Is. 64:6a)

³ Adapted from Mark Mittelberg, Lee Srobel, Bill Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian Participant's Guide: Communicating Your Faith in a Style That Fits You* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 60-63.

3. Christ

- a. Christ is God, who also became man.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1, 14)

- b. Christ died as our substitute.

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Pet. 2:24)

- c. Christ offers his forgiveness as a gift.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph. 2:8-9)

4. You

- a. You and I must respond.

¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (John 1:12)

- b. We must ask Christ to be our Lord and Savior.

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

- c. The result is a spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor 5:17)

Practice

Large Group Book Discussion

Chapter 4: *How Should We Evangelize?*

Dever talked about striking a three-way balance in our evangelism among these three qualities: 1) Honesty, 2) Urgency, and 3) Joy (pp. 55-60).

Honesty: What are some elements of the gospel message we might be tempted to omit for fear of turning people off?

Mark 8:34-37

³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul?"

Acts 2:36

³⁶“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Urgency: What are some reasons we ourselves lack urgency?

Ephesians 5:16

¹⁵Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Colossians 4:5-6

⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Urgency: What are some reasons our friends might not have urgency (also think about the possible responses Dever listed in chapter 6)?

Luke 13:1-5

¹ There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

Joy: How do we maintain and communicate joy in evangelism?

Philippians 4:4:

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Under “Specific Suggestions,” (pp. 60-68) Dever listed 1) Pray. 2) Use the Bible. 3) Be clear. 4) Provoke self-reflection. 5) Use the church. What did you find helpful?

Closing Instructions and Hymn

O Church Arise

Keith Getty, Stuart Townend
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O church arise and put your armour on
Hear the call of Christ our Captain
For now the weak can say that they are strong
In the strength that God has given
With shield of faith and belt of truth
We'll stand against the devil's lies
An army bold whose battle cry is Love
Reaching out to those in darkness

Our call to war to love the captive soul
But to rage against the captor
And with the sword that makes the wounded
whole
We will fight with faith and valour
When faced with trials on every side
We know the outcome is secure

And Christ will have the prize for which He died
An inheritance of nations

Come see the cross where love and mercy meet
As the Son of God is stricken
Then see His foes lie crushed beneath His feet
For the Conqueror has risen
And as the stone is rolled away
And Christ emerges from the grave
This victory march continues till the day
Every eye and heart shall see Him

So Spirit come put strength in every stride
Give grace for every hurdle
That we may run with faith to win the prize
Of a servant good and faithful
As saints of old still line the way
Retelling triumphs of His grace
We hear their calls and hunger for the day
When with Christ we stand in glory

Sharing and Prayer

1. Each man shares how we can pray for him in the area of evangelism and pray for each other.

Guidelines for Writing a Personal Testimony⁴

BC – Before Christ

1. Where were you spiritually before receiving Christ, and how did that affect you—your feelings, attitudes, actions, and relationships?

*If you became a Christian as a child you can start with question 2.

2. What caused you to begin considering God/Christ as a solution to your needs?

Conversion

3. What realization did you come to that finally motivated you to receive Christ?

4. Specifically, *how* did you receive Christ?

*Keep it simple, clear, and repeatable. Give specific details, i.e., don't make it some mystical experience. We want people to believe that they could do this if they choose.

⁴ Adapted from Mark Mittelberg, Lee Strobel, and Bill Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian Participant's Guide: Communicating Your Faith in a Style That Fits You* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 51-52.

