

## **JUST WALK ACROSS THE ROOM, WEEK 4**

### **ICEBREAKER**

How can spiritual rituals similar to the one Bill Hybels described reestablish a person's desire to submit to God's agenda for their day?

### **VIDEO OBSERVATIONS**

#### **GROUP STRIDES, PART A**

1. Have you ever thought that being a Christian necessarily meant that you had to become a "lifestyle referee" to the world around you? How did it strike you when Bill said Christ-followers are under *no* obligation to play such a role?
2. What do you think of the "Matthew Party" concept - an event where you invite a few Christ-followers, several seekers, and several people who want nothing to do with God - as presented in this session's video?
3. Whether or not you've ever been involved in a Matthew Party, what fears and concerns would you have about hosting one now?

#### **VIDEO SUMMARY:**

By definition, Christ-followers who choose to become walk-across-the-room people live all of life with the Grander Vision in mind - working, shopping, recreating, and partying with God's people-priority constantly on their radar. Even if their friends and family members don't seem initially receptive to spiritual dialog, they pray believing that one day, perhaps because of their faithfulness to "take a walk", everyone they know and love will be compelled to submit their lives to Christ.

#### **GROUP STRIDES, PART B**

Thinking back on the importance of God's power in evangelistic situations, if the Holy Spirit is the highway that leads to this super-natural power, then the onramp is *prayer*: constant, fervent prayer. The impact of prayer throughout the Bible is undeniable: healing occurred, barren women bore children, wars were won, wisdom was increased, forgiveness extended, strength was offered, God's judgment was stayed, and so on. When have you experienced proof of the power of prayer most significantly in your own life?

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

Thank God for the reality of the "mind-blowing thing called grace" that all Christ-followers enjoy. Ask him to prompt you toward prayer every morning - prayers for open doors of opportunity - so that you can play a role in giving someone a marvelous before-and-after story.

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### INDIVIDUAL STRIDES

In Chapter 10 of *Just Walk Across the Room*, Bill Hybels reminds you that "Matthew Parties don't have to be formal, expensive, elaborate, or perfectly orchestrated. They just have to *happen*". At some point consider hosting a Matthew Party. Take a few minutes to determine what type of gathering makes the most sense, given your personality and your situation.

1. Matthew Parties can range from a pool party or outdoor barbecue to a group of people hanging out at a local coffee shop. List all of the possible Matthew Party formats you could envision hosting. Allow the following ideas to get you started:

- Pool party
  - Outdoor barbecue
  - Holiday get-together
  - Sports tournament (golf, basketball, bowling, etc)
  - Picnic at a local park
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  - \_\_\_\_\_
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On pages 197-198 of *Just Walk Across the Room*, Bill Hybels suggests three categories of guests to consider for your Matthew Party. Here's how he describes them:

"I had invited about twenty people who were living extremely far from God, by their own admission. These men and women had never been to Willow before, had never been to my house before, and spiritually speaking would profess to be 'going it alone.'

"To that group, I added about twenty people who were in the Seeker Slow Lane - the remedial class of Christianity, you might say. On the rare occasion when I would badger them mercilessly, they'd agree to come to Willow. But it was sporadic attendance at best, usually involving a fair amount of kicking and screaming on their part. Most of them has been to my house previously to attend other parties, and all of them knew I was 'working' on them, nudging them along the (very) slow path to God. Maybe they would step across the line of faith someday, but in my estimation, it was going to take some time. A *lot* of time.

"In addition to the twenty of so people who were very far from God, and the twenty or so people who were in-progress types, I had sprinkled in a dozen or so very strong Christ-followers from Willow to mix it up a bit. The screening process for this group in particular had been intense! I knew I couldn't afford any overzealous types showing up. No truth vigilantes. No bounty hunters. Just normal, mature, relationally intelligent, open-hearted, radically inclusive people who understood how high the stakes were that night - after all, I was going to put them in a room with friends of mine who, apart from a bona fide miracle, would spend eternity apart from God."

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2. Jot down a few names in each group as you continue thinking through your upcoming gathering.

Those living extremely far from God:

Those in the "Seeker Slow Lane":

Devoted Christ-followers:

3. What do you want to see God do as a result of your Matthew Party? In the space below, capture your thoughts about your specific "goal" for this event.

There is no better way to close out this four-week experience than to commit anew to communicating with God through prayer. Write out your personal requests of God after reading each of the categories listed. Then, be prepared to see God move in miraculous ways as you devote yourself to the work of evangelism!

***"First, God, that my worldview would align with yours..."***

Ask God to reveal to you what you really believe about issues of ultimate reality. Be reminded that his kingdom agenda desires for *all* people to come to faith in him and live with him forever. AS you pray, ask for his heart which beats for people to become your heartbeat as well.

***"Next, that I would truly believe in the power of the gospel..."***

Pray that he would renew your hope in the power of the gospel. Do you really and truly believe that God's message - his plan of salvation - can change people's forever?

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***"That you would open doors for me today..."***

Echo the apostle Paul's words from Colossians 4:3-4: "And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should."

***"That I would allow the Spirit to direct everything I do and say..."***

Be reminded that words carry meaning. Big meaning! Ask God to rein in your tongue. Ask him to remind you of the power you carry with your words. Ask him for more, more, more wisdom in this regard. As you lean into the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, pray that you will think, speak, and move in accordance with his design for each and every interaction you have.

***"That you would silence the voices of doubt..."***

Pray that God would silence the voices of doubt that seek to dishearten, dismantle, and destroy. Ask him to remind you that your evangelistic efforts are not a self-image booster. Pray that he would keep your intentions focused on *other* people, not seeking to fulfill something in you, but rather to fulfill the greatest something in them- their need for God. Let the words of 1 Corinthians 15:58 minister to you as you pray: "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain".

***"That I would persevere until the end..."***

Pray that you would be willing to pay the price of time and energy, remembering the price Christ paid for you; and that the peace of Philippians 4:7 - peace that goes beyond human understanding - would flood your spirit. Pray that you would be open to being used in new and different ways to lead people to faith in him; and that other Christ-followers would play the role they are supposed to play in people's lives. Pray that hearts would melt, people would be changed, and heaven-bound eternities would be secured.

***"Finally, that I would devote myself to being a walk-across-the-room person!"***

Miraculous outcomes await Christ-followers who are prepared to be used by God in changing people's forever's. Tell God that you are ready to be an instrument for good. Ask him how he desires to magnetize people to his message of grace, using you as a mouthpiece. And pray that eternities would dramatically shift as a result of your simple steps pointing people toward faith.