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DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

AT OTTER CREEK FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

IN LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

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DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM
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To Rachel,
Whose love and support has been
and continues to be
instrumental in life and in ministry

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PREFACE

The doctoral project presented in this work was prompted by several of the members of Otter Creek First Baptist Church and the calling of God for each believer to be a witness. Through interacting with several members of Otter Creek First Baptist, a constant question arose, “How do we witness in a world that has changed?” Evaluating what the congregation understood about evangelism uncovered an apparent need. The church desperately needed training in evangelism. This training, eventually known as fluid evangelism, would not focus on one specific way to share the gospel, but would consist of teaching a variety of evangelism tools. As a result, the body of believers at Otter Creek pushed the project forward in its development as they constantly desired to be equipped to address various situations that they were facing. This desire of the body and the biblical command to be witnesses and the personal responsibility to equip the saints motivated this doctoral project.

I want to say thank you to the membership of Otter Creek First Baptist Church. The love and support they have extended to me in this endeavor has been amazing. The participation in the project allowed for its success. I am grateful and forever indebted to the church for the financial and prayer support that has been given through this time. The heart of the church has shown itself over and over again in support as I plowed through hours of research, teaching, and writing.

I am thankful for the participants of Kingdom Impact who gave up precious time for fifteen weeks to travel through this initiative. The service and dedication that was exhibited was both encouraging and special. Each individual who actively participated is a part of this completed project and has greatly impacted its outcome.

I am grateful for the cohort which traveled with me through the process. The weeks of gathering together for class allowed for a wonderful time of growth and fellowship. The opportunity to sharpen iron together was more beneficial than any single lecture that was given or book that was read.

My wife, Rachel, has served as an endless support and has stood beside me in the moments that seemed like the end would never come. For over the last seven years of marriage Rachel has challenged me, supported me, and encouraged me as a husband, student, minister, and father. Her love has caused me to expect more out of myself. Rachel is God's gift that has allowed for us to share life together in ministry and in raising our two daughters, Mary Ellen and Charlotte.

My simple prayer is that through this project the Lord has been glorified and seeds of the gospel have been sown. May the Lord use the faithfulness of his servants to bring forth a harvest.

Paul D. Richey

Bryant, Arkansas

December, 2011

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Developing a strategy for personal evangelism at Otter Creek First Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop a church-wide strategy for personal evangelism, utilizing personal accountability relationships with the intent of creating a culture of soul winning.

Goals

Five goals were established to aid in the preparation and the evaluation of the project. These goals established a standardized metric by which the project's effectiveness were judged. The first goal focused on increasing my personal awareness of evangelism. Within ministry, the daily schedules and routines of ministry can overshadow personal evangelism. The project was meant to refocus my personal attention to the urgency of being an evangelist.

A second goal centered on combining personal accountability among church members with the individual calling to be witnesses. Through weekly accountability, each participant reported on their evangelism experiences and held one another accountable to the gospel ministry. To facilitate such partnerships, a weekly time for gathering was determined.

A third goal focused on changing the beginning culture of apathy concerning evangelism to a culture of understanding the direct command of Christ to be witnesses. A survey was conducted during the first and fifteenth week of the project that aided in the evaluation of the cultural adjustment.

A fourth goal centered on equipping members in the art of “fluid personal evangelism.” Fluid personal evangelism does not focus on any one particular method of sharing the gospel, but rather leans on learning various beneficial tools for sharing the gospel. The addition of basic apologetics serves to strengthen the evangelistic tools for defending the faith in a postmodern culture. An evaluation of this goal occurred in week fifteen by a survey of project participants.

A fifth goal challenged the church to grasp the concept of being obedient witnesses. A strategic sermon series dealing with the Great Commission texts addresses the commands of Christ to be witnesses. The primary purpose was to educate and empower laity to be active soul winners. A survey given in week one and week fifteen measured this particular goal.

Context

Otter Creek First Baptist Church is located in the southwest corner of Pulaski County, Arkansas, within the city limits of Little Rock. Otter Creek originally consisted of a gated community of upper middle class families. Its growth moved beyond the gated community and stretched into community that engulfs an area of roughly a mile around the original gated community.

In the late 1970s, Otter Creek did not have a Baptist church that specifically targeted the area. At that time, those who desired to attend a Southern Baptist church

would need to leave the community and travel several miles. As a result, the Pulaski Baptist Association set a course to launch a church within the immediate community. The association purchased eight acres at the entrance of the gated community in 1978 and orchestrated support for a church plant. No services or organization took place until 1981, when a collection of six churches joined to sponsor the work in Otter Creek.

On July 2, 1981, Barbara and Charles Joliff hosted the first Bible study in their home. These Bible studies continued until October 11, 1981, when the church gathered for the first Sunday worship service at the clubhouse located within the gates of Otter Creek. Over the next three years, the church increased in number under the leadership of pastor Max Deaton and entered a new church building in March 1984.

Through effective leadership and outreach, the church grew to roughly 175 in morning worship attendance by 1985. The church was reaching the neighborhood effectively. By 1988, the Sunday morning worship attendance average was around 200.

Over the next several years, the church endured poor leadership and pastoral issues that led to a plummet in attendance. Many members grew tired of the problems and moved their membership to Geyer Springs Baptist Church, a mega church that had relocated within a mile of Otter Creek. In 2006, the Otter Creek First Baptist Church hit its low attendance mark by averaging 29 people in Sunday school.

In June 2009, I became pastor of Otter Creek First Baptist Church. At that time, the church averaged 33 in Sunday school and 45 in worship service. Since that time, the church has increased the Sunday school average to 42 and worship attendance average to 53.

Mission work holds a strong place in the heart of the members of Otter Creek First Baptist Church members. Throughout the years, Otter Creek's support of missions through giving is noticeable. In 2009, the church invested a total of \$25,319 into Southern Baptist missions through the Cooperative Program, local association, and special national and state offerings. The church was acknowledged as the highest per capita giving church in the association for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering 2009. When other mission activities of the church are calculated into the total amount for missions giving, the church gave almost \$30,000 in 2009. In the past, the church sent teams on mission trips to New York and other areas of the United States.

Unfortunately, giving to missions has replaced a zeal to reach the local community or to personally participate in a mission activity. The church itself resides inside the gated community and has struggled in the past to target the roughly 2,400 households within the community. Currently, the church is attempting to adapt its ministry to the ever-changing local context of the community.

In 2010, a summer initiative was launched with the intent of investing in the local community. This initiative focused on hosting a series of children's Bible club meetings throughout the summer, developing a preschool activity time to engage young adults, prayer walking, community surveys, and getting to know the needs of the community. The latter of these activities occurred through the church's changing its Sunday evening approach from a time of worship to a time of going and being the church. The entire emphasis attempted to show that the church that Otter Creek First Baptist Church is called to do more than just give to missions; it is called to be a collection of missionaries that impact the lives of people with the hope of the gospel.

Until the last decade, the Otter Creek community was inhabited by upper middle class Caucasian homes. At the turn of the century, gang activity began to manifest itself in another region of Little Rock. As a result, diversification of the community occurred as individuals and families attempted to escape gang violence. Now within the gated community there is an ethnic blend. At the same time, a movement has brought younger families into the community because of a well-respected school. In fact, roughly 25% of individuals who live in Otter Creek are 18 or younger. Since the church is currently made up of individuals who are over 60, there tends to be a generational struggle to reach younger adults.¹

The church is consistently evaluating its ministry objectives in light of the ever-changing nature of the community. Otter Creek First Baptist Church desires to reach the younger generation that is moving into the community, but has found more success in reaching new residents in a senior adult living community that is located across the street. The church struggles to adjust to some of these movements and is seeking to refocus itself away from personal desires and focus more strategically on reaching the community.

Rationale

The results of a 2010 survey of theological beliefs held at Otter Creek First Baptist Church demonstrated a lack of concern toward personal evangelism. Most participants understood the necessity of the Christian to share Christ. Unfortunately, a majority of individuals admitted to unfaithfulness in sharing their faith because of a belief

¹Arkansas Baptist State Convention, *Otter Creek First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas: Demographic Profile: 1,3, &5 Mile Ring* (February 11, 2010).

that they were unprepared to share the gospel. This finding explains the present mentality toward evangelism within the church: the Great Commission was commanded to all believers, but everyone else is responsible to fulfill it.

In discussing personal evangelism with church members who are currently involved in the formal outreach program, I concluded that many desire to be better equipped to share the gospel, especially when confronted with questions that unbelievers or skeptics may pose. This lack of equipping manifested itself when one of our women knocked on a door in the community to invite the household to church. Upon inviting the individual to church, the member was quickly told that this household did not believe in God, and, if they did, they would be Universalist. The church member retreated because of uncertainty in how to respond and as a result felt inadequate. Thus, the intent of this project was to equip members for such confrontations.

The overarching purpose was to take individuals who desire to become soul winners and equip them with the necessary information and support to share the gospel in various circumstances. Through accountability, a constant partnership established a means for encouragement and advice. Through various witnessing tools, individuals became equipped for a variety of encounters. Consistent ongoing training allowed individuals access to needed resources for addressing any concerns or questions that arose. Taking seriously the role of an equipper and several experiences like the one mentioned in the previous paragraph, this project served not only as a training class to gain knowledge on evangelism, but a process of continued growth as a disciple of Christ throughout the project.

Definitions, Limitations, and Delimitations

In order to reach the desired goal of developing individuals in fluid personal evangelism, a few definitions must be clarified. On a broad level, evangelism can be defined as follows:

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.²

When discussing personal evangelism for this project, the term *evangelism* will be used to refer to the intentional method or activity of sharing the gospel with others. The emphasis here is placed on the actual sharing of the gospel, not just having a spiritual conversation or doing any form of pre-evangelism.

Second, the term *outreach* will be used to signify the events or programs that are designed to cause interaction with individuals in need of the gospel. Outreach refers to the focus of interacting with individuals outside the church in order to build a relationship with them for the purpose of sharing Christ. Outreach, though intentional, is more focused on pre-evangelism rather than of evangelism itself.

When referring to evangelism, the term *fluid* refers to the concept of not being locked into one method or means of sharing the gospel. Fluid represents a variety of

²The Lausanne Movement, *Lausanne Covenant 1974* [on-line]; accessed 9 August 2010, available from <http://www.lausanne.org/covenant>; Internet.

styles or approaches to sharing the gospel that are intertwined to share effectively in the specific context. The means and method of communication is much more based on context than rote memory.

One limitation affected this project. The project was limited to the fifteen weeks given by Southern Seminary for the implementation of the project. To make the best use of this time, the project was split into three main areas. Week one through four consisted of training and research. Week five through fourteen consisted of witnessing and weekly follow-up sessions. Week fifteen served as a final check point survey and feedback from the participants.

A delimitation was placed upon the project. The participants were volunteers. Key leaders in the church, such as deacons and Sunday school teachers, were encouraged to take part for the purpose of setting an example before the church. There were no pre-requisites to participate in the project, just a willingness to be obedient to the Great Commission.

Research Methodology

In order to gain a proper amount of feedback concerning the project, the entire congregation participated in a pre-project survey. The pre-project survey consisted of a series of basic questions concerning the respondent's activity and views on personal evangelism. These questions focused on one's personal perspective of his or her ability to share the gospel.

Another pre-project survey was given to the participants in the project. This survey focused on one's previous training and self-evaluation of ability to share and communicate the message of the gospel with other individuals.

During the project, weekly group sessions allowed for constant feedback. Each of these sessions began with a time for feedback concerning experiences of sharing the gospel in the previous week, along with a time to address any key issues or questions that arise. The weekly feedback enabled proper equipping to take place, in order to meet the needs of the participants who were sharing their faith.

Consistent training encompasses more than merely allowing questions to be asked. Through predetermined topics certain circumstances or situations were addressed concerning how to apologetically defend the gospel. For instance, directly across the street from Otter Creek First Baptist Church is a regional hub for the Church of Latter Day Saints. Thus one session taught how to defend the faith and share the gospel with someone who is involved within the Mormon tradition. Teaching sessions were designed to train the participants how to share the gospel in the midst of grave and dark situations.

Support also came through accountability partners. Each participant was linked with an accountability partner for the purpose of encouragement, confession, and support. Through accountability partners, a basic framework existed for the participants to have someone to walk with through the trials and joys of his or her evangelistic efforts. This partnership led to a partnership in prayer, where each participant prayed for their partner as well as the individuals whom the partner was sharing the gospel with.

To aid in the development of each participant and help develop a culture of evangelism within the church, a sermon series laid the ground work for a biblical understanding of personal evangelism. Within this sermon series, the Great Commission was examined through the eyes of the gospel writers, the concept of fluid evangelism was biblically proven, the concept of personal accountability and evangelism were linked, and

several key apologetical issues were addressed. This series continued throughout the course of the fifteen week project.

At the conclusion of the project, the surveys given to the church and the participants in the first week were repeated. These surveys were compared and analyzed with the first set of surveys in order to depict any adjustment in the faithfulness in sharing one's faith and in the overall culture of the church concerning personal evangelism.

CHAPTER 2
A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING
OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Personal evangelism is not optional within Christianity. Each believer has received a command to fulfill the Great Commission. Some Christians attempt to meet this obligation through either monetary support of missionaries or the support of local believers participating in gospel efforts. These Christians attempt to find the fulfillment of personal responsibility in the faithfulness of other believers and excuse the need of personal involvement by claiming obedience and service in other areas of ministry. Bailey Smith challenges such a mentality by stating, “Let me repeat a too-often forgotten truth. Witnessing is every Christian’s responsibility. Escape cannot be found in some other achievement in Christian service. Oh, dear Christian, get hot on the trail for the souls of men.”¹ An understanding of the command of Christ to be soul winners should not be based on personal prerogative or opinion, but rather grounded upon fulfilling the Word of God. The desire of obedience should be passionate and believers must be zealous in pursuit of the lost.

The New Testament challenges each follower of Christ to accomplish the personal command of witnessing found in the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). The basic test of obedience for all the redeemed is evangelism. Soul winning should be the heartbeat of all the believer does and plans to do. Pastors must not only train believers in the art of personal evangelism,

¹Bailey Smith, *Real Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman, 1978), 162.

but must model it before the congregation. Pastors must fight the temptation to occupy time with administrative matters, sermon preparation, and preaching, all of which are good and necessary, and set forth the example of making disciples through personal evangelism and discipling. The main focus of pastors must be on the rescuing of lost souls from eternal doom. John Wesley challenges pastors with the following charge:

It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.²

W. A. Criswell echoes the sentiments of Wesley when he reminds pastors,

If the pastor is under the authority to do the work of an evangelist, then he must do the same thing; namely, he must use his church organization to win the lost. To what better use could they be dedicated? And what a powerful instrument for witnessing the pastor has in the marching members of his many-faceted ministry through the church. The way the church is put together is inherently, intrinsically made for soul winning, for reaching people. It is the thing that comes naturally.³

As Wesley and Criswell eloquently depict, pastors must be about the task of leading souls to Christ and to the strategizing of the church for evangelism. Pastors must hold to a biblical premise of personal evangelism and communicate that premise to their congregations.

The Biblical Background of the Command

Key Greek Terms

When investigating the biblical command of soul winning, four key terms within the Greek text point to the necessity of sharing the gospel. Each term can be found in at least one of the five Great Commission passages.

²Robert Coleman, *Nothing to Do But to Save Souls* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1990), 16.

³W. A. Criswell, *Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors* (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), 233.

Μαθητεύσατε. Jesus commissioned believers to impact the world as witnesses in Matthew 28:16-20. Within this passage, Matthew used the term *μαθητεύσατε* in reference to reaching and discipling people among the nations. This term stands as the glue that combines the Christian experience of salvation and the Christian responsibility of spiritual growth. Alvin Reid designates this term as “the main verb in the Great Commission passage,”⁴ adding that the word indicates that the passage is “imperative”⁵ and a “command.”⁶ Reid conveys the intensity of the imperative by stating, “The Great Commission is not the Great Suggestion!”⁷ Thus, *μαθητεύσατε* demands that believers move beyond reaching people for Christ and aid in thrusting people into a growing relationship with Christ. William Mounce defines *μαθητεύω* in terms of the action, “to make a disciple of, to train in discipleship.”⁸ As a result, a bond exists between evangelism and the concept of creating disciples, which is portrayed through the use of *μαθητεύσατε* in Matthew 28.

Εὐαγγέλιον. Marks 16 gives another version of the command to go into the world and reach souls. John Mark used the term *εὐαγγέλιον* to emphasize the proclaimed message. This term refers to the news received from the battle field proclaiming victory, especially the victory which has brought salvation to the city.⁹ Within Palestinian Judaism, *εὐαγγέλιον* carried the notion of declaring with the authority of God and not just

⁴Alvin Reid, *Introduction to Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 11.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸William Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), s.v. “Μαθητεύσατε.”

⁹Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), s.v. “Μαθητεύσατε.”

speaking or preaching.¹⁰ Thus, εὐαγγέλιον, which is found in its noun form seventy-six times and in its verb form thirty-three times in the New Testament,¹¹ carries the intensity of announcing the victory of Christ to the nations. A true soul winner proclaims the εὐαγγέλιον to the nations.

Κηρύσσω. Both Mark 16 and Luke 24 use the term κηρύσσω when commissioning the followers of Christ to go forth and present the redeeming message. In the basic form, κηρύσσω means to preach, proclaim, tell, or announce a message openly and publicly.¹² κηρύσσω distinguishes the believer as being a herald of God by telling the message of God to the world. Kittel notes that this proclamation “does not mean the delivery of a learned and edifying or hortatory discourse in well-chosen words and a pleasant voice. It is the declaration of an event.”¹³ The key focal point of the heralded message is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus, κηρύσσω is not fulfilled in announcing just any message, but is fulfilled in proclaiming the act of redemption for mankind.

Μάρτυς. Within Luke 24 and Acts 1, a new crucial term in the study of the commissioning of the believer is recognized. Μάρτυς in the simplest form means, “to testify or to bear testimony.”¹⁴ Alvin Reid adds a small twist by stating that μάρτυς means “being a witness because of radical transformation.”¹⁵ The command to be a witness should not be shocking in light of the nonbiblical Greek sense of the term. Kittel

¹⁰Ibid., s.v. “Εὐαγγέλιον.”

¹¹Reid, *Introduction to Evangelism*, 10.

¹²Mounce, *Expository Dictionary*, s.v. “Κηρύσσω.”

¹³Kittel, *Theological Dictionary*, s.v. “Κηρύσσω.”

¹⁴Mounce, *Expository Dictionary*, s.v. “Μάρτυς.”

¹⁵Reid, *Introduction to Evangelism*, 11.

gives insight to the Greek usage of the term by stating that it refers to “one who can and does speak from personal experience about actions in which he took part and which happened to him, or about relations known to him.”¹⁶ Thus, *μάρτυς* indicates the message of the believer is the testimony of a personal, radically changed life.

Five Great Commission Texts

Matthew 28:16-20 stands as the most well-known Great Commission passage. Most believers automatically recite this quotation when asked where the biblical command to be witnesses is found. Unfortunately, many individuals overlook the fact that all the writers of the Gospels included a version of this charge. Luke actually gives this command twice, once in the Gospel of Luke and a second time in the Acts of the Apostles. Richard Phillips comments on the frequency of the command: “Furthermore, according to the four Gospels of the New Testament, the Christian faith is designed to be shared with others.”¹⁷ These texts demonstrate how each believer is commissioned to go and declare the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Matthew 28:18-20 The Great Commission passage found in Matthew 28 is the longest of the commissioning passages. This passage engulfs the entire nature of the evangelism experience by declaring that witnessing is more than obtaining a collection of souls, but rather an emphasis on creating disciples. The Gospel writer pens,

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore into all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
(Matt 28:18-20)¹⁸

¹⁶Kittel, *Theological Dictionary*, s.v. “Μάρτυς.”

¹⁷Richard Phillips, *Jesus the Evangelist* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2007), 1.

¹⁸Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

Robert Coleman affirms this concept in stating, “But the mandate of Christ is not to make converts, but to “make disciples” – followers of Jesus – persons who will develop into the likeness of the Master.”¹⁹ So how is this disciple making of the nations accomplished?

First, Jesus clearly communicates that Christians are individuals who are under authority. Being under the dominion of Christ, believers realize the origin of Jesus’ authority is the Father. The Trinity directs attention to the headship of the Father and the authority of this position. Christ receives dominion, not by self-designation, but from the heavenly Father, stating that “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,” in verse 18. Emphatically, Christ points not only to the reality of his authority, but also to its source. Stephen Olford describes the scope of authority given to Christ in this manner: “All the powers of heaven, earth, and hell are under the authority of the risen Christ.”²⁰ In a way, this statement reaffirms the authority of Christ after the rejection that he received in Jerusalem.²¹

The authority given to Christ fulfills the prophecy given by Daniel. The prophet proclaims,

I saw in the night visions, and behold with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:13-14)

The proclamation of authority lies in the fulfillment of prophecy as a gift from the Father, and carries with it an all-encompassing scope. A witness must share the gospel under this authority.

¹⁹Coleman, *Nothing to Do But to Save Souls*, 79.

²⁰Stephen Olford and David Olford, *The Secret of Soul Winning* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing, 2007), 17.

²¹John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, in Logos Library System [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2005).

In ministering under the authority of Christ, believers recognize that “because Jesus has all authority, because he is king in the kingdom of God, his disciples must carry on the mission of teaching the kingdom.”²² Thus, as servants to the king, soul winners are obedient, not in a nominal sense, but in a manner that completely abandons selfish desires and priorities, focusing only on honoring, glorifying, and being obedient to Christ.

In the authority of Christ, the disciple finds hope, strength, and encouragement due to the victorious reality found in Christ. Christ rules over all because of the ultimate victory claimed against his adversaries. The authority in which Jesus speaks the Great Commission is not in a manner of hopeful victory, but in the assurance of claimed victory. The words of Russell Moore remind one of Christ’s victory:

When Jesus announced the Commission to his disciples (Matt 28:16-20), he was not launching a global public relations campaign. He was declaring war. When Jesus grants the Great Commission, he is signaling the onset of the last days – the expansion of the gospel to the ends of the earth means that God has indeed granted him the nations as his inheritance.²³

Jesus’ words declare not just the war ahead, but the ultimate victory already secured. Comprehending the victory found in Christ leads to the marching order in which believers respond.

Second, Jesus commissions believers to go into the world as witnesses. Once Jesus receives authority from the Father, he commands his followers in verse 19 to, “Go therefore and make disciples.” The mandate given by Christ directs the attention of the follower to be the instrument through which God declares salvation to the people of the world.

²²Craig Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2009), 718.

²³Russell Moore, “A Theology of the Great Commission,” in *The Challenge of the Great Commission: Essays on God’s Mandate for the Local Church*, ed. Chuck Lawless and Thom Rainer (St. Louis: Pinnacle Publishers, 2005), 49.

As a conduit of God, the Christian becomes the mechanism through which the Word of God is amplified to the world. As a musical student blows through a brass instrument to produce a sound that is an expression of his breathe, so does God use his disciples to express himself to the world. In the book, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions*, Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer remind believers that the command of God to carry forth his message is linked to the command given to Israel previously: “We, just like Israel, are to be instruments of His mission to make His way and His salvation known upon the earth until all nations rejoice and sing His praise.”²⁴

A believer must remember that being used as the amplifying conduit of God is not an option, but a mandate. The Great Commission is the designed plan of God to reach the nations with his message of salvation and hope. David Platt challenges believers to reach the lost by reminding them that “we are the plan of God and there is not a plan B.”²⁵ Platt challenges disciples to recognize one possible point of failure, the lack of obedience by the children of God.

Many followers of Christ claim that they are not called to go to the unreached people groups of the world and share the message of Christ. Due to misunderstanding the term “go,” some Christians attempt to fulfill the Great Commission through the financial support of missions. The focus does not need to be on leaving one’s current place and moving to a new ministry setting, rather the basis of “go” is to evangelize as one goes throughout daily life. Craig Blomberg states, “To ‘make disciples of all nations’ does require many people to leave their homeland, but Jesus’ main focus remains on the task of all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be.”²⁶

²⁴Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing, 2010), 21.

²⁵David Platt, *Radical* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2010), 156.

²⁶Craig Blomberg. *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

Third, Jesus addressed the multiplication of disciples. A believer's task is more than merely winning souls, spiritual growth must occur as well. When the Messiah commands disciple making, he emphasized the importance of continual growth in the life of his followers. Christians must comprehend the foundational manner of creating spiritual offspring because healthy organisms reproduce for the purpose of sustained life. Likewise, the body of Christ must reproduce spiritually for the purpose of a sustained life of a church, but more importantly for the growth of the kingdom.

A follower of Christ must truly be a disciple who is seeking individuals to join him or her in following Christ. John explains how Andrew heard John the Baptist's exaltation of Christ as the Messiah and followed Christ (John 1:35-51). In doing so, Andrew demonstrates how believers must bring people along the journey with them by stating in verse 41, "He first found his own brother Simon and said to him 'We have found the Messiah' (which means Christ)." Then, in a beautiful moment, verse 42 challenges believers in stating, "He brought him to Jesus." The principle of bringing lost people to Christ is crucial. If a Christian truly cares for an unbeliever, then the believer will do all that is possible to bring the lost person to Christ.

Fourth, Jesus gives a powerful promise of care, provision, and strength as he concludes the commission. The end of verse 20 simply promises, "I am with you always, to the end of the age." Jesus promises that in the midst of obedience the witness will never be without the power and aid of God. The Apostle Paul confirms this truth in his letter to Philippi, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of the Lord" (Phil 1:6). Thus, the promise of provision and care should strike down the fear of sharing faith and strengthen believers in fulfilling the command to be soul winners.

Mark 16:15-16²⁷ The commission found in Matthew 28 focuses on the aspect of making disciples. In the Gospel of Mark, the command does not address the concept of making disciples, but points to proclaiming the gospel. Mark 16:15-16 instructs, “And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.’” Believers are called to deliver the message of the gospel to the nations.

The first nuance of the commission found in Mark is the emphasis upon proclamation. The disciples have been ordered to take the received message from Christ and declare that hope to the nations. That commissioning still stands for believers today as followers of Christ are to proclaim the received message to the entire world.

Through proclamation, Christians are to make known the good news that has come through Christ. Through fulfilling the mandate, children of God become heralds delivering the message from on high. Henry Swete states, “That the Eleven were to be heralds of the Gospel to the world, as the Master had been its herald in Galilee, was a revelation reserved for the days after the resurrection; but the catholic mission of the Gospel had been foretold before the Passion.”²⁸ Note the emphasis, that as heralds, believers are called to mimic the example set forth by Christ. Jesus modeled the manner in which soul winners are to penetrate the darkness of this world with the light of Christ.

The gospel is a universal message for all to hear and receive. No limitation is given to those who are in need of the message from God. Mark asserts that the calling is to reach into the entire world. James Thomas emphasizes this calling when he writes,

²⁷The ending of Mark is highly debated. Most scholars hold that the two endings (a short ending in 16:8b or a long ending in 16:9-20) found in the manuscripts are not written by Mark himself, but are later additions.

²⁸Henry Barclay Swete, ed., *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indices*, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (London, New York: Macmillan and Company, 1898).

“Of significance in the saying is that the gospel is of universal import: the disciples are sent ‘into all the world,’ and the gospel is ordained for ‘all creation.’”²⁹

Still, there is an underlying question when it comes to heralding the message of God to all the nations. What is the message? The Gospel of Mark reveals that without a biblical understanding of the message, a witness cannot be a faithful herald. In a book explaining the gospel, Greg Gilbert states, “I think the energy generated by discussions about the gospel points to a general fog of confusion that swirls around it these days. When you come right down to it, Christians just don’t agree on what the gospel is – even Christians who call themselves evangelicals.”³⁰ Mark Dever gives insight to why this fog may exist, “Too often it becomes a thin veneer spread lightly over our culture’s values, being shaped and formed to the contours of our culture rather than the truth about God.”³¹ As a result, soul winners must comprehend the biblical gospel. The true gospel, not a distorted gospel, “is like fuel in the furnace of worship”³² and must be the message of the believer.

A biblical gospel begins with the understanding of the created design. The story of salvation does not begin with the incarnation, since Christ is the agent of creation (John 1:1-5) and “before all things” (Col 1:17). Genesis 1:1 declares, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Flowing from this design is the creation of man. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Gen 1:27). Out of creation, God gave man responsibilities and regulations. Genesis 2 depicts the original call to obedience given to Adam.

²⁹James Thomas, *The Gospel According to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

³⁰Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 17.

³¹Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004), 79.

³²Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*, 21.

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Gen 2:15-17)

Mankind is subject to God’s regulations and responsibilities due to the owner’s rights of God. The created order was originally woven together with the intent of constant communion with God while living inside perfect obedience.

The second key to understanding a complete biblical gospel centers on the rebellion of man against God that has manifested itself in the rejection of the owner’s rights of God. Rebellion of man has led to the refusal of God’s blueprint and the assertion that mankind has a better plan. The breaking of the intended relationship with God through rebellion is nothing less than spitting in the Creator’s face. As Greg Gilbert phrases it, “It’s the breaking of a relationship, and even more, it is a rejection of God himself – a repudiation of God’s rule, God’s care, God’s authority, and God’s right to command those to whom he gave life. In short, it is the rebellion of the creature against his Creator.”³³

The claiming of independence from God leads to sin. Sin, as understood in the Greek term *ἁμαρτία*, is the act of missing the mark or intended target. Thus, sin is the missing of the goal or mark that God has set before the believer. At the same time, sin can also be a rebellious nature which one finds in the Greek term *παράβασις*. A rebellious sinfulness is the intentional objection to God and his ways. This is the intentional breaking of the ways of God. So sin must be understood as both the intentional rebellion against God and the act of missing the mark that God has set before man.

With the exception of Jesus, all humanity has sinned in life. Paul, writing to the believers in Rome, declares, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). This passage follows Paul’s quotation of Psalm 14 when Paul emphasizes,

³³Ibid., 48.

“None is righteous, no not one” (Rom 3:10). In fact, James, the half-brother of Jesus, writes concerning the law, “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For he who said, ‘Do not commit adultery’ also said ‘Do not murder.’ If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law” (Jas 2:10-11). The result of sin is that it brings forth the judgment and justice of God.

God’s very nature is love, righteousness, and justice. As a result, sin cannot go without proper judgment. Oftentimes, believers forget the justice of God by overly focusing on the love of God. But God’s Word speaks clearly to God’s judgment and justice toward sin. Paul teaches in his letter to Ephesus, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sin in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience” (Eph 2:1-2). Mark gives a picture of the devastation of sin on mankind and the eternal punishment that awaits. “And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire” (Mark 9:43).

But in love, God made a solution available to mankind. In the fullness of judgment and justice, God required payment for the sinfulness of man. Alone, man could not achieve reconciliation with God. Thus God responded by sending his Son, Jesus, into the world. While here in the world, the Messiah was both completely divine and completely human. This unique status is the mystery of the incarnation that God became man while maintaining deity. This mystery was necessary for proper payment to be made. God’s solution was to make atonement for sin once and for all through the sacrificing of the perfect the Lamb of God, Jesus. This substitutionary act of atonement secures forgiveness, declares righteousness, and gives the promise of inheritance. Greg Gilbert puts it this way,

King Jesus came not only to inaugurate the kingdom of God, but also to bring sinners into it by dying in their place and for their sins, taking their punishment on himself and securing forgiveness for them, making them righteous in God's sight, and qualifying them to share in the inheritance of the kingdom.³⁴

This act of atonement was carried out on the cross. On the cross Jesus cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30), claiming the eternal victory.

Though the substitutionary atonement of Jesus is fascinating and victorious, the resurrection must not be forgotten. The resurrection shows that death is defeated and life is victorious. Through the atonement of Christ, man's penalty has been paid and through the resurrection of Christ, the reality of the gift from the paid penalty is recognized. The resurrection displays the victory over death that has been claimed by Christ and the victory over death that is available to man through Christ. But the key is, though Christ died and rose for all of humanity, an individual must respond to the gift of life offered through Christ alone.

God has created an avenue for sinners to be reconciled with him. In doing so, man is held accountable to his or her response to the offering of salvation made available by God. The response to the biblical gospel is simply to repent and to believe. Jesus declares, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Peter proclaims at Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Speaking to the elders in Ephesus, Paul declares he has been, "Testifying both to Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). All of these individuals proclaim that the appropriate response to the message of Christ is repent and believe.

Faith is the first component to responding to the message of God. Salvation through faith alone distinguishes Christianity from all worldly religions and beliefs. Greg Gilbert comments, "Every other religion in human history rejects this idea that we are

³⁴Ibid., 64.

justified by faith alone. Instead other religions assert that salvation is won through moral effect, good deeds, and somehow balancing one's account by accruing enough merit to outweigh one's evil."³⁵ But the gospel is not achieved by merit, worth, or works; rather it is grasped by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul, writing to the church in Ephesus, pens, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:8-9).

Faith is not simply belief in something that is not explainable or tangible, faith is about reliance. Faith is relying on Jesus for what mankind cannot obtain alone. Faith is jumping wholeheartedly into Jesus and trusting that he is there. Man must respond to the proclamation of the good news in true faith.

The second component of responding to the message of God is repentance. Repentance goes hand in hand with genuine faith because, as trusting in Christ alone takes root, surrender occurs. Surrender is the abandonment of selfishness, fleshliness, and worldliness. Genuine repentance is the act that separates individuals who are seeking an easy belief versus those who are seeking real change. At the same time, repentance does not equate perfection, but is about allegiance. Conclusively, the main difference between unbelievers and believers is their allegiance with sin or with God against sin.

Mark's commissioning focuses on the reality that each believer is called to be a herald of God who proclaims the message of salvation to the entire world. Thus, Mark causes the reader to ask, "What is a biblical gospel?" Thabiti Anyabwile says, "It is the gospel that makes us aware of the love of God, our depravity, and need for redemption, and of the possibility of eternal joy through worshipping God."³⁶ So Mark's commissioning is based on the concept that believers "should know the gospel, stand on

³⁵Ibid., 78.

³⁶Thabiti Amyabwile, *What Is a Healthy Church Member?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 46.

the gospel, hold on to the gospel, defend it, pass it on, declare it, proclaim it, and share it.”³⁷

Luke 24:45-49. Walking through the Great Commission texts leads to the Gospel of Luke. Luke 24:45-49 explains the importance of sharing Jesus, while also illuminating the fulfillment of Scripture. Luke 24:45-49 reads,

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are my witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

The emphasis of fulfillment and sharing distinguishes Luke 24 from the other commission passages.

As Christ commands his disciples, he points them to the fulfillment of prophecy. In the preceding verse, Jesus states, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44). Through the mentioning of the three main divisions of the Hebrew Scripture, Jesus points to the all-encompassing fulfillment brought forth in him. This directs the witness’ attention to the reality that the Messiah is the one to be declared. Robert Stein draws the following conclusion:

One such emphasis involves the fulfillment of Scripture, and, associated with this, the necessity of Jesus’ death. Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection are all the fulfillment of Scripture. The church’s worldwide mission and the Spirit’s coming to empower them for that ministry is also the fulfillment of Scripture.³⁸

A soul winner does not choose to declare the message of Christ; rather the witness is obedience to the command of Christ and is diligent in fulfilling the Word of God.

³⁷Olford, *The Secret of Soul Winning*, 48.

³⁸Robert Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

Luke not only focuses on the fulfillment of Scripture, but also emphasizes the responsibility of sharing. The Messiah guides the disciples concerning what to share, “You are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:48). Notice that the proclaimers are not only to share the message of Jesus Christ, but to share from personal experience with Christ as well. The believer is to share about his or her experience with the risen Christ. I. H. Marshall says, “Jesus appoints them as his witnesses, since they have been able to see his death and can testify to his resurrection.”³⁹

The same message is pertinent to soul winners today. Each believer must share the impact of the death, burial, and resurrection on his or her own personal life. Mal Couch challenges believers with the following: “All Christians are witnesses for Christ. They are the evidences of his mercy and his love, and they should live that others may be brought to see and love the Savior.”⁴⁰ Like the disciples, Christians today must understand the importance and the power in sharing from personal experiences with Jesus.

Many believers become hesitant when it comes to sharing about Christ. To combat this struggle, Jesus declares a promise of power. Jesus is not speaking of earthly power, but is declaring power that comes from on high. The leading and directing of the Holy Spirit gives this strength that is manifested in active obedience instead of passive cowardness. Power allows for active obedience that overcomes passive cowardness. The intensity of this power is so strong that without it the disciples cannot witness faithfully. The disciples were told to go and wait for this power, and upon receiving it they are to be

³⁹I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1978).

⁴⁰Mal Couch, *The Gospel of Luke: Christ, The Son of Man*, The Twenty-First Century Biblical Commentary Series (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2006), 237.

in the battle. Likewise believers today are called to be active heralds, but must do so only in the power from on high.

John 20:21. The shortest Great Commission passage is recorded in John 20. As John is recollecting the ministry and words of Jesus, he writes the following command, “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you’” (John 20:21). Jesus is commissioning heralds, ambassadors, and soul winners for the kingdom. Christ is decreeing the necessity to follow the example he has set as their teacher and rabbi.

The commissioning of Jesus is an ordaining of the disciples for a particular task, sharing the gospel. Earlier in his earthly ministry, Christ sent the disciples out to gain experience and to put into practice all that was seen and learned from him. As the disciples went out previously they were heralds proclaiming the message Jesus was teaching. Now a different office is held; they are ambassadors representing the kingdom. Instead of being messengers, the disciples are now representatives. John Calvin observes, “The Lord sent them as heralds before, now he ordains them as ambassadors.”⁴¹

An important realization is the example set forth by Christ which believers are called to follow. Jesus is modeling the way life should be lived and the manner which the love of God should be expressed for the nations. Jesus is setting up a plan of succession because he recognizes that very shortly he will depart and the ministry will be left in the disciples’ hands. Christ is not only modeling, but setting up a plan of succession where believers are setting forth the example for others and creating individuals to take over the ministry in due time. Thus, part of the commission given to believers creates a continuous succession of kingdom workers.

⁴¹John Calvin, *John 1-11*, in vol. 17 *Calvin’s Commentaries*, trans. John King (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 266.

Believers should grasp the reality that “the church should define its task in terms of its understanding of Jesus’ task.”⁴² Any other activity is left frivolous and unproductive concerning the work of the kingdom. To neglect the task to which God has called Christians is sin. Elmer Towns notes that,

Jesus’ commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel and reminded them of the eternal consequences of their actions. When they led others to Christ, they were remitting sin in that the new convert was being forgiven in heaven. When they failed to obey this commission, they were retaining sin because others were not given the opportunity to trust Christ as Savior.⁴³

John insinuates that individual believers are commissioned by God to be his ambassadors to the world. If God’s followers fail in this task, then they themselves are in the midst of the sinfulness of not sharing the love of Christ with the nations and neglecting the responsibility to develop individuals to carry out the task.

Acts 1:8. Luke pens the Acts of the Apostles as a continuation of the Gospel of Luke and as the story of the birthing of the church. At the beginning of this account, Luke picks up where the Gospel of Luke ends, with the promise of the coming Holy Spirit and the ascension of Jesus. In the beginning of Acts, one finds the following Great Commission text: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Supporting previous commission texts, Luke focuses on receiving power to share the good news and the calling to be the witnesses of Christ. Acts 1:8 effectively unfolds what it means to be a witness to all the nations.

The fact that the gospel has no limit concerning its audience stands as the pivotal truth to completely understanding Acts 1:8. Many individuals who claim to be soul winners in the local church have one of two flaws when attempting to impact the

⁴²D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1991).

⁴³Elmer Towns, *The Gospel of John: Believe and Live*, The Twenty-First Century Biblical Commentary Series (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2002), 206.

entire world for Christ. First, there is often a temptation to seek and share with individuals who are similar. As a result, the believer will oftentimes pass over obvious opportunities for sharing because of the uncomfortableness that exists with reaching someone who is different. Second, many believers hold that merely sending money overseas will meet the need to take the gospel to all the nations. Unfortunately, many Christians fall into one of these two traps and as a result are not completely obedient to the Great Commission. Jesus was not selective on the cross and believers do not have the right to be selective either. What Jesus declared was that “the ‘restoration of the kingdom’ is a worldwide mission.”⁴⁴ To make matters easier, Jesus explains the restoration process.

As Christians share the gospel, they need to begin in their local context. Jesus commands the disciples to start in the region of Jerusalem, charging his followers to begin in the heart of the movement against Christ. He is sending the disciples into a hostile environment within their own community. Notice the importance of sharing and caring for those in the local context before moving into the world. Geoff Hammond reminds believers today that Christians “must seize the kingdom opportunity before us and, with urgency, boldly share the good news of Jesus Christ with all the lost people living in our communities.”⁴⁵ Acts 2 emphasizes the reality of local evangelism as Pentecost takes place and kingdom growth occurs.

As a soul winner shares within his or her local context opportunities will arise to take the gospel to the neighboring areas. Some of these areas will be seen as friend while others will be seen as foe. Jesus specifically mentions the necessity to move away from Jerusalem and eventually move into the regions of Judea and Samaria. This command would stretch individuals within the Jewish culture as Samaria was the home

⁴⁴John Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

⁴⁵Geoff Hammond, *God's Plan for Sharing: North America, Your Mission Field* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, 2009), 2.

of the people who were considered worthless. Christ speaks to the necessity of the gospel for even those whom appear to be less deserving or worthy by earthly standards. Jesus is breaking down the concept of friend or foe when it comes to the message of salvation by progressively shattering earthly boundaries for eternal significance. The book of Acts, reveals that the apostles begin to fulfill this command by moving into these outer regions in chapters 8-12.

As a soul winner continues in his or her evangelistic effort, he or she should recognize the necessity of the gospel to travel to all the ethnicities around the world. From Acts 13 through the remainder of the book the focus is upon the ministry and mission work of the early church. In Acts 13 Paul begins to take the gospel to the ends of the earth as he travels on the first missionary journey. Through Paul's missionary efforts, barriers are broken and the gospel is spreading to the nations. The importance of this event is still true today as 16,562 identified people groups exist within the nations on earth and of those people groups 6,847 are considered unreached.⁴⁶ The task of a soul winner is not complete. Therefore, the commission to go and be witnesses to the ends of the earth is still as relevant in the twenty-first century as it was in the first century.

The Biblical Reality of Fluid Evangelism

One key aspect of sharing the gospel effectively is the ability to be fluid. For many decades, personal evangelism training has hinged on the memorization of a method instead of understanding how to relate the message of Christ in an understandable manner to a target audience. The change in the perspective of culture has led the church to a critical time in history as many of the previous methods of sharing the gospel appear to be archaic. Believers need to understand the personal responsibility to share the gospel in

⁴⁶ Joshua Project [on-line]; accessed 11 October 2010; available from <http://joshuaproject.net/great-commission-statistics.php>;Internet.

a manner that may differ from the generation before. The foundation to fluid evangelism is not the method, but the centrality of an unchanging gospel.

The ministry of the Apostle Paul serves as a great example of being fluid in presenting the gospel. Paul mastered the art of presenting the unchanging message of the gospel in a culturally savvy manner throughout his ministry. Whether in Corinth or Athens, the apostle found a way to convey the message of the gospel effectively to the local individuals.

Acts 17:22-34

Acts 17 provides a prime example of the effectiveness of fluid evangelism. While in Athens, Paul is observing the culture. Through his observation Paul notices that Athens is a city filled with idols and objects that represent a polytheistic culture. Acts 17:16-17 gives insight into the Athenian culture and demonstrates the concern for the city that is growing within Paul. As Paul begins to share the truth of the gospel at the synagogue, the scholars of Athens become intrigued concerning the proclaimed message. In response to their intrigue, Paul is summoned to present his ideology to the philosophers and intellectuals at Areopagus.

Before the assembly of Athenians, Paul dives into the message of Jesus Christ by finding commonality with the audience. Paul declares before the multitude, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, I declare to you” (Acts 17:22-23). The apostle’s opening appeal is “an effort to win the favor of his hearers and thus secure their attention.”⁴⁷ Paul has gathered information concerning the city and its inhabitants, and has searched for an avenue of presenting the truthfulness of the gospel

⁴⁷Polhill, *Acts*.

through a method that the Athenians can relate to and understand. As John Polhill states, “This gave him the perfect launching pad for his presentation of monotheism to the polytheistic and pantheistic Athenians.”⁴⁸

As Paul made his presentation of the gospel, the ability to present the gospel to the men of Athens required Paul to assess his surroundings for the sake of clear communication. Information was imperative. Paul had to recognize that the people who dwelt in Athens were individuals of prolific religion. The Athenians attempted to appease every god through idolatry. One such divine image was labeled the “unknown god.” Paul recognized this “unknown god” and knew that, for the Greeks to comprehend the truthfulness and exclusivity of the gospel, he needed to gain the audience’s attentive ear instead of immediately offending their belief.

Paul not only assessed the city of Athens, but he determined that the gospel needed to be shared beginning with creation instead of beginning with Christ. God, being the Creator, is the thread that is constantly present throughout Paul’s speech. The apostle exhibits the ability to interweave this truth throughout his declaration in Acts 17:24-29.

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

Paul used creation as the springboard to understanding the importance of each individual and the love that God holds for each person. The apostle is laying down framework in his defense that the “unknown god” of Athens is not truly unknown, but rather is the one,

⁴⁸Ibid.

true, living God. Paul introduces the gospel to the Athenian culture based on the creating aspect of God.

As Paul shares the truth of God with the Athenians, he builds his argument to a climax in which the gospel is presented and people are challenged to respond. What appears to be a cultural event, the presenting of one's thought before philosophers at Aeropagus, is being turned into a powerful presentation of the gospel. By cultural standards, Paul is allowed to stand before the men of Athens and present his message for consideration. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Paul uses their cultural surroundings to appease the audience and then begins to unfold the truthfulness of the Creator God. Through this course of action, Paul has laid the groundwork to present the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In Acts 17:30-32, Paul presents the gospel message.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this.

Paul has effectively and concisely presented the truth of the gospel. Thus, the Athenians can no longer claim ignorance concerning the redemption plan of God. To ignore such a message of the true God would be to commit the crime of high treason against the very Creator. Polhill gives this insight: "He was no longer an 'unknown God'; and should they continue their false worship and fail to acknowledge his sole lordship of heaven and earth, their sin would no longer be a sin of ignorance, but a high-handed sin."⁴⁹

Paul's desire is for the Athenians to comprehend the necessity of God's redemption. While presenting the truthfulness of the gospel, Paul makes known the need to repent. The people dwelling in Athens needed to repent and turn from their worship of

⁴⁹Ibid.

false, unloving idols and turn to obedience in the one, true, living God. Paul delivers the message of repentance and judgment as he clearly presents the outcome of eternal judgment without the reality of repentance. As a result some mocked Paul to his face, while others were intrigued to hear more of this message.

In recognizing the varied response to the initial presentation of the gospel, Paul's experience points a soul winner to the revelation that the response to the truth of the gospel will often be a mixture of affirmation and rejection. Scripture indicates that some of the Athenians followed and joined Paul while others did not: "So Paul went out from their midst. But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman name Damaris and others with them" (Acts 17:33-34).

Like Paul, believers today need to recognize the importance of assessing a situation in order to present the gospel in a manner that is culturally relevant. The intent is to never change the gospel message, but to present it in a manner that the audience is able to understand its truthfulness and the need of repentance. Likewise, when the gospel is presented today, there will be a mixture of responses to the message of Christ. Some will repent and follow, while others will mock, reject, and ridicule.

Acts 26

As Luke begins to describe Paul's plight in Acts 26, one sees that Paul is in captivity and has a session before King Agrippa for the right to defend himself in Rome. Rather than using this opportunity to defend himself, Paul chooses to be obedient to his calling and present a defense of the gospel. Just like the apostle had done in Athens, assessed his situation for the potential of effective communication. Paul knew that he was speaking to a Jewish culture and as a result began the presentation of the gospel through sharing his personal testimony of what Christ had done in his life. Verse 4 indicates how Paul drew from of his Jewish roots for the sake of presenting the gospel in

a culturally acceptable way. “My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews” (Acts 26:4).

Paul presents an amazing defense of the gospel during his hearing. Polhill observes, “Paul was not defending himself before the charges but rather offering an apologia, his personal testimony for his life as a Christian.”⁵⁰ Paul begins by speaking directly to his own personal heritage in Judaism. This background would resonate strongly with the audience as many individuals would relate to Paul’s own journey through Judaism. He mentions the fact that he was a Pharisee who was a member of the “strictest party of our religion” (Acts 26:5). Paul insinuates that those who are charging him with a crime now are the very ones who were once his peers.

By speaking of his heritage within Judaism, Paul begins to strengthen the underlying link between the Pharisees and himself. Paul recognizes that the Pharisees have forgotten that he once stood as a prime persecutor against the followers of Christ. In verses 10-11 Paul reflects on his previous rage against believers. He mentions how, under the authority of the chief priest, he locked believers into prison, brought Christians to death, and brought great punishment against the church. Paul tells of his personal life without Christ, differentiating between his old self versus the new self in Christ who stands before them now.

The audience knows that the apostle is a believer who has been changed because of his belief in Christ. But Paul does not begin his defense with Christ; rather he launches it with his own personal heritage and former life of harming those who were followers of Christ. By doing this, Paul has set the stage for the sharing of his own life changing encounter with Christ. Verses 12-18 speak of the salvation experience and commission that the apostle received as he journeyed on the road to Damascus. This experience was an encounter that was both personal and transforming. Paul explains the

⁵⁰Ibid.

need of change that must occur in each life. This change involves a movement from darkness to light and from Satan to God.

Paul laid the necessary groundwork for presenting the gospel by sharing his testimony. In verse 19 Paul turns the proverbial corner and begins to speak of the need of repentance and turning to God. He declares to them “that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance” (Acts 26:20). A few verses later, Paul explains how redemption was achieved by explaining, “that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and the Gentiles” (Acts 26:23). Paul is pleading that the redemption made available through Christ will be accepted by faith and that the audience will turn to God in repentance. Paul desires that a “turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18) will occur.

But even in fluid personal evangelism, the witness must call for a response. Without being intentional, the soul winner might never call on the heart of the unbeliever to be changed. Paul does not let the opportunity pass to make the calling for repentance personal. In verse 24 and following, Paul faces a response from the leaders and then turns to them with a challenge. Notice that Festus could not fully understand the simplicity of the gospel and called Paul a man that was out of his mind because of too much education. Without hesitation, Paul turns to Agrippa and continues to call for a response by using God’s Word. Paul begins with a couple of rhetorical questions that placed Agrippa in a tough spot. Either way Agrippa answers the questions will get the ruler into political stickiness. By the usage of entrapping questions, Paul makes Agrippa reflect on the reality that Christ is the fulfillment of the message of the prophets. Fernando calls it a challenge to Agrippa. “This challenge is for Agrippa to compare what the prophets foretold with what happened to Christ.”⁵¹

⁵¹Ajjith Fernando, *Acts*, The New International Version Application Commentary, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998).

Acts 17 and Acts 26 demonstrate the need for fluidness in the presentation of the gospel. In presenting the gospel, Paul's style of presentation was not driven by a learned method, but rather Paul adjusted the method of transmission based on the surrounding context. Paul understood the key component that the hearer must understand that which is being said. The apostle shows another model of how evangelism is fluid in First Corinthians.

First Corinthians 9:22-23.

During Paul's ministry, he arrived in Corinth and spread the gospel throughout the region. As a result, a local band of believers gathered together and formed a church. Once this establishment occurred, Paul journeys on to continue the work of spreading the gospel. After some time has passed and issues have arisen in Corinth; Paul finds it imperative to respond to the situation through a letter. In chapter 9 of his first letter to Corinth, Paul declares the freedom that comes through Christ, which is the gospel that he has declared. The apostle deliberately mentions the purpose behind all of his endeavors is the gospel. Paul brings this defense to culmination when he writes, "To the weak I become weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings" (1 Cor 9:22-23).

Paul begins by mentioning the transition that is necessary for the sake of the gospel by drawing on the need to meet those without Christ in their own circumstances. In mentioning the concept of becoming weak, Thiselton contends that Paul understands that "these are people who are most probably the vulnerable in sociopolitical terms, forced into dependency on patrons, owners, or employers, which makes decisive initiative or boldness a foreign habit of mind."⁵² Thus, the apostle clearly grasps the

⁵²Anthony Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2000).

necessity of going to the people who are socially not acceptable and meeting them on their own turf. It is a demonstration of genuine care and concern that one would lower oneself for the sake of sharing the gospel. Brad Powell relates this theme to the church today when he says, “It [the church] must communicate God’s truth and hope in language of the culture in which it’s situated.”⁵³

Paul’s passion remains focused as he moves to meet people where they are in life. As Paul is “thinking sympathetically,”⁵⁴ he maintains the centrality of the gospel through various methods of presentation. In believing that one must become all things for the purpose of reaching all people, Paul holds to the realization that God is “unchanging in principle and ever-changing in application.”⁵⁵ When speaking of the justice, righteousness, and holiness of God one must understand that the very nature of these characteristics are unchanging, but that they are manifested throughout the entire scope of time in different ways and manners. This concept is foundational in recognizing that Paul is changing his approach to sharing the gospel, while presenting an unchanging gospel because God’s character itself is unchanged, but is manifested in a kaleidoscope of ways. Powell speaks to why this truth must be upheld, “If God ever changed in character, we could not trust Him. Yet, if God never changed in conduct, there would be no Jesus, cross, resurrection, redemption, church, hope, or future.”⁵⁶

Paul continues on his thought process by laying before his audience the purpose of the task at hand. Paul’s clear focus is not on a gathering of individuals to follow his own personal teaching, but it is for the purpose of seeing lost individuals redeemed through the message of the gospel. The apostle understood that God desires all

⁵³Brad Powell, *Change Your Church for Good* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 76.

⁵⁴David Garland, *1 Corinthians*, The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁵⁵Powell, *Change Your Church for Good*, 76.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

individuals to be reconciled with him and knew that God not only values people who are in the covenant, but values people whom he seeks to be a member of the covenant. Thus, soul winners today must carry the same passion. The believer's zeal should be to reach lost souls where they are and bringing them to the cross so that they may see what God desires them to be.

Galatians 1:6-10.

As Paul pens the letter to the churches in Galatia, Satan is attacking the churches where the gospel has already been presented. He is causing doubt and confusion among those who believe in Christ and as a result is harming the evangelical effort of spreading the gospel. Timothy George clarifies the working of Satan against the gospel initiative when he says, "Whenever there is a genuine moving of God's Spirit or a major advance in missionary outreach, we can be sure that Satan and his minions will have a vested interest in casting doubts, sowing discord, and wreaking havoc."⁵⁷ The audience in Galatia is facing these attacks from Satan which have resulted in them falling into the trap of proclaiming an incomplete, distorted gospel. Paul clarifies this by writing,

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. (Gal 1:6-10)

Paul makes it clear that the center of fluid evangelism is the gospel. There is no other gospel than the gospel of Jesus Christ and if anyone presents a gospel that is

⁵⁷Timothy George, *Galatians*, The New American Commentary ,vol. 30, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

different, it is not a gospel at all. Fluid evangelism is only successful when the individual presenting the gospel keeps in mind that the gospel must never be altered or watered down in the midst of a culturally relevant presentation. Timothy George emphasizes that the Galatians have begun to follow a distorted gospel: “They have abandoned the Gospel for a polar opposite gospel which is not the gospel at all because there is not another gospel, even one that can be placed alongside the real gospel.”⁵⁸

Paul’s defense of the gospel is based on the fact that many Judaizers were declaring that Paul himself was a follower of a different gospel. They attacked the apostle for the sake of gaining an audience in Galatia. But Paul “had surrendered his life entirely to the lordship of Jesus Christ, and that surrender had cost him dearly in human terms.”⁵⁹ The apostle was willing to pay the physical, earthly price for the gospel he declared because of the realness and influence of it on his own personal life. Without caution a witness may fall into the trap of allowing culture to impact the message instead of using the message to impact the culture. In reality, compromise is not acceptable concerning the gospel. Walter Hansen emphatically believes that “our unwillingness to compromise the truth of the gospel will sometimes make us quite unpopular.”⁶⁰ Believers must not strive for social acceptance, but must follow Paul’s concept of fluid evangelism that has an unchanging message.

The Biblical Need for Accountability

One crucial part of Christian unity is accountability. Time and time again, Scripture declares the importance of individuals journeying together spiritually. When thinking about the task of evangelism, an available system of accountability is critical.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹John MacArthur, *Galatians*, in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987), 22.

⁶⁰G. Walter Hansen, *Galatians*, *The IVP New Testament Commentary Series*, vol. 9, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1994), 39.

Oftentimes accountability is manifested when individuals challenge one another to grow. Likewise, an opportunity exists for individuals to hold one another accountable in the task of carrying out the Great Commission.

Proverbs 27:17.

At times, believers are forced to seek unknown answers in the midst of uncertain situations. In sharing the gospel, individuals face periods of questioning and stints of encountering worldly philosophies and themes that are a new challenge. As a result, the believer will be pushed to a crossroads of fading away or seeking to find the answers.

Proverbs 27 reminds the Christian of the importance of accountability when the author states, “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17). Through this passage, personal evangelists are reminded of the importance of interaction between ministry partners. H. A. Ironside indicates the need for interaction that leads to growth by penning, “As by friction, one iron instrument is sharpened and polished by contact with another, so we may be a help to each other by interesting and profitable intercourse and exchange of thought. A recluse is always a very-one sided man.”⁶¹

Many people tend to avoid accountability partners because it can lead to honesty and pain. Just like iron sharpening iron, there is a time of sharpening and removing the dullness from one another through the process of journeying together. Garrett begs individuals to push through this difficult task of sharpening when he declares: “People must not shy away from interaction with their peers since it is an education in itself.”⁶² The key is that the process must be seen as a marathon and not a sprint. Individuals in accountability must not educate and abandon, but share and travel

⁶¹H. A. Ironside, *Notes on the Book of Proverb*, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Bros., 1908).

⁶²Duane Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary, vol. 14, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

together. When speaking on the topic of men's ministry, Sonderman writes, "It is not a race or an unloading of everything you know, but there is a sense of mutuality, of walking together through life."⁶³ Thus, a soul winner who aspires to be successful must be involved in accountability with other believers.

Daniel 2:17-19

Accountability is not only about journeying together for the purpose of growth, it assists in seeking the leadership of God. The prophet Daniel speaks clearly to accountability and fellowship within chapter 2. Daniel and other young Jewish men have been removed from their homeland and relocated to Babylon. This relocation occurred under the leadership of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. One night, the king had a dream that none of the wise men of Babylon could interpret. The king is greatly distressed when Daniel enters the picture. The prophet proceeded to declare that he could interpret this dream. In trusting in God, Daniel retreated to his friends for a time of seeking the Lord together. The prophet writes,

Then Daniel went to his house and made the manner known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning the mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the of the wise men of Babylon. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. (Dan 2:17-19)

Notice the intent to seek God not only individually by Daniel, but within the context of accountability with other young men.

This beautiful image of accountability should challenge Christians to join arms for the sake of the kingdom and seek God diligently. Part of accountability is exemplified by these Hebrew young men joining together to intentionally seek God and ask for insight into a difficult situation. Miller comments how this "is a beautiful picture

⁶³Steve Sonderman, *Mobilizing Men for One-on-One Ministry* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010), 83.

of four young men, possibly still in their teens, united in prayer.”⁶⁴ Smith insists that Daniel has “enlisted the help of his friends in a prayer vigil.”⁶⁵ Longman focuses on how these young men prayed together “to God to reveal the ‘mystery’ to them.”⁶⁶ Just like these scholars see the concept of unity in prayer and seeking God, so is it imperative that soul winners join together in accountability and unity to seek the leadership and strength of God when being obedient to matters dealing with soul winning.

Hebrews 3:13

Disciples who truly fulfill the command of the Great Commission surround themselves with other soul winners who are mature and seek the Lord. Seeking God in harmony with others is crucial. While walking together in accountability, believers must recognize that the journey should be a constant path. Soul winning is a task that is completely fulfilled through the unity and functionality of the body. The task at hand is a joint effort in which Christians challenge one another and walk together. Arthur Pink declares that Hebrews 3:13 “is to call attention to and stir up one another for discharging our mutual duties.”⁶⁷

The author of Hebrews writes, “But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb 3:13). As the author of Hebrews so eloquently writes, soul winners must exist in harmony with one another for the sake of encouragement and responsibility. Christians are to hold one another accountable for their own personal actions so that one may not be

⁶⁴Stephen Miller, *Daniel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 18, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

⁶⁵James Smith, *The Major Prophets*, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1992).

⁶⁶Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, The New International Version Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 78.

⁶⁷Arthur Pink, *An Exposition of Hebrews*, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM] (Swengel, PA: Bible Truth Depot, 1954).

found as a stumbling block for the gospel message. The key to this encouragement is the constant nature of it. If every day one walks this earth is considered today, then believers must be united together and pushing one another every single day. Thus the journey is constant.

Hebrews 10:24-25

Later in the Book of Hebrews, the author indicates that disciples must push one another along in the task of obedience to the Great Commission. The author of Hebrews writes, “and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Heb 10:24-25). Note the intensity present concerning the encouragement and challenge that should come from the fellowship of believers. From this passage, George Guthrie brings to light two important truths concerning accountability and fellowship that must be comprehended by believers. First, “the foundational assembly is that of the local body of believers, meeting together regularly for fellowship around the Word and worship of God.”⁶⁸ A second avenue for fellowship “is that of spiritual friendships, friendships that transcend the boundaries of individual local churches.”⁶⁹

Within the weekly church gathering, the body of believers join together with the basic passion to glorify God and to hear His truth. As a result, a time of accountability hopefully occurs as each believer and member of the fellowship begins to pray for one another and meets the needs of others. Out of the overflow of this assembly, soul winners begin to pray for and encourage one another on a consistent basis. The weekly gathering allows for disciples to gather together in a larger context, to be

⁶⁸George Guthrie, *Hebrews*, The New International Version Application Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 353.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 353.

encouraged by the Word of God, and to be strengthened by God's working in the fellowship of believers. This strengthens soul winners for the task ahead.

From this gathering of the body new relationships form that can become life changing. These relationships often lead to opportunities to share with one another concerns and needs that exist. As these relationships grow, disciples begin to share, encourage, and challenge each other to fulfill the command given by Christ to be soul winners. The key to this forming of relationships is that the journey is once again a journey that is not traveled alone, but one that is walked together as a body.

Conclusion

Far too often the church has become lazy in its task of carrying out the Great Commission. As a result of apathy and a lackadaisical response, many churches have surrendered the responsibility of training and carrying out personal evangelism. This unresponsive attitude has led to a culture of soul winners not being established.

Some of the fault must fall upon the shoulders of the leadership in the local church. Many have attempted to continually train people in the same manner over the past half century as culture has moved into a new era of relativism based out of post-modernity. Since many of the current methods of evangelism are outdated, a time has come for a refocusing on the necessity of Christians being witnesses who are obediently carrying out the Great Commission in a contextually effective way. The Great Commission must be understood and acted upon so that people who are destined to eternal separation can be introduced to the saving message of the gospel.

As the church faces this difficult transition, believers must remember that obedience is not optional and that soul winning is not done alone. Soul winners must approach evangelism with a fluidness that impacts the culture without changing the message of the Gospel. May the biblical command of soul winning, the biblical example of fluid evangelism, and the biblical picture of accountability push the body of Christ

forward with the task of reaching those who are unreached and destined for eternal judgment of God.

CHAPTER 3

AN UNDERSTANDING OF KEY PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND APOLOGETICS

Over the past fifty years, Christianity has created an ever growing number of personal evangelism resources. These methods and programs have been taught to believers as models of evangelism but, do not ensure comprehension of the gospel. As culture's worldview shifts more into relativism, believers must equip themselves to defend the faith apologetically, so that the effectiveness of soul winning methods will not be minimized. Thus, the Christian must obtain skills in personal evangelism and apologetics for the sake of the gospel.

Personal Evangelism Techniques

Many local Christian bookstores have a section dedicated to evangelism and church growth. The resources in this section focus on methods and events that aim to reach lost people for Christ and encourage them to attend church. Scanning these references reveals a wide variety of evangelistic approaches ranging from relational driven approaches of soul winning to direct hard sale evangelism. Each variant has its strengths and weaknesses concerning evangelism.

Share Jesus without Fear

Share Jesus without Fear by William Fay is a personal evangelism training curriculum built on the model of preparing the soil, planting the seed, and reaping the harvest. The student learns how to prepare the soil by asking the following questions:

1. Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?

2. To you, who is Jesus Christ?
3. Do you believe in heaven or hell?
4. If you died, where would you go?
5. If what you were believing is not true, would you want to know?¹

Through such questions, the soil of the heart is being prepared to hear the gospel.

Share Jesus without Fear approaches evangelism in a passive and indirect manner. This training equips the believer to move from prepping the soil of the heart to planting the seed by using biblical verses. In planting the seed, the evangelist simply takes the Bible and allows the unbeliever to read certain verses, while allowing the Holy Spirit to work in the lost individual's life. Fay teaches that it is not man's word, but the Word of God that convicts the sinner. Fay states, "God's Word penetrates and changes hearts toward the Son."² The witness does not interpret the biblical passages for the non-Christian, rather the believer simply asks, "What does this say to you?"³

Through preparing the soil and planting the seed, the desired outcome is that the Holy Spirit convicts the lost individual of sin and leads them to receive Christ as both Lord and Savior. To aid in the process of reaping what has been sown, Fay gives the five following closing questions that help in gathering the harvest:

1. Are you a sinner?
2. Do you want God to forgive you for your sins?
3. Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross for you and rose again?
4. Are you willing to give your life to Christ?
5. Are you ready to invite Jesus in your life and into your heart?⁴

¹William Fay, *Share Jesus without Fear* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1999), 34-35.

²Ibid., 41.

³Ibid., 45.

⁴William Fay and Ralph Hodge, *Share Jesus without Fear* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2008), 37.

The strategy is that through these questions, the Spirit continues to work in the life of the unbeliever and brings him or her to the point of decision.

In evaluating *Share Jesus without Fear* one main strength exists. Many Christians fall into the tendency of being passive and nonconfrontational. As a result, approaching an unbeliever can be difficult. Oftentimes the believer is hindered by uneasiness when attempting to confront and explain sin's curse to a lost individual. In combating this common hindrance, *Share Jesus Without Fear* allows Christians to proclaim the gospel in a very unfrontational manner.

Share Jesus without Fear also has limitations as a training course in personal evangelism. The simplicity of the course cannot be argued, but the complete preparation for the witness can. This approach is very much geared to following a certain, memorized outline. As a result, if an unbeliever challenges the personal witness on issues or topics that do not fall into the outlined material then there is a chance that the believer will be stumped and eventually become hesitant of sharing faith again.

Every Believer A Witness

Every Believer a Witness is a personal evangelism training course developed by Dennis Nunn. This curriculum focuses on the development of the Christian's personal testimony and obtaining the skills to share it effectively. The training is set up to be held in one of two manners. First, a church can elect to conduct the sessions in a revival format. As a revival, the course consists of two Sunday services and a daily service Monday through Wednesday. Second, a church can select to host the training on two consecutive Sundays and one mid-week service. The key to success lies in the intense, condensed nature of the course.

Every Believer a Witness focuses most of the training sessions on preparing the believer's spiritual walk before casting the soul winner out into the field for the harvest. The course centers on the understanding of the believer's personal salvation experience

and how to frame that experience into a nice, organized testimony that shares the message of Christ. Each participant begins by reflecting on life prior to salvation which points the believer to recognize their former condition of hopelessness and sin.

Reflecting on the past sinful condition allows the individual's attention to recall the moment of salvation. Each believer is prompted to remember the experience of recognizing the gift Christ offered as a way out of hopelessness. *Every Believer a Witness* challenges the Christian to comprehend all that Christ has done for man, so that freedom may be obtained through Jesus. At this moment, the participants in this training are faced with the reality of his or her own salvation.

The last part of the testimony deals with what Christ is doing in the believer's life today. The personal testimony should explain clearly how Christ has not only rescued sinners from death, but how Christ affects all areas of the Christian's daily life. This portion of the testimony directs the attention of the salvation experience past a moment in time and makes it relevant to every moment in life.

Like most training courses, *Every Believer a Witness* has both strengths and weaknesses. The most apparent strength is the development of the Christian's personal testimony. As the believer reflects on his or her own experience with Christ, his or her personal relationship with Christ will be affirmed or challenged. Such an exercise forces the Christian to truly evaluate his or her spiritual condition.

Contrasting that strength, a weakness is found in actually training an individual to share the gospel. Upon completion of the course, believers hold the ability to easily share their testimony, but have not received adequate training on how to take the personal testimony and turn it into an opportunity to share a clear, concise presentation of the gospel. As a result, the witness is missing the key ingredient to being able to fully proclaim the message of Christ. Without the intentional presentation of the gospel, the testimony becomes nothing more than a nice personal story.

Just Walk Across the Room

A newer addition to the line of evangelism training courses is written by Bill Hybels and is entitled, *Just Walk Across the Room*. In this curriculum, Hybels develops four key sessions that build upon one another. The main thrust of the training course is built around the concept of relational evangelism. Hybels sums up his training nicely: “Personal evangelism really can be as simple as a walk across the room – just a few Spirit-guided steps can have truly extraordinary outcomes.”⁵

Throughout this training process, the trainee is challenged to develop his or her personal spiritual testimony. The use of this testimony is crucial because of the relational approach that is implemented in this curriculum. The key to Hybels’ training focuses on adding a tool to share the gospel in coordination with the sharing of the believer’s testimony. Hybels is not concerned with which method of gospel presentation the soul winner uses, but desires that each Christian understands that the gospel needs to be proclaimed along with the testimony.

The witness, in Hybels’ model, should develop various relationships with other individuals and within these new relationships proclaim the gospel intentionally. To develop relationships effectively and to fulfill the task of soul winning, Hybels challenges believers to live a life around the concept of 3D. Living in 3D simply means that the witness must “develop friendships,”⁶ “discover stories,”⁷ and use discernment. By building relationships, the believer focuses on enlarging their personal influence among individuals around them through expanding their circle of friends and acquaintances. As these relationships develop, the soul winner must find common interest which can be used, not only in the friendship, but ultimately in the opportunity to share the good news

⁵Bill Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 23.

⁶Ibid., 60.

⁷Ibid.

of Christ. Since developing a friendship is a process, the believer must use discernment to recognize when the door is open to share the gospel. This concept of 3D living is truly a strong point of this curriculum.

Although this particular curriculum can be used effectively, there is a cause for concern. Many times believers search for excuses not to share the gospel. Barriers of not knowing someone well enough or knowing someone too well appear constantly. While this approach can effectively aid in destroying barriers that hinder sharing the gospel with others, it also allows for other walls to be erected. Without proper discernment and focus, the gospel message can easily be placed on the back burner over and over again.

The Way of the Master

The Way of the Master is a personal evangelism training course developed by Ray Comfort. Within this curriculum, Comfort points the believer to the task of clearly presenting the reality of sin to the unbeliever, stressing that, without the proper forgiveness from God, the sinner will face eternal punishment. Comfort teaches believers to declare a complete gospel instead of falling into the trap of presenting a love focused message that glosses over the reality and ramification of sin. Thus, through eight sessions, Comfort points believers to the art of presenting the gospel as true good news in light of the punishment that is coming to unrepentant sinners.

In presenting the gospel, *The Way of the Master* training focuses on sin initially before leading unbelievers to the reality and message of the cross. In presenting the message of Christ, witnesses are trained to begin the witnessing experience by asking the unbeliever about the person's goodness. This questioning is normally a non-threatening dialogue that leads to a spiritual discussion.

Most respondents feel good about their fleshly nature. In light of this good nature, Comfort teaches believers to follow up the lost individual's assumption by comparing personal goodness in light of the Ten Commandments. While walking

through the commandments, the believer quickly shows the sinner the depth of sinfulness in their life. By questioning, the door begins to open for the Holy Spirit to convict the person of sin. Through this approach, common ground is normally found on the reality that the individual has not kept the moral law of the Ten Commandments completely.

Now that enlightenment of sin is occurring, the witness should respond to the unbeliever by questioning the individual's innocence or guilt before God. Through this line of questioning, avenues to presenting the hope that comes through Christ begin to appear. If nothing else, a conversation focused on what Christ has done for each individual can easily be transitioned into.

When a witness is not focused or intentional about understanding the gospel, he or she can easily fall into presenting a half-gospel to unbelievers. By beginning with the law and pointing to the sinfulness of man, Comfort trains believers to present a complete gospel that speaks of both sin and grace. This starting point allows unbelievers to understand that grace is needed because of their horrible condition and standing before God. Unlike many of the other training courses, by focusing with sin at the beginning of the presentation, believers can boldly proclaim the completeness of the truth. This truly is the main strength of this training.

The Way of the Master can be difficult for an individual who is nonconfrontational because the nature of the approach is to show the lost individual the reality of his or her sinfulness in a very direct manner. The truth is that when one is sharing the gospel, confrontation of some sort will occur because the gospel confronts the sinfulness of the sinner. *The Way of the Master* may not be the easiest way to share the gospel for some, but it needs to be in the tool belt of all witnesses because some occasions call for such boldness, which is ultimately strengthened by the Lord.

Overarching Themes

Key similarities. Each curriculum evaluated dealt with the necessity of

church members abandoning the pews and intentionally sharing the gospel. Though this charge to the church is based on the commission of Christ, believers recognize that apathy hinders complete obedience. To respond to apathy, each evangelism training course deals with the idea of overcoming it.

William Fay declares that apathy guides believers into sin because it leads to the disobedience of silence. Fay related silence in witnessing to being ashamed of Christ in mentioning that denial occurs by, “never opening our mouths.”⁸ Ray Comfort builds on the concept of silence stating that “the sin of the church isn’t that it’s rich, but that it hasn’t the compassion to throw even a few evangelistic crumbs to starving sinners at the gate.”⁹

Research estimates that ninety percent of born again evangelical Christians never share their faith.¹⁰ This alarming statistic points to the reality of apathy within the body of Christ. Comfort believes to overcome apathy, the believer must realize and recognize the lostness of the world. Comfort states that “hell should be so real to us that its flames burn away apathy and motivate us to warn the lost.”¹¹

Fear is closely linked to apathy and must be dealt with by the Christian. Dennis Nunn dedicates an entire session to overcoming fear because of its great hindrance to personal evangelism. Hybels recognizes that fear is most prevalent when a believer steps outside his or her “circle of comfort”¹² and into the unknown.

To offset the hindrance of fear, Fay reminds witnesses that some fear is good. “Learning to witness does not mean that you will have no fear. It does mean getting

⁸Fay, *Share Jesus without Fear*, 6.

⁹Ray Comfort, *The Way of the Master* (Alachua, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006), 260.

¹⁰Fay, *Share Jesus without Fear*, 6.

¹¹Comfort, *The Way of the Master*, 251.

¹²Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room*, 23.

yourself ready to take advantage of the opportunities,”¹³ declares Fay. Likewise, Hybels minimalizes the threat of fear by declaring that sharing the gospel should not be fearful because the Holy Spirit guides the witness: “Personal evangelism really can be as simple as a walk across a room – just a few ordinary Spirit-guided steps can have truly extraordinary outcomes.”¹⁴ The intent is to lessen the amount of fear within the act of sharing the gospel by focusing on the strength and leading of God to fulfill his calling.

A third similarity does not focus on hindrances, but rather points to method. Each of the curriculums emphasizes the importance of the personal testimony. Many believers struggle to clearly share their testimony in a concise, cross-centered manner. While explaining how to structure a testimony, Hybels mentions that “before-and-after does not have to be dramatic. It just has to be brief, focused, coherent – and true.”¹⁵ Aiding in this process, Dennis Nunn leads each participant in developing their testimony and sharing it with one another for the purpose of developing the ability to share it clearly and concisely.

Key differences. Most evangelism training courses have similar teaching points and emphasis, but each is different and unique as well. The four evaluated curriculums each begin with a different starting point when presenting the gospel. This difference is based on methodology differences. These variants are essential as the Christian attempts to match their personality and giftedness with a comfortable evangelistic method.

Share Jesus without Fear uses the Bible, especially the Roman Road as the launching pad to sharing the gospel. In this method the Christian allows the lost individual to read the text. Through this approach, the soul winner does not interpret the

¹³Fay and Hodge, *Share Jesus without Fear*, 16.

¹⁴Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room*, 23.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 123.

passages of Scripture, but allows the lost person to search and find the truth within the text. *Share Jesus without Fear* trains the personal witness to completely trust in the work of the Holy Spirit to lead sinners to Christ. Using this method is a passive aggressive approach to soul winning.

Every Believer a Witness trains Christians to share the gospel through the use of their personal testimony. Through this equipping, believers are challenged to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through telling the story of what Christ has done for them. The use of testimony allows individuals to talk at ease about what has occurred in their life. The use of testimony allows Christians to be personal in sharing the truth of Christ.

Just Walk Across the Room centers on teaching witnesses to find common ground and transition into a spiritual conversation. Bill Hybels directs the Christian to build relationships with individuals who are in need of Christ. Through these relationships, the believer should find common experiences and interests with the intent of sharing the unchanging truth of the gospel. Thus, *Just Walk Across the Room* is completely relational in method.

The Way of the Master points the soul winner to the law as the starting point of the gospel presentation. Ray Comfort explains the importance of using the law to show sin in the sharing of the gospel. The believer is trained to show the lost individual their personal sinfulness for the purpose of sharing hope. By implementing this approach to witnessing, the Christian simply follows the idea set forth by the Apostle Paul concerning the purpose of the law in Galatians 3. The law is pivotal in presenting a complete gospel message; for freedom is only grasped in light of bondage.

Key strengths. Personal evangelism training comes in various forms and teaches varying methods. Due to the vast options, many believers struggle to determine which approach is the best. In reality, the method is not as important as the willingness to be a witness for Christ. A willing Christian benefits from any training course for at

least three reasons.

First, evangelism training gives believers a systematic method to share the gospel. Many believers feel inadequate in sharing the good news. The overarching concern deals with a feeling of unpreparedness and uncertainty in presenting the gospel message to a lost individual. Through trainings, like the ones previously reviewed, Christians gain knowledge and understanding of how to explain the gospel message clearly to an unbeliever.

Second, as an individual is trained in the art of evangelism, the soul winner will strengthen his or her understanding of the gospel. A believer cannot share that which he or she does not know. As a result, personal evangelism training allows for the participant to be educated in a full understanding of the gospel. The witness is able to grasp the fullness of grace which is completely recognized in the understanding of the law and its judgment. While the understanding of the gospel is growing, a believer becomes more at ease to present the good news. Likewise, in the recognition of sin comes a gratefulness for grace that can drive the witness.

Third, a focus on developing the skill of personal evangelism leads the believer to grow in his or her spiritual walk. While being equipped, the Christian deals intimately with the Word of God. Through the handling of Scripture, the believer will be challenged as God works in the life of the Christian. God's Word pushes the believer to seek for answers as he or she is becoming familiar with many of the hindrances that unbelievers face when presented the gospel. The more the believer seeks, the more growth occurs.

Key weaknesses. Just like any man made curriculum, training courses each have strengths and weaknesses. As mentioned previously, training classes carry certain characteristics that are profitable for the believer. Likewise, each approach to evangelism can also be susceptible to a few traps.

First, if a soul winner is not cautious, he or she can fall into the pit of relying too heavily on a method. When a believer becomes so attached to a model of presenting the gospel, the witness will struggle to effectively communicate the good news to the unbeliever. The context in which the gospel is presented must be understood if the message is to be received properly. When the method dominates the message, the message becomes stale to the ears of unbelievers and the method becomes a burden to the believer.

Second, as a personal witness is taught to share his or her testimony, the believer must guard against sharing only his or her personal story without presenting a clear, concise gospel message. Most people like to talk and discuss what is occurring in their life. Through the sharing of personal experiences, individuals can find common ground and experiences that draw a link. As this bond forms, a temptation will arise to continue on with the friendship without intentionally sharing the gospel. Though finding these similarities and the sharing of one's personal experience with Christ can be useful and effective, if the Christian is not cautious, temptations to neglect witnessing will arise in order to preserve the relationships that have formed.

Third, while initial training on the basics of evangelism is crucial, the believer must continually grow in his or her preparation as each witness will face a growing amount of difficult questions and situations. At the conclusion of a training course on evangelism, Christians may feel like they have now been fully equipped to face every situation that might arise in personal evangelism. Though the witness is equipped with the Spirit, the believer must continually grow in the understanding of Scripture and what it teaches about the challenges faced in everyday life. Thus, training curriculum should stand as a launching pad and not as an end all to being an obedient disciple.

Apologetics and Evangelism

If personal evangelism training is truly the spring board for sharing and should

be the launching pad into continual growth, what should the training include? One important area to consider pursuing is the training of apologetics. The study of apologetics educates the believer to answer many objections to the faith that unbelievers hold. Apologetics trains not only for the sake of evangelism, but for edification and strengthening of the life of the Christian. The sad truth is that many believers feel unequipped when challenged concerning an issue about faith. Over time many believers never mature in faith or never have the opportunity to be trained properly in what they believe. As a result, the church is made up of believers who do not have the ability to proclaim the truth of Christ because uncertainty exists in their belief. Thus, training must take place that educates Christians in what they believe and why they believe it.

Apologetic Evangelism

Society has endured many shifts in thought and philosophy. Each of these movements created cultural shifts in morality and adjusted the definition of truth. Currently, the world is in the midst of an age called Postmodernity, which is focused on the concept of relative truth. Relativism causes absolute truth to be ignored and morality and ethics to become based on personal perception. This personal ideology of morality is nicely illustrated: “In short, to believe in moral relativism is to argue that there are no real moral differences between Mother Theresa and Hitler, freedom and slavery, equality and racism, care and abuse, love and hate, or life and murder.”¹⁶ Relativism stands for personal truth superseding absolute truth.

Since relativism is flooding the minds of people, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is increasingly difficult. In the past, western culture held a presupposition about the absolute nature of the truth found in the Word of God. Now every belief or thought is questioned and examined. Unfortunately, the testing is no longer through the Judeo

¹⁶Norman Geisler and Frank Turek, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), 179.

Christian lens of thought, but is based in secularism. Craig explains that secularism is simply the “worldview that allows no room for the supernatural; no miracles, no divine revelation, no God.”¹⁷ As a result, what once seemed to be an easy task for the believer, to share the gospel, now has become more difficult due to the effects of relativism and secularism.

So how does the believer respond to the difficult challenges found in Postmodernity while being obedient to the command of witnessing? First, Christians must recognize the importance of being led and empowered through the Holy Spirit. Second, believers must equip themselves in understanding biblical truth. Third, in obedience to Scripture, witnesses must prepare to present a defense of the gospel to the unbeliever (1 Peter 3:15). These three steps are ultimately manifested in the practice and use of apologetics within apologetics.

A believer must be prepared to give a defense of the gospel. The term apologetics is based on the Greek term *απολογία*. The modern term apology finds its origin in this term. The intensity of this word signifies a defense that is given in a court of law. The act of apologetics must not be misunderstood as apologizing for the faith, but rather it is the defense of the gospel. Apologetics is the ability to defend the gospel (1 Pet 3:15) in an attitude of love (Eph 4:15) for the sake of presenting the gospel (Acts 17:22-31).

Out of apologetics two important purposes begin to appear according to Steve Cowen: “(1) to bolster the faith of Christian believers, and (2) to aid in the task of evangelism.”¹⁸ Apologetics is the intersection where obedient service and growth collide with defending the gospel and the study of theology. William Lane Craig affirms how spiritual growth through apologetics and evangelism work together:

¹⁷William Lane Craig, *On Guard* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010), 17.

¹⁸Steven Cowen, “Introduction,” in *Five Views on Apologetics*, ed. Steven Cowen (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 8.

“Apologetics training is a tremendous boost to evangelism, for nothing inspires confidence and boldness more than knowing that one has good reasons for what one believes and good answers to typical questions that the unbeliever may arise. Sound training in apologetics is one of the keys to fearless evangelism.”¹⁹

As apologetics builds up the faith of the believer, the witness is gaining the assurance in faith and finds himself or herself ready to present the gospel in the midst of difficult questions. One example of this practice can be found in an apology of the resurrection.

An Apologetical Defense of the Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ is a main area of doubt for many unbelievers. These individuals cannot grasp the reality of how a man who has been put to death can truly be brought back to life. As a result, scholars, philosophers, and other influential individuals have attempted to explain away the resurrection through a vast number of theories and explanations. The theories of the resurrection range from believing that Christ did not die upon the cross, to the idea that the disciples either went to the wrong tomb or stole the body. The attempts to debunk the resurrection are obviously important because Christianity stands and falls upon the basis of the resurrection. The resurrection stakes the claim of ultimate victory over death. Thomas Schreiner reminds the Christian that “the new creation only comes through the cross, but the cross is not the last word; the last word is the resurrection.”²⁰ Without this final chapter, the belief in Jesus Christ as the true Messiah simply unravels. Gerald O’Collins affirms, “In a profound sense, Christianity without the resurrection is not simply Christianity without its final chapter. It is not Christianity at all.”²¹

So is the resurrection truly significant to Christianity? Without the

¹⁹William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008), 21.

²⁰Thomas Schreiner, *Galatians*, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 329.

²¹Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 206.

resurrection, Christianity is no different than other religious beliefs. Josh McDowell states, “All but four of the major world religions are based on mere philosophical propositions. Of the four that are based on a personality rather than on a philosophical system, only Christianity claims an empty tomb for its founder.”²² The resurrected Lord separates Christianity from a system of beliefs or a collection of philosophical truths. Without the resurrection, Christianity is nothing more than another system of religious beliefs. Thus, the resurrection distinguishes Christianity. McDowell continues,

None of the promises of eternal life with a loving God have any meaning unless the resurrection actually occurred. Christianity is just another pretty story of hope without substance unless Christ really died and rose again from the grave to defeat death and demonstrate that, through him, we can do the same thing.²³

Notice that the resurrection holds the key to Christianity. Believers must recognize that Christianity stands and falls on the resurrection of Christ which means that hope and hopelessness hinge on the resurrection as well. John Stott simply but powerfully concludes, “Disprove the resurrection, and the church would have to collapse.”²⁴

Likewise, Willem Van Gemeren points to the resurrection being the hinge of Christianity: “The center and meaning of redemptive history is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without the resurrection there is no Christianity, no basis for Christian preaching, and no hope.”²⁵

Some Arguments against the Resurrection

The swoon theory. The swoon theory of the resurrection holds that Jesus’ death on the cross never truly occurred. The proponents of this theory do not refute the reality of Jesus going to the cross, but argue that Jesus merely passed out on the cross and

²²Josh McDowell, *Evidence for Christianity* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson and Electronic, 2006), 247.

²³Josh McDowell, *Evidence for the Resurrection* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2009), 115.

²⁴John Stott, *Basic Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1971), 64.

²⁵Willem Van Gemeren, *The Progress of Redemption: The Story of Salvation from Creation to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 358.

fooled the Roman soldiers into believing that he was dead. As a result, the cool, damp tomb served as a place of healing that allowed Jesus to awaken.

The swoon theory attempts to answer two critical questions concerning resurrection theories. First, does the theory explain the resurrection and second, does the theory explain the post resurrection appearances? The swoon theory makes provision for both of these questions. Though this theory seems to answer these two critical questions, there are a host of logical problems.

First, to pull off such a feat as opening a tomb from the inside would have taken an enormous amount of ability. Tombs in the first century were sealed by a large stone that was sitting in an incline track that weighed several tons. Along with this stone, a seal would have been placed upon the stone. For the swoon theory to be fact, an individual in a weakened state would have to move the stone from the inside of the tomb. John Stott points to holes in this theory by questioning, “after the rigors and pains of trial, mockery, flogging, and crucifixion he could survive thirty-six hours in a stone sepulcher with neither warmth nor food, nor medical care?”²⁶

Second, Jesus’ death on the cross would have to have fooled the Roman soldiers. A typical individual could have easily been fooled in trying to decide whether a man was alive or dead, but not a Roman soldier. Roman soldiers were experts at torture and death. They would have easily known the difference between passing out and death.

Third, the swoon theory does not have much support today. For several centuries this theory was held as a viable option, but today only a few individuals would affirm this belief. In fact, William Craig Lane claims, “This theory also is hardly a standout! For that reason it has virtually no defenders among New Testament historians today.”²⁷

²⁶Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 61.

²⁷Craig, *On Guard*, 253.

The hallucination theory. The hallucination theory holds that Jesus did not undergo resurrection, but simply appeared to the disciples and other individuals through hallucination. The supporters of this theory believe that a series of similar hallucinations created the belief that Jesus had risen from the grave and as a result fulfilled his role as Messiah.

Though the hallucination theory gives an explanation for the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, it does not explain the empty tomb. Concerning this theory Gary Habermas emphatically declares, “Jesus’ body should still have been located safely in the tomb!”²⁸ The idea that the disciples willfully paid the ultimate price for following Jesus because of hallucinations does not align with the first century context. The hallucinations at a very minimum would have needed to be supported by an empty tomb. Craig states,

Given the Jewish beliefs concerning assumption and resurrection, the disciples having seen heavenly visions of Jesus, would not have preached that Jesus had been raised from the dead. At the very most, the empty tomb and hallucinations of Jesus would have caused them to believe in assumption of Jesus into glory, for this was consistent with their Jewish frames of thought.²⁹

On a psychological front, “hallucinations result from purely inner psychological causes – not from the presence of an actual external force.”³⁰ To believe that the individuals who reportedly experienced an encounter with the resurrected Lord had the same hallucination is outrageous. If Jesus’ appearances were nothing more than hallucinations, several common principles that psychologists agree on concerning this phenomenon would be broken.

1. Hallucinations occur in only particular kinds of people.
2. An individual’s subconscious, especially in coordination with past experiences,

²⁸Gary Habermas, “The Case for Christ’s Resurrection,” *Faculty Publications and Presentations* (2004): 194.

²⁹Craig, *On Guard*, 256.

³⁰McDowell, *Evidence of the Resurrection*, 207.

are linked to hallucinations.

3. Hallucinations are restrictive in nature concerning where and when they occur.
4. Hallucinations normally derive out of an anticipating spirit or a hopeful expectation.
5. Hallucinations are an internal phenomena
6. Hallucinations have no spectrum of reality.³¹

Thus, this theory is loaded with holes that lead to more questions than answers.

The stolen body theory. The oldest and original attempt to explain away the resurrection is the stolen body theory. In the Matthew 28:11-15, the leaders of the Sanhedrin bribe the Roman soldiers to claim that the body of Christ had been stolen by the disciples in the middle of the night. The theory is built on the basis that the disciples stole the body for the purpose of fulfilling the prophecy given by Christ concerning his resurrection. Consequently, this theory answers the question concerning the empty tomb, but does not give an answer for the bodily appearances.

There are several hindrances to this theory having validity. First, the disciples would have needed to create a story that explained the resurrection. An explanation of the resurrection would not have been so simple if man had established it. Pagan fables show that a falsified story is normally embellished and not left to simplicity.

Second, the disciples would not have chosen for the women to be the finders of the tomb. For women to find the tomb would have nullified the discovery because of the first century cultural view of women. Women finding the tomb debunk the idea that a falsified story was created.

Third, for the disciples to remove the body of Christ would have taken the ability to overpower or distract the Roman guards posted at the tomb. Roman soldiers were trained in warfare and would not have easily been overtaken. The soldiers at the

³¹Ibid., 207-10.

tomb understood that to have the body stolen would equate to their own death because they would have failed at their task. The soldiers would have protected the tomb at all cost.

Fourth, culture itself in the first century does not allow for such boldness to occur. Within the context of the original culture, a disciple would have either chosen a new master or would have gone home if their master was put to death. So for the disciples to scheme a plot to steal the body would make no sense in the culture.

The stolen body theory does not seem to be a viable option. In fact, for this view to be true, the disciples would have gone against their personal belief on morality. Josh McDowell contends that a “significant problem with the theft/conspiracy theory is that this action would be contrary to the disciples’ known ethics.”³²

A Basic Look at the Facts

The resurrection of Christ can be approached and defended through many different avenues. But the simplest case for the resurrection is to look at the evidence that is basically universally held as truth. Gary Habermas calls this the “minimal fact approach.”³³ The evidence for this defense must meet two criterions. First, the data that is presented must be strongly evidenced. Second, the evidence must be accepted by a vast majority of scholars on the subject, this includes skeptics and supporters.³⁴ Such a defense of the resurrection rests on five main pillars.

The first pillar of defense is the reality of the death of Jesus. Crucifixion was a horrendous method of capital punishment. The Romans often used this form of punishment to deter individuals from uprising against the government. During the time

³²McDowell, *Evidence for the Resurrection*, 219.

³³Gary Habermas and Michael Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004), 44.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 47.

of Christ, crucifixion was a normal form of death that had been perfected over several centuries. Josh McDowell states that “crucifixion was a common method of execution during the time of Christ. In fact, archeological evidence indicates that crucifixion was known in the port of Athens as early as 700 years before Christ.”³⁵ As a result, Roman soldiers were masters at carrying out crucifixion. These soldiers could easily depict real death versus someone losing consciousness and would not have been fooled by an attempted scheme.

Many sources affirm the reality of both the crucifixion and the death of Jesus. Not only do the Gospels depict his death, but several non-Christian writers concur that the death of Jesus is a historical fact. Norman Geisler mentions several of these supporters: “Several non-Christian writers affirmed that Jesus had died by crucifixion. These included Josephus, Tacitus, Thallus, and the Jewish Talmud.”³⁶ The outside sources point to the reality that the death of Christ is not a fictional story developed to fulfill the prophecy previously proclaimed. Affirmed by both Christian and non-Christian sources, the death of Christ is one of the most historically supported facts.

One last area concerning the death is the spear that penetrated the side of Jesus. The information concerning the crucifixion mentions the Roman soldiers taking a spear and piercing the side of Jesus. Out of this gaping wound flowed a mixture of water and blood. This fluid supports the belief that the spear ruptured the sac that is around the heart and would have guaranteed death. Again the soldiers knew the outcome of such a measure. Ray Comfort remarks, “While he was on the cross a soldier pierced His side with a spear and blood and water gushed out. Professional soldiers would certainly have completed their assigned task and ensured his death.”³⁷

³⁵McDowell, *Evidence for the Resurrection*, 163.

³⁶Geisler and Turek, *I Don't Have Enough Evidence to be an Atheist*, 306.

³⁷Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort, *The School of Biblical Evangelism* (Alachua, FL: Bridge Logos Foundation, 2004), 333.

The second pillar of defense is the belief of the disciples. Prior to the crucifixion this collection of social misfits gained training from Christ to carry out his mission. Now the reality of the cross has devastated their hope. The disciples are fearfully hiding and seeking a safe haven from the authorities of Rome and the Sanhedrin who have just taken the life of Jesus Christ. All of the sudden, the resurrection occurs and everything in life changes. Weak, fearful disciples become witnesses who are boldly proclaiming the gospel of Christ in the heart of Jerusalem, the place of Christ's execution (Acts 2:1-40).

The transformed disciples are prepared to face death for the sake of Christ and the message of hope that they must take to the world (Acts 7:54-60). Mark Driscoll describes this transformation:

Prior to the resurrection, his disciples were timid and fearful, even hiding when Jesus appeared to them. Following the resurrection, however, they were all transformed into bold witnesses to what they had seen and heard, even to the point of dying for their convictions.³⁸

This is significant because the disciples were ready to pay the ultimate price of death for their belief. This fact may not seem much different from those today who practice religious suicide bombings, but the difference is great. JP Moreland makes the difference clear in saying that, "people will die for their religious beliefs if they sincerely believe they're true, but people won't die for their religious beliefs if they know their beliefs are false."³⁹ The disciples undergo a changed life once they experience a resurrected Lord.

How great was this change? The change in the disciples impacted their life in such a great manner that the apostles boldly began to proclaim the resurrection of Christ in Jerusalem. The origin of the church is the place that the church should have died at the hands of Roman soldiers. Instead, the Romans and the Jews could not place their hand on the body to prove that it was in the grave.

³⁸Mark Driscoll, *Vintage Jesus* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2007), 135.

³⁹Strobel, *The Case for Christ*, 247.

The third pillar of defense is the change that occurs in Saul of Tarsus. Saul of Tarsus, later known as the Apostle Paul, was hired by the Sanhedrin to wreak havoc on the church. The mission of Saul, the persecutor, was to put a stop to Christianity before it spread. The Bible speaks to how Saul was ravishing the church by going from home to home and carrying people who believed in Christ off to prison (Acts 8). Likewise, Saul stood in approval at the death of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60). Then, Saul experiences the risen Lord and a transformation occurs (1 Cor 15:8). Saul becomes Paul and the persecution he once brought against the church sets its sights on him. Such a change can only be explained in light of the reality of the resurrection.

The fourth pillar of defense is the change that occurs in Jesus' own brother James. William Lane Craig notes that "skeptical New Testament critic Hans Grass admits that the conversion of James is one of the surest proofs of the resurrection of Jesus Christ."⁴⁰ Jesus' younger brother, James, was skeptical that Jesus was truly the Messiah. Scripture illuminates that none of Jesus' brothers believed that he was the Son of God (Mark 3:21, 31-35; John 7:1-10). This unbelief seems to change in the life of James when the resurrected Lord appears to him (1 Cor 15:7). After personally experiencing the resurrection of Christ, James' life is altered and he begins to support the mission of Christ. Acts 1:14 speaks to the presence of James in the midst of the disciples after the ascension. Acts 12:17 indicates that James has become a leader in the church in Jerusalem and his leadership is established in Paul's testimony in Galatians 1:19. James' faith grew so strongly that he willfully faced martyrdom for the sake of the gospel. History depicts that James faced death by stoning around AD60. Habermas mentions the proof of this sacrificial death: "James' martyrdom is attested by Josephus, Hegesippus, and Clement of Alexandria."⁴¹

The fifth pillar of defense is the empty tomb. As Christianity spread through

⁴⁰Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, 380.

⁴¹Habermas and Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*, 68.

Jerusalem and into the surrounding region, the Jews would have been motivated to present the tomb occupied by the body. This presentation never occurred. The Romans would have found it advantageous to parade the buried body around the streets of Jerusalem. This demonstration never occurred. In fact, Norman Geisler states, “If the disciples went to the wrong tomb, the Jewish or Roman authorities would have gone to the right one and paraded Jesus’ body around the city.”⁴² The Jewish leaders could not disprove the resurrection, thus they attempted to explain it away. William Lane Craig mentions, “The Jewish authorities did not deny the empty tomb but instead entangled themselves in a hopeless series of absurdities trying to explain it away. In other words, the Jewish claim that the disciples had stolen the body presupposes that the body was missing.”⁴³ The first century rulers could not explain the resurrection except through a series of untruths that were orchestrated to cover up the reality of the resurrected Lord. This inability to explain the resurrection is evident in the deal made with the Roman guards who were at the tomb (Matt 28:11-15).

Outside of these five proofs stands other evidence that points to the reality of the resurrection. First, the tomb was discovered by women and second, early oral tradition points to the truthfulness of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:1-8). If the disciples had intended to create a legendary folk tale to spread their message of Christ, having women discover the tomb would not be beneficial. Within the cultural context, women were considered an unworthy source. Women were second class citizens of the day. William Lane Craig quotes Josephus: “Let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex.”⁴⁴ Timothy Keller mentions an argument against Christianity from a second century Greek philosopher Celsus: “Christianity can’t be true,

⁴²Geisler and Turek, *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist*, 302.

⁴³Craig, *On Guard*, 229.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 228.

because the written accounts of the resurrection are based on the testimony of women – and we all know that women are hysterical.”⁴⁵ Thus, to have women as discoverers of the tomb would not have been to the disciples’ advantage. Gary Habermas summarizes,

The gospels are in complete agreement that women were the earliest witnesses to the empty tomb, a simply remarkable report since the female testimony was generally disallowed in a law court for declaration on crucial topics. Thus to fabricate this story with women as the central witnesses most likely would serve only to have the case dismissed without a hearing.⁴⁶

Another area of proof is the early acceptance of a creed dated in the early to mid-30s C.E. First Corinthians 15:1-8 appears to be an early Christian creed linked to the testimony of Jesus’ appearance after the resurrection. William Lane Craig summarizes this creed in an interview with Lee Strobel: “This creed is incredibly early and therefore trustworthy. Essentially, it’s a four-line formula. The first line refers to the crucifixion, the second to the burial, the third to the resurrection, and the fourth to Jesus’ appearances.”⁴⁷

First, this early creed mentions that Jesus Christ died (v. 3). The declaration of the death of Christ stands to affirm the historical fact that the Roman guards put Christ to death under the instruction of Pontius Pilate. Anyone in Jerusalem on that dark day could stand and attest to the reality of the death of Christ. Each person could have seen the marred, beaten Jesus hanging on the cross as the spear pierced the side and the fluid from the heart sac flowed. The early believers never refuted the reality of the death.

Second, the next line of the creed speaks the burial of Jesus (v. 4). The three day lapse between the death and the resurrection points to the truthfulness of a tomb. Jesus was placed in the tomb of a Pharisee named Joseph of Arimathea (Mark 15:43).

⁴⁵Timothy Keller, *King’s Cross: The Story of the World in the Life of Jesus* (New York: Dutton, 2011), 216-217.

⁴⁶Habermas, “The Case for Christ’s Resurrection”, 188.

⁴⁷Strobel, *The Case for Christ*, 209.

The burial occurred in great haste because of the coming Sabbath. Timothy Keller describes, “The Jewish law permitted no work on the Sabbath, which meant they could not bury the body of Jesus that night or the next day. So Joseph goes to Pilate, hoping to be able to bury the body in time.”⁴⁸ Thus, the women were making their way to the tomb to finish the burial preparations on the third day.

Third, the creed declares that Jesus rose from the grave (v.4). Paul emphatically declares that Jesus did not remain in the tomb and that the tomb can be found abandoned. Again, this early statement of faith clearly affirms the belief that Christians were not following a leader lying in a tomb, but a Messiah who was living. This declaration is not based on theory but on personal encounters. The added appearances within this early creed strengthen the case for the resurrection, as well.

Fourth, the conclusion of the creed affirms the resurrection through various appearances. Peter is listed first among those who experienced the risen Lord (v.5). Though the gospels do not speak directly to such an interaction, Christian tradition indicates that such an encounter took place. Craig notes that, “virtually all New Testament critics agree that Peter saw an appearance of Jesus alive from the dead.”⁴⁹

The second appearance mentioned by Paul is the encounter between the risen Lord and the disciples (v.5). This interaction is important because it points to the physical nature of Christ in a post resurrection body. Also, the disciples knew Jesus and would not be fooled by an imposter. Outside of this creed, this appearance is affirmed by Christian tradition, the Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John, and the Apostle Paul.

The third appearance is to the five hundred (v.6). This number seems astronomical, but Paul would have no reason to mention it unless the five hundred witnesses could testify to the reality of the event. McDowell declares that, “if each of

⁴⁸Keller, *King's Cross*, 213.

⁴⁹Craig, *On Guard*, 231.

these 500 people were to testify in a courtroom for only six minutes each, including cross-examination, you would have an amazing 50 hours of firsthand eyewitness testimony.”⁵⁰

The last two appearances mentioned are James, the brother of Christ (v.7), and the Apostle Paul (v.8). These two appearances caused a significant change in the lives of these two men. As a result, each individual was prepared to sacrifice everything to be obedient to the risen Lord.

Apologetics and Evangelism Revisited

Through the vast amount of evidence, the resurrection can only be explained in one manner, it really occurred. Unfortunately, many believers would not be able to defend the resurrection when challenged. This lack of knowledge hinders the process of discipleship and personal evangelism. As a result, proper training in apologetics is crucial for a believer who desires to share the gospel in the midst of this relative world. No longer can believers attempt to compartmentalize evangelism, apologetics, and discipleship in separate areas. Each area must interrelate with one another. To aid in the perseverance needed to accomplish this task, accountability through the use of covenant agreements can be beneficial.

Using Covenants

A covenant is a binding agreement that two parties enter into together which defines the interaction that is to take place within the relationship. A covenant is a promise to support and serve one another while also laying a framework for the unity of the body and an individual’s unity with Christ. The use of covenants can also be effective when used in the context of personal evangelism. The covenanting together for the sake of evangelism creates a relationship of accountability that pushes each individual

⁵⁰McDowell, *Evidence for the Resurrection*, 196.

to be obedient to the commitment of fulfilling the Great Commission.

The Purpose and Use of Covenants in Personal Evangelism

Personal evangelism is similar to preparing and participating in war. Through the preparation, planning, and participation a bond can easily form between Christians who are journeying together. Covenants allow believers to commit to serve and to support each other through this trying task. Steve Sonderman offers four helpful lessons when understanding the importance of forming a bond with fellow believers.⁵¹

First, believers need to recognize that a battle is raging.⁵² The battle is not necessarily seen, but it is nonetheless real. Each time a believer attempts to share the gospel or grow in their faith, Satan will launch an all-out attack to hinder the ministry or growth of the believer. The Christian lives with this battle constantly raging and without support will find themselves struggling in the heat of the battle.

Second, believers in a covenant together are able to fight the battle together.⁵³ Personal evangelism can be a difficult battle for the Christian. Many obstacles hinder obedience and confidence of the believer. Having a partner in battle gives support for moments of weakness. This relationship allows for accountability to take place for the purpose of staying on task.

Third, Christians who are accountable can train together.⁵⁴ Training prepares the believer for obedience to the commands of God. As a believer prepares for the task and battle before them, support is needed from other Christians. These partner relationships allow each believer to push one another to a new level of spiritual growth.

⁵¹Steve Sonderman, *Mobilizing Men for One-on-One Ministry* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010), 134.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., 135.

⁵⁴Ibid., 136.

As the Christian grows in his or her spiritual walk, the training leads to a greater preparation for the coming battle.

Fourth, believers are often encouraged through partnerships.⁵⁵ Personal evangelism is a challenge that can often become discouraging. Many Christians face multiple rejections in comparison to individuals they see accept Jesus as personal Lord and Savior. This constant rejection can often turn into a hindrance to spreading the gospel because the believer may become disheartened. Covenant partnerships that allow accountability to take place can stop such hindrances as believers encourage and strengthen one another through the difficult times.

Covenant partnerships allow believers to form a bond together for the intent of spiritually journeying together. This journey is aided by the ability to hold each other accountable to the task of evangelism and growth. Believers should be encouraged to seek such a partnership especially in the context of preparing and carrying out the task of being a personal evangelist.

Concluding Thoughts

Christians should not overlook the importance of personal evangelism training. Such training enables believers to grow in their spiritual walk and remain obedient to the commissioning of God. When personal evangelism training is combined with apologetics, the Christian is preparing to face unbelievers with boldness and confidence when sharing the truthfulness of Christ. At the same time, the believer will face difficulties and hindrances in this journey. Thus, a Christian should seek an avenue to obtain a covenant partnership that will strengthen and encourage them for the task of fulfilling the Great Commission.

⁵⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KINGDOM IMPACT

In February 2011, I challenged the congregation of Otter Creek First Baptist Church to prayerfully consider participating in an evangelism initiative that focused on personal evangelism training, a study in apologetics, and accountability in fulfilling the Great Commission by making disciples.¹ This initiative would be called “Kingdom Impact” and those enlisted would participate in my Doctor of Ministry project. Each member of the congregation had a month to prayerfully consider being a part of Kingdom Impact.

In March 2011, 16 volunteers began the journey of impacting the Kingdom of God by intentionally sharing the gospel and making disciples. This group of individuals set out on a mission to strengthen their own relationships with the Lord and to be obedient to the calling that Christ has given to the church in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). Kingdom Impact contained five main objectives: (1) to increase awareness of personal evangelism, (2) to combine personal accountability among church members with the calling of being a witness, (3) to change the current culture of apathy concerning evangelism to a culture that understands the necessity of evangelism, (4) to equip participants in the art of “fluid evangelism,” and (5) to propel Otter Creek First Baptist Church to grasp the concept of obedience to God’s command to be His witnesses.

Kingdom Impact consisted of four main sections that targeted various groups within the congregation for the purpose of gaining feedback, training, and challenging

¹The main leadership of Otter Creek First Baptist Church was asked personally to participate because of their importance and influence within the church. This leadership included the deacons, all adult Sunday school teachers, and the staff.

them to be involved in ministry. The first main activity of Kingdom Impact involved a survey that every present member of the congregation took during week 1 and week 15. This survey gauged the congregation's feelings and beliefs concerning evangelism and their personal obedience in witnessing. Second, Kingdom Impact trained a faithful core of believers in the art of sharing the gospel effectively. Third, there was an intentional focus on continuing education and application of the training. Fourth, during the initiative, a sermon series was delivered. This series centered on the calling of God upon the lives of believers and addressed several important questions that are faced in evangelism. The overarching purpose of Kingdom Impact was not to increase the attendance of Otter Creek First Baptist Church, but to increase the saints in the Kingdom of God, while creating a culture of urgency when it comes to sharing the gospel.

The Participants

Leading up to the launch of Kingdom Impact, each church member of Otter Creek First Baptist Church was encouraged to participate in this kingdom focused evangelism initiative. The intention of Kingdom Impact was laid before the body of the church in each Sunday school class, three Wednesday Bible studies, and three Sunday mornings prior to the start.

At the initial meeting of Kingdom Impact, 16 church members attended. The collection of members included all but one Sunday school teacher, all the deacons, the entire staff, and several church members not involved in leadership positions. The participation increased over the following two weeks leading to a total number of 24 attendees. As the weeks moved along this number of active participants decreased to 12.

To accommodate the schedule of the congregation, training sessions for Kingdom Impact were set for five o'clock on Sunday evenings. This time frame was the normal allotment for discipleship training. Every member, except one, who participated in the previous discipleship training time, had expressed interest in attending and

participating in Kingdom Impact, thus this time slot was chosen for the training sessions.

The Surveys

One objective of Kingdom Impact was to create a desire for evangelism within the church. This metric was determined by two surveys given at the beginning and at the end of the initiative. Survey 1 was designed to measure the training and beliefs concerning evangelism as a congregation.² The first survey served as an instrument which distinguished any changes in beliefs or comfort concerning evangelism that occurred between week one and week fifteen. The survey was given anonymously to each member who attended Sunday school on each of these Sundays. The results of these surveys will be compared in the next chapter.

The second survey was more strategically focused on the individuals who actively participated in the training sessions of Kingdom Impact.³ This survey was given in week 1 and week 15 to measure any adjustments in personal confidence concerning evangelism. The survey attempted to correlate faithfulness in evangelism and spiritual growth within a believer's Christian walk. Survey 2 also depicted any changes in one's confidence in sharing the gospel.

The Training

During Kingdom Impact, a weekly training session covered a range of skills and techniques useful for evangelism, as well as, a focus on equipping the body of Christ to engage the culture effectively for the sake of the gospel. The training sessions were split into two main areas. The first four weeks centered on foundational truths and skills needed to be a faithful evangelist. The remainder of the weeks aimed to teach the attendees how to engage culture in a culturally relevant, biblically centered manner.

²Survey One can be found in Appendix 1.

³ Survey Two can be found in Appendix 2

Understanding Basic Evangelism

The first four training sessions of Kingdom Impact centered on equipping believers to be active in evangelism on a daily basis (Appendices 19-22). To assure that the trainees understood the importance of the task at hand, the first week began with the question, “Why should we study and know the gospel deeply?” In addressing this question, the session was divided into three main movements. First, the participants were charged to recognize the false claims of the world concerning the gospel. Second, the trainees were introduced to the biblical foundation and definition of the gospel. Third, the individuals were challenged to live a life that is consumed by the gospel. These three points were foundational to the remainder of the training.

The second week of training built off the concept of the gospel and focused on the art of designing and sharing one’s testimony. The apostle Paul was used as a model by examining Acts 22, Acts 24, and Acts 26. In each of these passages, Paul strategically shares his testimony with individuals in need of Christ. A consistent pattern of developing a testimony appeared in these examples. All participants were asked to remember their lives before Christ, their encounters with Christ, their lives with Christ, and their lives glorified by God. At the same time, each member was charged to make sure that a clear presentation of the gospel was included in his or her testimony.

The third week of training concentrated on basic methods of sharing the gospel. The intent of this week was to familiarize the participants with various methods available to them concerning how to share their faith. The week began by introducing the concept of fluid evangelism. To carry out effective fluid evangelism, the believer needs to have a tool belt that consists of a variety of evangelism tools that are used appropriately within the context of the cultural setting. The previous chapter reviewed *Share Jesus without Fear*, *Just Walk Across the Room*, and *The Way of the Master*. Each method and approach to evangelism served as an example of various tools that should exist in the evangelism tool belt. During session 3, the members were introduced to the

indirect approach, the relational approach, and the direct approach of sharing the gospel. To go with each of these methods, the participants were introduced to various evangelism Bibles, tracts, and openers that can be used to share the gospel.

Week 4 of Kingdom Impact highlighted the necessity of apologetics in effective evangelism. Most of the participants in Kingdom Impact were not familiar with apologetics. As a result, much of the time was spent defining apologetics and recognizing the biblical mandate to study how to defend truth. Likewise, each member became familiar with the basic concepts of how to use apologetics in the midst of sharing the gospel and how the study of apologetics strengthens one's spiritual journey. The trainees were also introduced to various books, trainings, and websites that are available for the study of apologetics.

Understanding Basic Cultural Encounters

During the remaining weeks of the Kingdom Impact campaign, the training sessions focused on various cultural encounters that may occur during personal evangelism (Appendices 23-32). The constant training was designed to be a time of encouragement and growth as each individual faithfully shared the gospel during the remainder of the initiative. Though initial plans had been established, the members of the class dictated several of the sessions because of the encounters that were occurring in the evangelism efforts. These encounters that needed to be addressed were recognized through the evangelism reports that each member filled out and the answers to each week's opening question, "What did you face this week that you did not know how to answer or respond to?"

Week 5 of the training dealt with the belief system of Unitarians and Universalists. Unitarians were addressed first because several of our members had been in contact with Universalists while previously attempting to share the gospel. In discussing Unitarians, the training focused on some alarming statistics that point to the

influence of Universalism within Christianity. Understanding this influence pointed to the importance of understanding how to effectively share the gospel with this group of individuals. Following the statistics, the trainees were introduced to the basic beliefs of the Unitarians. To conclude week 5, the training looked at four basic traits that must be remembered when sharing the gospel with a Universalist.

Week 6 taught how to share the gospel with a Mormon. Otter Creek First Baptist is located across the street from a main regional hub for the Mormons. Consequently, the members of the church are often facing Mormons at their doors and in the community. Many of the participants acknowledged that they often ignored the Mormons when they came to their door or did not know how to address them. To combat this underlying fear, the training taught the history of Mormonism, the basic beliefs of Mormonism, compared these beliefs to Christianity, and introduced several key reminders when sharing the gospel with someone who is a Mormon.

Week 7 highlighted the various responses that witnesses may receive when sharing the faith. This training session investigated the Apostle Paul and his experience at Areopagus. In Acts 17, one reads that after Paul has given a defense and presentation of the gospel that some of the individuals in Athens believed, some desired to hear more, and some walked away refusing to believe. Just like in the days of Paul, modern Christians, who share their faith, face various responses because the gospel always demands a response. To aid in the understanding of this truth, the training class was encouraged to recognize that the believer's faithfulness is not measured in the responses of man, but upon their obedience to the calling of God.

Week 8 looked into the belief system of the agnostic. This topic was crucial because several of our participants have friendships with agnostic professors at nearby universities. This week of training concentrated on the reality of skepticism that exists within culture and how to address it. Introducing the participants with agnosticism was important because within this belief system many questions arise concerning Christianity

and the Bible. By training on how to share the gospel with a skeptic, the believer is forced to understand his or her own beliefs in a greater way. To help understand the doubting nature of the skeptic, the session focused on seven key questions that agnostics often raise and how to answer them.

Week 9 was dedicated to understanding the basic tenants of Islam. Islam has become the great opposing force to Christianity and continues to grow at an astronomical rate. With the rapid growth of Islam comes the important responsibility of understanding their basic beliefs and being able to effectively share the good news of Christ with them. As this session focused on their basic beliefs, the participants were introduced to the history of Islam and their false belief concerning salvation.

Week 10 dealt with understanding the beliefs of Jehovah's Witness. Several of the members of Kingdom Impact had come face to face with members of this cult and were unsure what they believed and how to share Christ with them. This week's training walked through the beliefs of the Jehovah's Witness by lining up their beliefs against the truths of the Bible. By working through their beliefs in this manner, many in the group easily saw how deceptive their beliefs can be. This also allowed for a time of discussion on how to keep the door open when sharing the gospel with a Jehovah's Witness.

Week 11 highlighted the beliefs of the Baha'i and how believers should approach them with the gospel. Individuals within Kingdom Impact had been confronted with this group and desired to understand how to respond. In walking through this young religion's belief system, the influence of relativism and universalism are noticed. The Baha'i hold that all religions communicate and seek the same god, while truth is ultimately found by individuals who are on a journey. Through learning about the Baha'i, the need to present the condition of sin properly becomes obvious as they hold that man is ultimately good. The introduction of the Baha'i led to a great discussion of the effects of universalism and relativism upon modern culture.

Week 12 focused on reaching those within Judaism for Christ. A couple of the

members of Kingdom Impact were friends with adherents to Judaism and one member had a Jewish roommate. The participants in Kingdom Impact specifically asked if Judaism could be addressed. In addressing Judaism, there was a focus on the various branches of Judaism and understanding the effects of the cultural side of one being a Jew. To help in understanding how to share the gospel effectively with someone within Judaism, the participants were encouraged to look at several documents that are available online by Jews for Jesus. This session taught how often cultural identity can replace religion, not only in the case of Judaism, but also in the case of cultural Christianity.

Week 13 emphasized the effects of relativism upon our culture and how to share the faith with a culture that no longer holds to absolutes. Understanding the cultural reality of relative truth was a struggle for many in Kingdom Impact because they could not move past their own personal view of the existence of absolute truth. To aid in comprehending the culture shift that has taken place, the training focused on defining relativism, probing its effects on culture, and examining certain real life examples. Several of our college age students and young adults confirmed this cultural reality.

Week 14 focused on helping an individual in crisis. Several people who are friends or acquaintances of the church were faced with difficult crisis in their lives while Kingdom Impact was occurring. To help respond to these individuals with the hope that comes through Christ, this training session was developed. This week of training addressed how the members of the church could effectively minister to these individuals and share Christ with them while they were walking through the dark valleys of life. This week served as great encouragement for the participants as well.

Week 15 concentrated on reviewing keys in personal evangelism and reflecting upon Kingdom Impact. This week's session began by remembering important characteristics of sharing one's faith effectively and closed with a time of sharing. The participants of Kingdom Impact had the opportunity to share openly about their experiences and their overall feelings concerning the training. To aid in the time of

evaluation and reflection the following questions were posed:

1. How effective do you believe this initiative has been in training in the art of fluid evangelism?
2. If you were to participate in such a training again, what would you like to see covered that was not addressed?
3. Has this training allowed you to become more confident and at ease in sharing the gospel?
4. What do you view as the strengths and the weaknesses of this training?
5. In your opinion, what would motivate more members of the church to participate in a training class like Kingdom Impact?

By asking these questions, a discussion was held to determine the effectiveness of the Kingdom Impact initiative.

The Covenant

During week 5, each participant within Kingdom Impact was asked to sign a covenant with a partner (Appendix 3). The purpose of the covenant was to lay forth a commitment to evangelism. Within the covenant there were five key statements of commitment.

First, each participant agreed to the ministry of prayer. In the ministry of prayer, each person committed to pray for the other individual's ability to faithfully carry out the Great Commission by seeking to share the gospel with those whom they meet. The prayer ministry focused on praying for the individual who is the witness, as well as praying that God would work in the lives of those receiving the gospel.

Second, each participant committed to support one another. Through support, each individual made a commitment to encourage their fellow worker in the faith in the area of evangelism. This encouragement came through building one another up for the difficult labor that lies ahead and being there for one another when the journey becomes difficult. Each member agreed to be available for one another during this time.

Third, each member devoted himself or herself to challenge one another into creating a lifestyle of evangelism. Upon signing the covenant, each participant dedicated himself or herself to attempt to share the gospel a minimum of twice a week. The intent was to create a lifestyle that focused on seeking God's leading through everyday life as God opens door for each believer to share the gospel. This challenge allowed each member of the covenant to ask one another if each had faithfully shared the gospel during the prior week.

Fourth, each individual dedicated himself or herself to journeying with other believers. The commitment to journey together meant that each participant focused on encouraging the other member to grow in his or her spiritual life. Journeying together means that each believer is able to know that he or she had a comrade with whom to seek guidance and advice from in the moments of need.

Fifth, each person surrendered himself or herself to an accountability partner. Ultimately, this covenant set into motion the ability for each participant to hold one another accountable concerning the Great Commission and set up a manner in which each individual was accountable to others as well. This accountability was not intended to cause stress or a sense of failure or judgment, but was to serve as an avenue of encouragement and support.

Accountability

As the covenant agreement was signed by partners, accountability within the partnership formed. This partnership was designed to create an atmosphere of believers challenging one another to obediently fulfill the Great Commission and encouraging one another through the struggle.

Each week, these partners would come together for the opening five to ten minutes of the session and probe one another on his or her faithfulness to the Great Commission and his or her faithfulness to the covenant agreement. This accountability

relationship allowed each member to ask of his or her partner whether or not he or she had faithfully and honestly shared the gospel with lost individuals in the previous week. The system of accountability was to serve as a way to constantly challenge one another.

The weekly allotted time served as a time of prayer for one another and a time of prayer for individuals who were lost and being witnessed to. Through this time of prayer, a great sense of encouragement and strength was passed along between partners because of the understanding that each individual was not alone in the battle of witnessing. The members were constantly reminded of the biblical premise of accountability.

Evangelism Reports

Each witness was asked to fill out an evangelism report that allowed for reflection on the witnessing account. This evangelism report (Appendix 4) provided each member the opportunity to evaluate his or her witnessing experiences. This evaluation allowed for time of reflection on their personal ability at sharing the gospel and to any roadblocks that the witness may have faced. The report allowed for the individual to hone his or her own skills at sharing the gospel.

The reports also provided great insight to the application of the training course. Each report served as an evaluation of how the material in the training sessions was impacting the actual sharing of faith. The evaluations also allowed for avenues of encouragement as individuals shared experiences with one another. It allowed for the training sessions to be tailored for the needs of the members as well.

Opening Question

The opening question every week was, “What did you face this week through your evangelism experience that you did not know how to respond to?” This simple question allowed the training sessions to be tailored to best meet the needs of the

combatants in the battle of the gospel. By seeking the needs of the participants, the training addressed key issues that were facing the witnesses. As the weeks wore on, the members became more comfortable with asking questions concerning various witnessing situations. Though this question is simple, it did allow the course to be flexible. The course originally had a dedicated fourteen weeks of study that had been outlined, but as the witnessing commenced, the dynamics changed and the training sessions had to be adjusted to meet the immediate needs.

Preaching Series

Coinciding with the training sessions was a sermon series that focused on sharing the importance of the Great Commission and addressing key questions that believers faced concerning their faith. This series was split into two main parts. The first section of the series took place over the first six weeks of Kingdom Impact. During the first phase, the series concentrated on the mission statement of the church, the Great Commission texts, and fluid evangelism. The second phase concentrated on important foundational beliefs and answers to critical questions that Christians face. The intent of the sermon series was to engage the congregation as a whole with the purpose and importance of the Great Commission.⁴

The Call to Individual Evangelism

Each of the Gospels and the Book of Acts commissions believers to go and be witnesses for Christ. Most of the time, believers recognize that the Great Commission can be found in the Gospel of Matthew, but fail to see the constant repetitive nature of the command. As a result, the first six weeks were spent looking at the church mission statement, the Great Commission text, and the biblical mandate of fluid evangelism.

The first sermon of Kingdom Impact was intended to remind and refocus the

⁴Basic outlines for the sermon series can be found in Appendices 5-18.

members of Otter Creek First Baptist Church to remember and fulfill the mission statement of the church. Within the church's mission statement there are eight core objectives. These core objectives are (1) to bring glory and honor to God, (2) to be a church, (3) to evangelize the lost, (4) to disciple the saved, (5) to worship God, (6) to fellowship in love, (7) to equip the body of Christ for ministry and service, and (8) to reach the community of Otter Creek. Through the preaching of this message, the body was challenged to participate in Kingdom Impact as this ministry initiative looked to fulfill each of these eight core missions of the church.

The second sermon of Kingdom Impact launched into the Great Commission texts by examining the biblical command of making disciples found in Matthew 28:16-20. This message, entitled "A Simple Command," emphasized the charge given to Christians to go and be witnesses into the world. The believer is challenged to see that the command is not a suggestion, but is given forth in the authority of Christ and believers are to be obedient under this authority. Ultimately, believers are called to make disciples, not just converts.

Sermon 3 centered on the foundational truth that believers have been called not only to share the gospel and make disciples, but to proclaim the gospel based on Mark 16:15-16. By proclamation, the believer must participate in the mission of God by serving as a herald. As a herald, the Christian proclaims the message of Christ. This sermon distinguished the differences between the complete presentation of the gospel and one that has been altered by the world.

The fourth message concentrated on sharing one's personal faith to the nations. This sermon examined the commands of Christ to be witnesses found in the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. As the believer sets off into the obligation of evangelism, he or she must begin locally and then move into the rest of the world. This sermon addressed one of the misnomers that giving money to missions satisfies the personal command to be witnesses. The sermon emphasized the importance of sharing the gospel

with one's family and friends, as well as, launching forth into the world with the message of Christ.

Sermon 5 highlighted the commission of Christ that is found in John 20:19-23. This passage challenges believers to live a life that is on a mission for Christ because of being sent by Him. To live as one who is sent means that the believer is consistently and constantly seeking the lost to tell them the gospel. The message focused on the outcomes of obedience or disobedience to living in a manner that is proclaiming the gospel as one sent forth by Christ.

The sixth sermon in the Kingdom Impact highlighted on the need to be fluid when presenting the gospel. Following the example of Paul found in Acts, the congregation was challenged to move beyond believing that evangelism must be done in one method or another. The presentation of the gospel may vary in form, but never in message. This sermon pointed to the reality that believers must understand the culture and know how to effectively communicate with it. The placement of this sermon emphasized that since each believer is called and commanded to be a witness, then he or she needs to understand how to do so in an effective manner.

The Call to Evangelism and Apologetics

After completing the foundational components within the Kingdom Impact series, the focus turned to training the congregation in key foundational beliefs that must be understood in the believer's walk. These sermons either addressed issues such as the necessity of Christ or looked at pressing questions within culture, such as the existence of evil and suffering. Addressing such pointed issues aided in the training by making it highly practical.

The seventh sermon set forth the foundational nature of the Bible. One of the most foundational doctrines that must be understood is the proper belief concerning the Bible. By using 2 Timothy 3:14-17, this sermon centered on the following four critical

beliefs about the Bible: (1) The Authority of the Bible; (2) The Inerrancy of the Bible; (3) The Necessity of the Bible; (4) The Sufficiency of the Bible. The reality is that many people within the world do not have a proper understanding of the Word of God. The message provided a solid foundation for grasping and defending the inerrancy and necessity of the Bible.

Sermon 8 stressed the necessity of Christ in the lives of people. Society is becoming ever increasingly pagan. One of these pagan beliefs is the view of universalism and that Jesus is not exclusively the avenue to God. This sermon, based on Romans 5:12-21, pinpointed the exclusiveness of Christ as the true way to salvation. The structure of this sermon was to compare the original Adam to the New Adam in order to show Christ as the true Messiah. The message distinguished that Christ is the one and only way to eternal life.

Sermon 9 presented the case for the resurrection of Christ and depicted the critical nature of this event. One concern of several members of the church was the ability to defend the authenticity of the resurrection. This sermon, based on 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, used this early church creed as a launching pad to defend the reality of the resurrection and to set before the congregation an organized case. The beginning of this sermon centered in on understanding the need for Christ and then progressed into seeing the fulfillment of God's hand in the process of salvation.

The tenth sermon highlighted the reality of absolute truth, while showing that relative truth is full of obvious complications. Many members of Otter Creek find it difficult to understand that the culture has abandoned the ideology of absolute truth and has adopted the concept of relativity. In examining the statement concerning truth by Pilate in John 18:33-38, this sermon laid forth some keys to understanding truth as well as the dangers of abandoning absolute truth. The sermon caused many conversations that opened new areas of training.

Sermon 11 dealt with the issue of creation. Within Arkansas, there has been a

large debate on whether or not curriculum that teaches creation within high school biology classes should be accepted at the state universities. In nearing the end of the school year, this debate is set to ignite again. This sermon used Genesis 1 to discuss the reality and the importance of creation and the truthfulness of a Creator. The premise of the sermon was to show the importance of not abandoning the biblical account of creation.

The twelfth sermon attempted to answer the question of the existence of evil and suffering. Many lost individuals struggle to reconcile God and the reality of suffering and evil. The ability to discuss this issue in confidence enables believers to share the gospel effectively by answering one of the toughest questions in life. This sermon investigated the root of suffering and evil through the fall of man in Genesis 3. This sermon ended by looking at the promises that God gives to the believer when in the midst of suffering and evil.

Sermon 13 emphasized the need to work together as a body and to hold one another accountable in the process of growth. Proverbs 27:17 is used in this sermon to teach the importance of believers journeying together and challenging one another in their Christian walks. Likewise, Daniel 2:17-18 is examined in order to see a biblical illustration of how accountability and journeying together should be lived out. In this message, the congregation was challenged to understand that Christianity, though personal, is extremely communal.

The last sermon of the series deals with the nature of man. Is man intrinsically good or bad is a question that has been asked over and over. This sermon used Ephesians 4:22-24 to depict that in the original creation man was very good, but the Fall defaced the created image and the corruption of the Fall has been passed on generation to generation because of the seed of Adam. The end of this sermon pointed to the only true cure for man's condition is Christ. The final line of the sermon was "If we truly believe that Jesus is the only cure, then we must proclaim him as the cure with confidence."

Personal Responsibilities

During Kingdom Impact, I was personally responsible for the training sessions, the sermon series, and participating in the ministry. For the weekly training sessions, I studied and evaluated various evangelism tools and religions. Through my study, I developed both a teacher's plan and a participant's guide that was used. The thought process was to create a plan and a guide so that someone else could aid or lead in the teaching of this course again at a later date.

The sermons were preached on Sunday morning during the morning worship service. The preparation for these sermons followed my typical method of study. Each sermon was given about fifteen to twenty hours of preparation. To aid in the comprehension of these sermons, I created a weekly outline for the congregation that was inserted into the morning worship bulletin. This outline consisted of blanks in the basic outline form. To help fill in the blanks properly, each week had a corresponding PowerPoint that followed the sermon outline.

Instead of only teaching and preaching during Kingdom Impact, I actively participated in the accountability partnership, the covenant agreement, and the sharing of my faith at least twice a week. This participation allowed for the opportunity to disciple a young man named Dustin Burdin. By participating, more members felt comfortable joining Kingdom Impact because they felt as if they were not being told what to do, but were being taught and shown.

Conclusion

Kingdom Impact was a focused initiative that was dedicated to creating obedient witnesses. Otter Creek First Baptist Church is made up of congregates who often overlook the command to be witnesses and heralds in a world that is in need of Christ. Oftentimes individuals in the church believe that giving to a missions offering is

the fulfillment of the command found in the Great Commission. Kingdom Impact approached training from two different areas. First, Kingdom Impact taught individuals who desire to become better witnesses through a dedicated training session. Second, the entire church was impacted through the sermon series designed to challenge the congregation to be obedient to the calling of Christ and understand how to defend the faith properly.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

Upon completion of Kingdom Impact a time of strategic evaluation occurred. To properly evaluate, several basic questions were asked. Has this initiative achieved the desired goals and the purpose that were determined at the beginning? Are the participants of Kingdom Impact more able to share the gospel with confidence and effectiveness? Has the congregation's concern with evangelism changed? Such questions are used to evaluate Kingdom Impact effectively and honestly.

In order to evaluate Kingdom Impact systematically, this chapter gauges the fulfillment of the project's purpose and goals, along with the observed strengths and weaknesses, as well as other outcomes that might not have been expected. This chapter depicts any adjustments that should be made in Kingdom Impact. At the same time, a portion of this evaluation presents both theological and personal reflections.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of Kingdom Impact was to develop a church-wide strategy for personal evangelism, utilizing personal accountability relationships with the intent of creating a culture of soul winning. This statement of purpose is evaluated in three main sections: (1) the success or failure of the church-wide strategy, (2) the success or failure of the accountable relationships, and (3) the culture of soul winning within the church.

Kingdom Impact successfully became an effective, church-wide strategy for personal evangelism. Prior to Kingdom Impact, an intentional focus on evangelism as a church or as individuals had not transpired. In the past, the church had participated in times of traditional outreach that centered on following up with first time visitors and

door to door contacts in the community. The traditional model averaged 6 participants. Kingdom Impact consisted of a minimum of 12 participants at each session and each was active in sharing his or her faith. This focused strategy aided the church by training a core of believers that the invitation to Christ is central, not an invitation to the church.

The accountable relationships formed within Kingdom Impact were instrumental to the success of the project. The interactions between accountability partners heightened the faithfulness of the participants. These relationships built a stronger sense of unity in the church since individuals became partners in the gospel. Most of the participants spoke of the assurance in knowing that someone in the church was ready to journey with them in evangelism training. At the same time, most of the members felt an underlying support existed when sharing the gospel because of the accountability.

Though strides were made in changing the culture of the entire church, the philosophy of evangelism still needs to take root and grow. The survey given at the close of the project indicated that sixty-seven percent of the congregation believed that the total body of Christ is responsible for evangelism. An increase of five percent from the initial survey given in week one occurred. Unfortunately, a third of the congregation believes that ministers alone are called to share the gospel. This percentage indicates the number of congregants that do not hold the Great Commission as a personal calling. Though some positive change transpired, continual movement is needed in the adjustment of the congregation's philosophy regarding evangelism.

Evaluation of the Projects Goals

At the outset of the project five main goals were created to measure the effectiveness of the project. Each of the five goals focused on creating a culture of evangelism within the church and within individual believers.

Goal 1

The first goal was a personal objective that focused on increasing my own personal awareness of daily evangelism opportunities. Many times in ministry the responsibilities of doing ministry overshadows the main focus of sharing the gospel. At Otter Creek First Baptist Church, I found myself teaching and preaching seven times a week, while also tending to normal pastoral responsibilities. As a result, I missed clear opportunities to share the gospel. During Kingdom Impact, I made a personal commitment to seek out daily interactions that could lead to sharing the gospel. This goal was achieved successfully as I sought to share the gospel with all whom I encountered through normal life activity. At a restaurant, a gas station, or someone randomly stopping by the church, my focus turned to sharing and showing Christ.

Goal 2

The second goal of the project intended to combine the calling of the Great Commission with the concept of accountability among the participants. Accountability was an area unfamiliar to many of the members of Kingdom Impact. As a result, most participants initially struggled because of a lack of trust that existed between the accountability partners. As the weeks progressed, trust and a sense of accountability grew and turned into a positive attribute of Kingdom Impact. The trainees of Kingdom Impact discussed the strength that these relationships gave as each individual knew that they were being prayed for and had someone to lean on if questions arose.

The accountable partnership propelled the participants into a sense of prayerfulness that had not been seen at Otter Creek in my tenure. The members were praying for one another and for the encounters that each would face in the following week. They prayed for the individuals whom the gospel had been presented to in the previous week and asked that God would use the faithfulness of the witness to bring forth fruit.

The partnership among the participants brought forth a desperately needed sense of unity. Many of the members of Kingdom Impact previously endured various church wars together and as a result had unhealed emotional wounds. Within the accountability partnerships some of these wounds were forgotten and healed. The focus moved from the past to the present, which really aided in the process of being faithful witnesses.

Goal 3

The third goal of Kingdom Impact attempted to create a culture of evangelism within the church. One of the main desires was to move the body of Otter Creek First Baptist to the recognition that the individual member of the body has the responsibility to share the gospel faithfully. Overall, this goal had moderate success. Traditionally, many of the members of the church participated in the Great Commission only by giving to a missions offering. To combat this ideology, the initial part of the sermon series highlighted the church mission statement and the five Great Commission texts.

The survey, given in week 1, indicated that seventy-six percent of the congregation strongly believed that the entire body of Christ has an obligation to be witnesses. At the end of the training, the same survey depicted that 86 percent of the congregation strongly held that all the members of the body have this requirement to be witnesses. Though the percentage change indicates that a culture of evangelism has begun to take root, it must be noted that there is still plenty of room for improvement.

When discussing this topic with members of the church two statements occurred with some regularity. The first statement centered on the idea that the believer has fulfilled his or her obligation by serving the church for many years and now someone else must contribute. The second statement focused on an individual giving money to missions because he or she is not gifted in evangelism. Both of these statements are repeated far too often and must eventually be removed for a culture of evangelism to

truly take root.

Goal 4

The fourth goal pointed to training the membership of Otter Creek First Baptist Church in the art of fluid evangelism. The focus on fluid evangelism centered on understanding the cultural or situational setting in order to effectively share the gospel. This concept was recognized by everyone who participated in the training sessions, but was not universally accepted by the congregation as a whole.

Within the training sessions, each week provided a new topic which allowed for more proof to be given concerning fluid evangelism. At the beginning, most of the individuals in the training were not in agreement with the concept of fluid evangelism. At first, most trainees were hesitant because the idea of varying methods to present the same message sounded like heresy. With each passing week, more and more participants began to share how fluid evangelism was effective in their evangelism efforts.

The church body struggled with the concept of fluid evangelism because the church has fought accepting new methods that have been introduced in the past. As a result, some of the individuals held that if evangelism is not carried out in the manner that it was when they were trained then it was not correct. Some of this hesitancy can be understood in light of a few of the past issues that the members of Otter Creek have faced at this church and at previous churches.

Goal 5

The fifth goal dealt with clarifying what it means for the believer to be obedient to the calling of being a witness. As previously mentioned, many in the church hold that giving to a missions offering is complete obedience to the Great Commission. Such a mindset has created a culture of apathy at Otter Creek First Baptist concerning missions and personal evangelism. When asked, members cannot identify lost

individuals whom they encounter on a daily basis. Most people responded with the assertion that they did not know anyone or encounter anyone who was lost.

This statement slowly adjusted as Kingdom Impact wore on and the sermon series focused on the command given by Christ. By the conclusion of the fifteen weeks, several within the congregation recognized that they encounter lost individuals on a daily basis. This single change aided in the recognition of the changing culture around the church. Though the acknowledgement of lost people now exists, there is still work to be done to create a culture where obedience to the Great Commission is lived out.

Other Observations

Outside of the specified goals, other observations were made concerning the Kingdom Impact initiative. Some of these outcomes come as a direct result of this focus, while other outcomes seem indirectly related. Three main positive growth trends can be distinguished in addition to some positive positional changes that arose concerning evangelism.

First, Kingdom Impact demonstrated the faithfulness of God to those who are actively fulfilling the Great Commission. As the training commenced and the participants targeted lost individuals with whom they interacted with, God sent a great number of first time guests to the church. Since the beginning of the year, the staff had personally focused on inviting and investing in people's lives, as well as encouraging the membership to do the same. Throughout this time, a handful of prospects visited the church and none of them returned for a second visit. After the initial week of Kingdom Impact several first time guest visited Otter Creek and returned. Over the course of the project, 27 guests visited for the first time and many of those chose to return at least a second week. This response motivated the participants of Kingdom Impact in a mighty way.

Second, Kingdom Impact led to five new church members who joined Otter

Creek, not because of salvation, but came because of the church's investing in their lives since they moved into the area. These individuals were encouraged by the work of those involved in Kingdom Impact. One of the new members is African American and has been received with open arms. This occurrence is important since Otter Creek is a transitional neighborhood with a growing population of African Americans. This woman, Ms. Malvie, has added a new dimension to the worship experience, as well as the fellowship experience. Each of the new members have opened up new avenues of ministry for the church.

Third, there was an increase in average attendance for Sunday school, Sunday morning worship, and Sunday evening worship. During the fifteen weeks of the project, the attendance of Sunday school rose by 10 percent. This adjustment can be traced to the new members who became actively involved in Sunday school. The other factor seemed to be a general increase of faithfulness that occurred during this time.

The Sunday morning worship service grew by 18 percent during Kingdom Impact. Three key observations point to the change that happened. First, individuals within the church who had been on the peripheral became more active. Second, the new members who came and joined have been extremely active. Third, the increase in visitors has filled the void on the Sundays when our membership seems to be lacking in attendance.

What occurred during the fifteen week project during the Sunday evening worship service can be attributed to God alone. Each week the attendance seemed to increase slightly until week 6 when a discussion from Kingdom Impact spilled over into the worship time. From that moment on, the worship service took on a new format. The pews and rows were abandoned, and the congregation gathered in a semicircle and began to dialogue together while being taught a doctrinal truth. From this moment on, the Sunday evening worship service doubled.

The survey that the congregation participated in displayed a deeper

understanding of what it means to be a witness. One area of encouragement centered on the change in the comfortability level concerning sharing the gospel. During the initial survey in week 1, the membership of Otter Creek indicated that only 65 percent of the congregation felt comfortable in sharing the gospel. This percentage grew by 17 percent during the fifteen weeks of Kingdom Impact and 82 percent of the congregation felt comfortable with sharing the gospel by the end. Some of this change should be understood in light of the reality that many who participated in Kingdom Impact were more relaxed in sharing the gospel.

The survey also indicated that the congregation felt like they could clearly articulate the gospel in a clearer manner. The survey in week 1 depicted that only 30 percent of the congregation was confident in clearly presenting the gospel to another individual. The final survey indicated that this percentage level adjusted to 71 percent. Though the training time aided in this change, the sermon series also played a major role in the percentage adjustment. Many within the congregation commented on the clarity of the sermons and how each aided them in understanding communicating the gospel more clearly.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Every endeavor should be analyzed for both the positive and negative attributes. Kingdom Impact is no different. A variety of strengths and weaknesses appeared and could be discussed concerning this initiative, but three strengths and three weaknesses dominated the others.

Strengths

In the examination of Kingdom Impact several strengths became obvious. First, the training encompassed several different venues. The entire congregation was challenged weekly to be obedient to the calling of the Great Commission through a

sermon series conducted during the morning worship service. This series addressed many issues and questions that laity face while attempting to evangelize. One section of the sermon series pounded on the exclusiveness and the fullness of the gospel. The impact of such sermons was noticed in the congregation believing in the exclusiveness of the gospel at a rate of 97 percent in the final survey. This percentage was an increase from around 92 percent which was determined in the original survey. A sermon series coinciding with the training pushed the entire congregation to face the reality of God's calling.

Another venue was the training class. The training class took individuals from the worship experience and placed them in a setting dedicated to understanding how to become an effective evangelist. This training, combined with the sermon series, equipped each individual with a variety of tools needed for witnessing. An overwhelming number of participants agreed that the combination of the sermon series and the weekly training session made Kingdom Impact more effective.

The last key venue of training centered on the accountability groups. The accountability partnerships caused the knowledge from the training to be forced into action and not left for mental ascent alone. The participants who had previously undergone training stated that the application and support of Kingdom Impact made it highly practical and more effective. The hands on witnessing was more effective than experience gained through role playing according to the participants, feedback.

A second strength was the fluid nature of Kingdom Impact. Many courses are so structured and rigid that application to the local setting never takes place. Kingdom Impact was designed with a few original plans, but always intended to make sure that the questions and needs that the witnesses were facing were addressed. As participants left the training each week, many commented on the useful nature of the training and how they felt more prepared to follow up with individuals with whom they previously had shared the gospel.

The third main strength is the intentionality of placing training and application together. Several of participants felt that the application side of the training provided something new for them. Most of the members of Kingdom Impact felt isolated or inadequate in sharing the gospel prior to the course. The application of sharing the gospel, while undergoing the training, seemed to strengthen the comfortableness and the ability to share the gospel. The opportunity to return to the training sessions and seek guidance or to call on the accountability partners resonated strongly within the group. At the same time, many of the participants felt that the application side of the training forced them to put into action the skills obtained and as a result they felt like they mastered them.

Weaknesses

While the project contained obvious strengths, some weaknesses also appeared. The biggest gap in Kingdom Impact was a lack of a deliberate follow-up. Though many initial contacts were made with individuals in need of salvation, many of the participants did not follow-up with the people. Likewise, after the first or second follow up with visitors to the church the contact typically stopped. This weakness was even more evident through the evangelism experiences that had no intent of follow-up with the individuals. Kingdom Impact should have contained a specific emphasis on encouraging and expecting follow-up to occur.

A second evident weakness was the moving of people's mindset to see individuals as lost souls destined for hell and not just individuals who could fill a church roll. Unfortunately, the church growth mindset of growing the local church at all cost infiltrated many within the congregation over the years. As a result, many hold the view that the church is faithful when the attendance swells, even if this growth occurred by transferring of members. Kingdom Impact attempted to attack this mindset at its core and move the body of Otter Creek First Baptist to reach people for Christ instead of

reaching people for Otter Creek. The project fell short in its purpose because it did not explore the church growth model enough to expose its errors. The body often saw the church roll as the final destination instead of heaven.

The third weakness, which was unexpected, was the limited time frame of each session. The time limitations often left questions unanswered. Though an hour seems like an adequate amount of time for a training session, many sessions spilled over about ten minutes. Even at this point, the conversation was intentionally stopped and many were left with unanswered questions or thoughts. Though many of the participants asked these questions personally at another time, the questions would have been beneficial for the entire congregation. These weaknesses and a few others initiated some changes that should be made in Kingdom Impact.

Changes to Kingdom Impact

Kingdom Impact is far from perfect and would need to undergo a few modifications before being used again. Though some changes would be needed to address the weaknesses that were previously addressed, the following are three separate modifications that would be beneficial.

First, the sermon series would initiate the week or two before the training sessions. By beginning the sermon series, either officially or unofficially, a week or two before the focus, a basis of the calling of the church and its members can be identified clearly. Through the presentation of the biblical mandate of evangelism, the invitation to be involved in Kingdom Impact would find its basis not on the recommendation or request of a pastor, but upon the Word of God. Seemingly, this approach would allow for Scripture to penetrate into the lives of the members and challenge them to be obedient to the calling of God.

Second, the accountability partnerships would be established in week 2 instead of week 5. These partnerships were well received and turned out to be a positive for the

members of Kingdom Impact. In introducing the accountability partners in week 2 of the emphasis, each member would have time to pray together and train together before launching into the sending phase of the project. This time of prayer and training would build camaraderie and a support system more quickly and would allow for the partnership to be maximized in effectiveness during the evangelism focus. The extra weeks in prayer together would also serve as an avenue of trust building for one another.

Third, a basic theological survey at the beginning of the project would be beneficial. As the project moved along, several key theological issues began to arise. One such issue was the reality of hell. Though most of the congregation would publically state that hell existed, there seemed to be many misconceptions. The reality of hell seemed to be abandoned when viewing lost people as individuals whom were destined for eternity in hell. A theological survey would allow for a theological gauge to be determined and key theological misconceptions to be addressed. Likewise, foundational truths that need to be understood could be clarified if any confusion or misunderstanding existed.

A fourth change that must be considered is the time allotment. This project carried with it a limitation of fifteen weeks, but to effectively use this material, one would need to implement and teach it over an extended period of time. The amount of material alone would often overload the participants. As a result, spreading it out over six months to a year would allow the training to benefit each participant in a greater way.

Theological Reflections

The Bible is clear concerning the biblical mandate to be witnesses to all people. Kingdom Impact was designed to show the intensity of this calling and train how to faithfully fulfill this commission. As a result, two obvious theological reflections occurred. First, though evangelism and the support of missions are both biblically accurate and commanded, the support of missions can never be substituted for individual

evangelism. Second, evangelism does not have to be a solo activity it is to be a collective journey.

In understanding evangelism and the supporting of missions, one must understand the command given in the Great Commission texts and the example set forth by the Philippians in their partnership with Paul. Otter Creek First Baptist Church received a challenge to recognize the repeated nature of the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21; and Acts 1:8) and to understand that the command was not given to the disciples and early followers alone, but to the church today as well. Each text pointed to a direct call to the church, by the one with all authority, Christ, to be heralds of God who proclaim the good news of Christ. Each believer has received this commission upon his or her life and must not expect this calling to be fulfilled by other members of the body of Christ.

The believer must recognize that Scripture supports the notion of supporting missionary endeavors. In Philippians 4, Paul mentions the gift offering that has been sent from Philippi. This gift served to advance the gospel because it allowed for the needs of Paul to be met in a greater fashion. Paul rejoiced over this faithfulness of the church in Philippi and even considered them partners in the gospel (Phil 1:5). At the same time, Paul never allowed a supporting partnership alone to be the fulfillment of their calling to be witnesses. In Philippians 1:27-30, Paul reminded the church that living faithfully for God testifies to the gospel and that in their lives that the gospel will show their salvation and the coming doom for those outside of the gospel.

When understanding that evangelism is a team activity, one must recognize that Jesus sent the disciples out two by two. In Luke 10, Jesus sent out seventy-two men two by two to testify in his name. It should be noted that Jesus did not send them alone, but sent them in pairs that allowed one another to have a support system. This example was crucial for Kingdom Impact as it set the pattern for accountability partners to journey together as heralds of the gospel. This model served as beneficial for all believers who

desire to support one another in the process of sharing the gospel.

Personal Reflections

As I reflect on the time spent in the Doctor of Ministry program, I recognize several positive impacts that the program has had. First, the program taught me the necessity of reading good books. Prior to the doctoral program, reading was a dreaded necessity. In fact, most of the time a light skimming of the material would be considered interacting with the author. Since the doctoral program and its requirements, reading has become an enjoyment. The key is to make sure that good books are being read. By good books, I simply mean books that challenge the mind and satisfy the soul. Good books have become the doorway to thinking critically about various issues.

Second, the work placed a deeper sense of structure and discipline within my life. Before entering into the doctoral program, I had the tendency to procrastinate and avoid setting deadlines on myself. Since the doctoral program a new sense of discipline and order has become the norm in my life. Personal deadlines are now met and a sense of inner drive dominates my activities. The program pushed me to mature both as an individual and a minister.

Third, the program has broadened my awareness to new areas and approaches to ministry. The readings for the class and for the ministry project have caused interaction with thoughts and ideas that were foreign to my previous training or tradition. This interaction has led to an enormous amount of growth by enlightening me to other viewpoints. This new knowledge aided in developing my own personal stances on various issues. As a result, I learned to articulate and defend what I held theologically in a greater manner.

Fourth, the project portion of the degree enabled me to train individuals of the church in an intentional manner. Through Kingdom Impact, I individually invested in several of the members lives. This served to be beneficial as new relationships formed.

From these relationships, a couple of these men surrendered to the calling to ministry, while another one continues to struggle through the calling. This investment set up a sense of discipleship where I am able to mentor these individuals. This opportunity was initiated out of the training. Without the project, the individual mentoring would not have commenced.

Conclusion

Kingdom Impact challenged Otter Creek First Baptist in a profound manner. Several members were challenged in their preconceived notions of evangelism and were trained how to be fluid in sharing the gospel. The visitors and new members gave a sense of new life to the congregation. The project identified several key areas of training and teaching that needed to be addressed, while providing growth in the areas of evangelism and basic doctrines. Kingdom Impact truly made a difference in the Kingdom of God because it lit a fire under several members in the body of Otter Creek First Baptist Church to be witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Overall, Kingdom Impact and the Doctorate of Ministry program impacted my life and ministry. Without each of these, I would still be struggling through various areas of ministry due to many unfortunate habits that had formed. The project and the program assisted in the development of my ministry, my spiritual development, and my maturity as an individual.

APPENDIX 1

CHURCH WIDE SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the personal evangelism activity and comfortability of the members of Otter Creek First Baptist Church. This research is being conducted by Paul Richey for purposes of gathering information concerning personal evangelism in an effort to develop an appropriate approach to train the members in personal soul-winning. In this research, you will respond to a series of questions by either filling in the blank or circling the appropriate answer that best describes you. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

Using the following scale, please rate you confidence with the following statements

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Very Unconfident Not Sure Confident Very
Unconfident Confident

1. _____ I believe that there is only one true gospel message
2. _____ I believe ministers should be the ones to share Christ
3. _____ If I were asked to share my faith in Christ, I would feel comfortable sharing
4. _____ I believe that God desires for all to be saved
5. _____ I believe that every believer should share the gospel
6. _____ If I were asked to share my faith in Christ, I would not know what to say
7. _____ I am afraid of what others might think if I tell them about Jesus

8. _____ I am not sure how to answer questions that those I am sharing the gospel with might ask
9. _____ On a scale 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, how would you rate your ability to share the gospel
10. Have you ever been trained in personal evangelism? _____
 - a. If yes, how would you rate this training on a scale 1 to 10, with 1 being extremely unhelpful and 10 being extremely helpful? _____

APPENDIX 2

PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the personal evangelism activity and comfortability of the members of Otter Creek First Baptist Church. This research is being conducted by Paul Richey for purposes of gathering information concerning personal evangelism in an effort to develop an appropriate approach to train the members in personal soul-winning. In this research, you will respond to a series of questions by either filling in the blank or circling the appropriate answer that best describes you. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

The following section of this questionnaire is designed to obtain general information concerning individual training and activity concerning personal evangelism:

1. Please circle the age bracket that most accurately depicts your age
1-10 11-18 19-35 35-50 51-65 65+
2. How many years have you been a Christian?
1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-35 35+
3. Do you participate in any form of small group Bible Study (i.e. Sunday School)?
_____, if yes, how many are you currently involved in?

4. Have you ever participated in a class on basic foundations of faith?
_____, if yes, how many such courses have you attended?

5. Have you ever participated in personal evangelism training?
_____ if yes, how many such courses have you attended?

6. How frequently do you share the gospel or your personal testimony?
Which In a week: _____

In a month: _____

In a year: _____

In the last 3 years: _____

7. Circle the following which hinders you from sharing your faith the most?
Fear of Rejection Fear of Failure Don't Know How

Don't Feel Like It

Feel Like I Don't Know Enough

Using the following scale, please rate you confidence with the following statements

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. _____ I can clearly communicate the gospel

12. _____ I can share my personal testimony

13. _____ I can defend my faith in God

14. _____ I can defend the truthfulness of the Bible

15. _____ I can defend why I believe that Jesus is the only true way to heaven

16. _____ I know how to lead someone to Christ

17. _____ I am willing to answer questions a person might have about faith

18. _____ I am able to share my faith

19. _____ I enjoy sharing my faith

20. _____ God calls me to be His witness

APPENDIX 3

COVENANT AGREEMENT

A COVENANT BETWEEN

_____ and _____

Recognizing the importance of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) and recognizing the need to support one another in our Christian walk (Proverbs 27:17), we desire to covenant together to impact the Kingdom of God.

Each participant promises to prayerfully support one another and challenge one another to fulfill the calling of Christ on our lives.

The Participant's Agreement

1. **PRAYER** – Supporting one another in the fulfillment of the Great Commission will begin by praying for one another and for the ability of each individual to be a laborer in the work of God
2. **SUPPORT** – Through this covenant, each participant will support one another in the process of evangelism. Through support each participant is to build one another up in Christ.
3. **CHALLENGE** – Through this covenant, each participant will challenge one another to create a lifestyle that is focused on seeking out opportunities to share the gospel on a daily basis. Each individual is challenged to share his or her faith at least twice a week.
4. **JOURNEY** – Through this covenant, each participant is dedicating themselves to journey together through this time of spiritual growth and obedience
5. **ACCOUNTABLE** – Through this covenant, each participant will hold one another accountable to the task of fulfilling the Great Commission. This agreement allows each participant to inquire from their partner information concerning the previous week's evangelism experiences.

(Participant Signature)

(Date)

(Participant Signature)

(Date)

APPENDIX 4
EVANGELISM REPORT

Name of Witness: _____

Date: _____

Evangelism Event:

Name of Person: _____ Date: _____

Place Person was Encountered: _____

Known Follow-up Address:

Context of Encounter:

_____ - Had a set appointment with the purpose of sharing the gospel

_____ - Shared with person through a way of life

_____ - Randomly encountered individual and shared the gospel

_____ - Someone told me about the individual

_____ - Other: (Please Specify) -

Sharing the Gospel:

1. How would you define the spiritual condition of the individual?

2. Did the individual have any questions or preconceived ideas?

3. What hindrances to sharing the gospel did you encounter?

4. How would you best define your interaction?
_____ - A spiritually based conversation
_____ - A conversation centered on Christ
_____ - A conversation based on religious topics
_____ - A presentation of the gospel
5. How would you rate your presentation of the gospel on a scale 1-10? (1 being the most unclear and 10 being the most clear) _____
6. If you shared the gospel, how did you start the conversation?

7. If you shared the gospel, what tools or techniques did you use?

8. Did you ask for a response?

9. What was the response?

10. If positive, what was your encouragement to the person?

11. If negative, what is hindering a response?

12. Intended Follow Up

Personal Assessment

1. What I did well

2. Where I need improvement

3. Questions I have about sharing the gospel

APPENDIX 5

IN ONE ACCORD PHILIPPIANS 1:27-2:4

- 1. We are to Bring Glory and Honor to God (Psalm 86:8-10)**
 - a. Glory and Honor Understood
 - b. Living in Glory and Honor
 - c. God Must Receive Ultimate Glory

- 2. We are to be a Church (Romans 12:5)**
 - a. What is the Church
 - b. What it means to be a Church

- 3. We are to Evangelize the Lost (2 Timothy 4:5)**
 - a. We are to Share the Gospel
 - b. We are to Share the Gospel with the Lost

- 4. We are to Disciple the Saved (Matthew 28:16-20)**
 - a. We are Called to Discipleship
 - b. Believers are Called to Grow

- 5. We are to Worship God (Exodus 30:34-38)**
 - a. Worship is Not About Us
 - b. Worship is Who We Are

- 6. We are to Fellowship in Love (Philippians 1:3-5)**
 - a. Understanding Biblical Fellowship
 - b. The Bonds

- 7. We are to Equip the Body (Ephesians 4:10-13)**
 - a. Equipping the Saints
 - b. For Ministry
 - c. For Service

- 8. We are to Reach Out Into the Community (Acts 1:8; 8:1)**
 - a. We are to Leave the Comfort Zone
 - b. We are to Impact the Community

APPENDIX 6

A SIMPLE COMMAND

MATTHEW 28:16-20

- 1. Christians are Individuals Under Authority**
 - a. The Origin of Jesus' Authority
 - b. The Fulfilling Nature of Jesus' Authority
 - c. The Demonstration of Authority
 - d. The Hope Found in Jesus' Authority

- 2. Jesus Declares that Must Go Into the World as Witnesses**
 - a. We are to be the Conduits of God
 - b. Being a Witness for Christ is NOT an Option
 - c. The Misunderstanding of Go
 - d. The Proper Understanding of Go

- 3. Jesus Focuses on the Multiplication of Disciples**
 - a. Disciple Making is Foundational to Christianity
 - b. A Witness Must Grow in Christ
 - c. A Witness Must Challenge Others to Grow in Christ

- 4. Jesus Gives a Powerful Promise**
 - a. The Promise of Care
 - b. The Promise of Provision
 - c. The Promise of Strength

APPENDIX 7

PROCLAIMING ONE GOSPEL MARK 16:15-16

1. Proclaim for Christ

- a. We are to be the Herald of God
- b. We are to Proclaim the Message of God
- c. We are to Announce the Victory of God

2. Proclaim to the Nations

- a. We are to Take the Proclamation to People Like Us
- b. We are to Take the Proclamation to People Unlike Us
- c. We are to Take the Proclamation to the People who Dislike Us
- d. We Must Remember the Scene Before the Throne

3. Proclaim the Gospel

- a. We Have a Problem with the Gospel
- b. We Must Understand the Gospel
- c. We Must Unashamedly Proclaim the Gospel

APPENDIX 8

SHARING A PERSONAL FAITH TO THE NATIONS LUKE 24:44-49; ACTS 1:8

- 1. An All Encompassing Messiah (Luke 24:44-49)**
 - a. Christ is the One who is the Fulfillment of Scripture
 - b. The Personal Evangelism is a Fulfillment of Scripture
 - c. Believers are to Share the Impact of Christ on Their Lives

- 2. Believers Must Proclaim “THESE” Things**
 - a. THESE Things include the Death
 - b. THESE Things include the Resurrection
 - c. THESE Things include the Mercy and Grace of the Savior Brought to the Believer

- 3. Taking the Gospel Near and Far (Acts 1:8)**
 - a. Jerusalem
 - b. Judea
 - c. Samaria
 - d. The Ends of the Earth

APPENDIX 9

SENT ON A MISSION

JOHN 20:19-23

- 1. The Mission of Christ (As the Father has sent me)**
 - a. Rebirth the Apparent Righteous
 - b. Save the Deliberate Sinners
 - c. Heal the Humiliated

- 2. The Mission of Christ Follower (I am sending you)**
 - a. Seek Out
 - b. Offer Up
 - c. Proclaim Loudly

- 3. The Outcome**
 - a. Faithful Obedience
 - b. Faithful Obedience Offers Life
 - c. Sinful Disobedience
 - d. Sinful Disobedience Promises Death

APPENDIX 10

FLUID EVANGELISM: CONTEXTUALIZING THE GOSPEL ACTS 17:16-32

- 1. Understand the Culture**
 - a. Intentional Observation
 - b. Remember that Pagans Will Act Like Pagans
 - c. Understand Culture Out of Respect

- 2. Dialogue With the Culture**
 - a. Seek Out the Religious
 - b. Seek Out the Daily
 - c. Seek Out the Pagan

- 3. Proclaim Properly**
 - a. Preach Sin
 - b. Preach Christ
 - c. Preach Salvation through Christ Alone
 - d. Preach Heaven and Hell

- 4. Expect Various Responses**
 - a. Some Will Believe
 - b. Some Will Reject at the Moment
 - c. Some Will Cause Pain

APPENDIX 11

FOUR CRUCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BIBLE 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

- 1. The Authority of the Bible**
 - a. A Basic Understanding
 - b. The Bible is the Message of God
 - c. The Bible Claims Authority
 - d. The Bible is to be Lived Out as Authority

- 2. The Inerrancy of the Bible**
 - a. A Basic Understanding
 - b. The Importance of Inerrancy
 - c. The Testing of Scripture
 - d. The Completeness of Scripture

- 3. The Necessity of the Bible**
 - a. A Basic Understanding
 - b. The Bible Presents the Gospel
 - c. The Bible Pushes the Spiritual Journey
 - d. The Bible Tells of Who God Is

- 4. The Sufficiency of the Bible**
 - a. A Basic Understanding
 - b. The Bible is Sufficient in Teaching
 - c. The Bible is Sufficiently Complete
 - d. The Bible is Sufficient in Teaching Us How to Walk Blamelessly

- 5. Expect Various Responses**
 - a. Some Will Believe
 - b. Some Will Reject at the Moment
 - c. Some Will Cause Pain

APPENDIX 12

THE NECESSITY OF JESUS ROMANS 5:12-21

1. One Man

- a. Through Adam Sin Entered Into Mankind
- b. Through Adam Condemnation Arrived
- c. Through Adam Death Reigns

2. One Sacrifice

- a. Sin Causes Us to Accrue an Unpayable Debt
- b. God Required Consistent Sacrifice for Atonement
- c. Jesus Became the Required Sacrifice

3. One Savior

- a. Jesus Brings the Gift of Grace
- b. Jesus Brings Justification
- c. Jesus Makes Righteous
- d. Jesus Alone Brings Life

APPENDIX 13

THE REALNESS OF THE RESURRECTION 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11

- 1. The Needed Savior**
 - a. We are Sinners
 - b. We Deserve Death
 - c. God's Plan of Salvation
 - d. The Needed Savior

- 2. The Attempts to Minimize the Resurrection**
 - a. The Swoon Theory
 - b. The Hallucination Theory
 - c. The Stolen Body Theory

- 3. The Basic Five Facts**
 - a. Reality of the Death
 - b. The Belief of the Disciples
 - c. The Conversion of Paul
 - d. The Conversion of James (Jesus' Half Brother)
 - e. The Empty Tomb

- 4. The Outside Facts**
 - a. The Tomb was Found by Women
 - b. The Oral Tradition Being Passed Down

APPENDIX 14

WHAT IS TRUTH JOHN18:33-38

1. Keys to Understanding Truth

- a. Discover Truth
- b. Universal Truth
- c. Concrete Truth
- d. Sure Truth
- e. Unchangeable Truth
- f. Absolute Truth

2. The Effects of Truth

- a. Truth Defines Good and Evil
- b. Truth Causes Conflict
- c. Truth Demands Change
- d. Truth Requires a Response

3. The Dangers of Relative Truth

- a. Christianity is at Stake
- b. The Gospel is at Stake
- c. Biblical Literacy is at Stake
- d. Ethical Clarity is at Stake
- e. Individual Salvation is at Stake

APPENDIX 15

IN THE BEGINNING GENESIS 1:1-5

- 1. The Importance of Ex Nihilo**
 - a. Out of Nothing
 - b. The Bible Speaks to this Consistently
 - c. Ex Nihilo Speaks

- 2. The Importance of Created All**
 - a. Points to the Sovereignty of God
 - b. Points to the Providence of God
 - c. Points to the Power and Wisdom of God

- 3. The Importance of the Trinity Within Creation**
 - a. From the Father
 - b. By the Son
 - c. Through the Holy Spirit

- 4. The Importance of Creation's Purpose**
 - a. Creation Reminds Us of the Glory of God
 - b. Creation Reminds Us of the Goodness of God
 - c. Creation Reminds Us of the Gift of God

APPENDIX 16

WHAT ABOUT SUFFERING AND EVIL GENESIS 3

- 1. The Origin of Suffering and Evil**
 - a. The Fall of Man
 - b. The Results of the Fall of Man
 - c. The Curse of the Fall of Man

- 2. The Opposite Side of Suffering**
 - a. Suffering and Pain Can Lead to Repentance
 - b. Suffering and Pain Can Cause Growth
 - c. Suffering and Pain Can Be Used By God

- 3. Facing Suffering and Evil**
 - a. Face It With Joy
 - b. Face It With Comfort
 - c. Face It With Faith

APPENDIX 17

YOU ARE NOT ALONE PROVERBS 27:17; DANIEL 2:17-18

- 1. The Importance of Iron (Proverbs 27:27)**
 - a. The Nearsightedness of an Individual
 - b. The Act of Interaction
 - c. The Outcome of Accountability

- 2. The Importance of Interceding (Daniel 2:17-19)**
 - a. Intercession Starts With Commitment
 - b. Intercession Concerns Others
 - c. Intercession is the Joining of Hearts

- 3. The Importance of Insistence (Hebrews 3:13)**
 - a. Insistence Leads to Consistency
 - b. Insistence Leads to Responsibility
 - c. Insistence Leads to Encouragement

- 4. The Importance of Interaction (Hebrews 10:24-25)**
 - a. Interaction Must Be Regular
 - b. Interaction Must Be Challenging
 - c. Interaction Must Be Transcend the Weekly Gathering

APPENDIX 18

HOW GOOD IS GOOD ENOUGH ROMANS 3:9-20

- 1. The Sin Nature is Universal**
 - a. Personal Sin (Romans 3:23)
 - b. The Nature of Sin (Psalm 51:5)
 - c. Imputed Sin (Romans 5:12)

- 2. The Condition Due to Sin (vs. 10-12)**
 - a. Unrighteousness (10)
 - b. No Understanding (11a)
 - c. No Seeking of God (11b)
 - d. No One Does Good (12)

- 3. The Sinful Lips (13-14)**
 - a. Deception (13ab)
 - b. Venomous (13c)
 - c. Mouth Full of Curses (14)
 - d. Mouth Full of Bitterness (14)

- 4. The Act of Sin (15-17)**
 - a. Shedding of Blood
 - b. Ruined Path
 - c. Miserable Path
 - d. Peaceful Path Not Known

- 5. The Remedy**
 - a. Man Attempts to Defend Themselves
 - b. Redemption
 - c. New Nature
 - d. Imputed Righteousness

APPENDIX 19

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. This is Not the Gospel
 - a. We are Alright
 - i. Idea: In this many attempt to justify sin and see themselves as acceptable before God because of the general nature of God
 - ii. Effect: Man falls into the trap of minimizing sin and viewing salvation as an obtainable goal within their own ability
 - iii. Problem: This takes the Good News of Christ and makes it the self-achievement of man
 - iv. We Are Alright is Not the Gospel Because
 1. Scripture specifically speaks to the need of a Redeemer and a Savior because of our sinfulness
 2. Sin is the disease that inhabits all of mankind and carries with it no man made cure
 - v. We Must Understand Sin
 1. Sin is
 - a. The inability to keep the law (James 2:10-11)
 - b. The inability to claim innocence before God (Romans 3:10-18)
 - c. The inability to follow in complete obedience (Hebrews 2:2)
 - d. The separating agent between God and Man (Psalm 119:104)
 - e. The inability to allow oneself to find their identity in Christ
 - b. We Should Live in a Right Manner
 - i. Idea: If an individual follows the regulations of God and does the right things that are associated with Christianity, then they will have the gospel
 - ii. Effect: People begin to associate Christianity with living a good moral life instead of a life dedicated to Christ through repentance and faith
 - iii. Problem: what seems right and moral to man leads to ultimate death (Proverbs 14:12)
 - c. Friendship is Desired by God
 - i. Idea: Jesus is our friend who serves as a model of how to live life
 - ii. Effect: Jesus' deity and glory is minimized and the act on the cross does not remain central
 - iii. Problem: Jesus not only desires to be a friend, but He is the Savior

who paid the ultimate price of death for mankind and reigns today at the right hand of the Father. (Ephesians 2:13)

- d. God is Love
 - i. Idea: God is a God of love (1 John 4:8)
 - ii. Effect: People easily fall into the trap of a universal mentality instead of the exclusiveness of the gospel
 - iii. Problem: Love is only one attribute of God
 - iv. Just like God is a God of love God is also a God of
 - 1. Holiness
 - 2. Righteousness
 - 3. Judgment
 - 4. Many other attributes
2. This is the Gospel
- a. Creator God
 - i. Creation (Genesis 1:26-27)
 - ii. Righteousness (Exodus 34:6-7)
 - b. Sinner Man
 - i. The Original Sin (Genesis 3:17)
 - 1. Rebellion Against God
 - 2. Claiming of Independence from God
 - ii. Sin is in All (Romans 3:23)
 - 1. Romans 1:21-23 – Gentiles
 - 2. Romans 2:1 – Jews
 - iii. Why Understand Sin
 - 1. The Outcome of sin cannot be equated to sin
 - 2. Though sin causes a broken relationship with God, that is not what it is
 - 3. We must understand the disease of sin and not the doing of sins
 - c. Savior Jesus
 - i. Completely God and Completely Man (John 1:14)
 - ii. Inaugurating the Kingdom of God (John 18:36)
 - iii. The Suffering Savior
 - 1. Jesus willfully suffered in humility to make known his eternal kingdom
 - iv. The Act of Atoning Sacrifice
 - 1. In the death of Christ alone, the proper punishment was paid that allowed man to once and for all have their sin atoned for
 - v. The Resurrection
 - 1. Without the resurrection, Christianity is nothing more than a hopeless philosophy for life
 - d. Faith and Repentance
 - i. Faith is Required
 - 1. What is Faith?

- a. Faith is not about trusting blindly, it is about total reliance
 - ii. Faith Alone
 - 1. All major religions other than Christianity reject faith alone
 - 2. Faith alone is best understood in jumping off an edge trusting that Jesus is there to catch you
 - 3. Your reliance for survival is not in your hands, but totally in his.
 - iii. Repentance Goes With Faith
 - 1. What is Repentance?
 - a. The change of direction that occurs because of faith.
 - 2. Repentance is not an optional add-on
 - a. The believer does not get to choose partial Christianity. Repentance is not an option
 - 3. Repentance is a Process
 - a. Perfection is not possible until glorification, thus repentance is part of the process in which we journey toward perfection in our journey with Christ
 - e. God's Kingdom
 - i. The Coming Reign
 - 1. Here and Not Yet at the Same Time
 - 2. Time of Blessing and Curse
 - ii. Coming Reign Should Push to Repentance
 - iii. Coming Reign Should Encourage Believers
3. Being Overtaken by the Gospel
 - a. It Created New
 - i. We Must Be Reborn (John 3:5-7)
 - ii. We Must Be Recreated (1Corinthians 15:42-44)
 - iii. Newness is a Necessity (Colossians 1:21-23)
 - b. It Must Be Shared
 - i. The Gospel Must Impact Us (Acts 9:17-19)
 - ii. The Gospel Must Not Stay Silent (Romans 1:16)
 - iii. The Gospel Must Be Reproduced (John 1:40-42)
 - c. It Must Be Lived Out
 - i. The Gospel Must Cause Life Change
 - 1. The Gospel causes a life to become drastically different
 - ii. The Gospel Must Cause Thought Change
 - 1. Move from thoughts of social, relative truth to absolutes
 - iii. The Gospel Must Cause Allegiance Change
 - 1. World/Flesh to Christ

APPENDIX 20

ARRANGING YOUR STORY: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Biblical Model
 - a. Paul
 - i. ACTS 22
 1. Verses 1-5 – Paul's Religious Background Before Christ
 2. Verses 6-16 – Paul's Conversion Experience
 3. Verses 17-21 – Paul's Post Conversion Calling
 - ii. ACTS 24
 1. Verses 10-13 – Paul Begins with a Way of Life Experience
 2. Verses 14-16 – Introduction of the Gospel
 3. Verses 17-21 – Paul Brings to Light Current Issues
 - iii. ACTS 26
 1. Verses 1-11 – Life Before Christ
 2. Verses 12-18 – Conversion Experience
 3. Verses 19-23 – Life Since Accepting Christ
2. Defining and Understanding Your Story
 - a. Testimony
 - i. A testimony is the telling of God's work of setting a believer apart.
 - ii. A testimony is your personal God story
 - b. Personal Part of Testimony
 - i. To have a personal testimony as a Christian, one must first have a personal relationship with Jesus as both personal Lord and Savior
 - c. Importance
 - i. A personal testimony easily links to another individual because of the personal nature of it
 - ii. A personal testimony is important because it focuses not only on the moment of salvation, but also on the entire personal spiritual autobiography
 - d. Basic Overview of a Testimony
 - i. Pre-Conversion – The Work of the Holy Spirit
 1. Galatians 1:5
 2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13
 - ii. Conversion - The Moment of Regeneration
 1. 1 Corinthians 1:2
 2. 1 Corinthians 6:11
 3. Hebrews 10:14
 - iii. Post-Conversion – The Combined work of the Spirit and the Word
 1. John 17:17

iv. Glorification – The total separation of the effects of sin
1. Ephesians 5:26-27

3. Life Before Christ

a. Sinner

- i. What was the driving force of all that I was and all that I did?
- ii. Based on the basic moral law was I perfect and good?
- iii. How would you portray the idea of being a sinner without using the term sin or sinner?

b. Hopeless

- i. Due to sin, what hope really existed?

c. Death

- i. Every action has a price and every sin has a punishment

4. Encounter With Christ

a. Realization

- i. Reality of sinfulness before a holy God
- ii. What did it feel like the moment you recognized that you were an enemy against God?

b. Repentance

- i. Repentance is a changing of allegiance from the flesh to God
- ii. Repentance is exhibited by the turn from the flesh that follows
- iii. Where were you when you encountered Christ?
- iv. What was it like?

c. Reaction

- i. What was your response to the change of allegiance?
- ii. Did your life change?
- iii. Did your lifestyle change?

5. Life With Christ

a. What God has Done

- i. As you look back on your spiritual journey:
 1. Where has God provided for a need in your life?
 2. Where has God strengthened you in your weakness?
 3. Where has God comforted you in a storm?
 4. Where has God blessed you?

b. What God is Doing

- i. As you look at life now:
 1. Where is God providing for you in life?
 2. Where is God strengthening you?
 3. Where is God comforting you?
 4. Where is God blessing you?
 5. Where is God working?

c. What God has Promised to Do

- i. As you look forward what do you find hope in:
 1. What has God promised to you concerning your needs?

2. What has God promised to you concerning your weaknesses?
3. What has God promised to you concerning your pain?
4. What has God promised to you concerning eternity?

6. Bringing in the Gospel

- a. The Importance of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony
 - i. A testimony serves as a perfect link to tie the impact of the gospel to real life.
 - ii. When people are unfamiliar with Scripture they will listen to those whom have walked in similar situations.
- b. The Intentionality of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony
 - i. Without care, a believer can easily fall into the trap of sharing the story of their life without focusing or mentioning the working of Christ in their life
 - ii. Christ must be our major and we must be the minor
- c. The Guidelines of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony
 - i. Trust in the leading of the Holy Spirit
 - ii. Maintain the focus on the work of Christ in your life
 - iii. Avoid Christian terms and use normal everyday language
 - iv. As you tell your God Story, remember it and relive it
 - v. Tie in Scripture
 - vi. Keep it short and concise
 - vii. A testimony does not always begin at the same point, but it always points to the same message
 - viii. Maintain sharing your testimony as a normal part of life
 - ix. Ask if this type of experience has ever happened to them

APPENDIX 21

SHARING THE GOSPEL: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Fluid
 - a. Defining Fluid Evangelism
 - i. Fluid evangelism is the approach to personal evangelism where the individual who is share the gospel has several approached available to them and selects the proper method based on the context of the situation.
 - b. The Purpose of Fluid Evangelism
 - i. Fluid evangelism promotes constant growth within the believer
 - ii. Fluid evangelism does not allow a personal witness to become locked into one approach
 - iii. Fluid evangelism helps in maximizing the impact of the gospel message in the life of the unbeliever
 - iv. Fluid evangelism is about creating a life of evangelism
 - c. The Need for Fluid Evangelism
 - i. Without fluid evangelism, one can easily become stale as a witness for Christ
 - ii. Without fluid evangelism, the impact on the hearer is lessoned
 - iii. Fluid evangelism is not about one approach or method to sharing the gospel, but is about communicating the gospel effectively within the context of the situation.
2. Indirect
 - a. Scripture Based
 - i. The individual who is sharing the gospel uses key verses within Scripture to tell the gospel
 - ii. The verses used can vary, but the intention is that through the use of Scripture, the individual share the disease of sin and the hope of Christ.
 - iii. Reminder: When sharing through an indirect method, it is crucial to have the lost individual read the passages.
 - b. Non-Threatening
 - i. In an indirect method, the personal evangelist simple asks basic questions about the verses that are being used.
 - ii. The basic question to ask about the passages
 1. What does this passage say to you?
 - c. An example of how this is used. (Using the familiar method of Share Jesus Without Fear)
 - i. Opening to break the ice

ii. Basic Opening Questions

1. Do you have any type of spiritual beliefs?
2. To you, who is Jesus?
3. Do you believe that there is a heaven and a hell?
4. If you died right now where would you go? Why?
5. If what you believed were not true, would you want to know?

iii. Moving to the Scripture

1. Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned
2. Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death
3. John 3:3 – One must be born again
4. Exception Question: Why did Jesus Come to Die?
5. John 14:6 – I am the Way
6. Romans 10:9-11 – If you confess . . . you will be saved
7. 2 Corinthians 5:15 – No longer live for themselves
8. Revelation 3:20 – I stand at the door and knock

iv. Closing Question

1. Are you a sinner?
2. Do you want forgiveness of sins?
3. Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose for you?
4. Are you willing to surrender your heart to Christ?
5. Are you ready to invite Jesus into your heart and life?

d. Focus on the Spirit Convicting the Heart

- i. The key to this approach is complete trust that the Spirit is at work in the life of the individual whom you are presenting the Gospel message to

3. Relational

a. Find Common Experiences

- i. Use your interest to find avenues to share the gospel
- ii. When you have a common interest with someone, you automatically have an insight in how to share the gospel with that individual

b. Build Trust

- i. In the relational approach, you are building credibility and trust so that when the opportunity opens to share the gospel what you share is taken seriously
- ii. People no longer believe what you say just because you say it

c. Share Openly

- i. Share openly and honestly
- ii. In the relational approach, and actually in any approach, you do not need to cover the gospel message, but need to communicate it clearly and openly

4. Direct

a. Ask Challenging Questions

- i. Challenging questions are not meant to be rude or to come across as being self-righteous, but are to be used to draw the unbeliever to the reality to their unrighteousness and unworthiness
 - ii. Example Questions
 - 1. Do you believe you are a good person? Why?
 - 2. If you were to die today and were standing face to face with God and He asked, “Why should I let you into my kingdom?” what would you say?
 - b. Challenge Current Condition
 - i. Challenging a person in their current condition is a process of self-revelation that is led by the Holy Spirit
 - ii. Example Questions:
 - 1. Have you ever stolen anything?
 - 2. Have you ever disliked someone?
 - 3. Have you ever told a lie?
 - c. Clear Hard Sale
 - i. This approach pushes for a response
 - ii. This approach focuses on the aspect that today is the day of salvation
5. Tools for the Trade
 - a. Bible
 - i. Of course, any Bible can work in evangelism, but some publishers have published Bibles that are dedicated to the work of evangelism
 - ii. How to customize a Bible for sharing the gospel
 - b. Tracts
 - i. A good tract effective lays out the gospel in a presentation that is simple and direct
 - ii. Most tracts center around a theme that is prevalent within culture
 - c. Openers
 - i. Openers are questions or objects that are used to break the ice with people whom you are interacting with

APPENDIX 22

APOLOGIZE FOR NOTHING: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. What is Apologetics?
 - a. What Apologetics is Not
 - i. Apologetics is not based in arguing truth
 - ii. Apologetics is not based in apologizing for believing in Jesus Christ or God's Word
 - iii. Apologetics is not something that is left to scholars and individuals in academia
 - b. What Apologetics is
 - i. Apologetics is a logical defense of God, His Word, and His Truth
 - ii. Apologetics is a defense of what one believes
 - iii. Apologetics should be done by everyone
 - c. The Biblical Mandate
 - i. 1 Peter 3:13–16

2. How to Use Apologetics
 - a. Explanation
 - i. Apologetics is beneficial in explaining theological and doctrinal truth that people do not understand.
 1. This happens because by nature apologetics allows one to put into a systematic model truths about an area of belief
 - b. Defending
 - i. Apologetics is used to defend the gospel by placing logical arguments before the one who is skeptical
 1. These arguments are based on
 - a. Scripture
 - b. History
 - c. Logic
 - c. Answering
 - i. Apologetics is used to answer difficult questions concerning the faith
 1. Apologetics is beneficial when one does not want to accept the Word of God as complete truth

3. Why and How to Learn Apologetics
 - a. Why
 - i. Discipleship
 1. Apologetics deepens the faith of believers by cementing their beliefs

- ii. Growth
 - 1. Apologetics aids in growth because it acts like fertilizer to the soul
 - iii. Obedience
 - 1. Learning apologetics is not an option, but a biblical command
 - a. Each and every believer is in charge of making a defense and being prepared to make a defense
 - b. How
 - i. Intentional
 - 1. The studying of apologetics will not just happen
 - 2. The studying of apologetics must be intentionally sought out and studied
 - ii. Systematical
 - 1. The study of apologetics needs to be in a type of order or form
4. Tools for Evangelism
- a. Books
 - i. There are many books that are written on apologetics or on various areas of apologetics
 - b. Websites
 - i. Our own convention has a website dedicated to the study of apologetics
 - c. Training
 - i. Various churches and outside organizations offer specified training in apologetics.

APPENDIX 23

UNIVERSALISTS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. The Belief System of Universalism (Unitarians)
 - a. Basic Belief
 - i. The belief that all mankind will be saved because there is no true eternal punishment
 1. Concrete beliefs do not hold together universalist
 - b. Basic Practice
 - i. Universalists both as congregations and individuals engage in prayer, silent contemplation, worship, and meditation
 - ii. Unitarians are made up of Atheists, Humanists, Christians, and Pagans, thus each group is welcome to worship its higher power
 - iii. Originally, Universalists believed in the total salvation of all mankind, many still hold this, but it is not necessary
 - iv. The Unitarian Faith draws from six sources
 1. Direct Experience
 2. Words and deeds of Prophetic Women and Me
 3. Wisdom of the World's religions
 4. Jewish and Christian teachings
 5. Humanist teachings that deal with the results of science
 6. Spiritual teachings of earth centered traditions
 - c. Christian Universalist
 - i. Believe in a creator God who is manifested in love, light, truth, and spirit. This God whom we are to seek and love has been manifested to the world in the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ
 - ii. The basic universal commandment is to love one another and thus to serve one another
 - iii. Hold to a law of justice where there is a consequence for one's actions (this is manifested either here or later)
 - iv. Hold to the ultimate victory of divine mercy and grace for all souls
 - v. Christian Universalist believe that all people are the divine offspring of God who has been created in the image of the heavenly parent and are the mature in the way of Christ
 - vi. Miracles and mysterious phenomena can occur
 - vii. The Holy Spirit has inspired prophets, saints, philosophers, and mystics throughout history. Through a variety of cultures, and traditions spiritual writing have come. Their writings, such as the bible, and other writing of moral wisdom should be addressed with a discerning mind

- 2. Basic Issues
 - a. No Belief in Eternal Judgment
 - i. This goes against the Holiness and Justice of God
 - b. Rejects Absolute Truth
 - i. Looks are life as a smorgasbord of beliefs
- 3. Tools for Evangelism
 - a. Treat the Universalist as an Individual
 - i. Approach them in a personal manner that allows them to express their beliefs
 - 1. This should be done knowing that you will not agree with most of what they believe
 - b. Be ready to present the exclusive nature of Christ
 - i. A Universalist will attack the belief that there is only one way to eternity
 - ii. In a loving manner, one must address this issue as the true caring model of redemption
 - c. Turn the Argument Around
 - i. Many of their own beliefs contradict one another
 - ii. Ask questions that put them on the defensive
 - 1. Why do you believe all roads lead to eternal life?
 - 2. Why do you hold that all truth is relative?
 - a. Isn't your belief an absolute?
 - d. Be Genuine and Loving
 - i. This is not the time to become argumentative, it is the time for care and compassion because your belief is not at stake, their eternal destiny is.

APPENDIX 24

MORMONS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. The History of Mormonism
 - a. Founding
 - i. Joseph Smith Jr. on April 6, 1830
 - ii. Smith believed that none of the denominations that existed had the right theology and thus he prayed for a revelation from God on which one to join.
 - iii. 1820 – Smith has an encounter with the angel Moroni who answers the question concerning denominations by declaring that none of the denominations were correct
 - iv. 1823 – Smith received a second vision that states that the real work of God can be found on golden plates
 1. These golden plates are translated and turned into the Book of Mormon (these plates were apparently reformed Egyptian)
 2. The translation of this language was done through peep-stone gazing, which is a form of occult practice
 3. Smith states that the Book of Mormon is the most complete book that has ever been penned
 - b. Early History
 - i. Smith moves to Illinois and fell into trouble
 1. Smith is imprisoned
 2. Smith is killed in a mob riot
 3. Smith becomes a martyr
 - ii. 1844 - Brigham Young takes leadership and moves the Mormons to Salt Lake City where the “New Zion” is formed
 1. Smith’s wife breaks off and starts a separate more fundamental form of Mormonism. The branch is based in Independence Missouri
2. The Belief System of Mormons
 - a. The Mormon Scriptures
 - i. The Book of Mormon
 - ii. Doctrines and Covenants
 - iii. Pearl of Great Price
 - iv. The “Inspired” Version of the Bible
 1. The Bible we do not have because we have messed up translation
 - b. The Nature of God

- i. Eternal Progression
 - 1. God was a man who ascended to the role of God
- ii. Polytheism
 - 1. The Trinity is not accepted
 - 2. The Father, Jesus, and the Spirit are separate gods
- c. The Person of Jesus
 - i. First born of God
 - ii. Child of the heavenly parents
 - iii. Brother of Lucifer
 - iv. His plan of salvation was accepted
 - v. Achieved Spiritual atonement in the Garden by sweating blood
 - vi. Achieved physical atonement on the cross and resurrection
- d. Humankind
 - i. Is the manifestation of spirits from another world
 - ii. Is not under the curse of Adam
 - iii. Can achieve godhood

TOPIC	MORMONISM	CHRISTIANITY
BIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrupted • Incomplete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable • Sufficient • Infallible • Inerrant
GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe that the Father in heaven has not always been God • They believe that God is literally the Father of our Spirits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has always been God (Genesis 21:33) • God is not an exalted man (Luke 24:39)
JESUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is our older brother • Jesus is the first born of our heavenly parents • Believe that both Jesus and Lucifer offered plans of salvation and that Jesus' was accepted and that Lucifer's was rejected • Holds that without the aid of man, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agent of Creation • Agent of Salvation • Part of Trinity

TRINITY	Jesus would not exist	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trinity does not exist because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are all distinct personages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1 and John 1)
SIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam and Eve's fall was necessary for mankind to become mortal and then achieve immortality again • Each individual is not a part of Adam's curse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are fallen • All are under Adam's curse • Redemption is not possible within self
SALVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atonement of Christ – Jesus's atonement was for both Adam's sin and our sin • The Spiritual atonement took place in the Garden of Gethsemane and the physical atonement took place on Calvary and in the resurrection • Mormons believe that all are immortal and will enter some form of heaven (General Salvation) • Mormon believers that Individual Salvation leads to Exaltation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation is through faith alone in Jesus Christ

HEAVEN

This is achieved
through Christ
and Joseph
Smith

- The Celestial Kingdom – the highest level of heaven
 - The Terrestrial Kingdom – the second level of heaven
 - The Telesstial Kingdom – the lowest level of heaven
 - Hell – those who are the future inhabitants of the telesstial heaven
 - Outer Darkness – those who hear the Mormon Message and reject
- No mention of three heavens
 - Very distinct in earthly versus heavenly realm
 - Hell and outer darkness are equal and point to judgment

3. Reaching Mormons

- a. Compare the Book of Mormon to the Bible
 - i. Apparent Contradictions
 - ii. Plagiarism
 - iii. Archeologically Unproven
 - iv. Revised
- b. Discuss the Nature of God
- c. Discuss the Person of Jesus
- d. Discuss that it is more than a feeling
 - i. John Smith's premise is based on his feeling and not fact
 - ii. John Smith's truth is based in the occult
- e. Ask Difficult Promises
- f. Study to be prepared to offering a defense

APPENDIX 25

RESPONDING TO VARIOUS RESPONSES: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. The Gospel Demands a Response
 - a. The Gospel is Confrontational
 - i. The gospel confronts an individual in the midst of their condition and points them to righteousness
 - ii. The gospel always points to what should be
 - b. The Gospel is Convictional
 - i. The gospel confronts a person with the reality of their condition, but it also convicts a person of their guilt
 - ii. The gospel convicts an individual of their personal unholiness in relations to God
 - c. The Gospel is Confessional
 - i. The gospel demands a confession
 1. This confession might be positive, negative, curious, or indifferent
2. When a Person Responds Positively
 - a. Follow Up with a Basic Understanding of the Gospel
 - i. The Disease of Sinfulness
 - ii. The Work of Christ
 - iii. The Offering to Man
 - iv. God's Lordship
 - b. Encourage Them Into the Fellowship
 - i. You want to encourage them to be a part of a Bible believing church
 1. This is a nice time to invite them to come with you.
 - ii. You want to encourage them to follow in believer's baptism
 - iii. You want to encourage them to get into a Bible study setting
 - c. Help Them Become a Disciple
 - i. Walk with them on the early steps of being a believer
 - ii. Walk with them as they begin their spiritual journey
3. When a Person Responds Negatively
 - a. Simply Ask the "Why" Question
 - i. By asking an individual why they have chosen not to accept Christ as Savior does two important things.
 1. It allows you to answer any objections they may have
 2. It allows you to analyze your personal effectiveness in sharing the gospel

- b. Respond in Love
 - i. There is a time to be confrontation and a time to gentle love and make a statement like, “I respect your decision today and will be praying for you.”
 - ii. This is especially important if a person is turned off by the exclusive nature of the gospel or believes that all Christians want to do is get people saved
 - c. Remember the Rejection
 - i. The individual is not rejecting you
 - ii. The individual is rejecting Christ
4. When a Person Responds Curiously
- a. Some people need time to process what you have shared
 - i. Not everyone is able to process information quickly
 - ii. Remember, you know the information and have the relationship, they don't
 - b. Some people have just had the seed planted and it needs to grow
 - i. Many times the seed has started to take root and the curiosity is beginning
 - ii. As these individual hear more of the gospel, the root becomes stronger and the plant becomes defined
 - c. Remember, these individuals have not said no, they are in the I am not sure phase
 - i. These individuals are truly searching and seeking, they are just not sure what for yet
5. When a Person Responds Indifferently
- a. Some people will not seemingly respond because they have not thought about it and are not planning on thinking about it
 - i. Indifference is difficult to deal with because these individual can take something or leave it and it does not change them or bother them
 - b. Remember, these are the people that we just keep planting the seeds and praying for one to take root

APPENDIX 26

AGNOSTICS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Skepticism Rules the Day
 - a. Skepticism seems to be the code word of today
 - i. If one hasn't personally experienced it, then it must be questioned
 - b. Skepticism questions the value and worth of everything
 - i. Their focus is to find the down side of every thing

2. Basic Questions from Skeptics
 - a. If there is a God, then why does evil and suffering exist?
 - i. Love cannot be programmed and man was given free will
 - ii. God created freedom, but it is man who chose the acts of freedom
 - b. If the Bible is true then why are there contradictions?
 - i. In the original text no errors exists
 - ii. Three logical thoughts to remembers
 1. God cannot err (Titus 1:2)
 2. The Bible is God's Word (John 10:34-35)
 3. Therefore, the Bible cannot contain error
 - c. If God is a loving God, then what does He do with people who have never heard?
 - i. If you are truly concerned then you need to believe and tell
 - ii. God's justice and love for exceeds ours, thus his plan is perfect
 - d. Is it really possible for Jesus to be the Only Way to God?
 - i. The Word of God is clear and concise about the exclusiveness of Christ
 - ii. Remember, all roads lead to God, only one road lets you in God's kingdom
 - e. Is Christianity nothing but an emotional crutch?
 - i. Freud believed that religion was nothing more than a crutch to a weakened man
 1. He felt it was a manmade invention of the idealistic father
 - f. Isn't a belief in God nothing more than a blind leap into faith?
 - i. We must remember that faith is exercised every day.
 - ii. Sitting in a chair is truly blind faith
 - g. Isn't sincerity about your belief really all that matters?
 - i. We must always remember that faith is never greater or more valid than the object that it focuses on

3. Being Prepared
 - a. Be Equipped

- i. Study doctrine, truth, and theology
 - ii. Be in constant discipleship
- b. Do Not Allow the Side Questions to Deter the Intent of Sharing the Gospel
 - i. Maintain focus on the main objective, Christ
- c. Be Patient
 - i. Do not become frustrated with side arguments and questions, rather respect them, love them, and guide them through it

APPENDIX 27

ISLAM: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Understanding Islam
 - a. It Continues to hold to its 7th Century Characteristics
 - b. Muhammad took laws that existed in the 7th Century and turned them into the laws of Allah
 - c. The Sheik or Chief of the tribe has absolute authority
 - d. Women within Islam are considered property
 - e. Allah = claim that Allah is the same god worshipped as the Christians

2. Muhammad
 - a. Lived 62 years (570-632AD)
 - b. Worked as a camel driver until age 25 when he married a 40 year old wealthy woman
 - c. For the next fifteen years he runs the family fruit stand
 - d. At age 40, Muhammad receives various revelations
 - i. Tradition: Gabriel the angel came and gave Muhammad these revelations and these revelations later became the Koran because Muhammad was not an educated man
 - ii. Main Message: No other god than Allah
 - iii. 2nd Message: Man is god's slave and it is man duty to first submit and obey Allah
 - e. Islam was to be spread by force and sword

3. Six Beliefs of Islam
 - a. God
 - i. There is one god named Allah
 - b. Angels
 - i. They are the servants of god through whom he reveals his will. Everyone has two angels, one records all the good works and the other records all the bad works
 - c. The Prophets
 - i. Muhammad is the greatest
 - ii. Others include – Moses, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus
 - d. Holy Books
 - i. Koran – holiest book
 - ii. Recognize the Law of Moses, Psalms, and the Gospels, but see these works as corrupt
 - e. Day of Judgment
 - i. Terrible day when each individual will have their good and bad

- works measured
 - f. Decree of God
 - i. Allah ordains all fate
4. Five Pillars
- a. Affirmation
 - i. “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger”
 - ii. This phrase is quoted often by the devote Muslim
 - b. Prayer
 - i. Five times daily toward Mecca
 - c. Almsgiving
 - i. Worthy Muslims must give 2.5% to the poor
 - d. The Fast
 - i. Fasting from dawn until dusk during Ramadan
 - e. Pilgrimage
 - i. Journey to Mecca
 - ii. This is to be done at least once in a Muslims life
5. Different Gospel
- a. Jesus
 - i. Messenger of God, but not the Son
 - 1. John 1:1-4;14
 - 2. 1 John 4:1-3
 - ii. Deny Divinity
 - 1. Colossians 2:9
 - iii. Deny Death and Resurrection
 - 1. Matthew 26:28
 - 2. John 19:20
 - iv. Deny Christ as Final and Conclusive Revelation
 - 1. Hebrews 1:1-3
 - b. Covenant
 - i. Islam chose Hagar and Ishmael instead of Abraham and Isaac
 - 1. Genesis 17:18-22
 - c. Allah is Unapproachable and Unknowable
 - i. John 3:16
 - ii. 1 John 4:7-10
 - d. Allah is Unpersonable
 - i. Titus 3:4-7
 - e. Allah Requires Obedience and Weighs Works
 - i. John 14:6
 - f. Allah Needed Muhammad to Complete Words of Judgment
 - i. John 19:30
6. Keys to Sharing Your Faith
- a. Show What Christ Offers
 - i. A God Who is Personal

- ii. A God Who Loves Steadfastly
 - iii. A God Who is a Savior
 - iv. A God Who Guides as the Spirit
- b. Please Do Not
 - i. Become Confrontational about issues surrounding Allah, the Trinity, or Jesus
 - ii. Do not attack Muhammad or Islam
 - iii. Initially call Jesus the Son of God
- c. Please Do
 - i. Relationship Building
 - ii. Show Respect
 - iii. Be Knowledgeable
 - iv. Share Personally

APPENDIX 28

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. The History of Jehovah's Witnesses
 - a. Founding
 - i. 1881 – Legally founded by Charles Taze Russell
 - ii. Based out of some principles of the Second Adventists that Russell studied in the 1870s
 - iii. 1909 – Headquarters moves to Brooklyn, NY
 - iv. Five presidents until 2000 at which point they restructured to a board of directors with was led by Don Adam
 - b. Key Statistics
 - i. Six million active Jehovah's Witness
 - ii. 1.2 billion hours spent annually going door to door
 - iii. Their magazines are distributed in over 230 countries
 - iv. They have led six million one on one bible studies with potential converts
2. The Belief System of Jehovah's Witness
 - a. The Personal Name of God
 - i. Jehovah Witness holds
 1. In the Jehovah Witness' translation of the bible they claim that the personal name of God is Jehovah
 2. Throughout their translation, they hold to God being called Jehovah
 - b. The Belief Concerning the Trinity
 - i. Jehovah Witnesses believe
 1. The Father is Jehovah
 2. Jesus is the a separate god who is inferior
 3. The Holy Spirit is the active force of God that is not visible
 - c. The Person of Jesus
 - i. The Jehovah Witnesses equate Jesus with the archangel Michael
 - ii. The understanding of the incarnation
 1. Bodily form existed
 2. Michael ceased to exist
 3. Dead body destroyed
 4. Michael raised
 - d. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - i. The force of God
 - ii. Is impersonal

- e. Life in Heaven
 - i. Hold to a duality of eternal classes
 - 1. “anointed class” – AD 30-1935
 - 2. “other sheep” – all others who have never heard or lived after 1935
 - f. Salvation
 - i. Four Requirements for Heaven
 - 1. Obtaining knowledge
 - a. Both of Jehovah and of Jesus
 - 2. Obeying the Commandments of God
 - a. One’s life must be conformed to the moral law found within the Bible
 - 3. Be a member of the proper church
 - 4. Give complete loyalty to God’s church
 - ii. Eternal Security is absent
 - g. Scripture
 - i. Believes that the only true translation is the New World Translation
 - 1. All others are corrupt
3. Reaching Jehovah’s Witness
 - a. Pray for the guidance of God
 - b. Prepare Yourself to Ask Questions
 - c. Study to be prepared to offering a defense

APPENDIX 29

BAHA'I: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Basic and History Facts
 - a. Basic Numbers
 - i. Over 5 Million Baha'i in the world
 - ii. Baha'is are in over 180 countries
 - b. Founding
 - i. May 23, 1844 by Siyyid Ali-Muhammad
 1. He took on the name "Bab"
 - ii. He announced that he was to proclaim the ultimate divine revelation that would change the spiritual life for everyone.
 - iii. Bab proclaimed that a great messenger than he would follow.
 1. The one to follow would bring into existence a time of peace and justice.
 2. This greater one was name Baha'u'llah
 - iv. The second messenger was born in Persia during the 1800's.
 1. In 1863 – the second messenger claimed to be the one following Bab
 2. He is seen as the last divine messenger from god.
2. The Basic Desires
 - a. All forms of Prejudice must be abandoned
 - i. There should be a basic harmony that exists between all people and all nations
 - b. Men and Women are Equal
 - i. Since its beginning, the Baha'i have held to equality among the sexes
 - c. There is unity that can be found in relative religious truth
 - i. All mankind is on a journey of discovery
 - ii. All religions lead to same end
 - d. People must push to eliminate poverty and wealth
 - i. Focus is on equality and poverty and wealth discrepancy seems to be one of the largest areas of injustice.
 - e. Every person should search for truth on their own
 - i. A person should find their own truth and not the truth from others.
 - f. Science, reason, and religion are all in harmony
 - i. There is an overarching harmony that exists because they hold that religion and reality are one
 - g. There should be a global commonwealth of nations formed
 - i. Hold that this would lay the ground work for ultimate peace

- h. There is universal education
 - i. Knowledge plays a central role within the journey of life and self-discovery, so mankind should all have the opportunity to be educated
3. Basic Beliefs
- a. God
 - i. One god, no Trinity
 - ii. Creator
 - iii. All religions communicate to the same god even though the names may vary
 - iv. There is no possibility for man to completely comprehend god
 - b. Creation
 - i. Creation is in god's control
 - ii. God's knowledge of creation is perfect
 - c. Knowing God
 - i. Man cannot understand the essence of god, man can only understand god's attributes
 - ii. God cannot be seen because he does not have a physical body
 - d. God Revealing Himself
 - i. God has revealed himself through prophets
 - ii. No prophet who reveals god is any different in status
 - 1. Example: Christ and Buddha have equal value in revelation
 - e. Union Between Mankind
 - i. There can be world peace
 - f. Afterlife
 - i. Heaven and Hell are not literal locations, but are descriptions of the journey that people take toward god. The soul's destination is based on one's efforts
 - g. The Nature of Man
 - i. Man is not evil because god created man good
 - h. Holy Writings
 - i. They have over 100 volumes of work
 - ii. Other religions sacred writings are also revelation
4. Tools for Evangelism
- a. Spend time in prayer for the individual and for your witness
 - b. Spend time discussing the reality of sin
 - c. Share the exclusiveness of Christ and the gospel
 - d. Be Genuine and Loving

APPENDIX 30

JUDAISM: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Judaism's Development
 - a. Judaism as the faith in the Old Testament begins with Abraham
 - b. Around 200 BC the term Judaism began to refer to a religion based on Rabbis
 - i. This separated it greatly from the faith of the Old Testament
 - ii. This transition made Judaism move from being a religion to a way of life.
 - iii. The destruction of the temple in 70AD greatly changed Judaism because it abolished the priesthood and the sacrifices that are within Judaism
2. Main Movements of Judaism
 - a. Orthodox Judaism
 - i. Orthodox Jews hold to tradition and rituals. They are known for their strict adherence to the Law of Moses. The law must be interpreted by the rabbis.
 - ii. Emphasis = Tradition
 - b. Reform Judaism
 - i. The reform Jews were found in Germany in the 1700's.
 - ii. They hold to a teaching that centers on ethics and the teachings of the prophets.
 - iii. Emphasis = Humanism
 - c. Conservative Judaism
 - i. This group was also founded in German in the 1800's and is known as the group that is often the middle ground
 - ii. Emphasis = Form over Content
 - d. Reconstructionist
 - i. Is a branch off of the Conservative line of Judaism
 1. This branch is found in America and attempts to create a society that is religious and adapts to modern culture
 - e. Hasidic
 - i. They are separatists that are extreme in orthodoxy.
 - f. Zionist
 - i. This is really nothing more than a political movement back to Israel
3. Basic Beliefs
 - a. God

- i. Orthodox
 - 1. God is spirit and not form
 - 2. God is personal
 - 3. God is omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, omnipotent, and compassionate
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. The concept of God is flexible
 - 2. God is seen as impersonal
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. God is a concept
 - 2. The only absolute truth is that truth is not known by man
- b. Scripture
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. The Torah – holds an elevated position in comparison to the rest of the Hebrew Canon
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. The Torah and the other books
 - 2. Revelation is seen as an ongoing process
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. The Bible is a human document of
 - a. History
 - b. Culture
 - c. Legends and hopes
 - 2. The Bible is valuable for insights into morality and ethics.
- c. Humanity
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. Morally neutral
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. Perfection comes through enlightenment
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. Human nature is good
- d. Sin
 - i. Orthodox
 - a. Original sin is not a reality
 - i. Sin is breaking the law
 - ii. Conservative
 - a. No original sin
 - i. Sin can be moral actions or actions within society
 - iii. Reform
 - a. No original sin
 - i. Sin is interpreted by society
- e. Salvation
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. Obedience to the law is necessary
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. One must hold onto their Jewish nationality

- iii. Reform
 - 1. Salvation comes through bettering oneself
 - f. The Law
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. It is the basis of everything
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. Though there exists a moral absolute, laws themselves are relative
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. No absolutes, everything is constantly changing
 - g. The Messiah
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. The Messiah is not a divine being, but is only a man
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. Hold to an age of the Messiah
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. View the Messiah as an age of harmony and peace
 - h. After Life
 - i. Orthodox
 - 1. Physical resurrection
 - 2. Righteous will be with God forever
 - ii. Conservative
 - 1. No personal afterlife
 - iii. Reform
 - 1. No personal afterlife
- 4. Basic Observances
 - a. Rosh ha-Shanah
 - i. Jewish New Year
 - ii. A time of joy
 - b. Yom Kippur
 - i. Solemnest day of the year
 - ii. Seeks forgiveness from God
 - c. Hanukkah
 - i. Eight day celebration of the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians
 - d. Purim
 - i. It is a minor holiday that reflects the book of Esther
 - e. Passover
 - i. Most popular holiday in Judaism
 - ii. Comparable to the American Thanksgiving
- 5. Keys to Sharing Your Faith
 - a. Show Genuine Friendship
 - i. Building a relationship builds the right to share
 - b. Ask Questions to Learn About Them

- i. Be genuinely interested in what they practice and believe
 - ii. Ask questions that lay groundwork to sharing the faith
- c. Share Your Story
 - i. Share your testimony
- d. Key Thoughts
 - i. Share the difference between a Jewish way of life and a relationship with Christ
 - ii. Avoid terminology associated with Christianity
- e. Use Scripture
 - i. Especially point to the Messiah

APPENDIX 31

RELATIVISM: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Defining Relativism
 - a. Relativism is the worldview that all morality, philosophy, and truth is valid
 - b. Relativism is the understanding that what one believes is true for that individual and does not have to be true for anyone else.
 - c. Arenas of Relativism
 - i. Truth – All beliefs are equal and none of them are more right than another.
 - ii. Morality – the moral code of an individual is only based on their personal perception and not that of any type of absolute
 - iii. Ethics – ethical responses find their truthfulness in the context of the situation.
2. Defining Absolute
 - a. Absolute Truth
 - i. Absolute truth is the truth that is true for all people, in all situations, at all times, and in all cultures.
 - b. Absolute Morality
 - i. Absolute morality is the moral code that is overarching for all people, in all situations, at all times, and in all cultures.
 - c. Absolute Ethics
 - i. Absolute ethics is the ethical code that is expected of all people, in all situations, at all times, and in all cultures.
3. Relativism's Effect on Christianity
 - a. Leads to an Abandonment of God
 - i. When relativism dominates culture, an abandonment of God takes place because individuals believe that belief in a deity is based on individuals own personal belief system
 - b. Leads to an Abandonment of Morality
 - i. Relativism leads to an abandonment of morality because the moral code and guidelines that should govern mankind are removed for individual desire.
 - c. Leads to a Crippled Church
 - i. Relativism cripples the church as it infiltrates because the truth of God's word becomes based on opinion and personal perspective rather than the ways of God.
 - d. Leads to a Pseudo-Christianity

iv. Relativism endangers Christianity because people proclaim to be believers based on other criteria than Christ

4. Keys to Sharing Your Faith
 - a. Show Genuine Friendship
 - i. Building a trusting relationship so that the conversation can take place and the individual can see your sincerity
 - b. Distinguish the Reality of an Absolute Truth
 - i. Simply point out a couple of absolute truths that point to their reality.
 1. Example: Gravity
 - c. Point to the Contradictions in Relativism
 - i. Show how relativism in and of itself creates a culture of complete contradictions.

APPENDIX 32

INDIVIDUAL'S IN CRISIS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

1. Moments of Crisis
 - a. Moments of crisis break down barriers
 - i. Many times when crisis hits, barriers that have previously existed are removed and the individual is more open to hearing the news of Christ.
 - b. Moments of crisis can change perspective
 - i. During the moment of hardship, perspective is often changed because the previous point of view leaves on empty and wanting.
 - c. Moments of crisis demand authenticity
 - i. When an individual is hurting the true need is for someone to be authentic with them as they walk through the issue

2. Three Types of Crisis
 - a. Divorce
 - i. Divorce is the breaking of the commitment made at marriage
 - ii. Divorce should be understood as an experience that shatters the individual and is slow to heal
 - iii. Divorce often carries with it other emotions
 - iv. Divorce needs to be understood in light of its sinfulness
 - b. Death
 - i. Death is often accompanied by a deep sense of grief
 1. Grief is the emotional response to an intense moment of suffering or shock
 - ii. Those recovering from losing a loved one will often journey to healing
 1. The initial response is shock
 2. Shock is normally followed by some type of an emotional release
 3. Oftentimes, a time of loneliness creeps in that eventually gives way to anger and guilt.
 4. Through a slow process of adjustment, the individual slowly returns to a sense of normality
 - c. Depression
 - i. Individuals in depression struggle with their self-image
 - ii. Individuals in depression often seek to just feel better
 - iii. Individuals in depression often are under a sense of great conviction

3. Keys to Sharing Your Faith
 - a. Show Authenticity
 - i. When individuals are hurting, they need individuals who are authentic and genuine
 - b. Show Christ
 - i. At the right moment, be prepared to show Christ and how Christ offers hope
 - c. Show Encouragement
 - i. Use Scripture
 - ii. Use Testimony
 - iii. Be Available

APPENDIX 33

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL: PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

The Gospel is often _____

The Gospel is often _____

1. This is _____ the Gospel

a. We are _____

i. Idea:

ii. Effect:

iii. Problem:

iv. We Are Alright is Not the Gospel Because

v. We Must Understand Sin

1. Sin is

- a. The _____ to keep the law
(James 2:10-11)
- b. The inability to claim _____ before God
(Romans 3:10-18)
- c. The inability to follow in _____ obedience
(Hebrews 2:2)
- d. The separating _____ between God and Man
(Psalm 119:104)

e. The inability to _____ oneself to find their identity in Christ

b. We Should Live in a _____ Manner

i. **Idea:**

ii. **Effect:**

iii. **Problem:**

c. _____ is Desired by God

i. **Idea:**

ii. **Effect:**

iii. **Problem:**

d. God is Love

i. **Idea:**

ii. **Effect:**

iii. **Problem:**

2. **This is the _____**

a. _____ **God**

i. C _____ (Genesis 1:26-27)

ii. R _____ (Exodus 34:6-7)

b. _____ **Man**

i. The _____ Sin (Genesis 3:17)

ii. Sin is in _____ (Romans 3:23).

iii. Why _____ Sin

c. **Savior** _____

i. Completely _____ and Completely _____ (John 1:14)

ii. _____ the Kingdom of God (John 18:36)

iii. The _____ Savior

iv. The Act of _____ Sacrifice

v. The _____

d. _____ **and Repentance**

i. _____ is Required

ii. Faith _____

iii. _____ Goes With Faith

e. **God's** _____

i. The _____ Reign

ii. Coming Reign Should _____ to Repentance

iii. Coming Reign Should _____ Believers

3. **Being Overtaken by the Gospel**

a. **It** _____ **New**

- i. We Must Be _____ (John 3:5-7)
- ii. We Must Be _____ (1Corinthians 15:42-44)
- iii. _____ is a Necessity (Colossians 1:21-23)

b. It Must Be _____

- i. The Gospel Must _____ Us (Acts 9:17-19)
- ii. The Gospel Must Not _____ Silent (Romans 1:16)
- iii. The Gospel Must Be _____ (John 1:40-42)

c. It Must Be _____ Out

- i. The Gospel Must Cause _____ Change
- ii. The Gospel Must Cause _____ Change
- iii. The Gospel Must Cause _____ Change

APPENDIX 34

ARRANGING YOUR STORY:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. **Biblical** _____

a. Paul

i. ACTS 22

1. Verses 1-5 – Paul's Religious _____
Before Christ
2. Verses 6-16 – Paul's Conversion _____
3. Verses 17-21 – Paul's Post Conversion

ii. ACTS 24

1. Verses 10-13 – Paul Begins with a Way of _____
Experience
2. Verses 14-16 – Introduction of the _____
3. Verses 17-21 – Paul Brings to Light
_____ Issues

iii. ACTS 26

1. Verses 1-11 – Life _____ Christ
2. Verses 12-18 – _____
Experience
3. Verses 19-23 – Life _____ Accepting Christ

2. _____ **and Understanding Your Story**

a. Testimony

- i. A testimony is the telling of God's work of setting a believer
_____.
- ii. A testimony is your _____ God story

b. Personal Part of Testimony

- i. To have a personal testimony as a Christian, one must first have a
personal _____ with Jesus as
both personal Lord and Savior

c. Importance

- i. A personal testimony is important because it focuses not only on the moment of salvation, but also on the entire personal spiritual

d. Basic Overview of a Testimony

- i. Pre-Conversion – The _____ of the Holy Spirit

ii. Conversion - The Moment of _____

iii. Post-Conversion – The Combined work of the _____ and the _____

iv. Glorification – The total _____ of the effects of sin

3. Life _____ Christ

a. Sinner

b. Hopeless

c. Death

4. _____ With Christ

a. Realization

b. Repentance

c. Reaction

5. Life _____ Christ

a. What God has Done

- i. As you look back on your spiritual journey:

1. Where has God provided for a _____ in your life?
2. Where has God _____ you in your weakness?
3. Where has God _____ you in a storm?
4. Where has God _____ you?

b. What God is Doing

i. As you look at life now:

1. Where is God _____ for you in life?
2. Where is God _____ you?
3. Where is God _____ you?
4. Where is God _____ you?
5. Where is God _____

c. What God has Promised to Do

i. As you look forward what do you find hope in:

1. What has God promised to you concerning your _____?
2. What has God promised to you concerning your _____?
3. What has God promised to you concerning your _____?
4. What has God promised to you concerning _____?

6. _____ in the Gospel

a. The _____ of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony

- i. A testimony serves as a _____ link to tie the impact of the gospel to real life.
- ii. When people are unfamiliar with _____ they will listen to those whom have walked in similar situations.

b. The _____ of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony

- i. Without care, a believer can easily fall into the trap of sharing the story of their life _____ focusing or mentioning the working of Christ in their life

c. The _____ of Sharing the Gospel with the Testimony

- i. Trust in the _____ of the Holy Spirit
- ii. Maintain the focus on the _____ of Christ in your life
- iii. Avoid Christian terms and use _____ everyday language
- iv. As you tell your God Story, _____ it and _____ it
- v. _____ in Scripture

- vi. Keep it _____ and concise
- vii. A testimony does not always begin at the _____
point, but it always points to the same message
- viii. _____ sharing your testimony as a normal
part of life
- ix. Ask if this type of _____ has ever
happened to them

APPENDIX 35

SHARING THE GOSPEL:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. Fluid

a. Defining _____ Evangelism

- i. Fluid evangelism is the approach to personal evangelism where the individual who is share the gospel has several _____ available to them and selects the proper method based on the _____ of the situation.

b. The _____ of Fluid Evangelism

- i. Fluid evangelism promotes constant _____ within the believer
ii. Fluid evangelism does not allow a personal witness to become _____ into one approach
iii. Fluid evangelism helps in _____ the impact of the gospel message in the life of the unbeliever
iv. Fluid evangelism is about _____ a life of evangelism

c. The _____ for Fluid Evangelism

- i. Without fluid evangelism, one can easily become _____ as a witness for Christ
ii. Without fluid evangelism, the impact on the hearer is _____

2. Indirect

a. Scripture _____

b. Non-_____

c. An _____ of how this is used.

d. Focus on the _____ Convicting the Heart

3. Relational

a. Find _____ Experiences

b. _____ **Trust**

c. **Share** _____

4. Direct

a. **Ask** _____ **Questions**

i. Example Questions

1. Do you believe you are a _____ person? Why?
2. If you were to _____ today and were standing face to _____ with God and He asked, "Why should I let you into my kingdom?" what would you say?

b. **Challenge** _____ **Condition**

i. Example Questions:

1. Have you ever _____ anything?
2. Have you ever _____ someone?
3. Have you ever _____ a lie?

c. **Clear** _____ **Sale**

i. This approach pushes for a _____

5. _____ for the Trade

a. **Bible**

b. **Tracts**

c. **Openers**

APPENDIX 36

APOLOGIZE FOR NOTHING: PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. What is _____?
 - a. What Apologetics is _____
 - i. Apologetics is not based in _____ truth
 - ii. Apologetics is not based in _____ for believing in Jesus Christ or God's Word
 - iii. Apologetics is not something that is left to _____ and individuals in academia
 - b. What _____ is
 - i. Apologetics is a _____ defense of God, His Word, and His Truth
 - ii. Apologetics is a _____ of what one believes
 - iii. Apologetics should be done by _____
 - c. The Biblical Mandate
 - i. 1 Peter 3:13–16 (ESV) - 13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts _____ Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a _____ to anyone who asks you for a _____ for the hope that is in you; yet do it with _____ and _____, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.
2. How to _____ Apologetics
 - a. Explanation
 - i. Apologetics is beneficial in explaining theological and doctrinal _____ that people do not understand.

b. Defending

- i. Apologetics is used to defend the gospel by placing logical arguments before the one who is

c. Answering

- i. Apologetics is used to answer _____ questions concerning the faith

3. Why and _____ to Learn Apologetics

a. Why

i. Discipleship

1. Apologetics _____ the faith of believers by _____ their beliefs

ii. Growth

1. Apologetics aids in growth because it acts like _____ to the soul

iii. Obedience

1. Learning apologetics is not an option, but a biblical

b. How

i. Intentional

ii. Systematical

4. _____ for Evangelism

a. Books

b. Websites

c. Training

APPENDIX 37

UNIVERSALISTS:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. The _____ Statistics
 - a. What _____ Believe About Faith Alone in Christ
 - b. What _____ Thinks
 - c. Current Trends
 - i. Rob Bell – “Love Wins”

2. The Belief System of _____ (Unitarians)
 - a. Basic Belief
 - i. The belief that all mankind will be saved because there is no true eternal _____
 - b. Basic Practice
 - i. Universalists both as congregations and individuals engage in prayer, silent contemplation, worship, and _____
 - ii. Unitarians are made up of Atheists, Humanists, Christians, and Pagans, thus each group is welcome to worship its _____ power
 - iii. Originally, Universalists believed in the total _____ of all mankind, many still hold this, but it is not necessary
 - iv. The Unitarian Faith draws from six sources
 1. Direct _____
 2. Words and deeds of Prophetic Women and _____
 3. Wisdom of the World's _____
 4. Jewish and Christian _____
 5. Humanist teachings that deal with the results of _____
 6. Spiritual teachings of earth centered _____

c. Christian Universalist

- i. Believe in a creator God who is manifested in love, light, truth, and spirit. This God whom we are to seek and love has been manifested to the world in the _____ and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ
- ii. The basic universal commandment is to _____ one another and thus to serve one another
- iii. Hold to a law of justice where there is a consequence for _____ actions (this is manifested either here or later)
- iv. Hold to the _____ victory of divine mercy and grace for all souls
- v. Christian Universalist believe that all people are the divine offspring of God who has been created in the image of the _____ parent and are the mature in the way of Christ
- vi. Miracles and mysterious phenomena can _____
- vii. The Holy Spirit has inspired prophets, saints, philosophers, and mystics throughout history. Through a variety of cultures, and traditions spiritual writing have come. There writings, such as the bible, and other writing of moral wisdom should be addressed with a discerning mind

3. Basic Issues

- a. No Belief in _____ Judgment
- b. Rejects Absolute _____

4. Tools for Evangelism

- a. Treat the Universalist as an _____
- b. Be ready to present the _____ nature of Christ
- c. Turn the _____ Around
- d. Be _____ and Loving

APPENDIX 38

MORMONS: PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Mormons are the _____ growing religious movement in the world today, even though they are considered a cult.

An estimated guess is that _____ of all Mormon converts have either had a Christian experience or has been affiliated with Christianity in some form or fashion.

1. The _____ of Mormonism

a. Founding

- i. Joseph _____ Jr. on April 6, 1830
- ii. _____ – Smith has an encounter with the angel Moroni who answers the question concerning denominations by declaring that none of the denominations were correct
- iii. _____ – Smith received a second vision that states that the real work of God can be found on golden plates

b. Early History

- i. Smith moves to Illinois and fell into trouble
- ii. _____ - Brigham Young takes leadership and moves the Mormons to Salt Lake City where the “New Zion” is formed

2. The Belief System of Mormons

a. The Mormon _____

- i. The Book of Mormon
- ii. Doctrines and _____
- iii. _____ of Great Price
- iv. The “_____” Version of the Bible
 1. The Bible we do not have because we have messed up translation

b. The _____ of God

- i. Eternal _____
 1. God was a man who ascended to the role of God
- ii. Polytheism
 1. The _____ is not accepted

2. The Father, Jesus, and the Spirit are _____
gods

c. The _____ of Jesus

- i. First born of God
- ii. _____ of the heavenly parents
- iii. Brother of Lucifer
- iv. His plan of _____ was accepted
- v. Achieved _____ atonement in the Garden
by sweating blood
- vi. Achieved _____ atonement on the cross
and resurrection

d. Humankind

- i. Is the manifestation of spirits from another world
- ii. Is not under the curse of Adam
- iii. Can achieve godhood

3. Reaching Mormons

a. _____ the Book of Mormon to the Bible

- i. Apparent Contradictions
- ii. Plagiarism
 - 1. Within the Book of Mormon is direct Quotes from the Prophet Isaiah
- iii. Archeologically Unproven
- iv. Revised

b. Discuss the _____ of God

c. Discuss the _____ of Jesus

d. Discuss that it is more than a

- i. John Smith's premise is based on his feeling and not fact
- ii. John Smith's truth is based in the occult

e. Ask _____ Promises

f. Study to be prepared to _____ a defense

APPENDIX 39

RESPONDING TO VARIOUS RESPONSES:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. The Gospel _____ a Response
 - a. The Gospel is _____
 - b. The Gospel is _____
 - c. The Gospel is _____

2. When a Person Responds _____
 - a. Follow Up with a Basic _____ of the Gospel
 - i. The _____ of Sinfulness
 - ii. The _____ of Christ
 - iii. The _____ to Man
 - iv. God's _____

 - b. Encourage Them Into the _____
 - i. You want to encourage them to be a part of a _____ believing church
 - ii. You want to encourage them to follow in _____ baptism
 - iii. You want to encourage them to get into a Bible study _____

 - c. Help Them Become a _____

3. When a Person Responds _____
 - a. Simply Ask the “_____” Question

 - b. _____ in Love

 - c. Remember the _____
 - i. The individual is _____ rejecting you
 - ii. The individual is rejecting _____

4. When a Person Responds _____

- a. Some people need time to _____ what you have shared**
- b. Some people have just had the _____ planted and it needs to grow**
- c. Remember, these individuals have not said _____, they are in the I am not sure phase**

5. When a Person Responds _____

- a. Some people will not seemingly respond because they have not _____ about it and are not planning on thinking about it**
- b. Remember, these are the people that we just keep _____ the seeds and praying for one to take root**

APPENDIX 40

AGNOSTICS:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. Skepticism _____ the Day
 - a. Skepticism seems to be the _____ word of today
 - b. Skepticism questions the _____ and _____ of everything

2. _____ Questions from Skeptics
 - a. If there is a God, then why does _____ and _____ exist?

 - b. If the Bible is true then why are there _____?
 - i. Three logical thoughts to remember
 1. God cannot _____ (Titus 1:2)
 2. The _____ is God's Word (John 10:34-35)
 3. Therefore, the _____ cannot contain _____

 - c. If God is a loving God, then what does He do with _____ who have never _____?

 - d. Is it really possible for _____ to be the Only Way to God?

 - e. Is Christianity nothing but an _____?

 - f. Isn't a belief in God nothing more than a _____ into faith?

 - g. Isn't _____ about your belief really all that matters?

3. Being _____

a. Be _____

b. **Do Not Allow the Side Questions to Deter the Intent of**
_____ **the Gospel**

c. Be _____

APPENDIX 41

ISLAM:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. _____ **Islam**
 - a. It Continues to hold to its 7th Century _____
 - b. Muhammad took laws that _____ in the 7th Century and turned them into the laws of Allah
 - c. The Sheik or Chief of the tribe has _____ authority
 - d. _____ within Islam are considered property
 - e. Allah = claim that Allah is the _____ god worshipped as the Christians

2. **Muhammad**
 - a. Lived _____ years (570-632AD)
 - b. Worked as a camel driver until age 25 when he married a 40 year old wealthy woman
 - c. For the next _____ years he runs the family fruit stand
 - d. At age 40, Muhammad receives various revelations
 - i. Tradition: _____ the angel came and gave Muhammad these revelations and these revelations later became the Koran because Muhammad was not an educated man
 - ii. Main Message: No _____ god than Allah
 - iii. 2nd Message: Man is god's _____ and it is man duty to first submit and obey Allah
 - e. Islam was to be spread by _____ and _____

3. _____ **Beliefs of Islam**

a. God

i. There is _____ god named Allah

b. Angels

i. They are the servants of god through whom he reveals his will.
Everyone has _____ angels, one records all the good works and the other records all the bad works

c. The Prophets

i. Muhammad is the _____
ii. Others include – Moses, Noah, Abraham, and _____

d. Holy Books

i. _____ – holiest book
ii. Recognize the Law of Moses, Psalms, and the Gospels, but see these works as corrupt

e. Day of Judgment

i. Terrible day when each individual will have their good and bad works _____

f. Decree of God

i. Allah ordains all fate

4. _____ Pillars

a. Affirmation

i. “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his _____”
ii. This phrase is quoted often by the devote Muslim

b. Prayer

i. Five times daily toward _____

c. Almsgiving

i. Worthy Muslims must give _____% to the poor

d. The Fast

i. Fasting from dawn until dusk during _____

e. Pilgrimage

i. Journey to _____
ii. This is to be done at least once in a Muslims life

5. Different Gospel

a. Jesus

- i. Messenger of God, but not the Son
 1. John 1:1-4;14
 2. 1 John 4:1-3
- ii. Deny Divinity
 1. Colossians 2:9
- iii. Deny Death and Resurrection
 1. Matthew 26:28
 2. John 19:20
- iv. Deny Christ as Final and Conclusive Revelation
 1. Hebrews 1:1-3

b. Covenant

- i. Islam chose Hagar and Ishmael instead of Abraham and Isaac
 1. Genesis 17:18-22

c. Allah is _____ and Unknowable

- i. John 3:16
- ii. 1 John 4:7-10

d. Allah is _____

- i. Titus 3:4-7

e. Allah Requires Obedience and _____ Works

- i. John 14:6

f. Allah Needed Muhammad to _____ Words of Judgment

- i. John 19:30

6. Keys to _____ Your Faith

a. _____ What Christ Offers

- i. A God Who is Personal
- ii. A God Who Loves Steadfastly
- iii. A God Who is a Savior
- iv. A God Who Guides as the Spirit

b. _____ Do Not

- i. Become Confrontational about issues surrounding Allah, the Trinity, or Jesus
- ii. Do not attack Muhammad or Islam
- iii. Initially call Jesus the Son of God

- c. Please _____
- i. _____ Building
 - ii. Show _____
 - iii. Be _____
 - iv. _____ Personally

APPENDIX 42

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES: PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. The _____ of Jehovah's Witnesses

a. Founding

- i. _____ – Legally founded by Charles Taze Russell
- ii. Based out of some principles of the Second _____ that Russell studied in the 1870s
- iii. _____ – Headquarters moves to Brooklyn, NY
- iv. Five presidents until 2000 at which point they restructured to a board of directors with was led by Don Adam

b. Key Statistics

- i. _____ million active Jehovah's Witness
- ii. 1.2 billion _____ spent annually going door to door
- iii. Their magazines are distributed in over _____ countries
- iv. They have led _____ million one on one bible studies with potential converts

2. The _____ System of Jehovah's Witness

a. The _____ Name of God

- i. Jehovah Witness holds
 1. In the Jehovah Witness' translation of the bible they claim that the personal name of God is Jehovah
 2. Throughout their translation, they hold to God being called Jehovah

b. The _____ Concerning the Trinity

- i. Jehovah Witnesses believe
 1. The Father is Jehovah
 2. Jesus is the a separate god who is inferior
 3. The Holy Spirit is the active force of God that is not visible

c. The _____ of Jesus

- i. The Jehovah Witnesses equate Jesus with the archangel Michael
- ii. The understanding of the incarnation

1. Bodily form existed
2. Michael ceased to exist
3. Dead body destroyed
4. Michael raised

d. The _____ of the Holy Spirit

- i. The force of God
- ii. Is impersonal

e. Life in _____

- i. Hold to a duality of eternal classes
 1. “anointed class” – AD 30-1935
 2. “other sheep” – all others who have never heard or lived after 1935

f. _____

- i. Four Requirements for Heaven
 1. Obtaining _____
 - a. Both of Jehovah and of Jesus
 2. Obeying the _____ of God
 - a. One’s life must be conformed to the moral law found within the Bible
 3. Be a member of the _____ church
 4. Give complete _____ to God’s church
- ii. Eternal Security is absent

g. Scripture

- i. Believes that the only true translation is the New World Translation
 1. All others are corrupt

3. _____ Jehovah’s Witness

a. Pray for the _____ of God

b. Prepare Yourself to _____ Questions

c. Study to be prepared to _____ a defense

APPENDIX 43

BAHA'I:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. Basic and _____ Facts
 - a. _____ Numbers
 - b. F _____
2. The _____ Desires
 - a. All forms of _____ must be abandoned
 - b. Men and Women are _____
 - c. There is unity that can be found in _____ religious truth
 - d. People must push to _____ poverty and wealth
 - e. Every person should search for _____ on their own
 - f. _____, reason, and religion are all in harmony
 - g. There should be a global _____ of nations formed
 - h. There is _____ education
3. Basic Beliefs
 - a. G _____
 - b. C _____
 - c. _____ God
 - d. God _____ Himself

e. Union _____ Mankind

f. After _____

g. The _____ of Man

h. Holy _____

4. Tools for Evangelism

a. Spend time in _____ for the individual and for your witness

b. Spend time discussing the reality of _____

c. Share the _____ of Christ and the gospel

d. Be _____ and _____

APPENDIX 44

JUDAISM:
PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. **Judaism's** _____
 - a. **Judaism as the faith in the Old Testament begins with** _____
 - b. **Around** _____ **BC the term Judaism began to refer to a religion based on Rabbis**
2. **Main Movements of Judaism**
 - a. _____ **Judaism**
 - i. Emphasis = _____
 - b. _____ **Judaism**
 - i. Emphasis = _____
 - c. _____ **Judaism**
 - i. Emphasis = _____ over _____
 - d. **R** _____
 - i. Is a branch off of the _____ line of Judaism
 - e. **H** _____
 - i. They are _____ that are _____ in orthodoxy.
 - f. **Z** _____
 - i. This is really nothing more than a _____ movement back to Israel
3. _____ **Beliefs**
 - a. **God**
 - i. Orthodox
 1. God is _____ and not _____
 - ii. Conservative
 1. The concept of God is _____
 - iii. Reform
 1. God is a _____

b. Scripture

- i. Orthodox
 - 1. The _____
- ii. Conservative
 - 1. The Torah and the _____ books
 - 2. Revelation is seen as an _____ process
- iii. Reform
 - 1. The Bible is a human _____

c. Humanity

- i. Orthodox
 - 1. Morally _____
- ii. Conservative
 - 1. Perfection comes through _____
- iii. Reform
 - 1. Human nature is _____

d. Sin

- v. Orthodox
 - a. Original sin is not a _____
- vi. Conservative
 - a. No original sin
- vii. Reform
 - a. No original sin

e. Salvation

- iv. Orthodox
 - 1. Obedience to the law is _____
- v. Conservative
 - 1. One must hold onto their Jewish _____
- vi. Reform
 - 1. Salvation comes through _____ oneself

f. The Law

- iv. Orthodox
 - 1. It is the _____ of everything
- v. Conservative
 - 1. Though there exists a moral _____, laws themselves are _____
- vi. Reform
 - 1. _____ absolutes, everything is constantly changing

g. The Messiah

- iv. Orthodox

1. The Messiah is _____ a divine being, but is only a man

v. Conservative

1. Hold to an _____ of the Messiah

vi. Reform

1. View the Messiah as an age of _____ and _____

h. After Life

iv. Orthodox

1. _____ resurrection

2. Righteous will be with God _____

v. Conservative

1. No personal afterlife

vi. Reform

1. No personal afterlife

4. Basic Observances

a. R _____

b. Yom _____

c. H _____

d. P _____

e. P _____

5. Keys to Sharing Your Faith

a. Show _____ Friendship

b. Ask Questions to _____ About Them

c. Share _____ Story

d. Key _____

e. Use _____

APPENDIX 45

RELATIVISM:
A PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. Defining _____
 - a. Relativism is the _____ that all morality, philosophy, and truth is valid
 - b. Relativism is the understanding that what one believes is true for that _____ and does not have to be true for anyone else.
 - c. _____ of Relativism
 - i. Truth – All _____ are equal and none of them are more right than another.
 - ii. Morality – the _____ code of an individual is only based on their personal perception and not that of any type of absolute
 - iii. Ethics – ethical _____ find their truthfulness in the context of the situation.
2. _____ Absolute
 - a. Absolute _____
 - i. Absolute truth is the truth that is true for all people, in all _____, at all times, and in all cultures.
 - b. Absolute _____
 - i. Absolute morality is the moral code that is overarching for all people, in all situations, at all _____, and in all cultures.
 - c. Absolute _____
 - i. Absolute ethics is the ethical code that is expected of all people, in all situations, at all times, and in all _____.
3. Relativism's Effect on _____
 - a. Leads to an _____ of God
 - b. Leads to an Abandonment of _____

c. Leads to a _____ Church

d. Leads to a _____-Christianity

4. Keys to _____ Your Faith

a. Show _____ Friendship

b. Distinguish the _____ of an Absolute Truth

c. Point to the _____ in Relativism

APPENDIX 46

INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS:
A PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

1. Moments of _____
 - a. Moments of crisis break down _____
 - b. Moments of crisis can _____ perspective
 - c. Moments of crisis demand _____

2. _____ Types of Crisis
 - a. Divorce
 - i. Divorce is the breaking of the commitment made at _____
 - ii. Divorce should be understood as an experience that _____ the individual and is slow to heal
 - iii. Divorce often carries with it other _____
 - iv. Divorce needs to be understood in light of its _____
 - b. Death
 - i. Death is often accompanied by a deep sense of _____
 - c. Depression
 - i. Individuals in depression struggle with their _____
 - ii. Individuals in depression often seek to just _____ better
 - iii. Individuals in depression often are under a sense of great _____

3. Keys to _____ Your Faith
 - a. Show _____
 - b. Show _____
 - c. Show _____
 - i. Use _____
 - ii. Use _____
 - iii. Be _____

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Every Believer a Witness. Performed by Dennis Nunn.

ABSTRACT

Chapter 1 highlights the ministry context at Otter Creek First Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. In explaining the context of ministry, this chapter focuses on the history of the church, as well as, the current environment. There is an interweaving of the history and the current situation in order to show the role that history has played to create the current dynamics. Due to the unique physical setting of the church, a focus is given to the community that surrounds the church by analyzing an up to date demographics study. Chapter 1 includes a description of the goals and rationale for the project.

Chapter 2 focuses on the biblical and theological groundwork for this project. To fully grasp the command of the Great Commission, the commissioning passages found in the gospels, as well as, Acts 1:8 are examined. In addressing the concept of fluid evangelism, this chapter looks at Acts 17:22-34; Acts 26; 1 Corinthians 9:22-23; and Galatians 1:6-10. Through these passages the focus is upon the concept of various methods being used to present the same unchanging gospel. Chapter 2 also addresses accountability partners.

Chapter 3 focuses on the various outside sources that pertain to the concept of fluid personal evangelism through personal covenants. To achieve the goal, this chapter contains content that focuses on various methodologies to sharing one's faith with another. It lays the ground work for some key apologetical uses within sharing and defending one's faith. This chapter centers on the interaction between various methods of evangelism and the ability to use several methods at any given time to share the gospel.

Chapter 4 depicts the project's set up. By outlining the project in detail and sharing the process that is followed, this chapter allows someone to duplicate what has

been done at Otter Creek First Baptist Church. This chapter shows the transition from theory and theology to practical application.

Chapter 5 is a chapter of intense evaluation. The evaluation is a summation of the surveys that will be given and personal feedback that will come through the weekly meetings. Chapter 5 addresses the fulfillment of failure of the goals set forth at the beginning of the project and examine whether or not the church has matured in its faith.

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