



Introduction to Bridges Leadership Training

Cru was founded in 1951 by Bill and Vonette Bright as a way of reaching every college student with the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ. Their heart was to, “Reach the campus today, reach the world tomorrow.” By reaching future leaders during their college years they could make a global impact after they graduated. By 1983 they saw that the world was coming here. A branch of Cru called Bridges International was started to reach international students. Bridges International is a caring community of Christ-followers committed to serve, promote social connections and engage in spiritual conversations with international students so that students become leaders internationally.

This course is designed to be an 8 week training for leaders. Each week has a **training** that you will read through together, **discussion questions** to relate this to your specific campus and a **step of faith** that you will take together as a team. The goal is that by the end of the eight weeks, you will be equipped to lead a movement on your campus that will reach students from China, India and the Middle East.

These eight lessons can be printed out and read through together or you can simply open the link to the article online and read it through together on your mobile devices. Some links are password protected and your Bridges International coach will provide the password.

Week 1

Why International Students

Week 2

Connecting with New Students

Week 3

Winning Students to Christ

Week 4

Building Students in their Faith

Week 5

Reaching Chinese Students

Week 6

Reaching South Asian Students

Week 7

Reaching Muslim Students

Week 8

Sending Students to the World

Additional Resources

If you would like additional resources or to connect with a Bridges International staff member, go to:

BridgesInternational.com



1 Why International Students

Leaders of nations and leaders in business from around the globe come to the United States to study. Tomorrow's leaders have gathered at the top universities in America, but who is influencing them? Our hope is that we can introduce them to Jesus and send them back to their home countries as ambassadors for Christ. Before we discuss international students take a moment to watch the video, "The Nations. Here. Now" that shares why reaching international students is so important: <https://youtu.be/Hf53NoiTsgw>

When They Come Here

International students are an exceptionally strategic mission field. Of the 110 million college students in the world, over one million of the brightest and best are now international students and scholars in the USA. These students are:

Brilliant – among their nations' most outstanding students

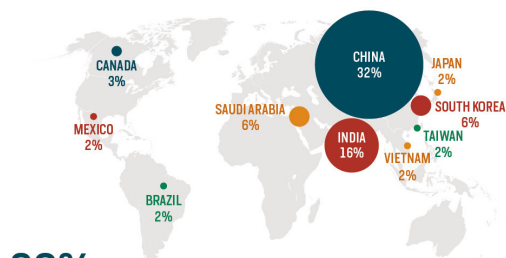
Pivotal – many come from hard-to-reach countries or cultures

Concentrated – a single U.S. campus may host such future leaders from 100+ nations

Lonely – many are far away from families for the first time

Open – away from cultural controls, they can more freely consider the gospel

TOP TEN PLACES OF ORIGIN OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



60% of international students come from China, India, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea.

One such student was a young man named Xi (pronounced "shee"). Xi was an international student on an agricultural research trip from his home in China. While in America he stayed at the home of Eleanor and Thomas Dvorchak in rural Iowa. The couple went out of their way to be kind to the young international student and let him stay in their son's room while he was away at college. Who would Xi go on to become?

Mr. Xi returned to Iowa twenty seven years later to say thank you to the couple, just before he became president of the largest country in the world. When the New York Times interviewed her, Ms. Dvorchak said, "No one in their right mind would ever think that that guy who stayed in my house would become the President."



Xi Jinping, the President of China, is one of thousands of world leaders that have studied in the United States

When They Return Home

Not only are international students a strategic mission field, they are a strategic mission force when they return to their home countries. After studying in America, many will become top leaders in business, government and education in their home countries. These students are:

Culturally Attuned – they are experts on the language and culture of their homelands

Well-Connected – their relationships and influence allow them to shape culture

Well-Respected – their degrees from the United States give them deepened credibility back home

Well-Prepared – they are equipped in Bible teaching and ministry skills in the United States to maximize their impact for Christ back home

If we can reach these students with the gospel while they are here in America, we can send them back to their home countries as ambassadors for Christ. What does the Bible

Launching a Movement on Your Campus

In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus defines the mission of the church in the Great Commission to his disciples. These are Jesus' last words to His disciples and He wanted to make sure they clearly understood what their mission would be.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

In these verses, not only does Jesus tell us that launching movements of students from “all nations” is what we are supposed to be doing, but He tells us how.

Jesus instructions can be summarized in three words: win, build and send. We are to fulfill the Great Commission by **winning** people to faith in Jesus Christ, **building** them in their faith and **sending** them to win, build and send others. While each Bridges International movement is unique, these three elements form the DNA of every healthy movement of students on campus.

Winning Students to Christ

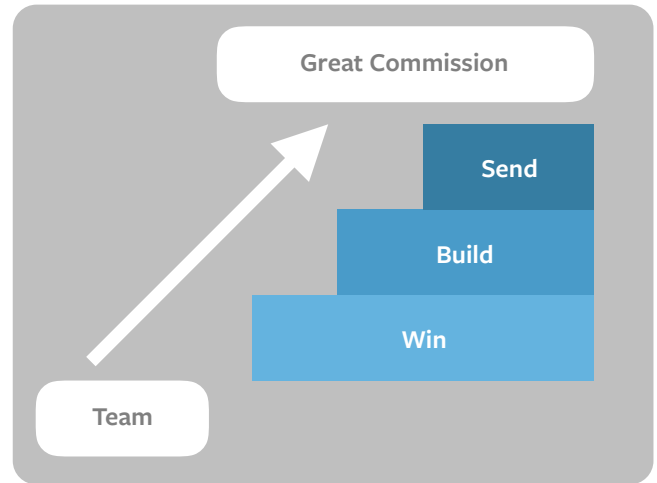
Built right into the DNA of a Bridges International movement is winning students to Christ. Why not just become a collection of people who are already Christians? In short, because that is not what Jesus called us to do. We are supposed to be reaching out to the whole campus, believers and non-believers.

Jesus tells us to make disciples by “baptizing them in the name of the father, son and holy spirit.” In other words, new Christians are supposed to be regularly joining our communities. In Luke 19:10 Jesus says, “For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.” Likewise, our ministry is not primarily one of gathering Christians, but introducing the lost to Christ. As we find believers, we invite them to join with us in becoming a movement of students that can reach every international student on campus with the gospel.

Building Students in Their Faith

After Jesus tells his disciples to share the gospel he calls them to “teach them to obey all that I have commanded you.” The second step in discipleship is to help new believers grow.

Walking with God on the college campus is challenging, for international students that have perhaps never been exposed to Jesus' teachings it is even more challenging. We have the opportunity to grow together in community.



Sending Students to the World

The third thing that we can learn from the Great Commission is that we are called to send students out to reach others also. Jesus did not only call his disciples to grow, he called them to go. Likewise we have received that commission and we pass it along to the international students that we work with. Whether you were born in America or in another country, Our ultimate goal is not just to reach international students, but to send them out to reach others. This means that each student you meet is a potential ambassador to reach your campus with Christ and even to take it back to their home country when they graduate. Our goal is not just to reach the campus today, but to reach the world tomorrow.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are international students a strategic group to reach out to?
2. How could you see God use international students back in their home countries after they graduate?
3. Do you know any international students on your campus? Where are they from? What are they studying?
4. Of the three (win, build, send) which is the most natural for you? Which requires the biggest step of faith?

While believers have been making disciples for 2,000 years, launching movements in the specific context of international students is unique. Below is a plan for launching a Bridges International movement on your campus.

Week 1 – Plan

The first step in launching a movement to reach international students on campus is to gather a Leadership Team of 3-5 student leaders and volunteers. As a team, commit a few weeks to meeting to pray, plan and prepare for reaching the campus. This is essential in launching a movement on campus.

James 4:2 says, “You do not have, because you do not ask.” We often think first of what we can do and only turn to what God can do as a last resort. Dream together about what you would like to see God do and then write it down. You will be amazed at how God answers specific prayer. If we are trusting God for a movement of international students on campus we must start with God’s power through prayer.



Bridges volunteers and student-leaders planning together

Make a plan for how you will reach international students on your campus. Start by decoding the campus. To decode is to find or understand the true or hidden meaning of something. Find out how many international students are on campus and where they are. Over the coming weeks, make a plan for how you will connect with international students, how you will share the gospel with them and how you will help them grow. Not only will this guide your prayers, but it will show you what you need to prepare for the coming weeks.

Week 2 – Launch

Now that you have prayed, planned and prepared with your leadership team, you are ready to launch! Choose a strategic time of the year for launch week, perhaps the first week of the semester or the first week back from an extended weekend break. As a leadership team, spend one week connecting with international students on campus using surveys or mobile mapping to meet new students (we will talk

more about this next week). As you meet students, tell each student you are starting a new group on campus for international students and ask if they might be interested. If they say, ‘yes’ take their contact information and text/email them about future events. If they say, ‘no’ thank them for their time and hand them a flyer about the special event you have planned at the end of the week.

Plan a special event at the end of the week to gather international students on campus. This can be a BBQ, a trip to a local tourist attraction or a famous speaker. The goal is to find some fun way for the leadership team to get to know the students and them to get to know each other. At the special event tell the students about the weekly dinner starting the next week.

Week 3 – Begin a Weekly Meeting

The following week, start a weekly meeting where international students can spend time together and have discussions about spiritual topics. Invite all of the students who came to the special event and any other international students you have met on campus. Hopefully you will have a mix of believers and non-believers in this discussion. The goal is to have an informal discussion where you can explore spiritual topics together. Make sure and get students contact information at the meeting so you can follow-up with them the next week.

At a separate time, meet together with just the leadership team to pray, plan and prepare. At the leadership team meeting, also list each student that has come to the small group discussion by name and pray for them.

Week 4 – Follow-Up

Text each of the students that you have met and ask them to get together to share more about your student group, Bridges International. As you get together for lunch or for coffee take the opportunity to hear their story and to share your testimony. During the course of follow-up with students, if you find multiple students interested in learning about the Bible, you can start a community group that will study the Bible together. This is not only for believers, but for interested seekers as well.

Best Practices

Here are some best practices from others who have launched Bridges movements on their campuses:

- **Share life with your leadership team**, hang out, invite them to your home for dinner, go to church together. Not only will this bring you closer as a team, it will model the kind of life-on-life discipleship you hope they will share with the people in their small groups.
- **Build a relationship with the students** who come to your group. People will come back not because they saw a poster, but because they made a friend.
- **Use social media** like Facebook, Instagram and WeChat to build momentum for the group and serve as a reminder to those involved. Post before every event so students have a reminder to come.
- **Share what you are doing with people in your church** or other ministry partners so they can be praying for you. They might love to be asked to be a part of your group on social media, so they know how to pray!
- **Expose your students to other believers** in your area, consider joining a retreat or meeting up with another Bridges group in the area, so they can catch the vision.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you have a leadership team on your campus? Do you need to spend time praying, planning or preparing?
2. How could you meet international students on your campus?
3. What would be special event that you could plan to invite students to?
4. Where could you hold a weekly meeting? Do you know any places close to campus (ie. friend's house, church, room at the university you could reserve)?
5. How would you text a student to follow-up with them? What would you want to talk about during your time together?
6. Are there any of the best practices you would like to use on your campus?

Step of Faith

As a step of faith this week would you ask your university about becoming a student group on your campus? Attached you will see a sample constitution you can use. While you start the process make a list of all the international students you know on campus and begin praying for them. As a team, make a list of all the international students you know right now and set an alarm on your phone for the same time each day to pray for students on your campus. Come back next week and share how the Lord has been at work.

The Constitution of Bridges International
at _____

ARTICLE I—NAME

The name of this student group is Bridges International.

This student group is a student chapter (hereafter Chapter) recognized by Bridges International, a nonprofit corporation with its principal offices in Austin, TX.

This student group has applied for and been granted Chartered status as a Chapter of Bridges International. As long as the student group fulfills the mission set forth in the Charter, and otherwise remains in compliance with its obligations under the Charter, the student group has the right to use the name and materials of Bridges International that are designated for the use of Chapters within the Campus Ministry. The student group has agreed that it will carry out the mission and present the messages of Bridges International.

ARTICLE II—PURPOSE

The purpose of the Chapter, as articulated in the Charter, is to build movements of people who are transformed by Jesus Christ. The student-led movement seeks to introduce students to Jesus Christ, help them to grow in their faith, encourage them to live life passionately under the lordship of Christ, and inspire commitment to advancing the purposes of God in the world.

ARTICLE III—STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith is the doctrinal foundation of this organization.

The Statement of Faith for this organization can be found at <http://www.cru.org/about-us/statement-of-faith/index.htm>.

ARTICLE IV—MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Membership shall be open to all duly enrolled _____ [name of university] students. Membership and activities are open to all currently enrolled students.

Active membership shall consist of those members who regularly attend large group meetings, have been a member of a small group Bible study for the previous semester/quarter, and have attended a Bridges International retreat or conference.

This Chapter may have associated members who are non-students, such as faculty and staff, community members, alumni and Bridges International staff members. Associated members shall have all membership privileges except the right to vote or hold office.

Section 2.

A member may lose the privileges of membership, including the right to attend meetings and events sponsored by Bridges International, under the following circumstances:

1. If the individual is causing disruption to the group or is engaged in disorderly conduct or threats.
2. If the individual poses a danger to other students.
3. If the individual's conduct rises to the level of harassment of another member of the group.

Under such circumstances, two or more members of the Leadership Team will meet with the individual, share the concerns, and ask him or her to leave the group. The accused member may then request a hearing before the full Leadership Team. The President will then call a special leadership meeting. They will hear from the accused member as well as other witnesses, confer, and make a decision regarding the accused member's membership rights.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS AND LEADERSHIP

Section 1: Officers

The officers of this organization will serve as liaisons with the University. The officers of this organization shall be the following:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Other officers deemed necessary

Term of office: An officer shall serve for one school term from the start of his/her term of office or until his/her successor is selected. The officers will be responsible for organizing and providing leadership for all meetings, activities and events of the Chapter, including religious activities related to worship, prayer, Scripture study, evangelism, and discipleship—or any other activity intended to further the purposes and to communicate the messages of the Chapter.

Additional Leaders: The current Leadership Team, in consultation with Bridges International staff, shall select additional leaders that are able to serve the Chapter as needed for a school term.

Leadership Team: the Leadership Team shall consist of the officers and additional selected leaders that provide direction for various aspects of the Chapter's purpose.

Section 2: Qualifications

In order to be eligible for office, members must demonstrate that they are qualified to serve as representatives of the Chapter and the organization of Bridges International.

- A. **Attendance requirement:** Officers must have been involved for at least one school term, having attended 75% of weekly large group and/or small group meetings (unless they were not in residence because they participated in an off campus study abroad program, an internship, or were involved in a Bridges International Chapter on a different campus).
- B. **Knowledge requirement:** Officers must complete the Chapter's leadership application, which shall determine the applicant's skill in providing spiritual leadership for the Chapter and knowledge of the Chapter's core messages.
- C. **Alignment requirement:** Officers must commit to lead the Chapter in a way which is consistent with the mission and faithful to the messages of Bridges International, and will not undermine Bridges International's mission and message. Officers will also commit to guide the Bridges International Chapter to serve the University community, seeking to care for those in need.
- D. **Additional Eligibility Requirements:** Officers must meet the school's eligibility requirements for leaders of registered student organizations as listed below: _____ (use language from university student activities policies).

Section 3: Selection Process

- A. Officers of this Chapter will be chosen either through election by active membership or selection by the previous term's Leadership Team. See Article VI. Additional leaders will be selected from the active membership. They will be chosen based on their ability to meet the same qualifications as the officers, and their willingness to serve.
- B. Applicants who meet the qualifications outlined above shall be eligible to stand for election for a leadership position.
- C. During any election or selection process, applicants will be asked about their faith, beliefs and views. Qualified applicants may be asked about their willingness to model the Chapter's core messages through their behavior so that the messages are communicated with integrity.
- D. The staff members of Bridges International serve an advisory role in the selection process, working with the current Leadership Team to consider and evaluate potential new leaders. The Leadership Team will then select individuals, inviting them to take the new leadership roles.

Section 4: Removal of Leaders

Leaders may be removed from their positions by a majority of the Leadership Team. Any member of the Chapter may make a complaint against any leader in the Chapter, including a member of the Leadership Team. Following the complaint, the Leadership Team (or members of the Leadership Team) shall meet to confer with the Chapter's Bridges International staff for advice and counsel. They will also meet with both the complaining individual and the accused leader. No leader may be removed without first receiving a full and fair hearing from the Leadership Team. A leader complained against may only be removed by at least a simple majority of the remaining members of the Leadership Team.

Any misrepresentation on the leadership application or a change in the leader's commitment to lead the Chapter to fulfill its purpose as stated in Art. II, shall be grounds for the immediate review of the leader's position by the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTIONS

Section 1.

Types of Elections: Elections, if held, will occur at the end of each term to select the following term's officers. Special elections may be held whenever called by a majority of the Leadership Team.

Section 2.

Nomination of Candidates: When an election is scheduled, any active member may nominate a candidate for office during the meeting or meetings prior to the vote. Any member may raise a question or concern to the Leadership Team regarding a present or proposed leader. The candidate must meet the qualifications for office listed in Article V, section 2, in order to be placed on the ballot (or selected for any leadership position in a given term).

Section 3.

Form of Vote: Active members shall vote under this article by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VII—MEETINGS

Section 1.

Types of meetings:

- A. Membership Meetings: Formal meetings of the active membership to conduct a vote.
- B. Large and Small Group Meetings: Regularly scheduled meetings for all members to attend.
- C. Additional Meetings: Gatherings, in addition to regularly scheduled meetings, which are open to all members.

Section 2.

Quorum for Membership meetings: In order to conduct a vote of the active members, at least half of the active membership must be present at the meeting.

Section 3.

Meetings shall be held to further the purposes of the Chapter. The officers, in consultation with Bridges International staff, shall determine the frequency, time and place, and agenda of the various meetings.

Large group meetings typically occur weekly during the school year, breaking when instruction ends and during school vacation periods. Small group meetings (Bible Studies, Discussion Groups) also meet weekly within the same parameters. Other meetings necessary to advance the purposes of the Chapter will be held as occasion warrants.

ARTICLE VIII—FINANCES

The Chapter may raise revenues through contributions, fundraising activities or by applying for school funds available to student groups. Paying dues is not a mandatory requirement to be considered a member of this organization. Students, however, may be charged for such services as special social gatherings, retreats and conferences.

The Chapter will hold to high standards of financial integrity. A member or several members of the leadership team will be responsible to carefully administer any school funds granted to the Chapter.

ARTICLE IX—ADVISORS

The advisor for this organization shall be decided upon by the officers of the organization. The advisor must be a faculty or staff member at _____ [name of university].

ARTICLE X—CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

The Leadership Team may seek to amend this constitution by general consensus.

Section 2.

Articles II and III may not be amended without express written permission of Bridges International.

Section 3.

All amendments, additions or deletions must be filed with the office of _____ [Name of school office] within _____ [see school rules] weeks of adoption, and will become valid at the time of filing.

Created: [date]

Amended: [date]



2 Connecting with International Students

The book of Acts gives us a glimpse into the lives of the early followers of Jesus. It begins with Jesus' words, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8) The book then shows us how the gospel changes people's lives and the message spreads throughout cities and towns of the whole region.

As the gospel spreads from one place to another we find the apostles asking the same question that we are asking, 'How do we meet new people?'

One of these times is when Paul goes to an area called Macedonia:

"We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together."

– Acts 16:12-13

Paul and his fellow travelers showed up in this new city and spent time observing what was the best place to meet people. In this case, going to the riverside to a place of prayer was the best place to meet people. On another occasion, they went to a very different kind of city.

"And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new."

– Acts 17:19-21

Here, Paul finds himself in the middle of an amphitheater called the Areopagus, where people would talk about different ideas each day. Whether the early believers were in a church, by a river or in an amphitheater they were always looking for the cultural crossroads where they could engage with people in discussions about Jesus.

Where are the cultural crossroads on your campus? Perhaps there is an area of your campus where student groups often hang out or a student center on campus. Just like the early believers, your role is to find that place and engage in conversations with international students. But how can you start a conversation with someone you don't know?

Surveys

The simplest and most straightforward way of meeting new students on campus is to use surveys. Surveys are an engaging way of meeting new students and finding out about the spiritual needs on your campus.

You and a friend print off a couple of surveys (attached at the end of this article) and walk around campus asking students, "Could you help us out with a quick survey? It will take about two minutes." You can then use the five question survey to learn about their life, their hopes and their spiritual

background. At the end of the survey you can let them know about Bridges International on campus and offer to get their email and phone number to let them know about future events on your campus. If they would like to hear more, you can always offer to meet up at another time to tell them more about your group.

Mobile Mapping

A fun method that many Bridges leaders have used to engage with new students is mobile mapping. Mobile mapping is simply going on campus with a small map and asking students, “Would you let us know where you are from?” It is a straightforward way of starting a conversation with students and it tends to draw international students.

Picture this, it is noon on the first day of class and thousands of students are walking from their classroom buildings towards the student union to grab lunch. As they are walking through the courtyard you are standing there with a map asking them where they are from. A student from China stops by, takes a small sticker and places it on Shanghai. You tell them that you have a friend from Shanghai and you start a conversation. As you are talking you tell them about the Bridges group starting on campus, they say they would like to come to the weekly dinner and ask if they can sign up for more information. You point them to the table you have setup, where another Bridges leader helps them put their email and phone number on the spreadsheet they have open on their laptop. They give them a flyer and tell them they look forward to seeing them Friday night. At the same time, a student from India walks over to the map and asks if they can put a sticker on Mumbai.



A group of Bridges leaders mobile mapping

The only thing you need to get started is a map and frame you can buy for a few dollars at Target or WalMart and a pack of round stickers from the office supply department. If you have the ability to setup a table and have a laptop for signup that is great. If not, you can simply pull out your phone and take their contact information.

Weekly Dinner

The other way of regularly connecting with international students is the weekly dinner. Weekly dinners provide a comfortable atmosphere for getting to know students and starting spiritual conversations. The idea is that anyone can come to the dinner, regardless of their level of spiritual interest. It is the open door for them to get connected to the Bridges International group and eventually to hear the gospel. For students from other countries, it can take time to build trust and this is a great atmosphere to do so.



Bridges students sharing a meal in San Francisco

The Weekly Dinner starts with finding a place near campus where you can invite students to have dinner at the same place and same time every week. Perhaps a friend’s house next to campus, a local church or a room you can reserve at the university. The consistency of the same time and location is important, because if it feels like it changes each week it is hard for students to put it in their schedule.

Have the leadership team arrive an hour early to help setup. Bring enough food for about 30 people (or however many you think will come, plus a little extra for new people). You can ask a local volunteer to prepare food or ask a church to pay for the food so you can pick it up at an international restaurant nearby. International students love to introduce their culture, so make sure and include food from different parts of the world. Maybe one week you could order Chinese food, the next Indian food and the next food from the Middle East. Pray together as a leadership team and be ready to welcome students 15 minutes before the event begins.

As students arrive, give them a name tag and have them sign-in at a laptop so you can let them know about future events. After a few minutes, have a leader stand up, welcome everyone and explain what Bridges is. After this, take 45 minutes to eat together. Have the Bridges leaders sit at different tables so you can all get to know different students. Try to include everyone in conversation so no one feels excluded.

After dinner play a brief ice-breaker game. Use a game that will get people interacting with each other, so that everyone feels like they made a friend. “Minute to Win it” games are an example of something fun, simple to play and easy to prepare.

After a short game, students can break into discussion groups. Offer one discussion group that is about an interesting spiritual topic such as family, holidays or dating relationships. You can find a list of great discussion guides at: InternationalConversationCafe.com The goal of these discussions is that they move students towards spiritual realities without being explicitly Bible focused. For students from other countries that have never heard about the Bible it might be very difficult to jump right into a Bible study and a group like this might be a natural first step.



Leading a Bridges discussion group in Philadelphia

At the same time as the discussion group (perhaps on the other side of the room) you can have a Bible Discovery Group (we will talk about them in two weeks during the Bridges Leadership Training: Building Students in their Faith). It is a simple tool to simply read through a chapter of the Bible and ask a few questions that will let them participate in a discussion without having to know a lot about the Bible.

After 45 minutes in their groups, have a Bridges leader stand up to give closing announcements. Thank everyone for participating, tell everyone about any events you are planning, offer to meet with students if they would like to discuss any of these topics further and ask them to bring their friends and come back next time.

Some weeks will have more students than you expect and some will have less. Don't be discouraged but remember Galatians 6:9 “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

Surveys, mobile mapping and weekly dinners are great ways of connecting with international students. This is the first step towards reaching your campus with the gospel. Next week we will talk about how to share the gospel with each of the students that you have been able to connect with.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where would be the best places on your campus to go mobile mapping?
2. When would be a time that your leadership team could do it together?
3. Where could you have a weekly dinner near your campus?
4. How could you involve volunteers or local churches in providing the food?
5. Are there other ways that you can think of connecting with new international students on campus throughout the year?

Step of Faith

As a step of faith this week, would you and a friend use a survey, go mobile mapping on your campus this week or plan your first weekly dinner? You can take these surveys and go out now to start meeting new students right now. Attached is a sample map you can print off on a poster board or you can buy one when you buy round stickers (color coding labels) at Target or WalMart. There is also a sample schedule for planning your first weekly dinner. Come back next week and share how it went.



Which country are you from?

What year are you in school?

1. What three words would you use to describe your life?
2. What single thing do you want to make absolutely sure you do during your lifetime, if at all possible?
3. **What happens after death?** Clarifying Questions: If they believe in heaven, ask if they also believe in hell. If they believe in some form of continuing existence, ask who or what determines what a person will experience.
4. **Your best friend comes to you and says, “I want to become a Christian, but I don’t know how.” What would you tell your friend?** Clarify: “How does a person become a Christian?”
5. **On a scale from 1 to 10, rate your desire to know God.** Clarify (1 is low/10 is high)

We are starting a group on campus that talks about spiritual topics, would you like to hear about our events?



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2. What single thing do you want to make absolutely sure you do during your lifetime, if at all possible?
3. **What happens after death?** Clarifying Questions: If they believe in heaven, ask if they also believe in hell. If they believe in some form of continuing existence, ask who or what determines what a person will experience.
4. **Your best friend comes to you and says, “I want to become a Christian, but I don’t know how.” What would you tell your friend?** Clarify: “How does a person become a Christian?”
5. **On a scale from 1 to 10, rate your desire to know God.** Clarify (1 is low/10 is high)

We are starting a group on campus that talks about spiritual topics, would you like to hear about our events?



Which country are you from?

What year are you in school?

1. What three words would you use to describe your life?
2. What single thing do you want to make absolutely sure you do during your lifetime, if at all possible?
3. **What happens after death?** Clarifying Questions: If they believe in heaven, ask if they also believe in hell. If they believe in some form of continuing existence, ask who or what determines what a person will experience.
4. **Your best friend comes to you and says, “I want to become a Christian, but I don’t know how.” What would you tell your friend?** Clarify: “How does a person become a Christian?”
5. **On a scale from 1 to 10, rate your desire to know God.** Clarify (1 is low/10 is high)

We are starting a group on campus that talks about spiritual topics, would you like to hear about our events?

Weekly Dinner Agenda

Time	Responsibility	Assigned To:	Comments
	Bring Food	Volunteer	
5:00PM	Arrive and setup	Leadership Team	
5:30PM	Pray	Leadership Team	
5:45PM	Greet Students	Leadership Team	
6:10PM	Welcome Students and Eat	Leader 1	
6:45PM	Games	Leader 2	
7:00PM	Discussion Groups	Leaders 3 & 4	
7:45PM	Closing Announcements	Leader 1	
8:00PM	Finish	Leadership Team	
8:15PM	Cleanup and Go Get Ice Cream!	Leadership Team	



3 Winning Students to Christ

Adapted from How You Can Introduce Others To Christ, by Dr. Bill Bright, co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ.

“You must bring a lot of happiness into this world,” said the young businessman with tears of joy and gratitude in his eyes. He had just prayed with me and received Christ as his Savior and Lord. He and his wife had been looking for God for some time, he said, and now he was eager to take the Four Spiritual Laws booklet home with him so that he could in turn introduce his wife to Christ.

The words of this joyful young Christian have come to my mind again and again: “You must bring a lot of happiness into this world” by sharing the Lord Jesus Christ with tens of thousands of students and lay people around the world.

The apostle Paul related this experience to the Colossians, “Everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen.”

You have the privilege of participating with our living Lord in the fulfillment for His Great Commission in our generation. In my opinion, the only way to change the world is to change individuals. Changed people, in sufficient numbers, will produce changed campuses, changed communities, changed cities, states and nations – yes, in a very real sense, a changed

world. Jesus Christ is the only One who can change people from within. You can help to change the world by introducing people to Jesus Christ.

Two Reasons Why Christians Don't Tell Others

One of the greatest misconceptions of the centuries is the idea so prevalent among Christians that men and women do not want to know God. Wherever I go around the world, I find ample proof that just the opposite is true. The Holy Spirit has created a hunger for God in the hearts of multitudes. From my experience and through much observation, I am fully convinced that the majority of non-believers throughout the world are ready to receive Christ when properly approached with a clear and simple presentation for the gospel by a Spirit-filled witness.

Yet, tragically, most Christians have never introduced a single person to the Lord Jesus. There are two good reasons for this. First, the average Christian is living a defeated, spiritually impotent, fruitless, worldly (carnal) life. He is not walking in the fullness and control of the Holy Spirit – as one Christian leader explained his reluctance to witness, “My kind of Christianity is not worth exporting.” If this is true in your life, I encourage you to review the Transferable Concepts of How You Can Experience God's Love and Forgiveness, How You Can Be Filled With the Spirit and How You Can Walk in the Spirit. (Cru.org)

The second reason is a lack of training. Most Christians have never been trained to communicate their faith in Christ effectively. They have never learned how to begin a conversation about Christ, how to explain the gospel simply and clearly, and how to lead a person to make a decision to receive Christ by faith.

Discussion Questions:

Take a few minutes now to read through out loud the Four Spiritual Laws by downloading the ‘God Tools’ App on your phone or reading through the paper attached at the end of this article.

1. How did it feel listening to the other person share their faith with you?
2. How could a simple tool like this be helpful for international students that have never heard the gospel?

How You Can Witness Effectively: The Means

We don't claim that the Four Spiritual Laws message is the only way to introduce others to Christ or even the best way. But we do know that literally millions of men and women have received Christ through the direct, simple presentation of the

gospel contained in this booklet. According to our estimate, more than one billion copies have been distributed in all of the major languages of the world.

One heartwarming experience demonstrates the effectiveness of the booklet. A man, who was greatly admired in his home town, was not a Christian. In fact, he was known as the town skeptic because he never responded positively to the many who witnessed to him personally.

He had befriended the parents of a Christian friend who felt especially concerned for his salvation. After obtaining a Four Spiritual Laws booklet, this friend decided to call on the skeptic and read it to him. As he finished reading, he asked,

“Does this make sense?”

The skeptic replied, “Yes, it does.”

“Is there anything that would keep you from receiving Christ?”

“No,” he said.

The two men then knelt together and prayed, and the ‘Skeptic’ invited Christ into his life as his Savior and Lord.

When they arose, the friend was rejoicing with the man, who then stunned him with this question, “Is this what you and all the other Christians have been trying to tell me for years?”

“Yes.”

“Well,” continued this new brother in Christ, “why didn’t you tell me? Any man would be a fool not to receive Christ if he really understood what is involved.”

The gospel as contained in the Four Spiritual Laws booklet had cut right through the barrier of skepticism and indifference so that this man received the Lord Jesus.

Suggestions for Evangelism as a Lifestyle

Now, permit me to share several simple suggestions that will help you to introduce others to Christ as a way of life.

First, begin every day with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to empower and lead you to those whose hearts He has prepared.

Second, relate to people in a loving, natural, personal way. Avoid being mechanical. Everyone responds to love. As you walk in love, the Spirit of God will confirm to those with

whom you are sharing Christ that you are genuine; that you are not simply trying to win an argument or promote a cause; and that you have taken time to talk to them because you truly love them with God’s love.

Not everyone will be prepared to receive Christ or even be positive in his response. Some may even be antagonistic. God may want you to sow the seed to use you as an instrument of harvest. Whatever the case, relax and let Him do what He wants to do through you.

Remember, just as all fruit in an orchard is not ripe at the same time, so some individuals will be ripe for harvest and others will still be green - not yet ready to respond to the gospel. Consider every gospel conversation a great privilege and opportunity, not a legalistic responsibility. Think of God’s great love, of what knowing Him has meant to you and what it will mean to others when they receive Christ. Make sharing your faith in Christ a way of life.

Simple Conversations Starters

There are many effective ways of establishing contact with another person. After a cordial, friendly greeting, you can say:

“This booklet is one of the most widely read booklets in history - more than one billion copies have been distributed in every major language. Have you ever heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?”

Or you might say: “A friend of mine recently gave me this little booklet which really makes sense to me. I would like to share it with you. Have you ever heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?”

Other Helpful Suggestions

When you share the Four Spiritual Laws, you can simply read through the booklet. Generally, you should read aloud from the booklet, holding it so that the person can read along with you. It is also helpful to use a pencil or something similar to point to the lines and words being read to insure better concentration.

At times, the Holy Spirit will lead you to stop and explain something that may be unclear or add a personal illustration. Normally, however, it is usually more effective to read through the booklet before stopping to explain or answer questions. If the person raises questions, you can say, “Let’s remember that question and come back to it in a moment after we have finished reading the booklet.” Of course, be sure to answer the question later!

Transitioning to the Point of Personal Decision

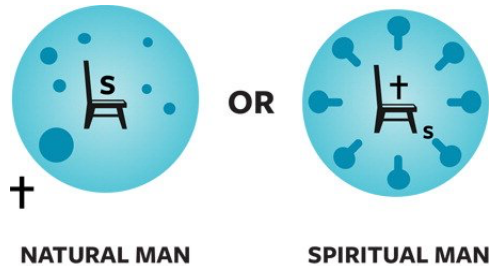
Generally, you will find that most people agree with the first three laws and are not likely to ask many, if any, questions. Thus, you can proceed to Law Four with confidence.

When you come to the two circles, one representing the self-controlled life, the other the Christ-controlled life, ask the question contained in the booklet:

“Which circle represents your life?”

Then ask:

“Which circle would you like to have represent your life?”



In most cases the one with whom you are sharing will answer the first question, “The circle on the left,” and the second question, “The circle on the right.”

The Holy Spirit’s work of producing a repentant attitude in a non-believer is a necessary preparation of receiving Christ. This change of attitude will result in a change of action. However, it should be clearly understood that you do not become a Christian because you repent but by the simple act of receiving Christ by faith as explained in John 1:12 and Ephesians 2:8, 9 “To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” “It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.”

The next crucial point in sharing Christ is to help those who want to receive him as their Savior to know exactly what to do. As you continue to read from the booklet, explain how to receive Christ.

Read the prayer aloud and then ask, “Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?”

If the answer is ‘Yes,’ say, “You can pray this prayer right now if you really mean it, and Christ will come into your life as He

promised.” Then pause for prayer, and suggest that if the individual will pray aloud, you can pray with him or her.

If there is a long silence, you may suggest that the person pray after you phrase by phrase. Be sensitive, however. Don’t offend by “forcing” the prayer. Some people wish to pray their own prayer rather than the suggested one. Should someone wish to pray silently, suggest he or she say “Amen” when finished. When he says, “Amen,” you pray aloud for the new believer.

If the individual makes no commitment after you have read the booklet through the first time to this point, avoid offending the person. Don’t try to argue or high-pressure anyone into making a “decision” for Christ. Jesus says, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.”

Remember the Role of the Holy Spirit

The important thing is not what you do, but what the Holy Spirit does through you. You and I do not have the ability to introduce anyone to Christ by our own power. **Remember, success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.**

Discussion Questions:

In your leadership team, break into pairs and practice reading through the Four Spiritual Laws where one person is the one sharing and one person is the one listening. After five minutes switch and give the other person an opportunity to share.

1. Are there any international students that you know that might not have heard the gospel presented in this way before before?
2. If you shared with a student and they decided not to pray, what would be the best way to respond?
3. If you shared with a student and they did pray, what would be the best way to respond?

Step of Faith

As a step of faith this week, would you meet with an international student and read through the Four Spiritual Laws together? You can download the ‘God Tools’ App on your phone or print off the attached paper. Come back next week and share how it went.

This booklet contains a message of love and hope. An exciting adventure awaits all who discover these life-changing truths.

The following four principles will help you discover how to know God personally and experience the abundant life He promised.



2

GOD'S LOVE

1 God loves you and created you to know Him personally. He has a wonderful plan for your life.

God's Love

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."
(John 3:16, NIV)

God's Plan

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."
(John 17:3)

► **What prevents us from knowing God personally?**



3

OUR CONDITION

2 People are sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love and plan.

People are Sinful

"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

People were created to have fellowship with God; but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

People are Separated

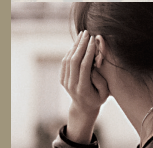
"For the wages of sin is death" [spiritual separation from God] (Romans 6:23).

4



This diagram illustrates that God is holy and people are sinful. A great gulf separates the two. The arrows illustrate that people are continually trying to reach God and establish a personal relationship with Him through our own efforts, such as a good life, philosophy, or religion, but we inevitably fail.

► **The third principle explains the only way to bridge this gulf...**



5

GOD'S RESPONSE

3 Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love and plan.

He Died in Our Place

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

He Rose From the Dead

"...Christ died for our sins ... He was buried, He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures ... He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, He appeared to more than five hundred ..."
(1 Corinthians 15:3-6)

6

He is the Only Way to God

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" (John 14:6)



This diagram illustrates that God has bridged the gulf that separates us from Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.

► **It is not enough just to know these truths...**

7

OUR RESPONSE

4 We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love and plan.

We Must Receive Christ

“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”
(John 1:12)

We Receive Christ Through Faith

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”
(Ephesians 2:8,9)

When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth

(Read John 3:1–8)

8

We Receive Christ by Personal Invitation

[Christ speaking] “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3:20)

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of the will.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives.

A life without Jesus Christ
Self is in the center and on the throne; Christ (†) is outside.



A life entrusted to Christ. Christ is in the center and on the throne, and self yields to Christ.



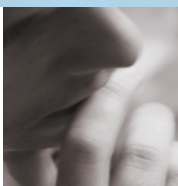
Which circle best describes your life?
Which circle would you like to have represent your life?

► *The following explains how you can receive Christ . . .*

9

You Can Receive Christ Right Now by Faith Through Prayer

(Prayer is talking with God)



God knows your heart and is not as concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart.

The following is a suggested prayer:

Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be.



Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?

If it does, pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.

10

How to Know That Christ is in Your Life Did you receive Christ into your life?

According to His promise as recorded in Revelation 3:20, where is Christ right now in relation to you? Christ said that He would come into your life and be your Savior and friend so you can know Him personally. Would He mislead you? On what authority do you know that God has answered your prayer? (The trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word.)

The Bible Promises Eternal Life to All Who Receive Christ

“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11–13)

11

Can you think of anything more wonderful that could happen to you than entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Would you like to thank God in prayer right now for what He has done for you? By thanking God, you demonstrate your faith.



► *To enjoy your new relationship with God...*

Suggestions For Christian Growth

Spiritual growth results from trusting Jesus Christ. “. . . The righteous will live by faith” (Galatians 3:11). A life of faith will enable you to trust God increasingly with every detail of your life, and to practice the following:

- G** Go to God in prayer daily (John 15:7).
- R** Read God’s Word daily (Acts 17:11)—begin with the Gospel of John.
- O** Obey God moment by moment (John 14:21).
- W** Witness for Christ by your life and words (Matthew 4:19; John 15:8).
- T** Trust God for every detail of your life (1 Peter 5:7).
- H** Holy Spirit—Allow Him to control and empower your daily life and witness (Galatians 5:16,17; Acts 1:8).

Remember

Your walk with Christ depends on what you allow Him to do in and through you empowered by the Holy Spirit, not what you do for Him through self effort.



14



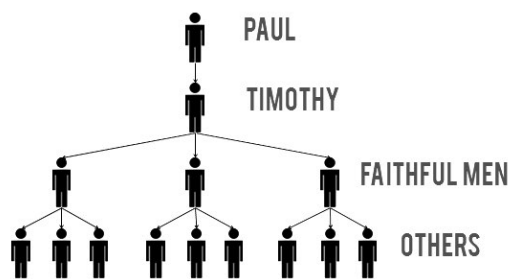
15



4 Building Students in Their Faith

How do we build international students in their faith? In the New Testament a young leader named Timothy was asking the same question of the apostle Paul. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul writes to Timothy, “what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

Timothy was in a group of people that Paul was teaching. Paul then exhorts Timothy to entrust those things he has heard Paul say to faithful men who will go on to teach others. This chain of discipleship is called spiritual multiplication.



Paul was just following the method that he saw Jesus using. While Jesus often preached to the crowds, he spent the majority of his time with just twelve disciples. Jesus knew that the only way to impact the world was by making a deep impression on a few. Crowds could be easily swayed, after all the same crowd that yelled “Hosannah” on Palm Sunday, was yelling “crucify him” on Friday. But Jesus apostles would go on to suffer persecution for the sake of the gospel and launch

movements throughout the known world that continue to today.

As you meet with international students to help them grow in their faith, you are joining this chain of discipleship as well. Just as others have helped you grow, you get to meet with students to study the Bible, pray, share life together and minister alongside each other.

Discovery Groups

Discovery Groups are a simple Bible study method developed by Bridges International to help you disciple other students. It was developed in collaboration with other organizations that work with internationals and with missions organizations that have been working in mission fields overseas.

How do you study the Bible with international students? At first it seems like a straightforward question, and we might think to respond, “the same way we study with anyone else” but international students are unique and a specific approach can make both our witness to non-believers and our discipleship of believers more effective.

International students are intelligent. If they have come to the United States, they are one of the top students in their country. They are very willing to engage in discussions about the Bible, and capable of comprehending what it means. Because of this, they want to feel respected and they want to feel like they have something to offer to the discussion.

International students are skeptical. They are leery of joining a group where they feel that they are trying to be forced into something. They feel very uncomfortable when the discussion involves them asking questions and one person being the “expert” that answers all of their questions.

International students haven’t studied the Bible before. When Americans read a new passage (for example when the Pharisees bring Jesus the woman caught in adultery) even if they have never heard it before, they will often understand the context. Internationals might not understand who the Pharisees are, who Jesus is, why adultery is bad, or why they want to stone her. Also references like Noah, King David and others might be unfamiliar to them.

Discovery Groups are a simple set of questions that you can use to study any part of the Bible. The Group Rules and Facilitator Rules ensure that the person leading the study is not talking too much and that the participants are not talking too little, thus everyone can participate. The group and facilitator rules also respect the students to let them look through the passage to find the answer, instead of bringing in material from other sources. The core belief is that scripture speaks for itself. This disarms skeptical students because you are not preaching at them; instead they are looking for truth themselves. Lastly because time is taken to define confusing terms at the beginning of the study and the discussions are centered around just one section of scripture, even those unfamiliar with the Bible can participate.

Getting Familiar with Discovery Groups

Take a few minutes now to read through the Bible Study attached at the end of this article. Read the Group Rules and Facilitator Rules and then read through the questions in each of the four sections. After you read it together, come back and finish the rest of this article.

Connect and Review

The purpose of the first section is for everyone in the group to share how they are doing. It sets the tone that each person can participate and that this is a place where everyone cares about what is happening in each person’s life. Trust is the foundation of any relationship. Taking time to hear about how God is at work in each person’s life will make the rest of the discussion far more fruitful.

Read the Passage

Notice how the passage is read through two times and then summarized once in this section. This might seem like a lot, but by hearing the Bible story three times it begins to sink in deeper and it gives the Holy Spirit more opportunity to begin to use the scripture in the persons heart. For students whom English is not their first language, it also helps overcome the language barrier.



Discover God’s Word

This section gives an opportunity for students to share what they do and do not understand in the passage. The group discussion is powerful here. As questions come up, resist the temptation to answer everything yourself and instead let the group help each other. You will be amazed at the insights students can learn from each other.

Obey God’s Word

The two questions we should ask when we study any scripture are, ‘what does this mean’ and ‘what does this mean for me.’ This section is where students get to apply the Word of God. You might have just studied about prayer or about forgiveness and by asking them how they should apply it they might realized that they need to take time to pray or they have someone they need to forgive. Don’t rush this section, but instead give everyone time to think how they can apply it. Lastly make sure and follow-up the next week by asking the questions, “How did you apply what we learned last week? Did you share what you learned with anyone?” found in the first section.

Suggested Scriptures

On the second page you will see a list of scriptures to study. While the questions can be used to study any section of scripture in a simple way, these sections have been tested in multiple countries as a way of helping non-believers learn how they can become a Christian and then grow in their faith. The first page has Explore God 1 and Explore God 2, these are to use with non-believers that are interested in studying the Bible. The next section, PODS, is designed to help a new believer understand the basics of following Jesus.

Discussion Questions

Now that you understand how to use Discovery Groups, try using it for yourself. Choose one person in your leadership team to be the facilitator for a sample Bible study right now, using Genesis 1:1-25. Spend 5 minutes going through each section: Connect and Review, Read the Passage, Discover God's Word, and Obey God's Word. It is ok if you don't get through each question, just move on to the next section after 5 minutes. (In a typical Bible study you will spend 15 minutes on each section but this is just a quick sample study). After your Bible study is finished discuss these questions together.

1. Do you think international students could participate in a Bible study like this?
2. If an international student watched you lead a Bible study like this, could they go on to lead one of their own in the future?
3. Who do you know right now that might be interested in being a part of a group like this?

Step of Faith

As a step of faith this week, would you meet with an international student and go through a Discovery Group together? You can print off the attached Bible Study or download the app for your phone by searching 'PODS Bible Study.' Come back next week and share how it went.

5 Group Rules

1. Everyone shares in sentences, not paragraphs.
2. Focus only on what this passage is saying, not other passages.
3. Focus only on what this group is seeing.
4. Give people time to respond, silence is okay.
5. Facilitator should facilitate discussion, not teach.

5 Facilitator Rules

1. Keep the session on schedule and complete all four sections — though not necessarily all questions.
2. Prepare before by studying passage, looking for main idea, and think of some examples/stories/applications from your own life.
3. Respond to questions by asking group, "What in the passage helps us answer that question?"
4. Respond to distracting comments by asking, "Where is that found in this passage?"
5. Respond to "strange" answers by asking, "Help us understand what you are thinking."

1.

Connect & Review

(Spend first 5-10 minutes on some of these questions.)

What are you thankful for this week?

What difficulties have you faced this week?

How did you apply what we learned last week?

Did you share what you learned with anyone?

How did you experience God this past week?

How can we pray for each other?

2.

Read The Passage

(Have everyone use the same, clear translation.)

Have someone read the Bible passage out loud.

Ask if there are any words they do not understand.

Define confusing words.

Have one person read passage out loud while everyone else has their Bible closed.

Have a different person re-tell what happens in the passage.

3.

Discover God's Word

In this passage...

...what did you like?

... what surprised you?

... what confused you? Why?

What does this passage tell us about...

... God?

... people?

... relationship between God and people?

4.

Obey God's Word

How does this passage change how you view...

... God?

... yourself?

... other people?

How should this passage change how you live?

What specifically will you do differently this coming week?

Who can you tell what you learned?

1 God Creates

God Creates All Things
Genesis 1:1-25
God Creates People
Genesis 2:4-24

2 Man Rebels

People Disobey God
Genesis 3:1-13
God Responds to People's Disobedience
Genesis 3:14-24

3 God Makes A Way Back

God Judges Creation
Genesis 6:5-22;
7:6-24; 8:18-22
God Makes Promises to All Creation
Genesis 9:1-19
God's Makes Promise to Abraham
Genesis 12:1-8;
15:1-6; 17:1-8

3 God Makes A Way Back Continued

God Promises a Suffering Servant
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Jesus is Born
Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20

3 God Makes A Way Back Continued

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man
Luke 5:17-26
Jesus Calms a Storm
Mark 4:35-41
Jesus Shares a Last Meal
Matthew 26:17-30

3 God Makes A Way Back Continued

Jesus Dies on a Cross
Luke 23:32-49
Jesus Rises From the Dead
Luke 23:50-24:12
Becoming a Child of God
John 1:1-18

Creation Testifies to God
Psalm 19
God Has Special Relationship With Man
Psalm 139:1-18

All Have Turned Away From God
Psalm 14
No One Seeks God
Psalm 53

God Makes 10 Commandments
Deuteronomy 5:1-21;
5:32-6:2
God Provides Sacrifices for Sin
Leviticus 4:13-31

God Forgives
Psalm 32
God Has Power Over the Nations
Psalm 2
Jesus is Baptized
John 1:19-34
Jesus is Tested
Matthew 4:1-22
Jesus Meets the Samaritan Woman
John 4:1-26, 39-42

Jesus Has Authority Over Spirits
Mark 5:1-20
Jesus Has Authority Over Death
John 11:1-44
How People Can Know God
John 14:1-14

Jesus Dies and is Buried
John 19:28-42
Jesus Meets Disciples After His Resurrection
Luke 24:13-35
Becoming a Child of God
John 1:1-18

Move on to EXPLORE GOD 2 (below) after completing all lessons in EXPLORE GOD 1

Explore God 2

Explore God 1

1 Foundation <i>Starting in Christ</i>	God (Gen. 1:1-2:3)	Sin (Gen. 3:1-19; Isaiah 6:1-6)	Jesus (John 1:1-18, 29-43)	Cross & Resurrection (John 19:16-20:10; I Cor. 15:3-6)	Faith (Eph. 2:1-10)	Outcome: Experience The Gospel
2 Follow Up <i>Starting in Christ</i>	Assurance (Luke 15:11-24; I John 5:11-13)	Forgiveness (Luke 7:36-50)	The Holy Spirit (John 14:15-28)	Living in The Spirit (Gal. 5:16-25)	Spiritual Warfare (Eph. 6:10-20)	Outcome: Live in The Spirit's Power
3 Lordship of Christ <i>Following Christ</i>	Identity in Christ (2 Cor. 5:16-21)	Position in Christ (Eph. 1:3-14)	Life in Christ (Col. 3:1-10)	Lordship of Christ (Matt. 7:21-27)	Taking up Cross (Matt. 10:34-38)	Outcome: Surrender Life to Christ
4 God's Word & Prayer⁺ <i>Following Christ</i>	Authority of Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:16-21)	Overview of Bible (Acts 7; Luke 24:13-35)	Memorizing Scripture (Psalm 119:9-16)	Prayer (Matt. 6:5-13)	Confession (I John 1:5-10; Psalm 51)	Outcome: Have Regular Quiet Time
5 Church⁺ <i>Growing in Christ</i>	Need For Fellowship (Heb. 10:23-25)	Marks of Church (Acts 2:42-47)	Worship (John 4:23-24; Rom. 12:1-2)	Spiritual Gifts (Rom. 12:3-8; I Pet. 4:8-11)	Using Your Gifts (Matt. 25:14-30)	Outcome: Serve With Your Gifts & Treasures
6 Relationships[*] <i>Growing in Christ</i>	Made in God's Image (Gen 1:26-31)	Resolving Conflict (Col. 3:12-17)	Family (Eph. 6:1-4; Matt. 10:37)	Marriage & Dating (Eph: 5:15-33)	Sex (I Cor. 6:12-7:5; I Thes. 4:1-8)	Outcome: Live in Forgiveness & Purity
7 Spiritual Multiplication⁺ <i>Imparting Christ</i>	God's Mission (Gen. 12:1-3; Matt. 28:18-20)	Gospel Mindset (I Cor. 9:16-27)	Personal Witness (I Pet. 3:15-16; I Thes. 2:3-8)	Crossing Cultures (John 4: 1-42; Acts 17:16-34)	Discipleship Selection (2 Tim. 2:1-6)	Outcome: Lead Others to Know & Follow Christ
8 Thinking Home[*] <i>Imparting Christ</i>	Persecution (Matt. 10:16-22)	Governing Authorities (I Pet. 2:13-21)	Work (Col. 3:23; Prov. 14:23, 10:4)	Money (Luke 12:13-21; Matt. 19:16-24)	Mercy (Micah 6:6-8; James 1:26-27)	Outcome: Follow Jesus Everywhere & Always

* Might be best addressed at a retreat.
 + A discipline that involves ongoing practice.

Chinese Students in America: 'Strategically Important'



“Reaching out to students from Mainland China is simply the most strategically important Christian missionary endeavor anywhere in the world.”

– Dr. David Aikman, a Christ-follower who served as bureau chief for Time magazine in Beijing, Moscow and other major cities.

Though stated more than 20 years ago, these words from a top-ranking journalist are as true today as ever. What makes the Chinese who study on America’s campuses so influential in their nation and the world?

- They are **numerous** – the largest foreign nationality on U.S. campuses. One in three international students is from Mainland China. Chinese can be found at virtually every institution of higher learning in America.
- They are **prestigious** – the best and brightest of Chinese society. They represent the top 1% of students from their country. (Although some are less gifted in their academics, those individuals come from families with wealth and influence.)
- They are **estranged** – often lonely and isolated. Many Chinese students struggle to integrate into American campus life and often retreat to their own little circles.

- They are **intrigued** – interested in learning more about Jesus. Although most Chinese students have not been contacted by Christians in their home country, they are curious about the gospel and few are “resistant.”
- They are **strategic** – potential ambassadors for Jesus throughout the world. Chinese can travel to certain places where Americans are not welcome, and they are not perceived as “Western imperialists” when they share their faith.

perceived great suffering through war, civil strife and natural disasters.

“
...they are often lonely
and isolated.

”

1 Understanding Their World

A Recent History

Chinese students are proud of their nation’s glorious past. Their ancient dynasties were marked by literary masterpieces, scientific discoveries and technological achievements. Unfortunately, earlier generations also ex-

perienced great suffering through war, civil strife and natural disasters. Fast forward to the mid-1980s and you will observe massive changes in Chinese society. In the ‘80s, China opened itself to the world and laid the foundation for its current status as a major economic force. Widespread discontent with national policies was also voiced in the ‘80s and is still heard at times. Spurred by the growth of their nation’s economy, today’s Chinese students are focused on material success as they pursue the “China Dream.” At the same time, many feel an inner hopelessness that drives a search for meaning and love.

A Current Profile

Today's Chinese students, strongly influenced by their culture, typically demonstrate these traits:

Society

- **Materialistic** – Students pursue wealth for significance and security. They take great pleasure in dining, shopping and traveling.
- **“Wired”** – Students are tech savvy and connected to the virtual world. They may stay online for hours chatting, watching TV shows and playing video games. They may find it difficult to verbally communicate and emotionally connect with others. Some are socially awkward.
- **Self-sufficient** – Chinese students have been taught to be extremely determined. Even though they think collectively, most ultimately rely on themselves.
- **Worldly** – Because of their exposure to movies and music, students are familiar with certain aspects of Western culture. Many have lost innocence through pornography and sexual activity.

Relationships

- **Harmonious** – Chinese students want to connect with others. They think collectively in matters of daily life--“we” not “me.” Chinese depend on their network of functional relationships within their community (expressed in Chinese as “guanxi”) for help and resources.
- **Respectful** – Students are obliged to respect and obey, especially within the family. They are dutiful to those in authority, such as parents and professors. They display politeness (“keqi”) to show their humility. Meanwhile, they tend to avoid conflict and in-depth communications because they are unsure of how to process such emotional content.
- **Conditional** – Students seek to give honor and not shame to others. They refrain from actions that would reflect badly on themselves or others and thus cause a loss of “face” (“mianzi”). They have a tendency to view interactions with others according to obligation. If they receive any favor, they think they must pay it back.

Family

- **Self-Focused** – Almost every Chinese

student has been raised as one child in the “4-2-1 family” (4 grandparents, 2 parents, 1 self). Because of this structure, many have been pampered as the center of family life. Some will demonstrate an undue focus on self and a struggle to connect with others.

- **Pressured** – Many students feel great pressure from their parents’ high expectations. In general, parents have sacrificed much for their children, and the children are expected to perform well in academics and artistry.
- **Disconnected** – Many Chinese students feel distanced from their parents because of the parents’ focus on career. Consequently, the students crave love and support, and they desire to be more deeply known by their parents.

Typical Profiles of Chinese Students

Li comes from an upper middle-class family in China, and her parents have chosen to pay the tuition for her to study in America. Much like her American undergraduate classmates, Li drives a nice car, spends countless hours on the Internet and takes luxurious trips during school breaks. Yet, she has problems understanding and relating to her American classmates. Li does not know how to join in

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Students are tech savvy
and connected to the
virtual world.
”

conversations about American culture, especially sports and music. She has given up trying to understand American students and has resolved to stay within her Chinese social circle. How might one enter Li’s world?

“Ming” is a popular guy among Chinese students at his U.S. university. It seems like everything is working for him--many friends, good grades and a pretty girlfriend. He and his girlfriend live together, which is common for Chinese couples on campus. Yet, deep in Ming’s heart, he feels lonely and does not want to share his feelings of vulnerability with others. When he feels lonely and distressed he searches for pornography on the

Internet. He doesn’t think this is wrong and, in fact, he sometimes looks at porn with his girlfriend. How might one enter Ming’s world?

2 Connecting Them To Jesus

Understand their Spiritual Journey

Today’s Chinese students were raised under the academic influence of evolutionism and, of course, atheism. As a result, most lack religious or philosophical beliefs to provide answers for life’s ultimate questions. Although their teachers in China probably told them that all religion is “superstitious,” those who have formed friendships with Christians may be open to spiritual truth.

It’s important to realize that Chinese usually approach the gospel from a pragmatic perspective—looking more for God’s hand of blessing than for a personal relationship with Him. After all, they come from an ancient culture with Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist influences, and they’ve been reared under atheism, evolutionism and humanism—with a dash of post-modern Western thought. Because of their utilitarian approach to the spiritual world, they expect a deity to give good luck or blessing. They only call upon their gods in times of need. The primary concerns of Chinese people are to live life well and honorably and to be prosperous. Their initial thoughts about God may focus on whether He can help them with practical aspects of their academics/career, their finances or their family.

Because of the factors mentioned above, we recommend sharing the gospel with these dynamics:

Relate truth to real life issues:

- 1) **Love** – Because the average Chinese student is looking for love, descriptions of God’s unconditional love may resonate deeply. (See 1 John 4.)
- 2) **Peace** – Students who feel stress from the expectations of others may readily embrace the peace that comes from a believer’s identity in Christ. (See Romans 6.)
- 3) **Direction** – Students who lack direction in life may appreciate the reassurance that God gives to His people in times of duress. (See Jeremiah 29.)

Ask questions to create spiritual conversation:

- 1) “Have you ever attended a church service?”
- 2) “Have you had any experiences with various religions?”
- 3) “Have you ever read the Bible?”
- 4) “Do you have friendships with any Christians—in China or the U.S.?”

Respond thoughtfully to negative notions:

- 1) **“Christianity is a Western religion”** – Explain that Jesus was born in the Middle East and that Christianity developed within an Eastern culture.
- 2) **“My family is opposed to Christianity”** – Offer your personal understanding for a student who feels that becoming a Christian may cause him/her to appear to be abandoning family traditions. Add your suggestions for how a person can be loyal to God without rejecting his or her family.
- 3) **“Christianity is unscientific”** – Expose your friend to tools that address topics of faith and science (see resources below)
- 4) **“Christianity is incompatible with Communism”** – Realize that students who are Communist Party members are told to avoid faith in God if they want to maintain their political affiliation. (Party membership is considered an honor and it is accompanied by opportunities for

career and financial advancement.) After demonstrating your sensitivity to the situation, urge your friend to weigh the current and eternal benefits of believing in Jesus. (You may wish to share many Scriptures including Matthew 16:26.)

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With no clear concept of sin or atonement, the student may have no authentic basis for understanding forgiveness.
”

Present spiritual truth

- 1) **There is a God** – For people who lack a “God-consciousness.”
- 2) **They can be loved** – Those who have never heard of unconditional love may believe their prior bad actions have made them unlovable to other people and even to God.
- 3) **They have sinned** – Because the closest translation of “sin” in Chinese literally means “crime,” some students will not grasp their sinfulness. Because they have not broken the laws of their society, they may consider themselves to be “good”

and not in need of being saved from anything.

- 4) **They can be forgiven** – With no clear concept of sin or atonement, the student may have no authentic basis for understanding forgiveness. Ironically, their lack of clarity about “sin” may prevent them from dealing with distrust or hate toward themselves and others.
- 5) **They can trust Christ** – Without affirmation of the Bible’s historicity and veracity, some students will consider Jesus as a mythological figure. They fail to understand his purpose or plan.
- 6) **They can have hope after this life** – Most Chinese students fear death; for them, it is the end of all existence. As a result, they focus on present goals and generally avoid any discussion of death or the hereafter.

3 Do’s and Don’ts

DO...speak clearly and slow down! These are bright students but they may not be able to follow fast-paced talk in their second or third language.

DO...connect with them through technology and social media. Be aware that WeChat is the most popular communication medium for Chinese students, but of course, you must use it cautiously since others could monitor your messages.

DO...be sensitive to include them in conversations when you talk to others.

DO...ask questions politely if they are doing things that you don’t understand.

DO...initiate spiritual conversations rather early within a relationship. Share your testimony and how Christ makes a difference in your life.

DO...invite them into “your world” (invite them to your house, introduce them to your friends, take them camping, invite them to watch football games, include them in family gatherings).

DO...experience life in “their world” (eat Chinese food, watch their favorite shows, hang out in their apartments, seek to understand their backgrounds).



DO...celebrate special Chinese holidays with them – such as the Mid-Autumn Festival and Spring Festival. Learn about the significance of each holiday.

DON'T...think that all Chinese come from the same background.

DON'T...underestimate the influence their families and culture have on them.

DON'T...discuss controversial topics such as “T-T-T” (Taiwan, Tibet, Tiananmen Square).

DON'T...assume they always understand what you’re saying when they nod and smile.

DON'T...pressure them to do things they don’t want to do.

DON'T...forget to explain basic spiritual terms, such as “New Testament,” “Christian,” “baptism” and “saved.”

DON'T...get discouraged if it takes them a while to come to Christ. Be a true friend!

DON'T...assume they have fully understood the gospel when they say they have believed in God.



4 Recommended Resources

Evangelistic Tools for Use with Chinese students

- **Everystudent.com (Chinese version)** – for articles and videos that address students’ most important questions about life and God. www.xinshengming.com
- **Song of a Wanderer** – popular apologetics book written by Chinese scholar for seekers (View book in Chinese or English online at www.reachinginternationals.com).
- **Heart Mirror** – popular pictorial tool proven effective for engaging Chinese students in spiritual conversation. (Order through www.bridgeschinesenetwork.com).
- **Discovering God in Chinese Characters** – an illustration of the gospel in Chinese characters (Order through www.crustore.org).
- **God’s Eternal Purpose** – a revised version of the “Knowing God” booklet (available for download at www.reachinginternationals.com).

Bibles and Books for Chinese students

- **Ambassadors for Christ Bookstore** – (see Chinese Resource Ministry) for Four Spiritual Laws, books, Bibles and videos for Chinese seekers and believers at discounted prices. www.afcresources.org
- **Print Bibles** – for Chinese and Bilingual Bibles (order at AFC bookstore). The CUV (Chinese Union Version) is commonly accepted in Chinese house churches but it is not easy to read. The CNV (Chinese New Version) is popular with students, as well as the CSB (Chinese Standard Version).
- **Online Bibles** - www.youversion.com and www.biblegateway.com provide Bible versions and study tools (Chinese and bilingual).
- **Bible App** – www.wedevote.com offers special features such as text search, reading plans, multiple versions and social tools (Chinese and bilingual).

Discipleship Tools for Chinese students

- **I Love Grow (Chinese)** – for articles and videos to equip believers to grow in their relationship with God. www.ilovegrow.com
- **Reaching Internationals** – for various tools and resources to reach and equip students (search “Chinese”). www.reachinginternationals.com

- **Chinese Network** – for resources and information on mission opportunities and conferences to equip believers. www.bridgeschinesenetwork.com

Resources to Learn about Chinese Ministry and Culture

- **An Introduction to the Mainland Chinese Soul** – for fabulous insights into Chinese culture, most of which still apply even with a new generation coming to America. www.leadconsulting-usa.com
- **Encountering the Chinese** - a book written by Hu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove which contains cultural analysis of Chinese values, norms, and views.
- **China Partnership Blog** – for articles about China and Christianity www.chinapartnership.org/blog
- **China Source** – for resources that provide a window into Christianity in China and the key issues that impact the Church. www.chinasource.org
- **Wild Swans** – by Jung Chang. This engaging biography tells the story of three generations of family growing up in China. It is an essential guide to understanding modern Chinese history from the perspective of these individuals.



Chinese Students in America

Discussion Questions

1. What motivates you to engage Chinese students on campus? What attitudes, perceptions or other barriers might prevent you from initiating conversations with them?
2. How might a Chinese student misunderstand what “becoming a Christian” means? How might this affect the way you present the gospel, share your story, etc?
3. What characteristics of Chinese students surprised you? Which of them do you observe in your interactions with students on campus? What did you learn that will be most helpful in your outreach?
4. What are three key things to consider when connecting Chinese students to Jesus? Which do you find most challenging to put into practice?
5. If there are Chinese students on your campus who have turned to Christ, discuss their journey to faith. What things seemed to be most significant or helpful to him?
6. Look over the list of Do’s and Don’ts, then think of your own interactions with Chinese. Share an example of the “Do’s and Don’ts” from your own experience, whether positive or negative. What were the results? What would you do differently next time?
7. Are there other things that you’d like to know or that you need from the Chinese Network in order to minister more effectively to the Chinese students on your campus? Email us with your thoughts at chinesenetwork@bridgesinternational.com.

Worldview Survey

This week, take one hour to interview a Chinese International Student. Record your answers on this paper. Before you begin, read through this introduction:

“This Worldview Survey is being conducted by a student group called Bridges International and is designed to get an accurate picture of religious attitudes, interest and opinions of individuals. In order to get the most accurate representation, we would appreciate your honesty and frankness in taking this survey.”

- Are you now or have you ever been active in a church, religious youth group or organization?
 Yes No Catholic Jewish Protestant Other
 Muslim Hindu Buddhist
- Would you say that your faith is important to you now? Has it grown or lessened in its importance to you over the past 5 years? How would you say it affects your life?

Questions about God

- Do you believe in God? What do you think God is like? Do you think God has loving intentions toward each individual?
- Do you think it is possible for God to be known, felt or experienced in a real way today?
- Who do you think Jesus is or was? (If answer is something like, “Son of God,” ask, “What do you think that term means?”)

Questions about religion

- In your opinion, what is it that causes people to embrace a religious faith? What turns them off?
- Do you believe that all religions basically teach the same things, or do you think there are major differences in what the various religions teach?

Questions about the Bible

- What percentage of the Bible have you personally read? 0% 25 50 75 100%
- Which of the following statements best reflects your view of the Bible?
 - The Bible is a collection of stories and fables designed to teach moral values.
 - The Bible is a good religious book, but there are many good religious books.
 - The Bible is God’s revelation to man, speaking accurately to history and morals.

Questions about Christianity

10. What do you think is the central message of Christianity?
11. According to your understanding, how does one become a Christian?
12. Do you have any friends you would describe as “practicing Christians?” _____ (i.e. serious about their Christian faith.)
What is your opinion of them?

Questions about heaven

13. Do you believe in heaven? Do you believe in hell?
14. How would you personally answer the question: “Why should I be allowed into Heaven?”

Questions about people

15. Do you think people are basically good, or bad, or a mixture of both?
16. Why do people do evil things?

Questions about them

17. If you could be sure there was a God, and if you could know Him in a personal way, how would you rate your desire to know Him? (Scale of 1-5) Not interested 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 Very interested
18. If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
19. Do you feel the classical Christian faith has anything to offer today’s individual? Why or why not? If so, in what way?
20. What would make a church or religious group attractive to you? (Style? Content? Programs?)
21. Classical Christianity states that in order to know God in a personal way, we must acknowledge our need for, and individually respond to Jesus’ offer of forgiveness. What do you feel it would take in order for you to believe in Christianity in this way?

[Optional: we are starting a student group called Bridges International, would you like more information on our events?]

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

South Asian Students in America: Gifted Minds from an Amazing Nation

Indians and other South Asians* represent the second largest group among international students on American campuses today. They are talented, optimistic and globally-minded. They speak English well. They are increasingly open to cross-cultural relationships. Plus, they are a fun and richly rewarding group of students with whom to engage—a group we would most likely be unable to reach in their homeland. Surely it is no coincidence that God is bringing so many Indian students to our campuses.

**Note: South Asia refers to the culturally similar countries of the Indian subcontinent—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. This document focuses primarily on Indian students and those from neighboring lands who practice a religion from the Hindu world (Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, etc.).*

1 Understanding Their World

Unity and Diversity

Though India as a political nation is just over 60 years old, its cultural and religious

heritage dates to the origin of civilization. Indians are rightly proud of their culture—ancient and yet modern, diverse and yet

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We are all minorities in India.

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unified. If you travel to India, you will frequently see this slogan on the backs of buses and motorized rickshaws: Mera Bharat Mahan (“My India is Great”). Indeed, this is an amazing nation:

- Nationally:** India is the second most populous nation in the world and likely to become the most populous country in a few decades. It is the world’s largest democracy with more than a dozen national political parties.
- Ethnically:** Indians use well over 100 main languages and well over 1,000 dialects. Caste divisions further stratify ethnic groups, even among those with a common language. Said Indian writer Shashi Tharoor, “We are all minorities in India.”
- Spiritually:** The majority of Indians are Hindu, numbering around 800 million. But India is also the second or third-largest Muslim country in the world as well. Buddhism began in India as an offshoot of Hinduism. Christianity, representing just 2-4 percent of the population, has groups which trace their history to the Apostle Thomas.
- Socio-economically:** India has perhaps one-third of the world’s poor. Yet there is a vast emerging middle class, and the nation is home to some of the world’s wealthiest individuals.

Belonging—Family and Relationships

In this ocean of diversity, a person’s security is tied to the identity and welfare of his or her family. Indians see themselves within their network of family and relationships, so they are threatened by isolation. Older people are respected and treated with deference.

Globalization is affecting the student generation, and youth are more affluent, more mobile, more Westernized and more curious about other cultures. Yet there remains

a strong desire in young Indians to belong to a group. Social decisions (like attending parties or going on trips) are usually made as a group—often at the last minute.

Spirituality and Religion

In South Asia, spirituality is everywhere. Temples and mosques of various sizes and histories dot the landscape.

The dominant religion, Hinduism, is better defined by what it is *not* rather than what it *is*. It is not creedal. It has no founder. It has no single common scripture. It does not claim an absolute truth—except perhaps that there is no absolute truth. It has no single god or specific pantheon of gods. In fact, many consider Hinduism to be a way of life more than a set of beliefs about God, life and life after death.

The pleasures or pressures of life dominate the thoughts of most Hindus. Although some are truly devout, most worship deities for practical assistance in this life or for the sake of family traditions. Thus, it is more helpful to recognize what a Hindu “is” or “does” rather than what he or she believes. Growing numbers of Indian students today are outwardly secular and skeptical, yet retain Hindu identity and practice.

Misunderstandings

Misunderstandings between Hindus and Christ followers go both ways. Our perception of Hindus and Hindu practice is not always right; Hindu perception of “Christianity” may be distorted.

Christianity is often perceived by Hindus according to cultural values. Conversion is assumed to be a cultural change for worldly benefit rather than a spiritual transformation. Indians tend to perceive others who “convert” to Christianity as uneducated, poor, tribal or low-caste individuals—because these are the ones who seem to have something to gain. This view is reinforced by the fact that the Indian church is mostly growing among such people. Thus, “becom-

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Misunderstandings between Hindus and Christ followers go both ways.

”

ing a Christian” is associated with a pragmatic decision to change culture and perhaps to reject one’s own family.

Most Hindus have very little knowledge of the Bible. Catholicism is the primary lens through which Christianity is viewed, so many will draw parallels between Catholic rituals and ornate church buildings and their own rituals and temples. Biblical concepts (God, sin, resurrection) are usually interpreted through a Hindu lens (many gods, ritual pollution, reincarnation). Most know that Jesus died on a cross. Few really understand why.

2 Connecting Them To Jesus

Due to such misperceptions of Christianity, it is unusual for Hindu students to honestly consider the gospel apart from contact with a Christian friend or community. It is within that relational environment that they can understand the gospel and wrestle with their questions.

Our goal is to build bridges:

- **Cultural bridges** of relational trust that demonstrate the love of Jesus and open doors for further connection and conversation
- **Spiritual bridges** to clarify misunderstandings about the message of Jesus and focus on a restored relationship with God (a transformed heart rather than a conformed cultural identity)

Build Cultural Bridges:

- **Take time to get to know South Asian students** on an individual basis and as part of the larger community. Ask about their family background (language, siblings, culture, religious traditions, holidays, etc). Learn about their hobbies and interests.
- **Ask about their religious background.** Is their family devout? How do they worship, and what holidays do they celebrate? Share your family’s religious background (Protestant, Catholic, etc.). Don’t hide your identity as a follower of Jesus.
- **Be quick to affirm positive aspects of Indian culture** like loyal families, strong community values and the quest

for spiritual truth. Refrain from criticizing traditions like the caste system or arranged marriages.

- **Fellowship over chai (tea) or a meal is a great way to get to know Indian friends.** Indian food is an integral part of the culture, and hospitality is highly valued. (Note: Indians have a variety of dietary practices and restrictions. If you are entertaining South Asians, it is very important to have vegetarian food available. Avoid serving beef to Hindus and pork to Muslims. Muslims will eat chicken, and so will many—but not all—Hindus.)
- **Remember to consider an Indian’s orientation toward family and social groups.** Pray for a person’s family when you pray for the individual. Enter his or her circle of friends and allow your friend to enter yours. Decisions are often made as a group, so include the group in planning activities whenever possible. Join South Asian events and celebrations - by yourself or with your group of friends.

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Growing numbers of Indian students are outwardly secular and skeptical.

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- **Think twice about making appointments for surveys or spiritual discussion.** Such appointments may seem too formal for a friendly conversation. Try spontaneously texting: “Hey, I’m on campus till 7. Let me know if you want to meet up.” If you know a friend well, dropping by his or her apartment unannounced is fine.
- **Build your friendships by watching Bollywood movies with Indian students,** and such experiences will also boost your knowledge of the culture. Two good choices are: “PK,” a 2014 hit that explores the search for spiritual truth as conducted by the major religions of India, and “3 Idiots,” a view of life at the top engineering colleges of India. Note: “3 Idiots” contains profanity, and both these films contain some sexual

references, but these are mild compared to what is found in most American films.

- **Don't pretend to be someone's friend in order to share the gospel with that person.** Love and serve everyone without distinction. But also look for those with whom you have natural affinity or shared interests.

Build Spiritual Bridges:

- **Pray for your South Asian friends and pray with them.** Expect God to answer. When He does, you have an open door to share more about the love and power of Christ. Invite your friends to ask their Creator to reveal Himself to them.
- **Use open-ended questions.** Asking good questions and carefully listening to the answers will build bridges of trust. Resist the urge to immediately correct every misunderstanding and explain every concept about the gospel. Rather, allow some loose ends and questions for your friend to think about. Here are some good beginning questions: Do you believe in God? (If so, why?) Can you tell me about your spiritual journey? What do you think is the purpose of a person's life?
- **Address misconceptions** such as "Christianity is a Western religion" and "All Americans are Christians." After you shed light on these topics, it may become easier to discuss deeper questions.
- **Offer truth in bite-sized pieces.** Present spiritual content in proportion to your friend's level of interest and in response to his or her questions. Do not rush to bring someone to a "point of decision." Wait until the person is ready (John 6:44).

Starting Points and Suggestions:

- **Invite your friend on a spiritual journey** to discover who Jesus Christ is in the Bible and through prayer.
- **Start with a belief in one God and point to Christ** as God's self-revelation as a man (Acts 17:23). Most Hindus believe there is one supreme God—whether personal or non-personal—who manifests Himself and is worshipped in different forms.

- **Begin by looking into the Bible and address apologetic questions as they arise.** Most consider the Bible a holy book and give it some degree of authority.
- **Use stories and analogies to explain spiritual truth.** The Gospel of John is good for the philosophically-minded and Luke for the scientific-minded. Parables are helpful, for they connect the gospel with practical issues of real life (family, work, money, etc.).

- **Share how Jesus is our perfect priest and once-for-all sacrifice for sin** (Hebrews 10:11-14). Hindus may readily grasp this truth since ritual sacrifices (fruit, sweets, flowers) are a part of temple worship and originated with animals—a fact that has often been lost or obscured.

Care for New Believers

- **When someone chooses to trust Christ, this decision needs to be handled with care.** One of the great fears of Indian families is that their child will "be converted to Christianity" in the United States. Such a perception of faith in Jesus is seen as turning one's back on one's family and crossing over into a non-Indian way of life. It is seen as bringing shame on the family, and thus typically results in a negative response from family and friends.
- **Don't assume your friend understands a "prayer of decision."** If your friend expresses interest in a commitment to Jesus, make sure this person truly believes the gospel and is not just trying to please you. Take time to patiently explain and answer questions. Our role is to walk alongside our friend as he or she begins to follow Jesus.
- **Don't broadcast your friend's decision.** If friends or family members hear this news from anyone other than the new believer, this could do great relational damage. Let your friend speak of

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Most know that Jesus
died on a cross. Few really
understand why.

- **Be aware that "sin" is understood in many ways by Hindus**—ignorance, moral failure or even ritual pollution (such as eating the wrong foods). Note that sin is rarely considered an offense against God but rather against others or one's self, and it is automatically tied to consequences (karma). Most Hindus have a vague sense of falling short in their lives, so you can begin by explaining that, no matter how hard we try, we cannot be good enough to reach God's level of purity.



his or her faith at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way.

- **Introduce a new believer to others from a Hindu background.** Those who have previously made the journey from Hinduism to faith in Jesus can help your friend navigate the emotional ups and downs and the resulting issues with family and friends.

Profile of a New Indian Believer

Raj began his journey to faith as a teenager in India when he observed the life of his Christian friend, Paul. Raj was impressed by how Paul made God an integral part of his life and by how he prayed about everything. Eventually, Raj came to the U.S. as a graduate student. He went to a Bible study out of curiosity, and then he began hanging out with an American named Sam who enjoyed soccer just as he did. After a while, Raj felt he could trust Sam enough to ask him spiritual questions. He was impressed by what he learned in the Bible about the unconditional love of God. After meeting Christ followers from Hindu families, Raj eventually placed his faith in Jesus. He was amazed to discover that he didn't have to go to a temple to meet God but that he could enjoy a personal relationship with God everywhere, all the time.



mility, prayer, sin, eternity and forgiveness. Focus on practical applications to life.

DON'T...imply that following Jesus means rejecting one's birth family and culture.

DON'T...criticize Hindu traditions (worship of the cow, arranged marriages, caste system, etc.).

DON'T...let sharing the gospel become the only motive for your relationships or service.

DON'T...argue or make religious comparisons. Your goal is not to win a debate.

DON'T...push your friend to make a faith decision. Be patient and allow God to work.

DON'T...assume all South Asian "Christians" have a personal relationship with Christ. Take time to get to know them and ask questions that will help clarify this issue.

DON'T...assume that all South Asian church events or individual believers will automatically help you communicate the gospel to your Hindu friends. Depending on their approach, some may produce a negative reaction.

tongue may be helpful for some, it is normally not necessary.

- **Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name**, by Sally Lloyd-Jones, is an excellent introduction to the Bible.

Outreach Books

- **Jesus through Asian Eyes** is a booklet by Clive Thome and Robin Thomson that sheds light on questions and misconceptions about Jesus and Christianity.
- **Jesus with Dirty Feet** is a book by Don Everts that introduces Jesus and deals with misconceptions.

Contextual and Religious Resources

- **yeshusamaj.org & www.karma2grace.org** – Both websites offer articles written by South Asian believers for Hindu seekers and disciples.
- **www.aradhnamusic.com** – "Aradhna" means worship, and this group captures the beauty and dignity of India's traditional worship music with songs of praise to Jesus.
- **Hinduism** is a booklet by H.L. Richard that provides an outstanding but concise summary of Hindu beliefs and practices.

3 Do's and Don'ts

DO...serve your friends unconditionally out of love—no strings attached.

DO...be respectful and courteous as you learn about your friends' culture and beliefs. Ask intelligent probing questions. Remember the answers.

DO...demonstrate authentic spirituality, a clear distinction from cultural "Christianity." Let your friends see the differences Jesus makes in your life.

DO...share your faith story with humility and also talk about God's work in your daily life.

DO...focus on internal spiritual transformation rather than outward rituals or religious conformity.

DO...treat the Bible respectfully since Hindus regard it as a holy book.

DO...discuss biblical concepts like love, hu-

4 Recommended Resources

Bibles

- Hindu students may initially prefer paraphrased Bibles due to their narrative approach. While a Bible in the mother

South Asian Students in America

Discussion Questions

1. What motivates you to engage South Asian students in your context? What attitudes, perceptions or other barriers might prevent you from initiating conversations with them?
2. How might a South Asian student misunderstand what “becoming a Christian” means? How might this affect the way you present the gospel, share your story, etc?
3. What characteristics of South Asian students surprised you? What did you learn that will be most helpful to you in your outreach?
4. How does the importance of family and relationships in South Asian culture affect your current ministry activities (personal appointments, inviting to events, time spent with students, etc)?
5. Several ideas are listed under “Connecting Them to Jesus.” Which do you find the most challenging to put into practice with South Asians? Why?
6. Describe and discuss the process “Raj” went through on his journey to faith in Christ. What things seemed to be most significant or helpful to him?
7. What are some creative ways you can integrate prayer in your ministry to South Asian students?
8. Look over the list of Do’s and Don’ts, then think of your own interactions with South Asians. Share an example of the “Do’s and Don’ts” from your own experience, whether positive or negative. What were the results? What would you do differently next time?
9. What other resources do you need to help you better engage South Asian international students on your campus? (MTL’s - Please record and pass on these suggestions to the SAN team: carol.schlack@bridgesinternational.com).

Worldview Survey

This week, take one hour to interview a South Asian International Student. Record your answers on this paper. Before you begin, read through this introduction:

“This Worldview Survey is being conducted by a student group called Bridges International and is designed to get an accurate picture of religious attitudes, interest and opinions of individuals. In order to get the most accurate representation, we would appreciate your honesty and frankness in taking this survey.”

- Are you now or have you ever been active in a church, religious youth group or organization?
 Yes No Catholic Jewish Protestant Other
 Muslim Hindu Buddhist
- Would you say that your faith is important to you now? Has it grown or lessened in its importance to you over the past 5 years? How would you say it affects your life?

Questions about God

- Do you believe in God? What do you think God is like? Do you think God has loving intentions toward each individual?
- Do you think it is possible for God to be known, felt or experienced in a real way today?
- Who do you think Jesus is or was? (If answer is something like, “Son of God,” ask, “What do you think that term means?”)

Questions about religion

- In your opinion, what is it that causes people to embrace a religious faith? What turns them off?
- Do you believe that all religions basically teach the same things, or do you think there are major differences in what the various religions teach?

Questions about the Bible

- What percentage of the Bible have you personally read? 0% 25 50 75 100%
- Which of the following statements best reflects your view of the Bible?
 - The Bible is a collection of stories and fables designed to teach moral values.
 - The Bible is a good religious book, but there are many good religious books.
 - The Bible is God’s revelation to man, speaking accurately to history and morals.

Questions about Christianity

10. What do you think is the central message of Christianity?

11. According to your understanding, how does one become a Christian?

12. Do you have any friends you would describe as “practicing Christians?” _____ (i.e. serious about their Christian faith.)
What is your opinion of them?

Questions about heaven

13. Do you believe in heaven? Do you believe in hell?

14. How would you personally answer the question: “Why should I be allowed into Heaven?”

Questions about people

15. Do you think people are basically good, or bad, or a mixture of both?

16. Why do people do evil things?

Questions about them

17. If you could be sure there was a God, and if you could know Him in a personal way, how would you rate your desire to know Him? (Scale of 1-5) Not interested 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 Very interested

18. If you could ask God one question, what would it be?

19. Do you feel the classical Christian faith has anything to offer today’s individual? Why or why not? If so, in what way?

20. What would make a church or religious group attractive to you? (Style? Content? Programs?)

21. Classical Christianity states that in order to know God in a personal way, we must acknowledge our need for, and individually respond to Jesus’ offer of forgiveness. What do you feel it would take in order for you to believe in Christianity in this way?

[Optional: we are starting a student group called Bridges International, would you like more information on our events?]

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____



Muslim Students in America: Within Reach of the Truth

Dramatic events seem to bubble forth on a daily basis from the Islamic world. It seems like we can't go a day without facing questions about the thoughts and actions of Muslims. Who are they? What do they believe? How can they ever be reached with the gospel?

Most of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims live in nations that restrict communication of the message of Jesus. Thus, Muslims are one of the largest unreached or under-reached people groups on the earth. God, in His wisdom and grace, is bringing increasing numbers to study at American universities. Currently, more than 150,000 international Muslim students are present on our campuses.

“
...they can engage in three
spiritual experiences that
might elude them in their
home countries.
”

Here in America, they can engage in three spiritual experiences that might elude them in their home countries--talk with a true follower of Jesus, encounter true Christian love and discover the truth of the Bible. But now that these Muslim students are within reach of the truth, will we help facilitate such experiences for them? Will we reach out to them with the love of Jesus?

1 Understanding Their World

The Beginnings of Islam

Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, was born in Mecca (in the land that is now Saudi Arabia) in 570 A.D. He was greatly disturbed by the idol worship of his culture and often retreated into the desert to meditate on the proper way to worship the true God. When he was 40 years old, it is said that the angel Gabriel appeared to him with his first revelation from God. These revelations continued, and they were later gathered together into the Quran.

Muhammad was eventually run out of Mecca

by the keepers of the idols in an event that marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar (A.D. 622). He fled to Medina where he attracted enough followers to make it possible for him to return to Mecca in A.D. 630. After Muhammad's death, Islam continued to expand under various leaders - through conquest and through trade contacts.

Islam in the World Today Where do Muslims Live?

The vast majority of Muslims live in the area of the world that has been identified as the "10/40 Window"—that area between the 10 and 40 degree north latitudes on the globe. The country with the largest number of Muslims is Indonesia, followed by Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Iran. Though we tend to think of Muslims as Middle Easterners and speakers of Arabic, that particular group comprises less than 25% of the world's Muslims.

Types of Islam

There are as many as 150 different branches of Islam, but they can generally be grouped under two main types - Sunni and Shia - with one special branch, Sufi.

The Sunni-Shia split occurred in A.D. 680. A primary difference between these two branches is their understanding of the qualifications of the leader for the universal Islamic community.

Sunni – About 85% of all Muslims are Sunni. In addition to following the Quran, Sunnis try to follow the sayings and actions of Muhammad that were collected after his death in the books of the Hadith. The Hadith show more clearly how to practice the teachings of the Quran. Sunnis believe that the leader for Islam (called a caliph) can be anyone selected by the consensus of the community. There has been no universally recognized caliph since the Ottoman Empire fell and the caliphate was disbanded in 1924.

“

We must consistently trust
God in prayer for each of
our Muslim friends.

”

Shia (or “Shiite”) – About 14% of all Muslims are Shia, and they are found mainly in Iran and Iraq. Shiites believe that Allah provides for the continuing guidance of the community through the Imam, who must be a direct descendant of Muhammad. The majority of Shia believe there were 12 Imams (Ali was the first) and that the twelfth went into hiding where he waits to return one day as the Mehdi (“Messiah”). There is no Imam present today, though in places like Iran the Ayatollah (“a word from Allah”) takes the place of the absent Imam. Shiites follow a non-literal interpretation of the Quran and their own collections of Hadith.

Sufi – This is not really a separate branch of Islam but a mystical belief system that cuts across both Sunni and Shia branches. Sufis adhere to an allegorical reading of the Quran. They believe that the soul can rise to the very presence of God and eventually be united with God through prayer and discipline. They often follow a “holy man” who gives spiritual guidance in the search for union with God through self-discipline, mystical intuition, and sometimes music and dancing.

Beliefs and Practices

Islam is a complete way of life that governs all aspects: moral, spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, economic and legal. The following descriptions are generally true throughout the Muslim world. Variations will occur in certain cultures or nations.

Cultural Beliefs and Practices

- **Wearing the Hijab(head-covering)** – Muslim women should dress modestly. Wearing the head covering (Hijab) is a mark of commitment to faith. In some countries, it is obligatory, but in others it is a personal choice.
- **Family Life** – The family is considered extremely important in Islam and includes the entire circle of familial relationships, including in-laws. Obligations to parents are strongly stressed. In many senses, marriage is considered the union of two families.
- **Shaking Hands** – Many Muslims do not shake hands with people of the opposite gender. When meeting a Muslim, wait to see if he or she offers his or her hand first; then follow accordingly.
- **Honor / Shame** – Muslim cultures, like most in Asia, are honor/shame oriented. One’s self-identity and respect is determined by an intricate network of socially acceptable behaviors and relationships.
- **People Oriented vs. Time Oriented** – Emphasis is placed on relationships and being with others and not on keeping to a strict time schedule for events or appointments.
- **Ethnic Pride** – Ethnic pride is a psychological factor that enables Islamic culture to remain generally unchanged. Most Muslims are proud of being followers of Islam. According to Islam, they are destined to dominate.

Religious Beliefs and Practices

- **Faith Path** – “Islam” means “Submission to God.” In general, Muslims believe or do what they have been told - not what they have discovered for themselves through study or questioning. Therefore, few read the Quran, and most are dependent on religious leaders to explain the Quran or Hadith.
- **Prayer Customs** – Muslims are required to pray five times a day. Men are en-

couraged to pray in the mosque though they may pray anywhere during the prescribed times. Memorized prayers are offered in Arabic.

- **Cleanliness** – Cleanliness (washing in a certain way) is a prerequisite to prayer. Muslims generally do not keep pets, including dogs, inside their homes, and they avoid contact with them.
- **Dietary Restrictions** – Pork products and alcoholic drink are haram (forbidden) in Islam. Muslims eat halal meat which is meat slaughtered in the Islamic way and blessed with the name of God.
- **Ramadan and Celebrations** – The month of Ramadan is set aside for fasting; during this month Muslims do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. The Quran declares that: “When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are put in chains.” Muslims believe that their good actions during this month bring a greater reward than at any other time of year.
- **Eid-al-Fitr** marks the end of Ramadan.
- **Eid al-Adha** (about 70 days after Eid-el-Fitr) is an occasion to commemorate Abraham’s obedience to Allah in offering his son Ishmael.
- **Sin and Forgiveness** – According to Islam, people sin but are not sinful by nature. Most “sin” is only considered a mistake that is due to forgetfulness or hu-

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Encourage your friends
to read the Bible for
themselves.

”

man weakness, and it can be forgiven by God through sincere repentance. There is no need for a Savior or substitute sacrifice. When we use the term “sin,” many Muslims may think only of major downfalls like murder or adultery. Thus, they will not agree with the biblical view that “all have sinned...”



- **Judgment and Salvation** – Islam teaches that on the Day of Judgment, every person will be accountable to God for his or her words and deeds. A practicing Muslim is always striving to be righteous while hoping and praying for God’s acceptance and grace. There is no assurance of salvation in Islam unless one is killed in a holy war (“jihad”).

itual war, and we must consistently trust God in prayer for each of our Muslim friends.

Make Friends

Most Muslims respond very positively to those who reach out to develop a loving relationship with them.

- Your friendship should be genuine. Live out your faith by demonstrating how your relationship with God helps you deal with everyday aspects of life (family, job, fears, future). Godliness is attractive to a Muslim.
- Your faith should be communicated early and naturally in your relationship with a student. Explain your faith - what you believe and why.

Read the Word

The Word of God as applied by the Spirit of God is what creates faith. Encourage your friends to read the Bible for themselves (preferably, with you) and to begin with Mark or Luke. If they do not have Bibles, obtain some in their language(s).

Know What You Believe

We should know how to respond to these typical objections that Muslims raise against the Christian faith.

- **The Bible has been corrupted or changed.**

- Personal response: Ask why your friend thinks so. Has he or she ever read the Bible? Ask for examples of “errors.”
- Theological response: Focus on the nature of God – He is all powerful and can protect His Word. Also focus on the nature of inspiration – God used human authors to communicate His meaning through their vocabulary and style.
- Logical responses: Ask, “When do you think the Bible was corrupted?” If your friend says it happened before Muhammad, point out that the Quran speaks highly of the Bible. If your friend says it happened after Muhammad, point out that we have copies of the Bible from long before Muhammad’s time—and they are unchanged.

- **Jesus is not the Son of God; there is no Trinity.**

- Assert that Christians also believe in only one God.
- Ask questions such as these: What do you believe about God? What is He like? Is anything impossible for God? Is it possible that He could take on human form in order to communicate more clearly with us?
- Invite your friend to study the Bible with you on this topic.

“

Model the love and grace of Jesus.

”

- **Jesus did not die on the cross.**

- Explain the necessity of the crucifixion due to God’s holy and just character.
- Explain the “offensiveness” of sin to God’s character and righteous demands.
- Explain the significance of the crucifixion and resurrection to our faith.
- Explain the evidence for the resurrection.

Be Patient

Remember that there are many barriers for

2 Connecting Them To Jesus

Key Components of Effective Outreach

Personal Preparation

Muslim evangelism should follow the basic model of I Peter 3:15-16.

- Be Spirit-filled.
- Be equipped to give answers when questions arise from their interaction with your life.
- Always act with respect toward them as persons whom God values and loves (not as targets or projects).

Prayer

Muslims are captive to a spiritual blindness, but God is at work “setting the captive free and bringing sight to the blind.” This is a spir-

a Muslim to cross in order to place faith in Jesus—family, cultural, theological and political. Model the love and grace of Jesus. Continue to spend time with your friend even if he or she initially rejects the gospel.

3 Do's and Don'ts

DO...be loving, friendly, fair, and courteous.

DO...be the initiator in the relationship. Take a personal interest in others, their culture and their nation.

DO...make a distinction between true and nominal Christians.

DO...pray with Muslims whenever possible, focusing on their needs.

DO...ministry on a one-to-one basis (group settings for spiritual conversations are often not effective with Muslims).

DO...treat Bibles with respect (keep them off the floor, out of the bathroom, etc.).

DON'T...criticize Islam, Muhammad, or the Quran.

DON'T...discuss Middle East politics, especially matters pertaining to Israel.

DON'T...get into heated arguments. Present your beliefs clearly but with respect.

DON'T...assume words have the same meaning (sin, Messiah, salvation, Son of God). Define what you mean by these terms.

DON'T...expose your friend's interest in the gospel to others - especially other Muslims.



Cultural Issues

- ***Honor and Shame: Unlocking the Door.*** Roland Muller. Xlibris, 2000.
- ***The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame, and Fear Cultures.*** Jayson Georges, 2014.

Resources to Give to Muslim Friends

- ***Glad News! God loves you my Muslim friend.*** Samy Tanagho. Authentic Publ. 2003
- ***Dear Muslim Friend.*** Jerry Mattix. ECS Ministries. 2014

Booklets

- ***Adha and the Injeel.*** Fouad Masri. Crescent Project, 2004. (a gospel presentation)
- ***Is the Injeel Corrupted? My Search for the Truth about the New Testament.*** Fouad Masri. Crescent Project, 2006 (a defense of the authenticity and reliability of the New Testament).
- ***The Five Principles.*** This booklet, which explains five essential points for ministering to Muslims, is available in pdf format from tipnetinfo@gmail.com upon request.

Web Sites

- **www.whoisthemessiah.wordpress.com** – This video lecture series explores what the Bible teaches about the Messiah. Some of the topics covered are: the need for, the prophecy about, and the purpose of the Messiah, as well as answering challenges Muslims make to the

trustworthiness of the Bible and the deity of Jesus.

- **www.reachinginternationals.com** – Many articles on reaching international students with a special section on outreach to those from the Middle East.
- **www.answering-islam.org** – A wealth of articles and links for resources related to Muslim ministry.
- **www.commanetwork.com** – The public site for Coalition of Ministries to Muslims in North America. It has a number of resources and links to helpful information and testimonies by former Muslims.
- **www.multilanguage.com/catalog.htm** – A site for ordering Scriptures in languages spoken by Muslims.
- **www.ReachingTheNationsAmongUs.org** – A site for the multi-language JESUS film plus links to many other resources and cooperating organizations.

Videos

- **Crescent Project video series.** – A six-part series introducing the basics about Islam and how to engage Muslims in spiritual conversations.
- **www.everystudent.info/fiveprinciples** – This is a private site containing six videos covering the major apologetic issues for sharing our faith with Muslims.

For more information on how to reach this people group, please contact us at tipnetinfo@gmail.com.

4 Recommended Resources

Books

Evangelism and Outreach

- ***Answering Islam.*** Geisler and Saleeb. Baker, 2002.
- ***Engaging Islam.*** Georges Housney. Treeline Publ., 2010.
- ***Understanding Islam and Christianity.*** Josh McDowell and Jim Walker. Harvest House, 2013.
- ***Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus.*** Nabeel Qureshi. Zondervan, 2014.

Muslim Students in America

Discussion Questions

1. What motivates you to engage Muslim students on campus? What attitudes, perceptions or other barriers might prevent you from initiating conversations with them?
2. What characteristics of Muslim students surprised you? What did you learn that will be most helpful to you in your outreach?
3. Which of the beliefs and practices (both Cultural and Religious) might provide a good opportunity or avenue for sharing the gospel? Why? How?
4. Several ideas are listed under “Connecting Them to Jesus.” Which do you find the most challenging to put into practice with Muslims? Why?
5. Look over the list of Do’s and Don’ts, then think of your own interactions with Muslims. Share an example of the “Do’s and Don’ts” from your own experience, whether positive or negative. What were the results? What would you do differently next time?
6. What are three main theological differences between Islam and Christianity?
7. Given the general view that Muslims have of Sin, Forgiveness, Judgment and Salvation, what elements of the gospel should we emphasize and/or clarify?
8. Muslims challenge the Bible, the Trinity, and the Crucifixion. How would you respond to these challenges, and what additional points would you make?
9. Are there other things that you’d like to know or that you need from the The Ishmael Project in order to minister more effectively to the Muslim students on your campus? Email us at tipnetinfo@gmail.com with your thoughts.

Worldview Survey

This week, take one hour to interview a Muslim international student. Record your answers on this paper. Before you begin, read through this introduction:

“This Worldview Survey is being conducted by a student group called Bridges International and is designed to get an accurate picture of religious attitudes, interest and opinions of individuals. In order to get the most accurate representation, we would appreciate your honesty and frankness in taking this survey.”

- Are you now or have you ever been active in a church, religious youth group or organization?
 Yes No Catholic Jewish Protestant Other
 Muslim Hindu Buddhist
- Would you say that your faith is important to you now? Has it grown or lessened in its importance to you over the past 5 years? How would you say it affects your life?

Questions about God

- Do you believe in God? What do you think God is like? Do you think God has loving intentions toward each individual?
- Do you think it is possible for God to be known, felt or experienced in a real way today?
- Who do you think Jesus is or was? (If answer is something like, “Son of God,” ask, “What do you think that term means?”)

Questions about religion

- In your opinion, what is it that causes people to embrace a religious faith? What turns them off?
- Do you believe that all religions basically teach the same things, or do you think there are major differences in what the various religions teach?

Questions about the Bible

- What percentage of the Bible have you personally read? 0% 25 50 75 100%
- Which of the following statements best reflects your view of the Bible?
 - The Bible is a collection of stories and fables designed to teach moral values.
 - The Bible is a good religious book, but there are many good religious books.
 - The Bible is God’s revelation to man, speaking accurately to history and morals.

Questions about Christianity

10. What do you think is the central message of Christianity?
11. According to your understanding, how does one become a Christian?
12. Do you have any friends you would describe as “practicing Christians?” _____ (i.e. serious about their Christian faith.)
What is your opinion of them?

Questions about heaven

13. Do you believe in heaven? Do you believe in hell?
14. How would you personally answer the question: “Why should I be allowed into Heaven?”

Questions about people

15. Do you think people are basically good, or bad, or a mixture of both?
16. Why do people do evil things?

Questions about them

17. If you could be sure there was a God, and if you could know Him in a personal way, how would you rate your desire to know Him? (Scale of 1-5) Not interested 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 Very interested
18. If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
19. Do you feel the classical Christian faith has anything to offer today’s individual? Why or why not? If so, in what way?
20. What would make a church or religious group attractive to you? (Style? Content? Programs?)
21. Classical Christianity states that in order to know God in a personal way, we must acknowledge our need for, and individually respond to Jesus’ offer of forgiveness. What do you feel it would take in order for you to believe in Christianity in this way?

[Optional: we are starting a student group called Bridges International, would you like more information on our events?]

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____



8 Sending Students to the World

“By this is My Father glorified that you bear much fruit and that you prove to be My disciples... You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.” – John 15:8, 16

Sending is not simply one conversation or a series of steps as students prepare to return home. What is home after all? As global citizens, international students come from the world and go back into the world. Bridges International desires 100% SENT: where every Christian student in our ministry is committed to living a life on mission.

LIFE on MISSION are elements that are meant to be woven throughout the discipleship process. The circles represent three things:

1. The **Three Conversations** are ongoing conversations with your disciples.
2. The **Five Factors** are the critical elements for life on mission that students must own throughout each transition.
3. The **LoM Check-list** helps you gauge if they are prepared to contextualize their faith.



Three Conversations

1. *Willingness to Surrender:* The process of surrender begins long before a student transitions home or graduates. The student experiences the reality of surrender as soon as he or she starts asking questions like: Is it time to speak up in class? Is God asking me to share my story with a lost friend? Does God want me to start a Bible Study? Each student has to get to a point where he or she is willing to say: “Lord, I’ll go as your ambassador wherever you send me.”

Lord Jesus, I surrender to You, and in the power of Your Spirit, I will...

GO where You want me to GO
DO where You want me to DO
SAY where You want me to SAY
GIVE where You want me to GIVE

2. *Willingness to Be Intentional:* Effectiveness requires both stewardship (the long-term process of surrender to God’s good ways) and a servant-heart (doing what needs to be done). Continual teaching on the Spirit-filled life equips students to experience Christ’s transforming power as well as discover how it translates to whole life stewardship.

3. *Willingness to Lead by Faith:* Students must lead by example and practice. One of the best ways to prepare internationals to be SENT is to grow them as practiced leaders now. Leaders persevere and act in uncertain and hostile environments. A Challenge to lead can often come before students think they are ready. This requires more faith for them and for you, and gives them opportunities to trust the Lord, be trusted and coached by you, and experience grace in leading.

Five Factors

One day you and those that you are reaching out to will graduate from university. How do you determine what to do next and how to successfully follow God wherever He calls you? The Five Factors are five different things to look for in every season in life. With a Vision, a Team, a Plan, Equipping and a Coach you are setting yourself up for success, whether you are trying to reach your campus with the gospel or have an effective presence for God in your workplace.

1. Kingdom Vision: Know where you are headed. Ex. 3:1-12

Being a part of a Christian movement helps shape the vision you have for fulfilling the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Kingdom vision is seeing how you best fit into God's big plan which then influences your decisions and choices now and in the years to come. What you're learning now about reaching others, building them in their faith, and sending them to do the same is laying the foundation for a lifetime of fruitfulness. So as you take inventory today, what would it look like for you to live out your kingdom vision?

1. What passions and gifts do you have? How do you see yourself using those to glorify God and serve others? Do you have a burden for a specific area on campus or group of people in your community?
2. What would it look like for you to live out the Great Commission and the Great Commandment in light of your gifts and ministry experience?
3. The context you're a part of shapes and reinforces your kingdom vision. Is there a movement, church, or organization you can connect with that is already pursuing your vision?
4. Write a short statement communicating what you believe God is calling you to do next.

2. Team: A Great Vision Needs a Great Tea. Ecc. 4:9-12

Without a compelling community, few people can persevere for long. Ecclesiastes 4 says, "It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work...and if one falls down, the other helps." Join with others who are surrendered to Jesus and share a similar kingdom vision. Live missionally with your friends—gather people to pray, plan, encourage one another and live out that vision together.

1. Is there a team in your movement or church that is already pursuing your vision? Could you join them?
2. If not, who do you know that is surrendered to Jesus and shares a similar kingdom vision?
3. Think of at least two friends you can ask to join with you to live out your calling.
4. When can you connect with your team to pray, plan and begin living intentionally on mission?

3. Plan: A Great Vision Needs a Great Plan Gen. 6:9-22

You need a plan with simple, doable steps that will help you begin to implement your God-given vision. It doesn't have to be elaborate. Plan with the end in mind. Having a plan is all about being intentional and taking steps toward your kingdom vision.

1. As your team meets with God, what specific steps of faith is He asking you to take?
2. What are your first three steps to bring about your vision for God's kingdom in and through your life?

4. Ongoing Equipping: Education Doesn't End with Graduation Eph. 4:11-16; Matt. 25:14-30

Successful people are always growing and developing. Effective organizations are always adapting. Championship teams are always improving. Ongoing equipping is anything you need in order to help you live out your kingdom vision. This can include further education, skills, tools, training and resources. These things will help you in your journey of walking with God and serving Him for a lifetime.

1. Ask yourself regularly, "What areas of my life need to be developed to better fulfill my calling?"
2. What could you read to help equip you for your kingdom work? Are there any conferences or other training that will also help?
3. Now, what three things will you do to better equip yourself to live out your kingdom vision?

5. Coach: All 'Greats' Have a Coach 2 Tim. 3:10-14

Scripture stresses the importance of gaining wisdom from others. (Prov. 16:16) We can never underestimate the blessing of another who has gone before us and learned a thing or two along the way. A coach is just that person: someone to answer your questions, help you and your team when you are stuck, and encourage you when the going gets tough.

1. Who is already doing what you have a vision for and what can you learn from them?
2. Is there someone who can mentor you and help you accomplish your vision? Who would that be?

LoM CHECKLIST

Lives as Self-Feeder

- Reads Bible regularly and has a Bible study plan
- Prays regularly
- Has completed PODS
- Connects regularly with a faith community

Practices Contextualized Faith

- Aware of and connected to language specific evangelism & growth resources
- Able to pray in their own language
- Owns and reads Bible in their own language
- Able to share their faith in their own language
- Knows and is connected to believers from their home country/language

Engaged in Cultural Adjustment Process

- Registered with Sending Pad or equivalent
- Working on Sending Handbook
- Engages with other sent ones in coaching groups or roundtable format

Aware of Key Church & Culture Issues

- Dealing with parents/family expectations
- Understands basic theology
- Aware of practical persecution issues
- Understands servant leadership, authority, and humility

Discussion Questions

1. As you heard about leading a life on mission does it leave you feeling excited, anxious or both?
2. The first conversation talks about 'Willingness to Surrender.' What part of this is most difficult for you?
3. The second conversation talks about 'Willingness to be Intentional.' What would it look like to be a servant and a steward?
4. The third conversation is 'Willingness to Lead by Faith.' How have you seen leadership grow you?
5. What do you feel called to do after you graduate? What would it look like to commit yourself to doing that on mission?
6. Read the LoM CHECKLIST. Which of these areas would you like to grow in next?
7. As you think of the students involved in your Bridges International movement, are there any students that could join you as leaders next semester?

Step of Faith

As a step of faith this week, make a list of potential student leaders and begin praying for them. If you think it would be good for them to serve as a leader, meet with them next week to share why you are leader in Bridges International, read through the attached 'Bridges Leadership Team Covenant' together, and ask them to join the Bridges Leadership Team on your campus.

BRIDGES LEADERSHIP TEAM COVENANT

Thank you for prayerfully considering serving on the **Leadership Team** with Bridges International! Bridges International is a caring community of Christ-followers committed to serve, promote social connections and engage in spiritual conversations with international students so that students become leaders internationally. Before you accept a role on the Leadership Team, it is important to understand the purposes and values of the team, as well as the commitment and expectations involved. **The Leadership Team is a core group of aligned students committed to follow Jesus and help others to know and follow Christ by spiritually leading in varying capacities on campus.**

Core Beliefs

Because of the foundational importance of our beliefs, every student leader must affirm our core beliefs:

- *The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, God's infallible written Word, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments.*
- *We believe that it was uniquely, verbally and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that it was written without error (inerrant) in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks. And we believe in the Apostles' Creed:*
- *I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*
- *I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.*
- *I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.'*

Commitment and Expectations

The thing we value most is your relationship with Christ. The Bridges staff team commits to coming alongside you in your walk with God and developing you to become a spiritual leader. As individuals and as a team, we commit to:

Walk by faith

- Love God
- Walk in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
- Seek God in His Word (Psalm 119:105, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Pray consistently (1Tim 2:1-4)
- Obey Christ as we live in purity (Titus 1:6-9, 1 Tim 3:2-4)
- Participate faithfully in a local church

Communicate our faith

- Initiate spiritual conversations with and befriend new students
- Go on follow up appointments with staff, and then lead in following up contacts
- Learn and model how to co-journey with others toward Christ in their cultural context
- Learn how to share the gospel and be familiar with evangelism tools
- Take the initiative to share the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit
- Share your story with individuals, small groups, and meetings

Multiply our faith

- Invest in the lives of seeker students
- Plan and lead outreaches
- Be trained and willing to lead a Discovery Bible Group
- Prioritize conferences & summer missions and recruit others to join (Rom. 10:13-15)
- Have vision for campus and prayerfully seek God to reach it
- Lead a discipleship group with younger believers or mentor other Christian students

Character and Life in Community

- Be faithful to the Lord and to commitments you make to serve Him
- Trust God with your time by being available to what He asks of you
- Have a posture of teachability, always being a learner and in humility to receive feedback from others, especially those in authority over you
- Demonstrate a willingness to be vulnerable and honest and keep one another accountable
- Have a servant heart and leadership like Christ (Phil 2)
- Appreciate the gifts that God has given to others
- Be willing to initiate and deal with conflict in a Christ-like manner when it arises

A *sample* weekly time expectation for a student on a leadership team:

- Attend Leadership Team Meeting or Bridges Gathering (2hr)
- Participate in a discipleship group (1hr)
- Lead a small group, do evangelism, or follow up a new student (1hr)
- Total weekly (4hr)

Before God and my brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, acknowledging that nobody is perfect, nonetheless, I understand these qualifications and invite team members to hold me accountable to them as a leader in Bridges International.

Signed

Date

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This Certifies that

*Has successfully completed the training
program requirement for*

BRIDGES LEADERSHIP TRAINING

and is qualified to lead others through this training.



DATE

BRIDGES TEAM LEADER