

Immediate Follow-up Strategy for New Believers

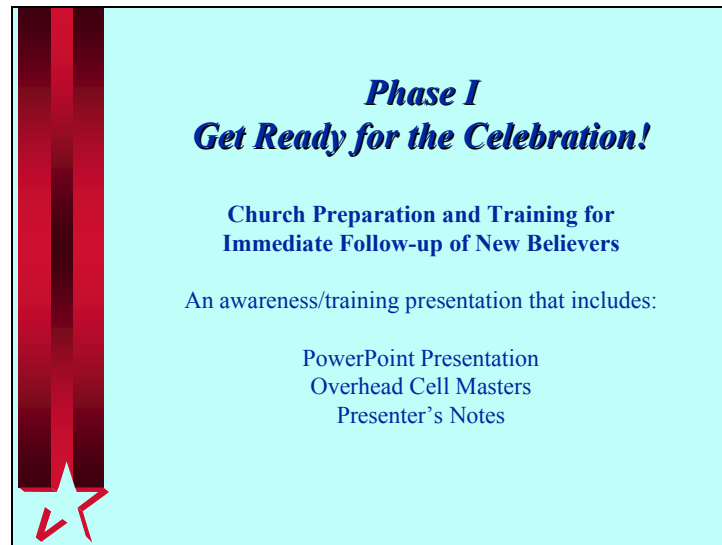
A Four-Phase Follow-up Strategy

Phase I: Get Ready for the Celebration!
The Church Preparing for New Believers

Phase II: Let the Celebration Begin
The First 10 Minutes of a Believers New Life

Phase III: Let the Celebration Continue
The First Week of a Believers New Life

Phase IV: Keep the Celebration Going
The First Month or Until Assimilated

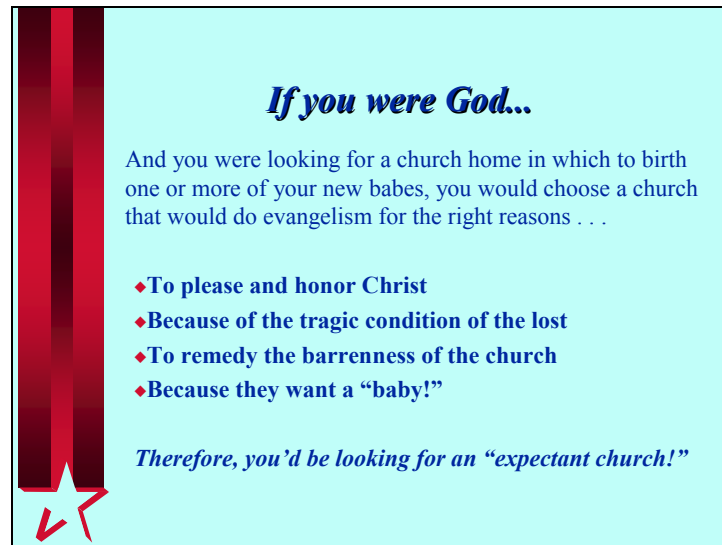


About Phase I . . .

Phase I is accomplished primarily by the pastor or another leader conducting a special church service for the express purpose of dealing with the people of God concerning follow-up. By our actions, the average church member seems to feel little responsibility for the new believer. This presentation is designed to help change the hearts of church members concerning the new believers.

The Phase I material includes the following:

1. A PowerPoint presentation with speaker's notes. If you have a computer with PowerPoint and a computer projector, you can use this tool.
2. Overhead cells can be produced from the PowerPoint slides, using a plain paper copier and acetate cells which can be purchased from an office supply store.
3. Presenter's notes with a small image of the corresponding overhead cell.



If you were God...

And you were looking for a church home in which to birth one or more of your new babes, you would choose a church that would do evangelism for the right reasons . . .

- ◆ **To please and honor Christ**
- ◆ **Because of the tragic condition of the lost**
- ◆ **To remedy the barrenness of the church**
- ◆ **Because they want a “baby!”**

Therefore, you’d be looking for an “expectant church!”

The Bible calls new Christians “babes in Christ” (1 Peter 2:2). If you were God and you were looking for a church in which to birth a new babe, what would you look for in that church? You’d want them to have the right motives for evangelizing!

What is the real objective of any soul-winning effort? Is it to grow our church? As good as that is, it’s not the main reason. Is it to get our church excited? It will do that, but that’s not the best reason. Is it to give Christians the great experience of seeing people “get saved?” Yes, but even that doesn’t say it all.

The most worthy motive for any evangelistic effort should be to bring new babes into the Kingdom of God. If we don’t want a new babe, it doesn’t make a lot of sense to evangelize. Why do we want a new babe? So our numbers can go up? So the record can look better? We must get this right if we are serious about wanting God to bless.

First, as the Bride of Christ, we must want a new babe to please Him (2 Cor. 5:9).

Second, we want to birth because of the tragic condition of the unborn (John 3:36). The lost ones cannot get into the kingdom unless they are born again (John 3:3).

Third, we want to birth because we are barren, and are grieved over our barrenness (Isa. 54:1,6). Nothing does more for church fellowship than some excited new believers.

Fourth, we want to birth because we want a baby! We must want every new Christian to become all that Christ wants him or her to be. The church must accept this responsibility joyfully and become like a nursing mother to the new babes in Christ. An evangelistic church is like an expectant mother.

What Is an Expectant Mother Like?

<u>Physical</u>	<u>Spiritual</u>
1. Excited about it	
2. Tells it	
3. Priorities Change	
4. Careful about eating/medicine	
5. Preparation	

Let's continue using the analogy Jesus chose, the birthing analogy. What kind of preparation does a couple make when they find out that a baby is on the way? (Write responses on the cell. If you are using computer projection you will need a marker board, etc., on which to write responses.)

1. They go around telling all their friends. They even tell people they don't know. They are excited about what is going to happen to them.

2. Their priorities change. The way they make decisions about what they will and will not do changes radically. The new agenda for day-to-day living is based on how this or that will effect the welfare of the unborn child. They question every decision on the basis of the welfare of the unborn.

How do we make decisions around our church? Is the safe birth of the unborn a high priority? Is the preparation for the welfare of the newborn a major factor in the decision making process at our church? Let's get personal: Is your church expecting? Are you sure you want a baby?

3. Expectant parents have to make some hard choices. They know that they can't do everything. Some money has to be spent to provide what the new baby will need. Time will have to be spent. At times our favorite things have to give way to the needs of the baby.

What Is a New Baby Like?

<u>Physical Baby</u>	<u>Spiritual Baby</u>
1. Dependent	
2. Demanding	
3. Independent	
4. Trusting	
5. Self-centered	
6. Hungry	
7. Precious	
8. Doesn't know he or she is a baby!	

So what is a new baby like?

Presenter: Ask how many present are parents. Then ask the group for their answers to this question concerning a physical baby. Write on the cell if you are using an overhead projector, or on a marker board if you are using computer projection, what a new baby is like. They will call out such characteristics as helpless, demanding, dependent, independent, fragile, trusting, self-centered, fearful, hungry, teachable, worthy, precious.

Next, ask what a spiritual baby, a new babe in Christ, is like.

Note and point out that the characteristics of both are remarkably similar.

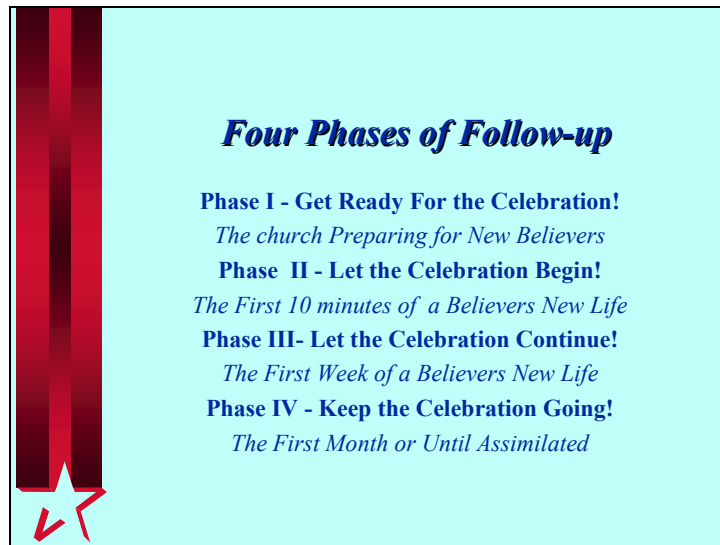
Slide 6

What Does a New Baby Need?

<u>Physical Baby</u>	<u>Spiritual Baby</u>
1. Loving Parents	
2. Milk/Baby Food	
3. Security	
4. Teaching by Precept and Example	
5. Discipline	
6. Space	
7. Changing	

Ask the parents what a new baby needs. They will suggest answers like parents, milk and baby food, lots of love, changing, security, family, teaching , discipline, space, etc.

Write on the overhead cell or on marker board the responses and then ask, “*What does a new babe in Christ need?*” Write these and note the similarities.



Four Phases of Follow-up

Phase I - Get Ready For the Celebration!
The church Preparing for New Believers

Phase II - Let the Celebration Begin!
The First 10 minutes of a Believers New Life

Phase III- Let the Celebration Continue!
The First Week of a Believers New Life

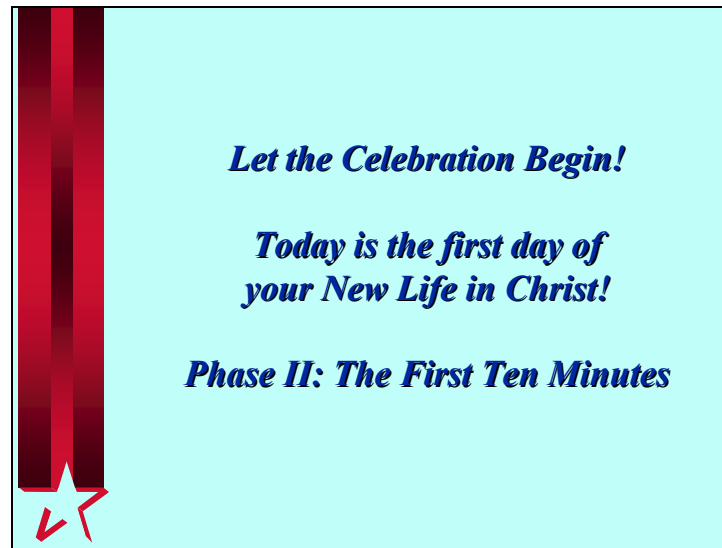
Phase IV - Keep the Celebration Going!
The First Month or Until Assimilated

From the previous overhead cells we noted that good follow-up begins with good church preparation for follow-up, which we can call Pre-Natal Care. Once the moment of birth arrives, every midwife or birthing room at every hospital has a plan of action. Plans are in place for each phase of the baby's early life. Even more plans are in place when the baby goes home.

Should we do any less for spiritual babes? Every church needs to have a plan in place, one that goes into action anytime a new birth occurs. This will never happen by accident.

A good follow-up plan can be considered using the four phases, as named on this cell.

We have just reviewed Phase I. Now that we know what our responsibility is, let's go to Phase II.



Let me recommend an immediate follow-up folder called, "Let the Celebration Begin." It is designed to be used by the witness during the first 10 minutes after someone is born again. Let me explain how to use this tool.

After the person has prayed the salvation prayer, say something like this: "Congratulations! You have prayed a wonderful prayer to invite Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior. This is the most important decision of your life. Let's make sure that you know for certain that you have eternal life."

Open the folder and lead the new believer through the first panel, which is designed to help with assurance. Celebrate each of the assurances.


The next panel offers five essentials that aid normal development of a newborn physical baby and a newborn babe in Christ. Review these points.

Now detach the last panel, which is the "Decision Form." Set the form aside for a moment.

Lead them to complete the "For the Record" form.

Return to the "Decision Form" which you detached earlier. Allow the new believer to assist and affirm as you complete this panel. When completed, give this panel to the Pastor or other leader of the event.

Tell the new believer that another Christian will visit them soon and will bring some other very helpful Bible study materials. The next cell will present each section of this folder in more detail.



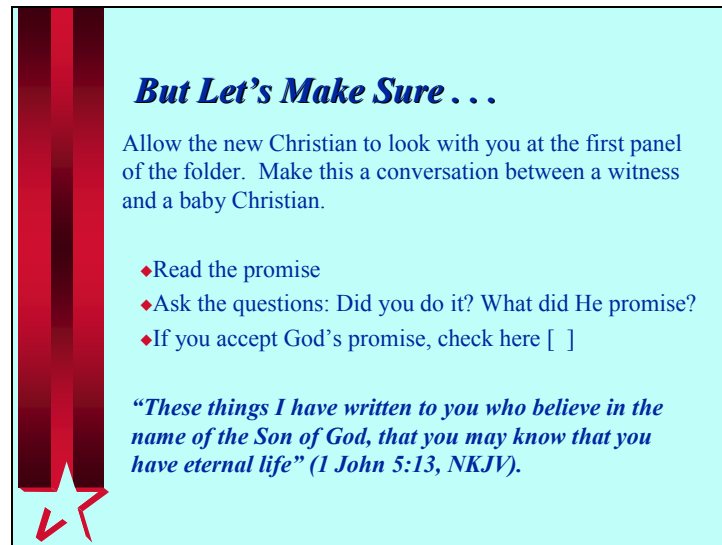
The First Ten Minutes

Two Great Needs: Assurance & Growth

Help the new Christian to claim Bible promises for assurance, become unashamed of Jesus, and gain four growth areas that meet his or her most urgent needs at this critical time.

<u>ASSURANCE</u>	<u>GROWTH</u>
Repentance	Home and family
Faith	Regular Breathing
Lordship	Good Food
	Learning to Talk

(This is done by the witness)



But Let's Make Sure . . .

Allow the new Christian to look with you at the first panel of the folder. Make this a conversation between a witness and a baby Christian.

- ◆ Read the promise
- ◆ Ask the questions: Did you do it? What did He promise?
- ◆ If you accept God's promise, check here []

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13, NKJV).

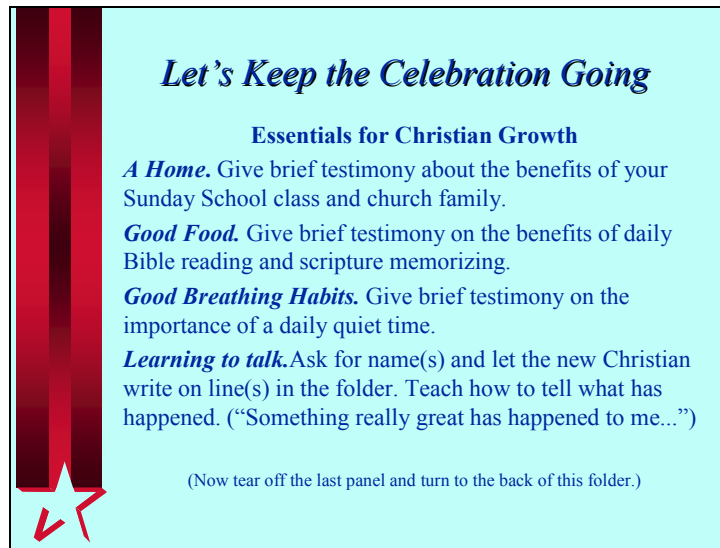
This is the first panel of the "Let the Celebration Begin" folder.

You can know for certain that you have eternal life because God's Word can be trusted.

Read and claim these three promises:

1. "Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Did you respond to God's love by turning away from your sins and turning to Jesus Christ for forgiveness? What did He promise to do with your sins? If you accept His promise regarding repentance, check here. []
2. "For by grace you have been saved through faith." (Ephesians 2:8). Did you totally trust in Jesus for your salvation? What did He promise to do? If you accept His promise regarding faith, check here. []
3. "That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:9,13). Did you give Jesus control of your life and ask Him to save you? What did He promise to do? If you accept His promise concerning His Lordship, check here. []

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13, NKJV).



Let's Keep the Celebration Going

Essentials for Christian Growth

A Home. Give brief testimony about the benefits of your Sunday School class and church family.

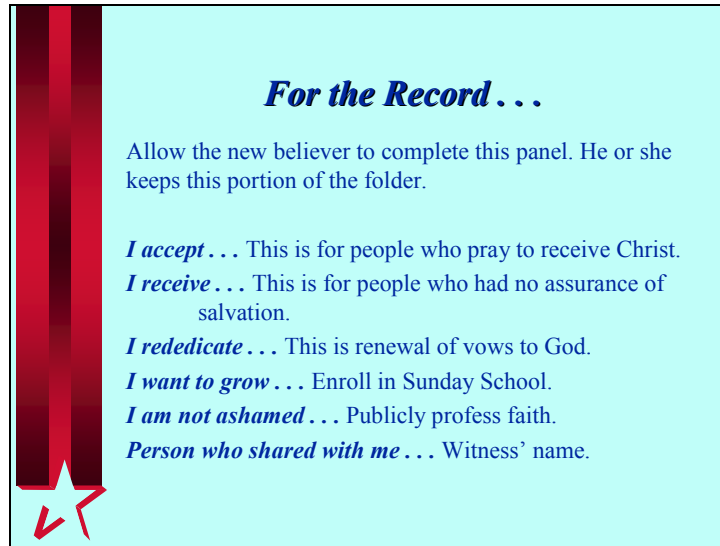
Good Food. Give brief testimony on the benefits of daily Bible reading and scripture memorizing.

Good Breathing Habits. Give brief testimony on the importance of a daily quiet time.

Learning to talk. Ask for name(s) and let the new Christian write on line(s) in the folder. Teach how to tell what has happened. ("Something really great has happened to me...")

(Now tear off the last panel and turn to the back of this folder.)

This is the second panel of the "Let the Celebration Begin" folder. Go over this panel with the new believer.



For the Record . . .

Allow the new believer to complete this panel. He or she keeps this portion of the folder.

I accept . . . This is for people who pray to receive Christ.


I receive . . . This is for people who had no assurance of salvation.

I rededicate . . . This is renewal of vows to God.

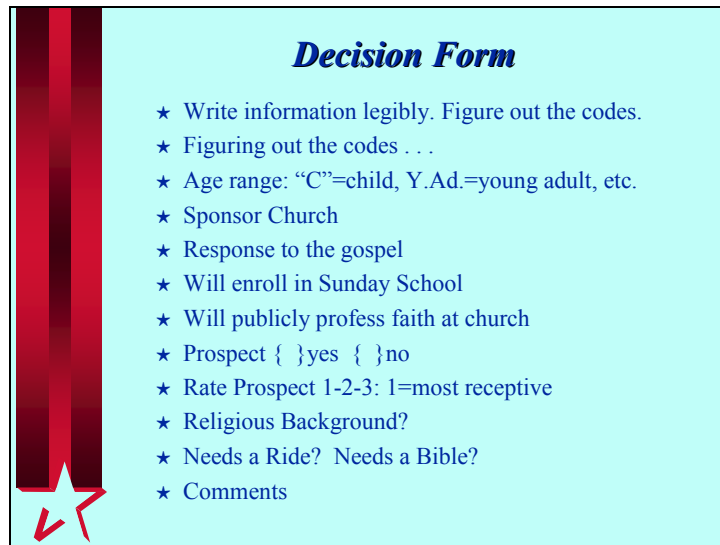
I want to grow . . . Enroll in Sunday School.

I am not ashamed . . . Publicly profess faith.

Person who shared with me . . . Witness' name.



Explain how the witness should help the new believer complete this panel of the “Let the Celebration Begin” folder. After completion, the new believer will retain this portion of the witnessing tool.



Decision Form

- ★ Write information legibly. Figure out the codes.
- ★ Figuring out the codes . . .
- ★ Age range: “C”=child, Y.Ad.=young adult, etc.
- ★ Sponsor Church
- ★ Response to the gospel
- ★ Will enroll in Sunday School
- ★ Will publicly profess faith at church
- ★ Prospect { }yes { }no
- ★ Rate Prospect 1-2-3: 1=most receptive
- ★ Religious Background?
- ★ Needs a Ride? Needs a Bible?
- ★ Comments

This is the last panel of the “Let the Celebration Begin” folder. It should have been detached as you began the follow-up conversation; bring it out now and allow the new believer to assist and affirm as you complete it. Give this form to the pastor or leader of the witnessing effort.

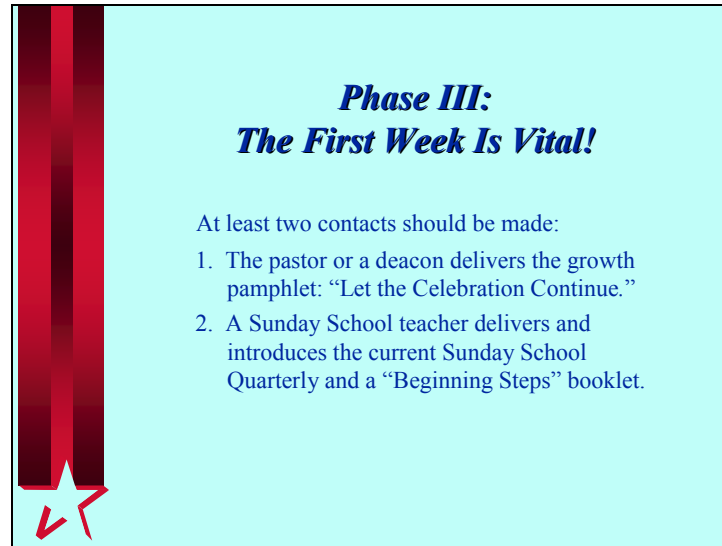


Phase III requires some "office work."

Decision forms will come in from various ministries and events of the church. You can use a copier to print out copies of these forms to hand to the individuals listed on the cell. However, if your church uses a computer for keeping track of prospect information, this information should be entered into a database or spreadsheet which can be set up to print out a follow-up form. Copies of this form should be handed out as soon as possible after the conversion.

It is important that contact be made with the new believer(s) during the first week after conversion.

Each of the individuals or groups such as Deacons, Sunday School teachers, and mentors should receive some orientation concerning their helpful actions toward the new believer. Some of these are listed on the following cells.



**Phase III:
The First Week Is Vital!**

At least two contacts should be made:

1. The pastor or a deacon delivers the growth pamphlet: "Let the Celebration Continue."
2. A Sunday School teacher delivers and introduces the current Sunday School Quarterly and a "Beginning Steps" booklet.

Phase III . . . The First Week

If possible the Pastor and/or a Deacon should visit the new believer before the next Sunday following his or her conversion. On this visit, they should deliver the pamphlet, "Let the Celebration Continue." They should encourage the new believer and prepare him or her for the next contact from the church.

The information on this cell can be thought of as "taking the baby home from the hospital." It is tragic that in some cases, new babes in Christ are simply told, "We want you to come home, and the address is 123 Main Street. Your first meal will be served at 9:45 on Sunday morning. Show up and meet your family." Some are not even told the address. Here is what needs to happen: Someone from the church family needs to call and visit the newborn Christian and prepare him or her for the welcome experience he or she is about to receive at their new home. Ideally, at least two people should share responsibilities for preparing the baby for his or her new home: the Pastor and/or a Deacon, and a Sunday School teacher.


These people (Pastor, Deacon, or S.S. Teacher) should be well prepared and expectantly awaiting information on a new believer. These do not need to be long visits, but the new babe needs to know that he or she has been born into a caring family. If it is not possible for one of these to be a home visit, perhaps an invitation to meet and eat, or even a phone call is better than no contact. Share favorite Bible verses, helpful books, videos, and music.

Counsel and pray with and for the new believer.

Sit with the new believer in church.

Genuinely befriend him or her and introduce to others at church.

Invite the new believer to your home.



The First Week
The Sunday School Teacher:

- ★ Delivers and explains two books:
 - A Bible Study Book (or Sunday School Quarterly)
 - A “*Beginning Steps*” Booklet
- ★ Invites new Christian to Sunday School/Bible Study, worship, and Discipleship Training
- ★ Enrolls new believer in Sunday School
- ★ Helps new Christian with next week’s lesson
- ★ Prays with new Christian
- ★ Offers transportation and Bible

Phase III . . . The First Week (Continued)

The responsibilities outlined above need to be communicated to the Sunday School teachers. Suggestion: Make a copy of this cell for each teacher.

Some discussion needs to take place with the teachers and in the classes with regular attenders about how to receive and be helpful to new believers who attend. For example, it is best to assume that the visitor knows nothing about the Bible or how things are done at a Baptist church. Do not ask a visitor to read or pray aloud in the class.

Extra Sunday School quarterlies need to be ordered and delivered to each new believer by the Sunday School teacher.

The “Beginning Steps” booklet may be preferred for new believers who have a more evangelical church background instead of the “Let the Celebration Continue” pamphlet. However, those who complete the pamphlet, “Let the Celebration Continue,” should go through the “Beginning Steps” booklet also.

New Christians who have a solid background in Christianity are ready to go directly to something like *The Survival Kit for New Christians*. The decision about which persons are ready for the various growth tools is best made on an individual basis by the pastor or other discipleship leader in the church.



The First Week
The Pastor or a Deacon:

- ★ Visits the new believer
- ★ Presents and introduces the pamphlet:
“Congratulations! Let the Celebration Continue”
- ★ Discusses public profession of faith and the meaning of and need for baptism
- ★ Talks about areas of service in the church
- ★ Assigns a mentor/encourager

(Continued on next cell)

Phase III . . . The First Week (Continued)

Present the information on the slide. Show the Pamphlet, “Congratulations, Let the Celebration Continue!”

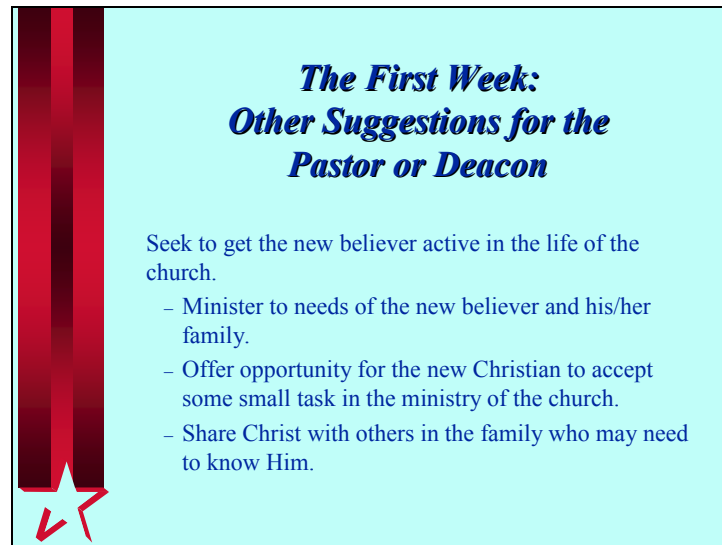
You are encouraged to read aloud the first page, and help the new believer to complete the first day’s study. Most of it is self-explanatory. Ask the new believer to complete one “lesson” each day, except Sunday, when you invite him or her to be in church with you.

Then present Christian Believer’s baptism and share the beautiful meaning of this observance.

The last item on this slide, “Assigns a mentor/encourager,” needs some special preparation. The Pastor and other church leaders should pray for, enlist, and train people who are willing to be mentor/encouragers for new believers. Barnabas, Paul, and others set the example for us, as they would come alongside younger Christians and help them to grow in their faith. To enlist such people, preach about the need of mentors and call for people to surrender to God’s call to be a mentor/encourager

The NET Evangelism strategy is an excellent Mentoring training process whereby new believers can be paired-up with a mature Christian for the purpose of learning how to share their faith. Contact the North American Mission Board for details at 770-410-6315

Billie Hanks, “*Operation Multiplication,*” International Evangelism Association, (254) 947-3030 is also excellent materials.



***The First Week:
Other Suggestions for the
Pastor or Deacon***

Seek to get the new believer active in the life of the church.

- Minister to needs of the new believer and his/her family.
- Offer opportunity for the new Christian to accept some small task in the ministry of the church.
- Share Christ with others in the family who may need to know Him.

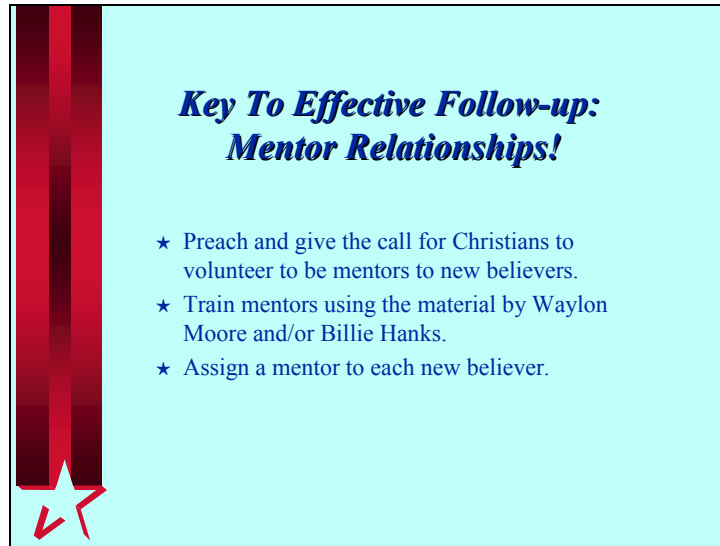
Phase III . . . The First Week (Continued)

The Deacons need to be made aware of the opportunities and responsibilities outlined and sensitized to the needs of the new believers.

Offer the new Christian an opportunity to accept some small responsibility. The Pastor should talk with the Deacons about how to help the new believer and ways to involve the new believer in the life of the church. For example, this can be parking cars, folding hand-outs, arranging chairs, decorating, helping with one of the church's ministries, etc. It is very affirming to the worth of an individual to allow them to help, and they get a taste of the joy of serving Jesus.

If the Deacon or the Pastor is aware of the ages of others in the home, it can be helpful to take someone with him on the visit who may be of the same age. For example, if he knows that there are teenagers in the family of the new believer, a teenage believer can be very helpful on the visit.

Respond appropriately to ministry needs that are discovered. Make notes and bring them back to the church on the information card of the individual so that appropriate ministry can continue. Watch for where God is working in the home and join Him in it. This brings us to an important principle of effective follow-up: Relationships.




***Key To Effective Follow-up:
Mentor Relationships!***

- ★ Preach and give the call for Christians to volunteer to be mentors to new believers.
- ★ Train mentors using the material by Waylon Moore and/or Billie Hanks.
- ★ Assign a mentor to each new believer.

The most effective ongoing follow-up must involve mentoring. This will never happen by accident. (Present the points on the cell and reinforce each one.)

*The reason mentoring relationships are the key to effective follow-up is because good relationships produce trust. Trust is vital for the new Christian to receive “needs-level input” for his or her life from the Christian who is doing the follow-up. Several church members need to form a relationship with the new believer, **but at least one needs to be assigned as a mentor.***

The Apostle Paul wrote, “I am become all things to all men, that I might save some” (I Cor. 9:22). His secret of success in evangelism involved this relational principle: He sought to “become” something to the person, so that he could reach them for Christ.



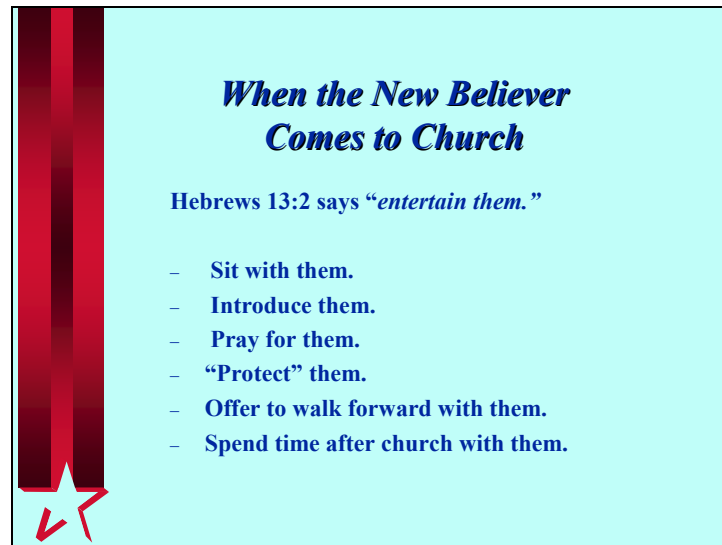
***The First Month
(or until assimilated)***

- ★ Every effort should be made to get the new believer into Bible study and Discipleship Training. See LifeWay Christian Resources Literature Order Form *
- ★ The mentor should help the new believer as he or she studies the **Beginning Steps** booklet and/or other growth material.
- ★ The **Survival Kit** should be studied.
- ★ Much prayer for the new believer is needed. Satan will try to discourage follow-up.

**Order from Customer Service Center, 1 800 448-8032.*

Phase IV . . . The First Month

Present the information on the cell.



***When the New Believer
Comes to Church***

Hebrews 13:2 says “*entertain them.*”

- Sit with them.
- Introduce them.
- Pray for them.
- “Protect” them.
- Offer to walk forward with them.
- Spend time after church with them.

The First Month . . . Until Assimilated

New believers need special treatment when they first begin to attend Sunday School and church. “Entertain” doesn’t mean do a little performance for them, the word means “hospitality!”

Ask the group what they think each of the points should mean at their church. Most of these points are self-explanatory, but are overlooked in many churches.

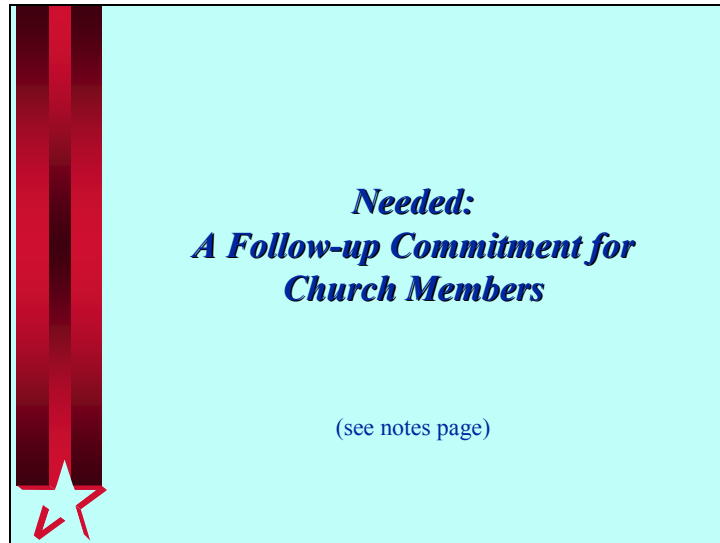
For example,

Sit with them. New believers should not be expected to “fend for themselves.” If he or she is new to your church, don’t presume that they understand the way things are done.

Protect them. This means to put yourself in their place and help them to avoid potentially embarrassing situations.

Offer to walk forward with them. This should be done very discreetly, and with no pressure.

Spend time with them after church. This could be done over a meal, or a ride home, or just a few minutes before they leave the church building. Talk with them to see if they understood everything or have any questions. Invite them to the next appropriate gathering.



Develop a Follow-Up Commitment for Church Members

We understand that our first responsibility to God after a person is born again is the welfare of His newborn babe. (Read Matthew 28:19-20.) Therefore, I am asking you, as a body of believers to commit to God and covenant together to strive for integrity in evangelism by making excellence in follow-up a priority. Please join me in making this covenant to God on behalf of the new believers, even yet unborn, that He will give to our fellowship in the months ahead. Check the items with which you agree to covenant and return the form to me at the close of this service.

- [] I want to grow in my understanding of the needs of new believers to prepare myself to be a mentor for a new believer.
- [] I will appoint myself to welcome visitors and especially new believers into our church.
- [] I will do my part to see that no visitor or new believer sits alone in our worship services or in my Sunday School class.
- [] I will pray for visitors and new believers during the worship services, and will focus my prayers on at least one person during the invitation.
- [] I will encourage new believers by sharing Bible verses that have helped me to grow in Christ.
- [] If and when I lead a person to Christ, I will use the "Let the Celebration Begin" follow-up folder or similar material to help them get started following Christ.

[] I will do whatever is necessary to help make my church and my Sunday School class a warm, loving environment in which new believers in Christ may grow and develop into mature relationship with Christ.

Signed _____ Sunday School Class _____

Date _____ Telephone _____



As you conclude your presentation, ask the people, what your church would be willing to do with and for one or more new Christians. Use the material below to develop your covenant:

1. “A Heart for Newborn Babes in Christ.” Would our church devote at least one service to this presentation or something better to plead with the people of God to have a heart for the newborn of Christ’s Kingdom? Is our church willing to put together an effective plan and carry it out on their behalf? Will our church call out and train mentors for new believers?

2. “The First Ten Minutes.” Would our church conduct training in the use of the “Let the Celebration Begin” folder? If Christians come from other places to witness, this brief training can be done before they go out. The witnesses should also be trained to complete the Decision Form. Will we make copies for those who should continue the follow-up?

3. “The First Week.” Will the initial visits to each new believer by the pastor/deacon and Sunday School teacher be made? Will our church formulate and organize our own plan to continue follow-up after the initial visit? If no follow-up is done, only a very small percent of those who make decisions for Christ will become active members of your church.

4. “The First Month” (or until assimilated.) Will our church have a place in it’s heart to make a place for the new believers? Will new classes be started for them if needed?