



**5 SECRETS**  
to Becoming A Highly Effective Christian!



## LET ME INTRODUCE YOU

- I hope you read this

### ***“The Center of God’s Universe”***

If you love Maywood Christian Camp, like many of us do, don’t forget we are enjoying the sacrifice and effort of those who have gone before us.

Heading into Maywood’s 50th year celebration I got to thinking. A lot has happened since those 3 couples put the finishing touches on the first cabin and decided to stay the night and christen the camp. Lem and Helen Moore, Billy Joe and Margaret Fredrick and Jerry and Mamie Jenkins were the couples, and that first night the first prank was pulled. The men snuck around the back of the cabin and scared the ladies by making noises with an old bull horn.

A few weeks later the first group of “real” kids showed up. ER Bruce directed the week. Mamie Jenkins was the lifeguard (she couldn’t swim). I was there and so were about 50 others.

We’ve come a long way from “sulfur water”, cold showers (get some “old timer” to tell you about the original boys bath house), swimming in the lake and running for cover during an “Evangelistic Hour” when the rain blew during in the days before the “tabernacle” was constructed. Last year we had 2000 campers and thousands of others who were a part of our camp. As

Jeff Goff recently posted: “I never cease to be amazed at the lengths some people go to to support and promote our little “Center of God's Universe.” I am surrounded by greatness!”

Much has changed. Maywood is now considered by many “the cadillac” of Christian camps. But as much has changed - just as much has NOT. “Rise ’n' Shine” has been shouted, whispered, sung and “morning crew laughed” into cabins roughly 2500 times and there have been just as many “Evangelistic Hour” services. At least once a week every week the campers will gather under the stars and hear someone say “every one look up at the stars” and then talk about the glory of God. There have been 10’s of thousands of courtships. “Round the mess hall you must go”, “skit night”, “Sadie’s Hawkins”, and “Skeet Hunting” has been played out more times than anyone could count. And only God knows how many have made the decision to become life-long disciples under those stars or how many have had their sins washed away by the grace of God down at the Pool of Siloam or back home after they’d had time to think, pray more and talk it out with others in their lives. Thanks to all over the last 50 seasons of Maywood Christian Camp who have aided to making this a special place to us all.



I have this “friend” who writes and about a year ago he wrote: “The church will lose 100% of it’s young people

between 18-34...” That is unacceptable. I also believe he is wrong. BUT even one lost is one too many. And, none of you want to be that one that is lost from the Lord! Maywood Christian Camp has been in the mission of trying to help keep that percentage low for 50 years now. We have failed at times but Maywood Christian Camp has also been a spiritual lifeline for many young people (many adults too - after all one of our tag lines has always been “For the Young and The Young At Heart”).



It was a rare Saturday, I wasn't speaking anywhere and only had one appointment. The rest of my family was out of town. I should have been going over my sermon notes for Sunday but instead I started thinking about this 50th year and remembered a seminal moment in my life. I was standing beside the pool. Dad had just baptized another camper and I was hearing for the thousandth time the same speech he made every time he did that. He stood in the pool - the most effective Christian I have ever known - sharing and smiling. At that moment I did not realize he was sharing the simple secrets of his own effectiveness. His words ring in my ear every time I baptize someone - and even now as I write this.

“God has forgiven all of your sins. If you want to be faithful for the rest of your life here are some things you should do. I've never seen anyone who did these things who did not remain faithful. Number one...” He continued through five essential elements for faithful living, or spiritual success. This year we are going to look at what you need to do to be faithful to the Lord for the rest of your life. These are words to build your life on. Whether your 9, 19 or 99 - they work. The sooner you can put them into practice the more you will grow in your faith and joy in the Lord and the sooner you'll become a Highly Effective Christian.

Why do some of you come every year to Maywood all messed up but a week later you leave on a spiritual high? It's because here you nurture the spiritual person: You feed him, you exercise him, you listen to him. You pray, you praise, you participate with others who are trying to live right and you listen as God's Word is preached and taught. You, are transformed by six simple days - **imagine** what you could be like if that became a part of your every day. If prayer, praise, participation in God's Work and partaking of His Word was a habit.

So, are you ready to learn the secrets?

**A note as you begin: I don't want to indicate at any point that these are easy. They are not. And anyone who tells you they are is lying to you. Your teacher, your counselor, your camp director, your parents and your preacher all struggle to be all they want to be in these. They are challenging but they are worth the effort.**

## **SECRET #1 - Monday**

**"Everyday say something to God"**

Secret Number One to becoming a Highly Effective Christian: Prayer

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:17

The word "prayer" is used 397 times in the New King James Bible. It is first used in Genesis 20:7 where God in a dream speaks to a king who has done wrong innocently. But that is not the first time the concept of prayer is in your Bible. That's in 4:26 "Then men began to call on the name of the Lord." And that is really what prayer is - it is calling on the name of the Lord.

Prayer for the Christian is our lifeline. It is an ongoing talk with God. When we stop talking with those we love we have lost the relationship. Prayer is not fancy language in a church building - it is a conversation with our Father. Our public prayers are a little more formal because we are leading the thoughts of others and not just expressing our personal requests, but we are mistaken if we believe God hears anyone based upon eloquence or as Jesus put it, that we are heard "for our much speaking" (Matthew 6:7 KJV). Prayer is never a performance or a time to show off - it is a time to ask

God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart" (Philippians 4:6 GNT).

Remember with awesomeness and seriousness "we are addressing not only our Father, but the God of all the Universe!" There is a reverence about talking to Him. He is not our good buddy down the road that we play pickup ball with - He is God. It is not our goal to bring God down to our level but Jesus came to bring us to the Father.



## **NUMBERS DON'T LIE**

Here's a few stats for you to think about:

U.S. News and the Internet site Belief.net funded a poll to learn more about why, how, where and when people pray. Here is a summary of some of their findings:

- 75% percent were Christian (it shocks me to imagine that 25% of those who pray are NOT Christians).
- 64% say they pray more than once a day.
- 56% say they most often pray for family members.
- 41% say that their prayers are answered often.
- 1.5% say that their prayers are never answered.
- Over 73% say when their prayers are not answered, the most important reason is because they did not fit God's plan.
- 5% say that they pray most often in a house of worship.
- 79% say that they pray most often at home.

And one more: A Gallup poll finds 76% of Americans favor "a constitutional amendment to allow voluntary prayer in public schools. That's amazing!

## HOW DO I GET FROM *HERE* TO *EVERYDAY*?

We all agree that prayer is a good thing and that we ought to pray. But I am amazed: A lengthy and in depth study conducted in my own mind reveals the non surprising fact that I've never met the Christian who believed she/he prayed enough!

*We'll talk in a few minutes about how prayer can become too routine, but there is a difference between meaningless routine and important habit. We all want to pray but how do we challenge ourselves, discipline ourselves so that prayer becomes a natural part of our lives?*



**Take a few minutes right now in your class** and talk about ways that we can encourage each other to be “constant in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

Here are a few things we want you to remember when it comes to prayer:

1. Be aware of what prayer is: It's talking to God. No fancy language. No code. Just talking to our Father. Now, when I talked to my dad I always remembered to respect him. Surely no one has to tell you that the same must be true of talking with the one who made the whole everything.

2. Begin: The time to start is NOW. (Teacher: take a minute in class and let everyone pray a silent prayer).
3. Be consistent: Maybe the second most important thing to remember when it comes to prayer is simply to remember!
4. Set aside time: The best way to remember to pray is to set a specific time to pray (first thing in the morning, before you go to bed, before a meal, etc).
5. Don't just pray at those times you sit aside - Pray “on the fly.” When you see something beautiful breath a prayer of thanks. When you see or hear of someone hurting pray for them. When you face a problem, temptation, or dangerous emotion (anger, bitterness, etc) pray right then.
6. Make prayer about others TOO. Don't be selfish and just talk to God about yourself. Don't just pray “selfies.” Pray about other's needs, about friends who aren't in love with the Lord, about people who are struggling.



*If you ever stop praying you are in trouble spiritually.*

One of the wonderful things about prayer is that you will never stop growing in prayer. But as with most personal growth - listen carefully here - you rarely see it when it is happening. As you exercise your habit of prayer you will find yourself growing in prayer. Praying more, looking forward to telling God what is happening in your life. So. Everyday talk to God.

## **FOR THE TEENS:**

This is much deeper than just a routine - but it is also a routine. There is a danger that of prayer becoming nothing more than a routine. Jesus called them vain prayers - just a prayer to check it off a list or to look good in public or in front of other believers. We will be judged by our idle words and I've seen many a man who could lead an eloquent prayer publicly but who lived an empty life privately. Who's words did not match his walk. Whose verbiage did not jive with his vive.

It is our hope that the routine leads to a richness in your relationship with the Lord. It is not a guarantee in any way - but without the development of a routine it is doubtful that you will ever develop the relationship.

You're old enough to hear this now. Your prayer life is up to you! Start praying.



## **FOR THE PRE-TEENS:**

I can't remember the first time I heard someone tell me about "how to remember who to pray for" but I've never forgotten it. When I pray I think about the fingers on my hand.

Your "pinky" or little finger - remember to pray for the little people: Children and little babies.

Your "ring finger" or the second finger - remember to pray for your family, your mom and dad,

grandparents, the people in your house and maybe for marriages everywhere.

The "big" finger or middle finger - remember to pray for the big/important people. For world leaders, and people in government, for your mayor, your principal.

The "pointing" finger - remember to pray for the teachers and preachers in your life. For those who point to you and direct you.

The "thumb" - pray for yourself. That you will grow in Christ and be the person you want to be for Christ, for your own needs and desires.

## **IN CLOSING - Let's use some common sense here:**

God is first and foremost a Father. He's a good Father not a bad one - in fact he's the best one. So in attempting to understand God that is one way to go about it.

A good Father will always want to here from His children. He will want to hear from them regularly but if they stop communicating with Him he still loves them and if they start again He wants to hear from them again

A good Father cares for all children and will do what He can to help anyone BUT He cares more directly for His own children.

A good Father expects His children to respect Him.

A good Father wants His children to learn to do things on their own but always is there for them.

Everyday talk to God.

### **ONE MORE GOOD THING:**

49% of teens say they would be likely to attend prayer meetings before or after school. (Foster Letter, 6/04).  
How about starting something big at your school?  
Encourage others to pray with you.



### **ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION:**

We'll talk about it on Wednesday but the greatest concern that many of us who love Maywood have is that your faith not grow JUST while you are here.

Write out a prayer below for your own spiritual growth. Keep it and go back and read it once a month this year.

Why do you think it is hard to say in a group of your peers - "Let's pray?" Even when you are with others who are Christians.

What does the Bible mean by "pray without ceasing"?

## SECRET #2 - Tuesday

### “Everyday say something for God”

Secret Number Two to becoming a Highly Effective

Christian: Evangelize

Memory Verse: Romans 5:8-9

EVANGELISM! I just scared you a little didn't I? Me too. But that is because we have come to believe that evangelism is a work, a program, a task. It's not you know. Here's how dad said it in the pool that day:

***“Every day say something for God.”***

Don't get scared but I'm going to toss a little language your way. The word “evangelize” actually is from “middle English” (is that sort of like Middle Earth in the Hobbit?). And really simply means “To well announce” or “announce well” or “bring good news.” So forget about “evangelism” and start thinking about “bringing good news” to people about Christ and what He did for you (1 Peter 3:15).



Now, where were we? Yes, learning the secrets of highly effective spiritual people. What does evangelism or sharing good news have to do with that? Well, it's pretty simple - we share/talk about what we love and are committed to.

Here's one of the neatest things about Christianity - it is action. It's really meant more as a verb. We use it as a noun but the concept is more action than “nounish.”

A Christian is someone who behaves like Christ would - or at least is trying to. It is not a sideline event. We want to be in the game - God puts us in. You are in the starting lineup (2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 12:18 - hey teach', have your students turn to these two verses and discuss what they mean). You are His star player in fulfilling the role He has for your life.

God wants you in the game for Him. Evangelism is sometimes a sit down Bible study and most always will eventually be face to face helping another understand God's Will for his/her life. But if that is all we think about when we think about evangelism we need to think twice. Our mission is to sow the seed (Luke 8).

Say something. Confess why you live like you live. We are not good because we are boy scouts or good members of society or just 'cause we're trying to be good little boys and girls or 'cause Santa may be watching, but because we belong to God. Tell somebody. Yes, you need to share your smile and kindness but you also need to share why you smile and why you are kind. It is because of our Savior who gives us our salvation.

In one way it is going to become harder to talk on God's behalf as more and more people in our culture choose not to believe in God or choose a religion that is not Christian. But in another way it becomes a greater opportunity as not “everybody” in our circles



will be “Christian.” Casual Christianity is going to go away - actually it never really existed.



There are a couple of questions you need to hear about this:

1. Do you really believe what your church going says you believe or do you just go cause your parents are there or your friends are there or it's the popular thing to do? Is it just a social event or is it a life thing? Do you really believe that Jesus died on a cross - dead, dead? And that He rose from the grave and will someday return and take those who love Him and follow Him with Him and the others will burn forever in Hell? That's a hard question, but if we don't believe that, maybe it explains the 98% who never talk to others about Him.

2. Do you care about others? Do you want them to be lost or saved? If you do, surely you'll at least squeak a little - if not shout from the rooftop the hope of Jesus.

Wow, did I really just write those two questions?

So, be a Christian: Talk about God. Thank Him openly. Espouse His values clearly. Explain why you live as you live. It's not that hard. You already evangelize every day! Remember how we defined it: “bring good news”? You hear a good song and you tell someone about it - you're a music evangelist. You see a new

movie or TV show and you talk to a friend about it - you're a cinema evangelist. You eat at a neat place and you invite someone to go there with you - you're a foodie evangelist. You are an evangelist about every one of those things. So, if you really love the Lord and believe in God and are thankful for what He has done in your life or enjoy His Family - you'll naturally tell other people about it. Put in as few a words as possible - WE TALK ABOUT WHAT WE LIKE!

### **NUMBERS DON'T LIE:**

\* Eighty-two percent of the unchurched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited.

\* Only two percent of church members invite an unchurched person to church. Ninety-eight percent of church-goers never extend an invitation in a given year.

\* 7 out of 10 unchurched people have never been invited to church in their whole lives.

—Dr. Thom Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door*

### **HOW DO I GET FROM *HERE* TO *THERE*?**

This one may actually be the easiest of the 5 to make into a habit. I could be wrong but I don't think I am. We all talk about what we like and what we love. Guys, you don't have an problem talking about the girl you think is beautiful or a car you want. Girls you can talk all day about a new store you like or a guy you think is “all that.” Sorry for the stereo-type there but just proving my point. So maybe the key to turning this to habit is to start noticing things you love about Christ and His

Family the church. If you never focus on Him or if all you ever do is complain about “your church” - then you’ll struggle here. But I’ve been a part of eight congregations in my life and everyone of them had problems BUT they all had wonderful things about them too. And you can chose to focus on and highlight the good things and good people in the church you worship with.

Start small. In one way I want to say that if you make too big a deal out of this you’ll make yourself sick with worry about when and what and who and how. You’ll get dry throat and sweaty palms. On the other it is a big deal. But let me make is simple for you. Start with something like a natural response. When someone comments on what a pretty day it is or anything positive - just respond “Isn’t God good?” Or when someone tells you about a problem they are facing say “I’ll pray about that.” Start with making those a habit and you’ll be amazed at what God will do with you.

### **TALK IT OUT:**

The Bible is full of examples of “saying something for Jesus everyday”, here are a few verses to get you going. Take a few minutes and talk about how these apply to us (and to you) today:

Matthew 28:18-20 “Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son

and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (NLT).

2 Corinthians 5:20 “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (ESV).

Mark 5:19 “Jesus...said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you” (NKJV).

Luke 9:23 “And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me” (NASV).

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (NKJV).

### **FOR THE TEENS:**

You have a chance like no one else. The depth of your friendships and the openness of other teens at this point in their lives. No one may have told you this before - they may have told you that you are the church of the future - but you are the church already, TODAY and you have more open doors to share the gospel than any other demographic in the church. So, here are a few tips I learned from an expert:

1. Collect people: Keep a list. Take a small card (like the size of a business card - your teacher may have some for you. Teachers: have some for them :) and write three names on it of people you want to see become Christians. Keep that card with you at all times. It will remind you in every conversation with them that you have a bigger mission.
2. Pray for opportunities: Pull the card out and ask God to help you find the chance, the open door to talk to them about Him.
3. Bring God into the conversation: Now, look for times in your interaction with others to talk to them. Look for times to invite them to a devo or a service project or a trip or a worship service.
4. Don't close doors: Watch your mouth. Remember you may never lead the person to the Lord, but you may be the person who leads them close enough to Him that someone else can. Evangelism is not about winning arguments but about winning souls. If you win every "fight" about the Bible - you misunderstand what the Bible is for and you'll send more people away from God than to Him. You must NEVER compromise truth, but you also need to keep the "bigger" picture of their soul in mind.
5. Ask: Is there a reason why you have not been baptized? I'm amazed every now and then when I know someone who I know knows what they need to do but hasn't done it what happens when I just ask them if they are ready. And they are!

By the way: Is there a reason why you have not been baptized?

From the birthday of the church to today the answer to "how do I become a Christian?" is clear:

1. It starts with faith that Jesus is the Son of God (John 3:16; 11:25; Mark 16:15-16).
2. Someone who has the faith to believe surely will be willing to admit that belief. The Bible calls this confessing (Matthew 10:32; Acts 8:37).
3. If you believe He is God's Son who rose from the dead to live forever then to turn your life around to His way of teaching just makes sense. This is repentance. A desire to turn from living for self and a decision to live for Him (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:11).
4. And the person who believes and decides to live for Jesus will naturally do what He says (John 14:15) and He teaches that one must be baptized (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-38).

So why haven't you?

**IN CLOSING - Let's use some common sense here:**

How do you think God plans on helping your friend learn about Him?

One of the most misused and misunderstood verses in the Bible is 1 Peter 3:15. "...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (ESV). Notice two things in this verse. 1. This verse in NO way is about Bible knowledge as some have indicated. It is about the HOPE that is in us: The

hope of heaven, the hope we have in Christ. You'll learn tomorrow how important Bible knowledge is for our spiritual lives but that's not the point of this verse. This verse is about being ready to share your hope. To do that you need to know what you did to become a Christian and what the Lord did for you when you did that. 2. It talks about our attitude as we teach others. It is not a condescending, or "I'm better, smarter than you are" attitude, but one that is gentle, meek, kind, respectful of the other person, and of their beliefs and understanding. It cares more about the person than winning a fight or a discussion over the Bible.

Now, notice this: God works through His People. If your friend becomes a Christian it will probably be because somebody talked to them about it. There is not a single thing in the Bible that leads me to believe anything but that it is God's plan to use you for that purpose.



### **ONE MORE THING:**

Really 98% of those who claim to be Christians don't invite anyone to church in a given year? WOW! I find that hard to imagine. Do you?

### **ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION:**

How can we start today? Can you be an evangelist at Maywood? HINT: Remember what the word means.

Set up a mock discussion with a friend who is not a Christian and play it out in class.

Why do you think we are most hesitant about this habit?

DO IT - teacher: Provide each student with a small note card (maybe half a 3x5 card) challenge them to write the names of three of their friends on that piece of paper and to start praying that these friends become Christians.

## SECRET #3 - Wednesday

“Everyday let God say something to you”

Secret Number Three to becoming a Highly Effective Christian: Bible Study

Memory Verse: Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 2:15

I don't like “forwarded jokes, stories, chain letters or gimmicks” but I do like this and I think I first saw it in an email forwarded to me:

Dear Lord,

So far I've done all right.

I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent.

I'm really glad about that.

But in a few minutes, God,

I'm going to get out of bed.

And from then on,

I'm going to need a lot more help.



Do you wonder **why**? Why you start the day with such great intentions and stumble and crumble? Why you “go forward” in repentance and then “fall back” in regret? Why you begin so well but bottom out so woefully? Why you crash and burn in your spiritual life? Why you just can't seem to get it all right and keep it all right when it comes to your relationship with God?

I can't read your heart and I haven't been following you around - but I know why. Do you really want to know why? It's all the junk food you're eating! You've gotten fat and lazy and just plain unhealthy. I'm not talking about Twinkies and Ding Dongs (oh man, one of those would be good right now), Pizza or Yeast Rolls (have you tried Dinelli's bread sticks?! I'm a Dinelli's evangelist!) - I'm talking about something much more spiritual. Your intake to your mind and soul and spirit. What are you eating?

If you are spiritually flabby and anemic it's because of ONE reason and only one reason you are not spending time in the Bible and applying it to your daily life. If your faith is not growing it is not because of your parents, your preacher or your pastors. It's not the hypocrisy of others or the pressure from peers. It's because of YOU.

That's not me talking it's the Holy Spirit: “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11 ESV). If you find yourself giving in to satan it's probably because you have way too little of God in your reserve tank - you don't have the defenses stored up to do battle with that evil one who is dishonest and tricky.

*“Nothing will do more for your spiritual health than memorizing the Word of God.”* I remember where I was when I first saw those words. They are powerful and true - might I even say “life-changing”? Do me a favor -

read that sentence a loud in your class together.  
Repeat it together.

Now before you say “I can’t” let me remind you. You remember the directions to your house, you pin for your bank card, your favorite sports team’s lineup, when your favorite TV show comes on, who sings your favorite song and most of the lyrics of it. No, you have no memory problem - you just memorize what you determine is most important to you. I don’t want to beat you up on this. satan has done a good job selling us junk food. What he’s selling is attractive. Give me a choice of just what I want - I’ll pick “Cow Tails” over broccoli every time! The secret is to think about what is best in the LOOONNNGGG RUN for you. A little junk food won’t kill you. Nobody dies from one Krispy Kreme Creme Filled Chocolate-covered doughnut. But if that is your primary source of “nutrition” you’re gonna have a hard time fitting into last year’s jeans. We’ve learned well to choose easy over hard - it’s why America is out of shape - that’s true physically and spiritually!



Just in case I wasn’t real clear, listen carefully: *There can be no enduring, authentic, meaningful spiritual growth divorced from the Word of God.* God told me that. He said: “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17 NKJV). If you want your faith to grow - read the Bible more.

I want to let you in on a very important little secret (actually it’s a HUGE secret, it just sounds better to call it a little one). Ready? *God will help you.* He has “provided us all things that pertain to life...” (2 Peter 1:3). He “will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to endure” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Your image of the Heavenly Father may be of an earthly one who is overbearing, and has a hair-pin temper, you never know what His mood is so you always walk gingerly around. But I want you to remember these words for the rest of your life: God is on your side! Go ahead, whisper it to the person next to you “God is on your side.” Chant it as a class or holler it as a cheer. **GOD IS ON YOUR SIDE!** That may be the news flash of the century. But He can’t help you if you won’t let Him.

If you are not reading the word of God you are not growing spiritually like God wants you to. But if you really want to be a highly effective Christian **the most important step** is time spent listening to God in His Word.

### **NUMBERS DON’T LIE:**

*According to the most recent survey from the American Bible Society 88% of American’s own a Bible and 61% wish they read it more. The average household in America has 4.4 Bibles. BUT: 57% only read their Bibles four times a year or less. And, here’s the most shocking stat of all - while people in foreign countries*

*travel miles, stand in line and risk their life to own a Bible - in our country, according to a 2014 worldmag.org survey only 9% read their Bible daily!*

#### **BIBLE FACTS FROM AN OLD CAMP BOOK:**

The word "Bible" means "the book"

The Old Testament has 39 books and the New Testament has 27

40 wrote the Bible over a period of about 1500 years.

#### **HOW DO I GET THERE FROM HERE?**

We live in a pretty neat time in history: We have greater access to the Bible than ever before. Yet it goes unread by so many. You can download the Bible for free on your phone and it will remind you to read it or it will just read it to you. Yet we don't take the time to click a couple of buttons and do it.

On no. I'm going to use a very bad word here: Discipline. The only way for you to become a daily Bible reader is to develop the habit of reading the Bible every day. It takes making yourself until it becomes a part of you. And just like going to the gym one time does not take off 20 pounds or make you a body builder or make you strong physically, reading the

Bible one day won't make you what you need to be spiritually. It's the weight of habit that changes things.

Get on a plan - that's how you accomplish any task well.

Get a team - How can we help each other?

Get a reward - how about heaven for starters? But in the short time give yourself a reward for competing a week, then a month without missing a day.



#### **TALK IT OUT:**

Here's a couple of questions to get you started:

1. Does the easy access to the Bible make reading it consistently easier or harder? Why?
2. What could the people in THIS CLASS do to encourage each other to read the Bible daily?
3. Is Bible reading enough? Discuss James 1:22-27. What do we call someone who professes to be a follower of the Word of God but is not really? What can we do to keep from being "that guy?"

## **FOR THE TEENS:**

It was illegal to read or own a Bible in parts of England in 1409. The punishment for memorizing the Bible in English was death. While many brave people gave their life so that you could read your Bible, ultimately the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg in 1455 set in course events that law could not contain. Men like Tyndale and John Rogers were tortured and burned at the stake for translating the Bible. Those in positions of government would search houses asking the owners if they owned a Bible. The homeowner had two options: 1) Produce their Bible and watch it be destroyed in the streets outside their home. 2) Conceal their Bible and risk a search of their home. If the Bible was found, the family would be taken into their street with their Bible and executed. Many times the pages of the Bible were soaked with the blood of those who treasured it. One of these 'blood-bought' Bibles is in a private collection in Texas. (Info from: <http://www.dadislearning.com/2014/01/28/bible-is-special/>)



There's only one way to stop the Bible! Don't read it! Kings, priests, rulers, tyrants, even satan himself cannot stop it - but you can! By simply not reading it. If you don't read it, it might as well be outlawed.

## **FOR THE PRE-TEENS:**

Start NOW. If you spend 15 minutes studying the Bible every day beginning TODAY you will be a Bible scholar before you turn 20. You will increase multiples of times the opportunity for God to use your life to bless others.

## **IN CLOSING:**

Read the Bible:

It answers the questions you need most.

It has proven trustworthy.

It will provide you the power to face the devil himself.

It will prove to you the validity of your faith.

It will give you the directions you need to plan your life.

I dare you to try it.

## **ONE MORE THING (but it's a big one):**

Will you commit to beginning today reading the Bible for at least 10 minutes every day?

I, \_\_\_\_\_, with God's blessings, will read from His Book at least 10 minutes every day.

\_\_\_\_\_ date

**Keep this book:** That could be the most life-changing commitment you ever sign!



## SECRET #4 - Thursday

“Everyday DO something for God”

Secret Number Four to becoming a Highly Effective Christian: Serve  
Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:10

It's a problem of *worth*. *Value* I mean. We don't really believe our selves *worth*, or *worthy*, or **valuable** enough to God that what we might do or contribute might really mean anything. We've been told enough how bad we do or how we don't measure up and we've failed enough on our own that we just don't think God has any real use for us. So, we, do, nothing. Or just enough, we believe, to stay out of trouble. And for some of us we have seen mom's and dad's do virtually nothing that could be considered sacrificial service that we just follow suit.

But **what if God *could use you?***

What if He desired to use you?

What if He gave you gifts

just for that purpose? What

if He needed you to be the

person at your school, in

your class, in your youth

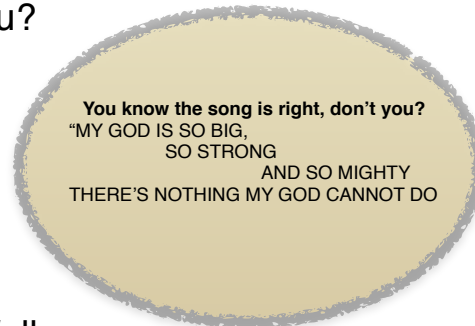
group to lead, to stand up, to

serve, to be an example? Well,

every page of my Bible seems to

indicate that is His plan. I want to challenge you to join

me (and more importantly, much more importantly,



HIM) on a magnificent journey! It will be full of twists and turns, it will be full of obstacles, it will be fun and it will be challenging. It will wear you out and it will fill you full! It is the journey of being a fully devoted servant of Jesus Christ.



Your spiritual life **BEGAN** at your baptism. It didn't end there. The best news I have for you is that you are young and you can start now. Think about it - you may reach the height of a career and get a big raise, a gold watch or a promotion. You may become a great philanthropist and have a building named after you or a street in your honor. **BUT** in the adventure you have before you - the God who made everything - may someday look at you and say "well done" - enter My rest where 70 years is as nothing. Get ready for an eternity of bliss. Well done. Amazing to imagine!

What if. What if. What if every time you did something solely for God - - - HE smiled?

***THIS IS WHERE THESE 5 GET FUN:***

What if you started every day with this prayer? "Good morning God, what can I do for You today?" Or, "Good morning God, what will you do with me today?" Or "Good morning God, what I do I do for you today!"

## **NUMBERS DON'T LIE:**

God can do great things through ordinary people.

100% of God's best servants could not have done what they did in their own strength!

100% of God's greatest servants did not feel worthy to be used by God as they were!

100% of God's greatest servants began by making themselves available to God!

God wants to do great things with your life. I've lived it and call back to you! I'm color-blind, had eye surgery twice before I was age 2, sightly dyslectic, and have a speech impediment - yet God has used my feeble words to influence others and I make my life with words.

I want to remind you that we are talking about becoming something effective for the Lord - USEFUL. 2 Timothy 2 talks about the "great house" and being used by the Master. That very concept should astound us. Paul talks about vessels of gold and silver and clay - I'm just happy to be in the cabinet of the Master. To imagine that God can do great things through your life - that is a great thought.



## **HOW DO I GET FROM HERE TO *THERE*?**

Thankfully this one is rather easy to get started with:

1. Pray: Do what every great servant of God from Samuel to today has done, say: "Here am I. I am at

Your service." Ask God to make your life count and use you for His purposes regardless of where that may lead or what it may involve.

2. Start doing! Start serving. Doing. Chairs need moving - move them. Trash needs emptying, empty it. A class needs a teacher, step up. The church needs singers for a nursing home devo, you be the dude.

The problem for some is twofold:

a. They volunteer but if the opportunity is not glamorous or if it's hard they back out. They want to be used but only if it's big. Or b. They don't want to do something that is hard and takes a lot of time or discipline. May I refer you back to the commitment you made in #1?

3. Begin finding what brings you joy! What seems natural - start using your abilities for the Master. Every one is gifted by God. For me, it's preaching - from a pulpit, in a blog, with voice or with pen. And God has let me do a LOT of that. BUT I still move chairs most every week.

4. As you grow ask others what they see as your skill. What you bring to the table.

Now, learn all you can about that - do it well. And do it for God.

## **FOR THE TEENS:**

Don't let people tell you you are the church of tomorrow. You are a Christian. If you wait till you are 18, 22, 30, 50, you will spend your life waiting. Don't. Start now. Paul was clear "don't let anyone despise your youth" he continued "be an example in - now look at this list. "in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." Now look at it. It is MORE than JUST how you don't live. It is how you live. And highlight that word "conduct."

“You have something to give to God that I don't have - a complete life of service.” Here's the danger of waiting. You give up what you can do that no one else can. And no one can live for you! No one can serve for you. I know it doesn't feel like it now but time will fly. You'll look back and either smile or sigh. The habits you begin now will determine where you go from here. Programs of work that will impact the world will happen - WHY NOT be the catalyst? There are souls to be won - WHY NOT by you? There are people who need a lifeline, who need encouragement - WHY should it not be you?

Here's something fabulous and that is true of NO ONE else you will ever deal with -  
Your ineptitude is extremely attractive to God. Any organization you join, any employer you work for will highlight your ineptitude - only God will take even your inability and use it. For it makes HIM shine. When a

superstar is a superstar everyone thinks the superstar is great. When God does something with someone who isn't and can't - wow. Be available!

## **FOR THE PRE-TEENS:**

Sometimes we think we have to be a certain age to serve God. When God began using Samuel he was a child (1 Samuel 1-3). A boy King, Josiah, turned his whole nation back to God beginning when he was 8. Work together as a class on this. Right now, stop and make a list of things you can do at the age you are in service to the Lord. Make sure one of the things is something that anyone in the class can do while here at Maywood. Now this week do it and report back on the results in class tomorrow.



## **IN CLOSING:**

He gave you life and salvation. He made you and remade you (Gal. 3:13) - now give that life back to Him. See your life as a drink offering (Romans 12:1-2; Phil 2:17).

He has put each in the Body just as it pleased Him (1Co 12:18). I am convinced that most of us never do anything special because we do not see ourselves as special. We don't believe God can use us.

But consider - Moses, didn't think he could speak. If you start listing people and what God has done with them you'd soon learn that God rarely uses superstars. He does His best work with average talent. There's a reason for that. Let me ask it as a question: If God uses someone who is super-talented and they do something super-talented then who's to know if "they" did it or He did it. But when He takes your little and does something with it - it is clear to all the world that the power is of Him and not of you.



### **ONE MORE THING:**

Go to Matthew 25 - it is what you do that sets us apart. Remember James' words: "Be doers of the Word and not hearers only..." Deceiving yourselves. It is self-deception to think that all you need to do is show up.

Thrive, enjoy, be delighted that you are the one talent person! That God gave you a talent. But don't hoard it! Use it.

### **ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION:**

What would you do for Christ if you weren't embarrassed to say it?

What do you think you could do for Jesus today?

What would you like to learn how to do?

Is there something THIS CLASS can do before class time tomorrow for the Lord that would make camp better for someone?

Psst: Hey campers, it's Friday!  
The day camp legends are made! Enjoy it!

### **SECRET #5 - Friday**

“And partake of the Lord’s Supper every  
Sunday”

Secret Number Five to becoming a Highly Effective  
Christian: Communion

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

**NOTE TO TEACHER:** Friday’s at camp are interesting. Things get crazy. People start doing stuff that makes for memories forever. Class time is sometimes shorter, sometimes you as a teacher need to answer some ongoing questions and wrap things up in a special way. I hope you will. Therefore I’ve kept this lesson a little shorter - but don't sale it short. It is important and a true key to our mutual purposes.

### **WHAT?**

Remember the Sesame Street jingle: “One of these things is not like the other...”? This secret is definitely different than the other four but that doesn't mean it's less important OR that is doesn't belong in a list of secrets to becoming a highly effective Christian - in fact it's possibly more important than the other four.

### **WHY?**

1. Remembering Christ in the communion was commanded by Christ Himself: It brings us back to our Connection with Christ. Every week, just like the first century church (see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), we are called back to the center of our lives - Christ, the cross, our connection, community and communion. If Jesus thought it was important enough to command then it is important enough for us to return to. It is this weekly “returning” to the Table that provides a reminder and a connection to Christ that will keep you continuing to desire effectiveness.

2. Remembering Christ in the communion brings our Connection with Christ’s People: Hebrews 10:25 is a verse you’ve probably heard a lot (quote it together, out loud in class - see you all do know it :)). It’s the verse that teaches we need to not skip church services. But if that is all we get out of the verse we are only getting half the verse. Part of our coming together is that we are Family and we are required to encourage each other. So when you go to church seek out people to encourage - and not just people you know or like or who are your age. We look for excuses to get together with the people we love to be with! Peter wrote: “So love each other deeply with all your heart” (1 Peter 1:21).

3. Remembering Christ in the communion keeps us centered in our focus: Let's face it, since we deal with these things called humans in church there will always be issues, worries, frustrations. Let me put it painfully blunt - People bring problems! It has been that way since God breathed into man life and free will. And I've learned that my focus sometimes ends up being on those problems and the things about "church" that make it hard. So, I need a reminder - a call back to why I am a Christian. Looking to the cross reminds me of my need for a savior and the salvation offered from Jesus being lifted up (John 12:32). This weekly reminder of what is really important brings my focus back around. Yeah, brother Sam's a jerk, sister Sue mistreated me, elder Bob messed up - but Jesus is Lord and He died for me - what else matters?

4. Remembering Christ calls us back to our confession: When you became a Christian you confessed that you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God. For most of us, saying that in front of family, friends, cabin mates or congregations was not a challenge - but living like you believe that all the time is. The communion makes us remember who we are living for. It makes us examine our own lives.

### **HOW?**

Doesn't it get boring? Not if you love the Lord. Take the focus off us and put it on Him! On what He did. Some folks say if we only partook of it once a month or

a quarter it would mean more. Is that true of anything else we love?

Do you get bored hearing your favorite band, your girlfriend/boy-friend tell you they love you, watching your favorite TV show? No, in fact studies show that the repetition makes us love the things we love even more. You need this connection for it will make you love the Lord even more.

### **IN CLOSING:**

Where do you want to be spiritually when you come back to Maywood next year?

I was listening to a secular podcast just today and it was talking about how truly successful people see what they don't have or are not and determine to make it or become it. It's a series of habits that lead to effectiveness in any field. You don't walk the first time you try - you fall down. You fall and fail and try again. But you stick to it. So, where will you be when you come back to Maywood a year from now? It'll be determined by the investment of your time and energy over the next 12 months, 51 weeks, 357 days! I believe in you, your teacher does, but most of all God does. Now, go start making it happen!

So now you know the secrets: the only question is - What are you going to do with them?