

Rebecca Manley Pippert
with Dick Molenhouse



EMPOWERED

Equipping everyone for
relational evangelism

- HANDBOOK -

Empowered

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WELCOME TO EMPOWERED

I was recently interviewed on an American Christian radio show where people could call in. The subject was evangelism, and ten minutes into the interview the entire phone board lit up with callers from across the country. The comments were revealing.

Every caller spoke of someone they deeply cared about who was not a Christian.

While they longed for their friend to come to Christ, they felt completely inadequate in how to reach them.

Their fears were very similar: How do I raise the topic of faith naturally? What if I offend them or they reject me? What if they raise questions I can't answer?

Everyone essentially asked the same thing: How do I reach people in today's increasingly secular culture? As one caller put it:

“Jesus didn't suggest we share the good news—he commanded us to. But how do we communicate the eternal Christ in our secular, ever-changing world?”

Never has there been a greater need to share Christ with the world (starting with our own neighbors)—yet never have believers seemed more ill equipped.

And that is why I am so excited to welcome you to *Empowered*—a course that equips ordinary Christians for personal evangelism. For the past thirteen years Dick and I have conducted evangelism-training conferences and been part of evangelistic initiatives around the world. For the first six years we ministered on every continent (apart from Antarctica!). Then for the next seven, we were focused primarily on Europe. Europe has long been considered the most challenging place for the gospel in the world—yet we have seen amazing fruit as Christians have reached out in even the most unlikely places.

EMPOWERED

Empowered is the fruit of all these years of working right around the world, of motivating and equipping ordinary Christians to share their faith with those around them.

It is imperative that we know how to effectively communicate the gospel. We need to get beyond one-size-fits-all techniques. We need to learn to communicate the truth in a way that is also loving. Yet we need to remember, even as we seek to show Christ's compassionate love, still to share Christ's gospel truth.

We need to recover the "Jesus way"—the biblical way—by creatively and persuasively sharing God's truth in the context of authentic relationships and community, so that people may become radical, missional disciples.

So *Empowered* is for you—especially if you feel inept or inadequate about being a witness for Christ. We wrote this course for you—for you to become empowered to talk about Jesus in everyday conversations in your ordinary life. Thank you for making the time to join us—we'll be praying that the truths you hear, the Bible passages you study, the discussions you have, the thinking you do and the prayers you share will change you, and so change the lives and eternities of those around you.

Thanks,



Becky



Dick



1

INADEQUACY IS COMPULSORY

REFLECTION: AS YOU BEGIN...

What three words best describe how you feel about evangelism?

What do you hope to get out of doing this course?

 **INTRO**

BIBLE STUDY

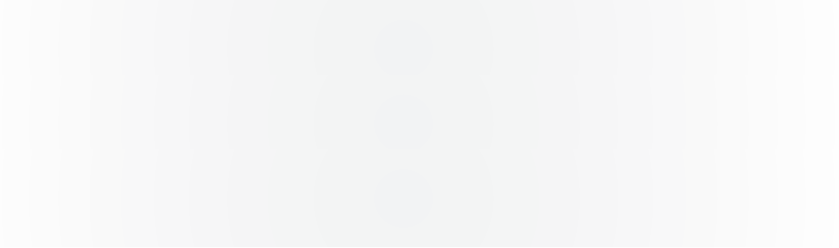
Read 1 Corinthians 2 v 1-5

1. How did Paul feel about sharing the gospel with people in Corinth?

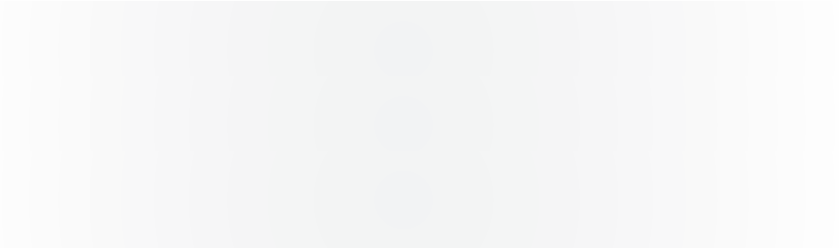
2. What did he focus on talking about? Why, do you think?

SESSION ONE

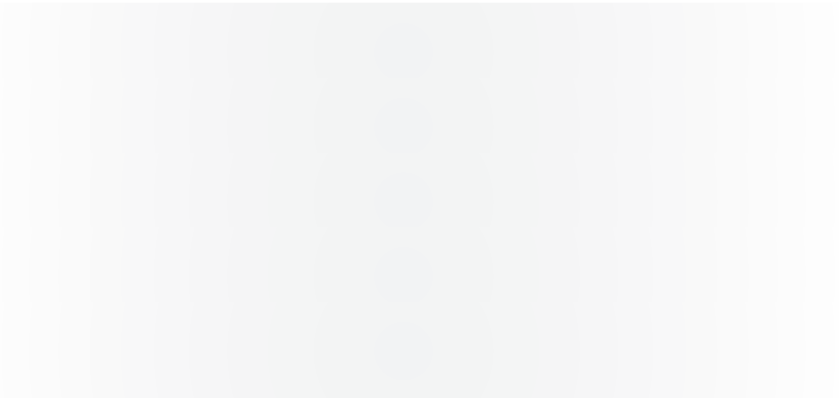
3. What did Paul's message not come with, and what did accompany it (v 4-5)?



Why was that a good thing for the faith of the people who did listen to him?



4. When we feel weak about talking to others about Jesus, how is Paul both an encouragement and a challenge to us?





1. Our Motivation for Witness—God the Father

Jesus was criticized for mingling with sinners, and responded by telling three stories (Luke 15):

- ~ The Lost Sheep
- ~ The Lost Coin
- ~ Two Lost Sons

God searches for the lost and rejoices when they are found. He loves people, and so must we.

2. Our Model for Witness—Jesus

The eternal Son of God came to live on earth as a weak human being!

God's glory and power is revealed through human weakness (1 Corinthians 2 v 3-5).

Jesus' life reveals what it means to be human—we are created to be God-dependent people, not self-sufficient people.

Our feelings of inadequacy remind us that we are not God; but celebrating our smallness frees us to depend on God's power.

3. Our Means for Witness—the Holy Spirit

We depend on God's power by “remaining” in Christ (John 15)—he dwells within us through the Holy Spirit.

The “Three Rs”:

- ~ *Remember* in every situation that Jesus is with us.

SESSION ONE

~ *Rejoice* that we have access to God's power through Christ (Matthew 28 v 20).

~ *Request* the Lord's help in every situation.

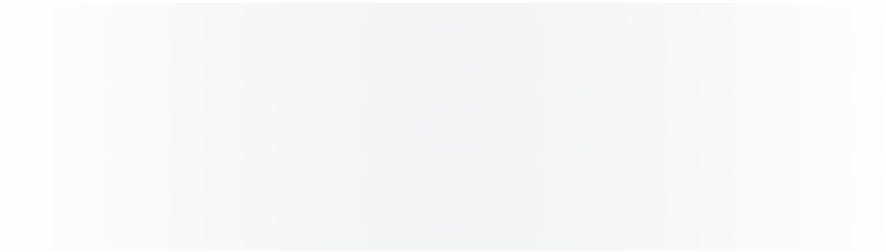
God has always used the weak to accomplish his purposes—he can use you too.

TALK NOTES

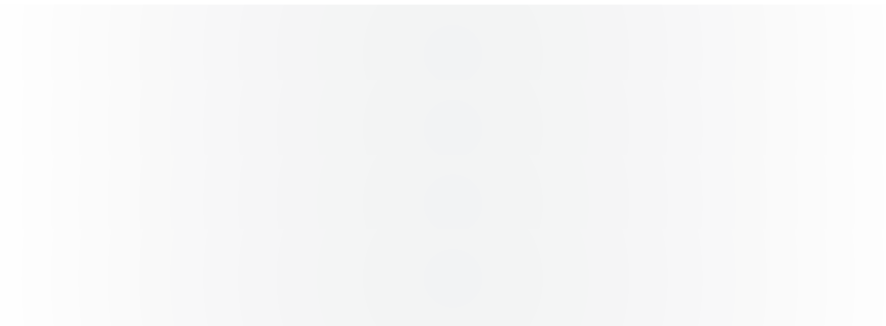


DISCUSS

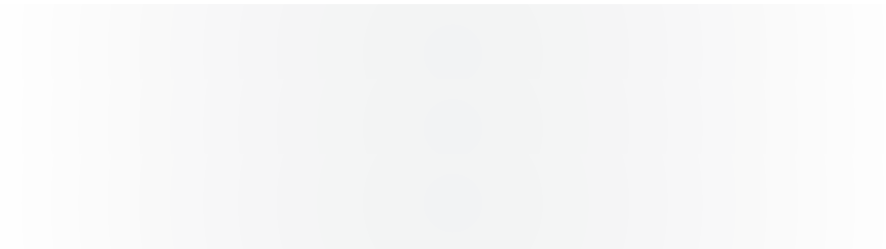
1. “God has always used the weak to accomplish his purposes.” How have you witnessed this, in your own experience or in those you know? When do you find it hardest to believe the truth of this, and why?



2. How do you respond to the idea that inadequacy is not an obstacle to evangelism—it's a necessity?



3. Remember... Rejoice... Request. How could you start, or keep, consciously practicing the presence of Christ this week? What do you think might change if you do that?



SESSION ONE

4. What is the one big truth from this session that you will apply to your attitude to evangelism?

NEXT STEPS

- ~ Between now and the next session, consciously practice the presence of Christ, abiding in him by remembering, rejoicing and requesting.
- ~ If you're able to, arrange to meet another member of your group this week to pray together (from now on, we'll call this person your "prayer partner").
- ~ Either with your prayer partner, and/or each day on your own, ask God to grant you both a deeper faith and greater awareness of his power and presence.



