



## OUTREACH: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk with him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.  
Colossians 2:6-7 (ESV)*

We realize that you, as parents, are the primary faith influencers in a young person's life. The best disciple-making takes place when students' parents take the lead. That's why we've created this helpful guide for you to use at home with your child. It is designed to give you some basic information about what is being taught at church through *The Core: A Deep Discipleship* program, along with some helpful tools, suggestions, and questions to help you reinforce this learning at home.

### Overview of the Outreach Root:

Before he returned to his Father in heaven, Jesus gave his followers one last command: to spread the good news of his death and resurrection—the gospel—to the whole world. That's a daunting task. But if we truly understand the joy we have as followers of Jesus, we'll realize that sharing this joy is the greatest act of love we can show another person. When we become members of Christ's body of believers, the story doesn't end. That's just the beginning! Now we get to join in a remarkable mission to care for the least, to love other people, and to share Jesus as Lord wherever we go.

### Main Topics Covered:

- 1) *Outreach Intro Lesson: This lesson introduces and sets the stage for the Outreach Root. It's designed to give students a framework for the next few lessons on what it means to be spiritually lost, how Jesus was burdened for the lost, and what our role is in reaching the lost.*
- 2) *Lost and Found: What does it mean to be spiritually lost? The stories and main ideas of this lesson emphasize that being found is about an intimate relationship with Jesus, the joy that Jesus took in welcoming the lost, and the typical mindset that many teens have about God. Bible Passage: Luke 7:36–50*
- 3) *Burden for the Lost: Why share about Jesus? This lesson shares the idea that Jesus thinks finding the one lost sheep is worth a whole lot of effort. It also dives into the idea that sharing Jesus should be about helping people understand why it's worth it to passionately pursue Jesus. Bible Passage: Luke 15:1–10*
- 4) *Spread the Word: How do I share Jesus with others? Students know that the world has plenty of lost people, and we know that we should do something about this. But how do they help move people from lost to found? Learning about how God can use us to spread the gospel is at the core of this lesson. Bible Passage: Acts 3:1–4:4*

- 5) *Purpose vs. Preference: How do I start wanting what God wants?* Part of becoming a rooted disciple of Jesus is making your desires for the world align with his desires for the world. And the truth is, this may require a pretty big overhaul of your current way of doing life. Students will wrestle with these concepts and think about what changes they need to make in their lives to choose purpose over preference. Bible Passage: Luke 19:1–10

**Questions you can ask your child:**

- 1) What is Moralistic Therapeutic Deism? Do you know anyone who believes this? What are the challenges to sharing your faith with someone who believes that way?

*Note: The term Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD) comes from Christian Smith's book Soul Searching. MTD consists of beliefs like these: 1) "A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth." 2) "God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions." 3) "The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself." 4) "God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem." 5) "Good people go to heaven when they die." Research shows that MTD is very prevalent amongst seemingly "Christian" youth in America today.*

- 2) Have you ever shared your faith with someone? How did it go? Would you do it again?
- 3) It is so tempting to try to take the easy way out. We often do things that are comfortable. But we know that God has a purpose for us, a mission, and that we need to put aside what we prefer to follow God's purposes. What are some tangible ways you can do that in your life today?

**Activities you can do together:**

1) Help your child share their faith. Let them identify a handful of friends who aren't believers. Create a plan to pray together for these young people. Support your child as they make relationships with these students. Also pray together for opportunities for your child to share their faith with them. Help your child write out their testimony and a short message to share their faith. Help them find safe places to practice sharing this testimony and message. Look for opportunities at your church to be involved in evangelistic and outreach events. Doing all these things will help empower and encourage your child to be bold in sharing Jesus with those around them. Of course, the most powerful way to educate them and inspire them is to share your faith with others and model this lifestyle for them.

2) If you live in the Midwest or if you ever get the opportunity to travel to the Chicago-land area, it is worth making a trip to Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, to visit the Billy Graham Center Museum. The museum allows visitors to see and experience Christian evangelism movements in America. It is an educational and inspirational place. You can learn more about it here:

<http://www.wheaton.edu/bgcmuseum/About-the-Museum>.

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