



REACH

Pass on
your Faith



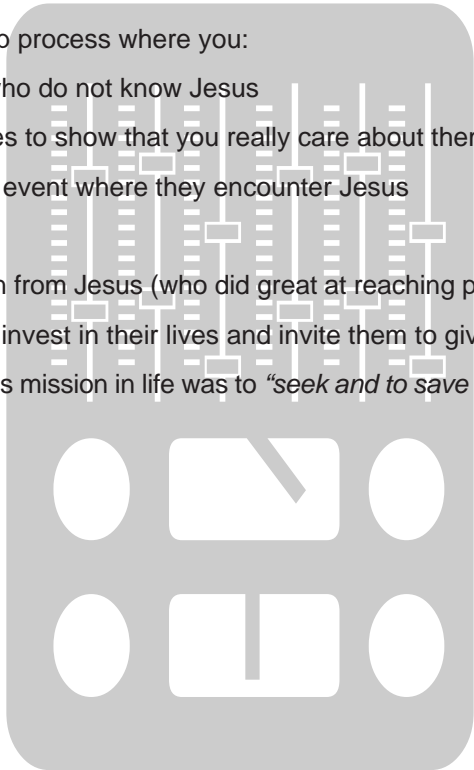
Introduction

So you had an **encounter** with Jesus and he became your Saviour; you are **connecting** with other believers and **growing** in your Christian walk. So what's next??? It is time to pass on what you have received to your friends who have not yet started on the faith journey. Think of the Christian life as a relay race – you receive the baton from someone, run your section of the race and then pass it on to someone else. It is now time to learn how to reach your friends for Jesus.

Reach is a three step process where you:

1. *identify* friends who do not know Jesus
2. *invest* in their lives to show that you really care about them
3. *invite* them to an event where they encounter Jesus

We are going to learn from Jesus (who did great at reaching people) how to identify people who are lost, invest in their lives and invite them to give their lives to him. In fact, he said that his mission in life was to “*seek and to save the lost*” (Luke 19:10).



Your friends, even if they seem happy, are lost if they do not know Jesus as their Saviour.

2. Someone needs to search for it

When that sheep went missing the shepherd went out looking for it until he found it. When the coin went missing the woman tore the place apart and did not give up until she found it. In the story of the prodigal son, the father exercised restraint because he respected his son's right to find freedom and live on his own, but his eyes kept scanning the horizon longing for his return. God cares so much about lost people that he was willing to give his only Son to die for them. God has invited you to join him in his rescue mission to find people who are lost and bring them back to him. Your lost friends must know that they are sinners, that Christ died for their sins and that if they repent and believe in Jesus, they will live forever with God.

3. There is rejoicing when it is found

The shepherd and the woman threw a party when they found what was missing. The son came home and his dad threw the biggest party of all. In Luke 15:10 we read that when one spiritually lost person comes back to God there is great rejoicing in heaven. Do you want to interrupt heaven and cause a party to break out? Then invite your lost friends to encounter Jesus!

When we reach our friends for Jesus, Jesus has promised to be with us (Matthew 28:20) and to give us His power (Acts 1:8). You will know His presence and His power as you:

1. **Identify** the lost friends that God has placed in your life
2. **Invest** in their lives to develop trust and friendship
3. **Invite** them to take the next step in their faith journey

In your every day life you will get opportunities to meet people and to start relationships. You really don't have to struggle or go out of your way. Just look around you and you will find people to reach.

2. Help with obstacles

A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. (Luke 19:2-3)

Zacchaeus was kept from meeting Jesus because he was so short and could not see over the heads of the crowds. There are different reasons why your friends may not know Jesus: maybe they have grown up in a family that practices another religion; maybe they do not believe in the existence of a creator God; maybe they have met Christians who turned them off Christianity or maybe no one has ever taken the time to tell them who Jesus is, and how he came to earth and died to come to give them eternal life. Whatever the reasons, they need your help to overcome obstacles in their way!

3. See who is looking

So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." (Luke 19:4-5)

As you live your life as a follower of Jesus you will attract attention – people will start noticing how you live. They will go out of their way to get your attention – maybe by asking a question about what you believe or what you do on a weekend. It is your responsibility to notice their interest and, like Jesus with Zacchaeus, give them your attention!

1. Move to the next step

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14 -15)

Jesus took some time to move to the third step (invite). He spent years in relative obscurity but at a certain point he knew that his time had come and he started inviting people to be his followers. You must decide to move from investing in your relationship with your lost friend to the final step which is inviting them to meet Jesus. This is probably the most scary step, but if we only do step 1 (identify) and step 2 (invest) we have failed in reaching our friends for Jesus.

2. Invite people to respond

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mark 1:16-17)

Jesus did not wait for people to find him – he went to them – he met them where they were and invited them to follow him. You can invite your lost friend to an event where they can meet and hang out with Christian youth who love Jesus and have an opportunity to hear the gospel and receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord. If you are confident in your faith, you can go right ahead and invite them to accept Jesus as their Saviour!

3. Expect people to respond

At once they left their nets and followed him. (Mark 1:18)

Jesus was not surprised when Simon left his nets and followed him – he expected him to accept his invitation and he was ready when he responded positively. The time and effort you put into the reach process will be rewarded so you must prepare for it. You could offer to get them to the event or give them directions. You should explain what they can expect at the event. If you are confident and believe that God is leading you to invite them to follow Jesus then have a copy of the Encounter book and lead them through the first chapter to introduce them to Jesus and then commit to meet with them for the next five weeks to help them grow their relationship with Jesus. You should also get a Bible to give to them if they do not have one already

Make It Real

To help with the inviting step you can do the following:

1. Get a term program to give to them.
2. Get an Encounter book to use with them.
3. Get a Bible to give them.



Closing Thoughts

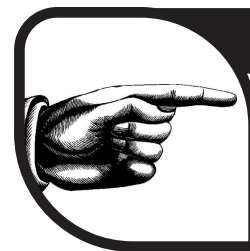
Let's take a quick look at three stories that Jesus told in Luke 15 (grab a Bible and read the chapter before you carry on).

It is the story of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son.

Jesus told the stories to show how God cares about lost people.

1. Something of great value is lost

The missing sheep was important to the shepherd because it was a significant part of his flock. The coin was vital to the woman's survival because it was a tenth of her life savings. And obviously a son is incredibly valuable to his father. Jesus used the stories to show that lost people have great value to God and he wants them to be found.



Step 1: Identify

The first step in reaching out to help people encounter Jesus is **identify** – you identify lost people in your life and decide who to focus on. You probably have 30 people in your class at school; then there are people who live in your street and others in a sports or social club that you are a part of – so where do you start? Who do you pick? Do you use the Eni Meeni Mini Mo strategy? Do you have a lottery draw with their names? Or would a thumb suck work? Maybe not!

Learn from Jesus

Let's look at the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus in the gospel of Luke and see what we can learn from his approach to identifying:

¹Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ²A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. ⁵When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."⁶So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. (Luke 19:1-6)

1. Look out for people

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. (Luke 19:1)

When Jesus entered the town of Jericho he was on his way to another city – he was not on a mission trip or even particularly looking for someone to reach – life was just happening! Reach is not a program or a tactic or something we do on a Saturday morning once a week – it is a lifestyle – it happens as we live our lives.



Step 2: Invest

The second step in reaching out to help people encounter Jesus is **invest** – you invest your life in the lost person so that a genuine relationship can develop.

Learn from Jesus

Let's look at the story of Jesus and Matthew to see what we can learn from his approach to investing:

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" ¹²On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:9 -13)

1. Initiate the relationship

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. (Matthew 9:9)

Jesus went up to Matthew – who, like all tax collectors in his day, was not the kindest or most honest person. Yet, Jesus connected with him as a person and invited him to follow him. You need to look out at school or in your community for people your age who do not know Jesus and take the first step towards starting a relationship with them.

It is an investment – which means that it will most likely cost you something!



2. Get personally involved

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. (Matthew 9:10)

Jesus was not afraid to hang out with lost people. He went to dinner at Matthew's house and did not leave when his dodgy friends arrived. You will never reach your friends for Jesus if you don't get close to them. Someone once said, "You can impress someone from a distance but you can only impact them from up close". You have to close the gap if you want to reach people. You must put yourself in a place where people can open themselves up to your life. This is the only way to develop trust in the friendship. But isn't that really dangerous? Won't they pull you away from Jesus? That is a real danger. Let's carry on with the story and see what advice Jesus has for us.

3. Know your purpose

When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:11-13)

Jesus knew the dangers involved in spending time with lost people, but he was not there just to party with them! He had a clear purpose to call sinners to follow him. You need boundaries in your reach relationships. Don't put yourself in an unhealthy place with the person or encourage them to be dependant on you. It would not be wise to hang around your lost friends unless you are praying that God will keep you safe and help you reach them for Jesus. Your friends are "sick" and they need "mercy" – they are lost and they need help to find their way to Jesus – and you may be the only person who can help them find their way!



Make It Real

For each lost friend you have identified think of an action to take to invest in the friendship:

My Lost Friends

An Action to Invest in Them

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Make It Real

If your cell phone provider said that you can identify 3 friends in your life and call them for free – who would be on your list?

My Close Friends:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If God asked you to identify three people your age that do not have a relationship with Jesus – who would be on your list?

My Lost Friends:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Congratulations! You have just *identified* the people that God wants you to reach! Even if you only can think of 1 or 2 lost friends right now, that's fine! Don't forget that reaching happens as you go about your life – and in time God will show you who you need to reach. Once you have identified your lost friends, you are ready to move on to step 2 in the Reach process!



Step 3: Invite

The third step in reaching out to help people encounter Jesus is **invite** – you invite people to take the next step in their journey towards a relationship with God.

Learn from Jesus

Let's look at the story of Jesus and Simon to see what we can learn from his approach to inviting:

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" ¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ¹⁸At once they left their



nets and followed him. (Mark 1:14-18)