

# SEE JESUS NETWORK

Interactive Bible Studies  
For Small Groups

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## ENCOUNTERING POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE

PERSON OF JESUS SEEKER STUDIES: 05-06

by Paul Miller

In our *Person of Jesus* seminar I ask participants, "What scares you the most about leading a study with non-Christians?" Someone always says, "I won't know how to handle difficult *intellectual* questions like, 'How do we know the Gospels aren't myths?'" But in our feeling oriented culture *intellectual* questions are rare. Difficult *psychological* viewpoints, though, are common.

In a study in Richmond, Virginia the women were taken aback by the idea that they were not naturally good, that they could be sinners. Oddly enough, one person whose relative was murdered was one of the most vocal. A participant of a study in Asheville, North Carolina reacted negatively to Lesson 5 which says that Jesus is not just a great example of how to love but also the power for love. She said, "God created me with the power of loving like Jesus. God loves me directly without the need of a mediator. I feel there is no such thing as sin." Rousseau (18th century) and Emerson (19th century) via Oprah (21st century) have effectively disciplesd a whole new generation of Americans.

Even the Mormons are in trouble. A Mormon woman in a study in Florida said she was enjoying the study as long as they finished in time so she could watch *Desperate Housewives!* Later in Lesson 8 the study leader, a pastor's wife, was sharing some of her own struggles with being legalistic. The Mormon woman got a bewildered look on her face and said, "I can't believe you really act like that. I thought you were this perfect little pastor's wife who never did anything wrong." Notice how the gospel comes alive when it is paired with a life that reflects the gospel.

We are far from helpless in the face of modern culture. In a study in Pennsylvania, one of the couples

who'd been coming for a year confessed to the leader that they were living together and not married. Furthermore, she was pregnant and the man was still married. His wife was living in a nursing home bedridden from a nerve disease and known to be contentious. And of course, the couple claimed to be believers. (Who needs to watch *Desperate Housewives?*)

Given the complexity of their lives, the leader decided to focus on their adultery. He began by listening to them, hearing their stories, and then over several months explained that they couldn't continue living together and claim to be followers of Jesus. He offered to help them financially so they could live celibate lives, but they chose to leave the group rather than repent. The leader approached the couple as a fellow sinner offering them not a formless, feel-good gospel, but real hope for change that was costly to them (giving up their sin), the leader (giving his money) and to God (giving his Son).

### The DaVinci Code

*The DaVinci Code* along with the discovery of the *Gospel of Judas* brought a unique opportunity this year. Debbie Ellington, a seeJesus Trainer in Maryland, emailed me, "HELP! Two women in our *Person of Jesus* study were talking about the *Gospel of Judas*. I had not heard of it. Are you aware of it? Any comments? Their question is, 'How do we know that we have the entire Bible?'" (See my Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> blog for my answer.)



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### OUR VISION

*A transformed church that reflects the beauty of Jesus.*

### OUR MISSION

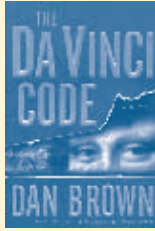
*To create high-quality, interactive Bible studies and training for small groups and outreach.*

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# ENCOUNTERING POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE

...continued from page one

*The DaVinci Code* started people thinking about Jesus. Jim Moon, the pastor of CrossPointe Presbyterian in Smyrna, Georgia, took *The DaVinci Code* ad from our website, put it in two local newspapers, and emailed it to 300 people. Three men showed up, all with similar backgrounds, all searching. One of them, Chris, had been a recent visitor at the church. He said that a friend from work told him to find a church on the web and go. He “felt God telling him to try us out—even though we are Presbyterians.” Two weeks later Chris professed faith in Christ.



Shelly Timbol, in Jacksonville, Florida, invited a co-worker to her small group. When she declined, Shelly suggested they meet at work. The woman lit up and a group of 3-6 women met weekly at 7:30 am in their office conference room.

## Statistics of Studies with Non-Christians

Last year 29 people told us they started a *Person of Jesus* study with non-Christians in them. Since the start of seeJesus in 1999, we've heard from 289 people who've started studies with non-Christians. Since we are dependent on people contacting us, we believe this number is just the tip of the iceberg. Of these 29 studies, eight were led by women and twenty-one by men. Interestingly enough, sixteen of the men were pastors. About 40% of the 289 studies were led by women, although we get most of our stories from women since they communicate more!

## Creative Venues

Each year people come up with new, creative places to have a study. Michael Gordon, a pastor at Grace and Peace Fellowship in inner-city St. Louis, combined a *Person of Jesus* study with a food pantry ministry. The study grew from a group of three to a high of 19. One woman became a believer. In Nashville, Michael Graham, another pastor, lead a study with 14 childcare workers some of whom were not believers.

## 10 PERSON OF JESUS SEMINARS

Richmond, VA	Perkasie, PA
Jacksonville, FL	Fayetteville, GA
Knoxville, TN	Bradenton, FL
Philadelphia, PA	Colorado Sps, CO
Richmond, VA	Bridgewater, NJ

## OVERSEAS 05-06

SEEING JESUS IS STUNNING IN ANY CULTURE!

### Europe

The highlight of our overseas work was our seeJesus **London** Conference in May. Three of our seeJesus Trainers, Julie, Drew, and Monte, joined Timo and Paul to lead *Small Group Leader Training*. The British pastors got comfortable with the interactive style when they actually taught one another lessons in *Small Group Leader Training*. We had former Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus participating as well.



MONTE STARKES TRAINING

A group of Hindu and Sikh men in **London**, led by World Harvest Missionary Barry Schutter, were immersing themselves in Jesus. One man, a Sikh, was so drawn to Jesus that his copy of *Love Walked Among Us*—which he carried with him like a Bible—had become worn. He was struggling with becoming a Christian because to follow Jesus would shame the memory of his deceased father.

Rose Marie Miller (another missionary and Paul's mother) leads another study in **London** with a Muslim background believer. Rose Marie said, “We have a wonderful, really delightful time together.”

In **Slovakia** Keith Hunter, a missionary with the Evangelical Free Church, invited people to learn English by using *Love Walked Among Us*. Four months into the study, one young man became a believer while visiting his girlfriend in England.

In **Madrid, Spain**, Jan Courtney, a missionary with Mission to the World, started a study with four Spanish women. They had the joy of seeing one of their husbands make a profession of faith. One woman wrote a note to Paul, “Thanks to this study I have come to know Jesus, and to place all of my life in Him, to trust Him and to give Him my problems, but most of all, to know Him.”

### Latin America

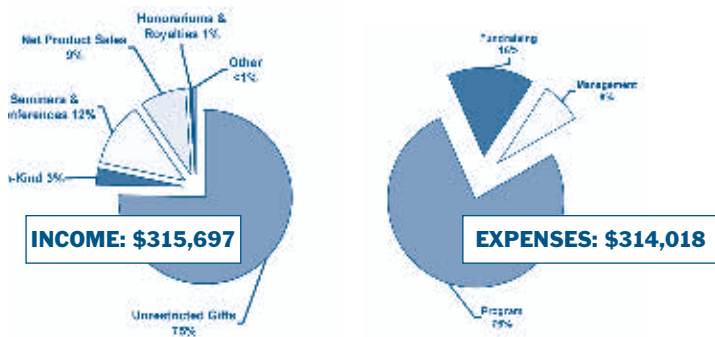
Jeff Owens, a seeJesus board member, did a lesson through a translator at a Mission to the World conference in **Monterey, Mexico**. Jeff said, “The people loved, I mean LOVED, the curriculum. There is a lot of excitement about the seeJesus ministry. All of the Mexican pastors knew about it.” Jeff had brought 50 of our 8-Lesson Spanish *Person of Jesus*. He said, “I had a long line of people that formed after the lesson to thank me and ask questions. They made arrangements to organize how they would share them because we only had 50 books.”

Debbie Ellington, on a mission's trip to **Honduras**, asked to do a study at an orphanage. The leader of the orphanage reluctantly gave her permission and agreed to translate. Her heart was won over when she saw the reaction of the teens to the lesson.

## SALES 05-06

<i>Love Walked Among Us</i> .....	4,260
<i>Love Walked Among Us (life-to-date)</i> .....	24,574
<i>Person of Jesus Leader's Manual</i> .....	427
<i>Person of Jesus Leader's Manual (life-to-date)</i> .....	1,844
<i>PrayerLife Leader's Manual</i> .....	263
<i>PrayerLife Participant's Manual</i> .....	1,185
<i>PrayerLife DVD, VHS &amp; CD</i> .....	159
<b>Gross Sales</b> .....	<b>\$56,641</b>

## FINANCES 05-06



Financial statements are audited by Holmes, Simmons, & Oswald, P.C. Audited financial statements are available upon written request.



## PRAYERLIFE 05-06



In our first full year since the *PrayerLife* study was released we sold \$18,451. We also had our first overseas *PrayerLife* seminar in London. Participants were mainly from New Life Masih Ghar, the church that World Harvest has planted in London. It was fascinating to hear the struggles that former Muslims have in praying. Their struggles aren't that different from ours here in America.

Bob Allums did four *PrayerLife* seminars. One seminar was a gift that seeJesus gave to Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New Orleans where Ray Cannata is pastor. Their membership had dropped in half because of Hurricane Katrina. Bob said that because of their suffering they were remarkably teachable.

### 13 PRAYERLIFE SEMINARS

Fayetteville, GA	Peoria, IL
Harrisburg, PA	Paxton, IL
Dresher, PA	Norfolk, VA
Mastic Beach, NY	New Orleans, LA
Timonium, MD	Damascus, MD
Knoxville, TN	Alexandria, VA
Roselle, IL	

## SEEJESUS BOARD

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Co-founder, Cardinal Health Partners & Venture Capitalist

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Director of Community Group Ministry, Trinity Presbyterian Church and seeJesus trainer

Bob Loker, Director  
Williamsburg, VA  
President of Shaia Oriental Rugs

## REFLECTIONS ON LAST YEAR

### THE YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER

by Paul Miller

Last year we shifted our energies to create a volunteer network of "seeJesus Trainers" led by Timo Strawbridge. We've accepted two men, Drew Bennett and Monte Starkes (both pastors) and two women, Julie Courtney and Debbie Ellington. It was thrilling for me to observe them in London training British pastors and American missionaries.



**TIM STRAWBRIDGE TRAINING**

We have another ten applicants working on meeting the requirements which include teaching the entire *Person of Jesus* manual, teaching one unit with non-Christians, and completing *Small Group Leader Training*. We're hoping to broaden this network and also create a network of *PrayerLife* Trainers. We are applying this model to our development work as well. Focusing on volunteers represents a major shift for us that has the potential of greatly multiplying our efforts.

One of the greatest joys for me is getting notes from people whose lives are being transformed by seeing Jesus in new ways.



A Brethren-in-Christ missionary in Bogota, Columbia wrote, "It (*Love Walked Among Us*) is powerfully affecting how I view my relationships with my husband and my students." I got an email

from a Catholic psychotherapist who was using *Love Walked Among Us* to help a Lutheran pastor love his Associate Pastor. We live in an interesting world.

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—AND—

MR. GARY BISHOP, HARLEYSVILLE, PA

# SEE JESUS WILLIAMSBURG CONFERENCE

*"I am so excited about the content of The Person of Jesus and the interactive style in which it is taught. The conference and the study...provoked me to marvel at Jesus' beautiful complexity."*

—Ramon Presson, Singles Pastor, Brentwood Baptist, Brentwood, TN

## DATES/TIMES

**Wednesday - Friday, March 28-30, 2007**

Check-in begins at 3:00 pm on Wednesday with the first session starting at 7:00 pm. Following lunch on Thursday you will have the afternoon free for tours and sightseeing, returning at 7:00 pm for the evening session. The conference ends on Friday at noon.

## LOCATION

The Williamsburg Hospitality House  
415 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185  
www.williamsburghospouse.com

The Williamsburg Hospitality House is one of the most distinguished colonial hotels in Williamsburg, and located just two blocks from the historic district.



Photos courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. seeJesus.net is not affiliated with The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

# only \$149 per person!

to register or for more info go to  
[www.seeJesus.net](http://www.seeJesus.net) or call 1.866.537.8763

## CONFERENCE FEE

**Only \$149 a person!**

This includes registration fee, two nights lodging and three meals. Pastors, small group leaders, Sunday School teachers, spouses, or anyone involved in evangelism or teaching is encouraged to attend.

## CONFERENCE TRACKS

**The Person of Jesus** [Led by Paul Miller]

*The Person of Jesus* interactive Bible study will be the means for discovering afresh the wonder of Jesus. You'll learn how to equip your small group leaders to do inductive Bible study.

**Small Group Leader Training** [Led by seeJesus Trainers]

Potential small group leaders learn to lead a small group and current ones increase their skills and enlarge their vision. Attendance is limited to alumni of our conferences and seminars and requires additional preparation prior to the conference.

**PrayerLife** [Led by Bob Allums, PrayerLife Trainer]

You will learn step-by-step how to begin a private life of prayer in fellowship with our heavenly Father.