

LESSON 9 Contributing to Your Community

In most continents and almost every country the Red Cross Association is at work, serving humanity. They help people in times of disaster, such as famine, or heavy storms, or earthquakes. The Red Cross is supported by contributions, or gifts. People give money, supplies, and blood so the Red Cross will be ready to help when trouble comes. People contribute not because they will get something in return, but because they desire to help others in emergency and trouble.

It is the same with our contributions to our community. We do not help because we will receive some great gift in return. Rather, we contribute our time, money, and talents to community needs because it is right and good to do so. In this lesson we will see how we can prepare ourselves to serve our community better.

The Plan

- A. Preparing to Serve
- B. Becoming Involved
- C. Contributing Skills

The Goals

1. Identify ways to prepare yourself for a Christian witness in your community.
2. Indicate ways to influence your community for God.
3. Show how your skills can be used to help your community.

A. PREPARING TO SERVE

Goal 1. Identify ways to prepare yourself for a Christian witness in your community.

Before we can serve someone, we must be prepared for the service we are giving. The greatest service Christians can give to their communities is to win souls. Here are three ways to prepare yourself to be a witness in your community:

1. *Have personal assurance of salvation.* How can you be sure of your salvation? By having a secure relationship with the Lord. You can do this by praying and studying the Word of God. When you know the author of a book you have a greater desire to read the book. As you get to know God better, you will have a greater desire to read His Word—the Bible.

Allow your trust in God to be based on what the Bible says, and not on how you feel. If you feel that you have failed, cheer up. God loves you! Accept His love and place your faith in His Word rather than in your feelings. If for some reason you have begun to doubt your relationship with Him, remember the verses in Ephesians 2:4–5:

Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even

when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

None of us can earn God’s love; therefore, we must accept His free gift and live in a way that shows God we are thankful. Paul asks,

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
 Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or
 famine or nakedness or danger or sword?
 ...No, in all these things we are more than
 conquerors through him who loved us.
 (Romans 8:35, 37)

When we accept Christ as our Savior, we can have complete security in our salvation because of His mercy, and not because of our feelings.

2. *Know how to lead someone to God.* Have you ever had someone say to you, “Follow me; I know the way,” and then you ended up lost? That is not a pleasant feeling. We like to follow people who really do know the way.

If we want to lead other people to God, we must know the way. Many verses in the Bible help us to lead someone to Christ. In the following chart are a few verses that you may memorize to get you started:

Verse	Message
Romans 3:23	All people have sinned and need a Savior.
Romans 6:23	People deserve death, but God offers life.
John 3:16	God has provided a sacrifice for our sins.
1 John 1:9	If we confess our sins, God will forgive us.
1 John 5:13	We can know we have eternal life.

If you would like to use these verses to show someone how to find Christ, memorize the verses. Put the page number of the first verse inside the cover of your Bible. Then at the bottom of the page where the first verse is found, put the page number of the next verse. Do this until you have listed all five

of the verses. Then you will have a simple but effective way to use your Bible to lead someone to Christ. You are prepared to serve. As you find other verses that will help you to witness, mark them in the same way.

3. *Depend on the Holy Spirit.* No matter how well you know the Bible, you must still depend on the Holy Spirit to help you. He will give you guidance and will bring the right words to your mind as you witness.

The Holy Spirit draws people to God and makes them sorry for their sin. He knows the condition of each person’s heart. As you pray for His direction, He will help you to serve your community through your personal witness.

Application

1 Without looking back, list the three ways you can prepare to serve your community as a soul winner.

- a)
- b)
- c)

2 Write in the correct word(s) to complete each statement below.

- a) I will have greater desire to read the book if I personally know the
- b) My relationship to God does not depend on how I
- c) It is by God’s grace that I have been
- d) To properly lead someone to a personal experience of salvation, I must know
- e) I will receive help in leading others to God from the



B. BECOMING INVOLVED

Goal 2. Indicate ways to influence your community for God.

Christians can serve and influence their communities in many ways. We should be better citizens, neighbors, and friends because we are Christians. Our community should be better because we are there. If we hope to influence our community for God, we must take part in community activities. But we must decide which activities are good, and which ones would harm our Christian testimony. How do we decide?

First of all, when you need to decide whether to become involved in an activity, ask yourself: “Is it against basic Christian teaching according to the Bible?” If the answer is no, then ask yourself this question: “Can I be a witness for God, enjoy the activity, and come away unharmed?” If the answer is yes and if you have prayerfully considered it, then go.

If you do go and find that the activity does not meet the standards given above, then leave, and thank the Lord for teaching you a lesson. The Holy Spirit will give you wisdom in making decisions such as this one.

Christians can involve themselves in their communities and let their lights shine in many ways. For example, they can be good citizens by notifying the police if they see a crime being committed. They can help provide wholesome activities for the youth and/or elderly of the community.

Christian parents and other Christians can take an interest in the local schools and help teachers and leaders in whatever ways possible. You might even be able to help get Christian teachers for your school. Show an interest in getting better school buildings, books, and libraries if they are needed.

Another good way to influence your community is to become friends with community leaders such as police officers, teachers, doctors, and those who operate businesses. Look for opportunities to witness to them about what Christ has done in your life. Try to get acquainted with your mayor and

representatives in your local government. Remember, they need the Lord, too.

It would be impossible to list all the ways we can serve our community. When we are given opportunity to vote for leaders or laws that encourage righteous living, it is our Christian responsibility to do so. If the community is trying to raise funds for a worthy project such as a hospital or an orphanage, Christians should help with these projects.

In all our relationships, it is important that we be examples of Christianity. This is especially true in our business dealings. The Bible tells us that we should “set an example for the believers in speech in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

Application

- 3** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.
- a)** Christians can attend any kind of activity as long as they testify about Christ there.
 - b)** If Christians attend a function and find that it is not according to Bible teaching about what Christians should do, they should leave.
 - c)** It is possible to attend any function as long as you do not let people there know you are a Christian.
 - d)** Being a Christian should make you a better citizen, neighbor, and friend.

- 4** Circle the letter in front of good examples of Christian community spirit.
- a)** John has decided not to vote because he does not care who is chosen to lead the community.
 - b)** James has offered to organize youth activities at the school after the soccer games.
 - c)** Ruth goes to the hospital twice a week to help sick people by reading to them, writing letters for them, or visiting with them.
 - d)** Mary will not attend school activities because she is not as well educated as the teachers.
 - e)** Robert saw a young man rob a storekeeper, but he did not report it because he did not want to get involved.
 - f)** Philip makes it a point to smile and greet people on the street, such as the postman, the policeman, or the neighbors.
- 5** Try to become friends with at least two leaders in your community this month. Write here the names of those you will try to get to know.

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C. CONTRIBUTING SKILLS

Goal 3. Show how your skills can be used to help your community.

John Brown is a Christian who gave his life to Christ many years ago. Everyone in his community respects him as a good worker and an honorable man. Mr. Brown is also known in his community as a good builder. When the mayor asked for volunteer help to build a recreation area downtown, Mr. Brown offered to direct the new building project.

Notice the important aspects of this story:

1. John Brown is an excellent builder with a good reputation.
2. He has offered his skill to help in a community project that will provide enjoyment for many people.

These two things are of interest to the community. Many people probably do not know that Mr. Brown is also a Christian. However, everyone involved in the project will come to know that he is a Christian as they work with him. He loves God, and Christian principles will shine out of his life.

Perhaps you have skills that your community needs. Can you offer your services as a contribution to everyone? If you can, you will be a blessing to others, and you will have an opportunity to give your Christian testimony by using your skill to help others. The community needs many skills. Farming, building, nursing, caring for small children, and helping to clean or beautify your community are only a few ways to be involved. What is your special ability? Have you offered it to God and your community?

Application

6 Discuss two ways your skills can be used as a witness to your community.

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7 Think of some ways you have been involved in your community by using your skills? List them in your notebook.

8 Name one way that you will become more involved in your community.

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Check Your Answers

5 Your answer

- 1 a)** Have personal assurance of salvation
- b)** Know how to lead someone to God
- c)** Depend on the Holy Spirit

6 Your answer. As you contribute your skills, people will see your Christian witness and you will be able to lead them to Christ. You will bless your community by your attitude and involvement.

- 2 a)** author.
- b)** feel.
- c)** saved.
- d)** God's Word.
- e)** Holy Spirit.

7 Your answer. Can you see ways that you could do more?

3 Statements **b)** and **d)** are true.

8 Your answer. God will bless you as you give freely to others what He has given to you.

4 b), c) and **f)** are good examples of Christian community spirit.

