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DEVELOPING PERSONAL WITNESSES AT MUSTARD SEED
CHURCH IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

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DEVELOPING PERSONAL WITNESSES AT MUSTARD SEED
CHURCH IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

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For the glory of God.

To my precious wife,

I love you so much and thank God for you.

Your worth is far above rubies.

To my children,

Jesus loves you, and I love you.

Each of you is a dear gift from the LORD.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	VII
PREFACE.....	VIII
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Context.....	1
Rationale	2
Purpose.....	4
Goals	4
Research Methodology.....	4
Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations.....	6
Conclusion	7
2. THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR CHRISTIANS LIVING AS PERSONAL WITNESSES.....	8
Psalm 96.....	10
Psalm 96: An Analysis.....	11
Mark 1:14–15.....	15
Mark 1:14–15: An Analysis.....	16
1 Corinthians 15:1–5.....	21
1 Corinthians 15:1–11: An Analysis.....	22
Romans 10:14–17	25
Romans 10:14–17: An Analysis	27
Conclusion	30

Chapter	Page
3. THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO BEING A PERSONAL WITNESS.....	31
Spiritual Warfare and Personal Evangelism.....	32
The History of Spiritual Warfare.....	33
Personal Evangelism Involves Spiritual Warfare.....	35
Evangelism Strategies and Practices.....	39
Evangelism Strategy and Practice Fundamentals.....	40
Communication Strategies for Evangelizing.....	43
Apologetics.....	47
Apologetic Foundations.....	48
Defending the Faith.....	50
Conclusion.....	52
4. DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT.....	54
Preparation.....	54
Implementation.....	56
Content Overview.....	58
The Gospel.....	58
What Is Evangelism? Why Do It?.....	60
Salvation—Part I.....	61
Salvation—Part II.....	62
Evangelism Methods, Tools, Techniques, and Strategies.....	64
Evangelism and Spiritual Warfare.....	65
Evangelism and Apologetics.....	66
Evangelism and the Local Church.....	68
Conclusion.....	69
5. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT.....	70
Evaluation of the Project’s Purpose.....	70

Evaluation of the Project’s Goals.....	71
Strengths of the Project	78
Weaknesses of the Project.....	80
What I Would Do Differently.....	83
Theological Reflections	84
Personal Reflections.....	87
Conclusion	89
Appendix	Page
1. GOSPEL AND PERSONAL EVANGELISM KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY (GPEKI).....	91
2. PERSONAL EVANGELISM INVENTORY (PEI)	95
3. POST TRAINING INTERVIEW	99
4. PERSONAL EVANGELISM TRAINING CURRICULUM/SESSION NOTES	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY	152

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCOT	Baker Commentary on the Old Testament
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BST	Bible Speaks Today
IVPNTC	InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary Series
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries

PREFACE

A Doctor of Ministry project is not done in isolation. It is a team effort. What is more, a project that aims to develop faithful and biblical personal witnesses for Jesus Christ makes for a likely target in spiritual warfare. I am especially thankful to those who supported and prayed for me as I endeavored to complete this project.

I am particularly thankful for my wife. Her support has been absolutely critical, and I thank God for such a suitable helper. My children, who are a tremendous joy, have extended much grace to me, and I praise God for them. I pray that God would use this project to assist them in living for Jesus Christ.

I also thank God for my parents and brothers. My father and mother introduced me to Jesus, encouraged me to complete this project, and prayed unceasingly for me. My parents's testimonies highlight the grace of God, and I am grateful they taught and showed me that Christians are to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. Moreover, my brothers regularly sharpened and encouraged me. Through them, I continue to see "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Ps 133:1 KJV).

My church family deserves special recognition. This project is impossible without them, and their support and prayers were enormously valuable. What God has done in Mustard Seed Church is truly beyond what I imagined, and I pray that He would continue to grow His people in every good way.

Furthermore, I want to express my gratitude for the Professional Doctoral Studies Office at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. From the beginning of my doctoral studies, the men and women of the PDS Office have been helpful, communicative, and efficient. Their work was of much benefit to this project.

Finally, I bless God for my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Timothy K. Beougher.

Through every chapter, as well as in life and loss, he capably facilitated this project to completion. I am thankful (among other things) for his guidance, patience, understanding, feedback, and encouragement. At some critical moments, his words and actions were the very stimuli I needed to continue to press forward in this project.

Peter Kim

Paterson, New Jersey

December 2022

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the well-known passage on the Great Commission found in Matthew 28: 18–20, Jesus states, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”¹ Since Christians are expected to obey this commission and because gospel proclamation is a necessary ingredient in the production of disciples for Jesus Christ (Rom 10:13–18), every Christian is commissioned by the Lord to evangelize.

Regardless of difficulty, pastors must lead the way in equipping Christians for the work of ministry (Eph 4:11–12), and churches should strive to train followers of Christ to evangelize and disciple their neighbors. Followers of Christ must be taught to love God and their neighbors (Matt 22:37–39) and be ready to give appropriate answers to questions concerning the hope that is found in them (1 Pet 3:15). Thus, in accordance with these truths, this project seeks to provide tools, motivation, and encouragement for the practice of personal evangelism. Ultimately, it seeks to develop Spirit filled personal witnesses who possess a biblical foundation for evangelism and properly handle the gospel message.

Context

In 2018, a small group of believers and I planted Mustard Seed Church (MSC)

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the King James Version.

in Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson is the United States’s first planned industrial city, and it remains a strategic location twenty miles west of New York City. Approximately 147,000 residents live in Paterson, and its significance can be attributed to, among other things, its population density, the unreached peoples that are found there, and its location in the Northeast—a region the North American Mission Board claimed as the most influential region in the United States.² Evangelism in Paterson has the potential to impact the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

From its birth Mustard Seed Church has prayerfully striven to be a healthy, biblically faithful, and gospel-centered church. A familiar refrain among MSC’s members is the church’s desire to “be disciples *of* Jesus making disciples *for* Jesus.” Our members strive to use their valuable time, energy, resources, and prayers to see a gospel work established through Mustard Seed Church. They also aspire to be more faithful Christians and disciple makers in their own workplaces and communities of residence. They understand the Christian life is one of daily, holistic, and grace driven obedience, and they want their regular actions and thoughts to be congruent with what they are asking God to accomplish in Paterson.

While our church remains small, we believe that God can do great things through us. Making disciples has not been an easy task, but our church has continued to look for opportunities to share the gospel and develop relationships with nonbelievers, and we have seen some fruit. Additionally, others, who have gathered with us and increasingly been exposed to the biblical demands of evangelism and discipleship, are exhibiting an enhanced desire to be equipped to save souls.

Rationale

Although God created man and woman in His image (Gen 1:26–27), human

² North American Mission Board, “Regional Focus: Northeast,” accessed June 23, 2017, <https://www.namb.net/send-cities/nrtheast>.

beings stand rebelliously against their Creator and are dead in their sins (Gen 3; Rom 3:23; 1 Cor 15:21–22; Eph 2:1). Nevertheless, our gracious God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:4), and He has ordained for saving faith to come through the hearing of the gospel (Rom 10:17). Indeed, Paul explains in Romans 1:16 that the gospel message is the very power of God unto salvation.

Part of being a fruitful Christian is to obediently bear witness to Christ through evangelism. The New Testament makes clear that Christians from all walks of life evangelized and were encouraged to be ready to give answers to questions concerning their hope (Acts 8:1–4; 1 Pet 3:15–16). While sometimes changing their evangelism methods, they left the message of the gospel unchanged and faithfully took that message to the unbelieving world (Acts 2:12–40; 8:26–38; 13:16–41; 17:22–31; 1 Cor 9:19–23; 15:3–4; 2 Tim 2:2).

As long as the Lord Jesus tarries, the church must bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. Jesus desires that his people be fruitful disciple makers (Matt 28:18–20; John 15:16), and while Christians today are faced with new opportunities and challenges to the gospel, we are to persevere in being winsome ambassadors for Christ. Some Christians will be particularly gifted by God to be evangelists, but all are called to evangelize (Eph 4:11). Specifically, pastors must do their part in equipping the saints for this work of ministry.

Given the context of Mustard Seed Church and the demands of the Great Commission, this project sought to develop adult volunteers at Mustard Seed Church (Paterson, NJ) into personal witnesses. As a congregation, we desire more and sense the need for further knowledge and training. In our church's life, we had yet to implement a formal course on evangelism, and it was thus beneficial for our church to provide a targeted training in personal evangelism.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop adult volunteers into personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church in Paterson, New Jersey.

Goals

The goals of this project were fivefold. Each of the goals combined with the other goals in order to move this project to the desired end of developing personal witnesses of Christ.

1. The first goal was to assess the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.
2. The second goal was to assess the practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism of the adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.
3. The third goal was to develop an eight session curriculum that would train adult volunteers in the gospel, the biblical basis for personal evangelism, and the practice of personal evangelism.
4. The fourth goal was to increase the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.
5. The fifth goal was to equip adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently.

Successful completion of this project depended upon the completion of these five goals. A specific research methodology was created that measured the successful completion of these goals.³ The details of this methodology are given in the following section.

Research Methodology

The first goal was to assess the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a

³ All of the research instruments used in this project have been approved by and used in compliance with The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee.

personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was measured by administering the Gospel and Personal Evangelism Knowledge Inventory (GPEKI) to these volunteers.⁴ This goal was considered successfully met when all the volunteers completed the GPEKI, and the inventory was analyzed to yield a detailed assessment of the volunteers's level of understanding of the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism.

The second goal was to assess the practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism of the adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was measured by administering the Personal Evangelism Inventory (PEI) to these volunteers.⁵ This goal was considered successfully met when all volunteers completed the PEI, and the inventory was analyzed to assess the volunteers's practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism.

The third goal was to develop an eight session curriculum that would train adult volunteers in the gospel, the biblical basis for personal evangelism, and the practice of personal evangelism. This goal was assessed by my doctoral supervisor, who evaluated my curriculum before its deployment for biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability. This goal was considered successfully met when my doctoral supervisor approved of the curriculum for utilization.

The fourth goal was to increase the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was measured by conducting a post training interview after the completion of the course.⁶ This goal was considered successfully met when the results of the interview indicated

⁴ See appendix 1.

⁵ See appendix 2.

⁶ See appendix 3.

that participants's knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, had increased as a result of participation in the personal evangelism course.

The fifth goal was to equip adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently. This goal was measured by conducting a post training interview after the completion of the course.⁷ This goal was considered successfully met when the results of the interview established that participation in the personal evangelism course resulted in participants evangelizing more obediently, winsomely, and confidently.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms was used in this ministry project:

Evangelist. For this project, evangelist referred to a person who has the spiritual gift of being an evangelist. The *New Bible Dictionary* explains, "It is plain that the gift of evangelist was a distinct gift within the Christian church; and although all Christians doubtless performed this sacred task, as opportunity was given to them, there were some who were pre-eminently called and endowed by the Holy Spirit for this work."⁸

Personal witness. For this project, "personal witness" referred to someone who is personally involved in presenting the good news of Jesus Christ to others (personal evangelism). Such a person may or may not have the spiritual gift of being an evangelist.

One number of limitations applied to this project. This limitation was that volunteers for this project were drawn from those who are a part of the ministry of Mustard Seed Church. This limitation restricted the individuals who could participate in this project. Since the purpose of this project was to develop adult volunteers into

⁷ See appendix 3.

⁸ D. B. Knox, "Evangelist," in *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed., ed. I. Howard Marshall et al (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 348.

personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church, the number of those who are church members or attendees in the ministry of Mustard Seed Church at the time of this project's deployment was a firm limitation.

Three number of delimitations applied to this project. First, this project lasted for sixteen weeks. In order to meet the requirements of a Doctor of Ministry project and train and release people to engage in personal evangelism in a swift but effective manner, this length seemed appropriate. Thus the evangelism course developed and utilized in this project aimed to provide a robust but *foundational* overview of the issues that surround personal evangelism. Second, this project was limited to training adults. At the time of this project's development and deployment, these individuals seemed best positioned to benefit from a course in personal evangelism. Finally, the small size of the project group was a delimitation. The average Sunday attendance of Mustard Seed Church is about ten to fifteen attendees. This was a small group from which to draw volunteers and may affect the predictive ability of this project if it is employed in other contexts.

Conclusion

God has put a tremendous opportunity in front of Mustard Seed Church. Without true faith in Jesus Christ, our neighbors stand condemned. God desires all men to repent, and adult volunteers who are well equipped in personal evangelism can be a means that God uses to glorify Himself and bring others to saving faith in His Son. As we aim to be disciples of Jesus who make disciples for Jesus, we now turn to Chapter 2 of this project which will outline the biblical and theological foundations for Christians to live as personal witnesses.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR CHRISTIANS LIVING AS PERSONAL WITNESSES

The Bible teaches that Christians are to be personal witnesses who share the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers. This chapter insists, in contrast to arguments and forces that oppose the necessity and propriety of Christian evangelism, that all believers in Jesus Christ are to obey the Great Commission and be personally involved in evangelism.¹

In Mark 12:28–31, Mark recorded one of the scribes asking Jesus, “Which is the first commandment of all?” Jesus replied, “The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” Mark Dever, deducing the impact these commandments should have on believers, rightly declares,

What does such love require of [Christians]? It seems to require that what [they] want for [themselves], [they] want for those [they] love, too. If you desire to love God with perfect affection, you will desire that for your neighbor, too. But you are not loving your neighbor as yourself if you’re not trying to persuade him toward the

¹ Tim Beougher notes two main reasons some argue that it is not necessary for every Christian to evangelize. These arguments are (1) the Great Commission was issued to the apostles alone and is no longer applicable to Christians today, and (2) the “gift of evangelism” precludes the need for all Christians to evangelize. See Tim Beougher, “Must Every Christian Evangelize?,” *9 Marks Journal*, September–October 2013, accessed November 28, 2022, <https://www.9marks.org/article/journalmust-every-christian-evangelize/>. Research released by Barna Group in 2019 showed that while 96 percent of Millennials in the United States who are categorized as practicing Christians strongly agree that part of their faith means being a witness about Jesus, 47 percent strongly agree that it is wrong to share one’s personal beliefs with someone of a different faith in hopes that they will one day share the same faith. See Barna Group, “Almost Half of Practicing Christian Millennials Say Evangelism Is Wrong,” accessed November 28, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/research/millennials-oppose-evangelism/>. These kinds of discrepancies and rebuttals against the need for Christians to evangelize are not uncommon.

greatest and best aspect of your own life—your reconciled relationship with God. If you are a Christian, you are pursuing Christ. You are following him, and you desire him. And you must therefore also desire this highest good for everyone whom you love. It is love itself that requires [Christians] to pursue the best for those [they] love, and that must include sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with them.²

Indeed, the book of Acts shows that the early church, a loving, responsible, and convinced assembly, comprised mostly of ordinary Christians, actively shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers.³ In Acts 8:1–4, Luke records how Christians, scattered from Jerusalem as a result of persecution, “went every where preaching the word.” Justo L. González points out that these dispersed Christians, which did not include the apostles, were “the first to take the Christian message” to the areas surrounding Jerusalem.⁴ “Men and women of every rank and station in life had discovered the riddle of the universe, so sure of the one true God whom they had come to know, that nothing [stood] in the way of their passing on this good news to others.”⁵

In 2 Corinthians 5:18–20, Paul expounds upon the ministry of reconciliation that God had given to *all* Corinthian believers. Paul explains,

And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.

The Bible unambiguously teaches that Christians are to be personal witnesses who share the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers. While it is true that the Great Commission “was given *to* the apostles, it was not *only* for the apostles.”⁶ In what

² Mark Dever, *The Gospel & Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 49.

³ See Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 273–99.

⁴ Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Present Day* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2005), 23.

⁵ Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 273.

⁶ Beougher, “Must Every Christian Evangelize?”

follows, four key passages that support the thesis of this chapter, Psalm 96, Mark 1:14–15, 1 Corinthians 15:1–5, and Romans 10:14–17, are analyzed. There are additional texts which could be examined, but these four will be considered due to the limitations of this chapter.⁷

Psalm 96

Jesus appreciated the Old Testament. He understood that the written word of God testified of Himself—the living word of God (John 1:1–18). In John 5:39, Jesus said to the Jews of His day, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” The apostle Paul also wrote of the enduring usefulness of the Old Testament. In 2 Timothy 3:16–17, he states, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” Graeme Goldsworthy therefore affirms,

The most compelling reason for Christians to read and study the Old Testament lies in the New Testament. The New Testament witnesses to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the One in whom and through whom all the promises of God find their fulfillment. These promises are only to be understood from the Old Testament; the fulfilment of the promises can be understood only in the context of the promises themselves. The New Testament presupposes a knowledge of the Old Testament. Everything that is a concern to the New Testament writers is part of the one redemptive history to which the Old Testament witnesses. The New Testament writers cannot separate the person and work of Christ, nor the life of the Christian community, from this sacred history which has its beginnings in the Old Testament.⁸

Furthermore, Tremper Longman III notes that “the Psalms is the heart of the Old Testament.”⁹ It is a book that was publically used in the corporate worship of ancient

⁷ Arthur F. Glasser sees the “whole Bible as a missionary book revealed by a missionary God who creates and calls a special people to participate in God’s mission to the nations.” See Arthur F. Glasser et al, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God’s Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 28.

⁸ Graeme Goldsworthy, “Gospel and Kingdom,” in *The Goldsworthy Trilogy* (Sparkford, Great Britain: Paternoster, 2000), 18–19.

⁹ Tremper Longman III, *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 9.

Israel and “represents the end result of a long history of composition [more than eight hundred years], transmission, collection, and arrangement. It contains some of the earliest and some of latest texts in the Old Testament and is in a sense a microcosm of the whole Old Testament.”¹⁰ Thus the psalter (and for this chapter, Ps 96) is a fitting place to begin our examination of the responsibility that Christians have to be personal witnesses who share the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers.

Christians (New Covenant believers) have always made use of the Old Testament and the Psalms in significant ways. Gerald H. Wilson writes,

Christians . . . shared with their non-Christian Jewish contemporaries a desire to employ Scripture as a means to understand God’s will for their present circumstances. For Jew and Christian alike ancient Scripture continued to speak a guiding message into each new time and circumstance. Both communities searched the prophets to understand present history. . . . Through the past nineteen centuries, Christian use of the psalms has continued to recognize . . . three distinctive elements. . . . (1) The psalms serve as guides to personal, private prayer. (2) They continue to find their way into Christian worship through liturgy and through metrical versions for singing . . . [and] (3) . . . the psalms still serve as a scriptural resource for the divine Word of God speaking to our present circumstances.¹¹

By more clearly understanding Psalm 96 in its full canonical context, we can further grasp the purpose of God and the role His people are to play among the nations.

Psalm 96: An Analysis

Psalm 96 is one of several psalms in the psalter that praise God for his divine kingship.¹² It openly displays God’s rule and majesty, commands God’s people to action, and directs the nations to the worship of God the King. It was an integral part of the lives of God’s Old Covenant people¹³ and can be broken up into two sections (vv. 1–6 and vv.

¹⁰ Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms*, vol. 1, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 19–20.

¹¹ Wilson, *Psalms*, 1:30–31.

¹² See also Psalms 93–100.

¹³ In 1 Chronicles 16:23–33, Psalm 96 is used as the ark of the covenant is brought into Jerusalem. John Goldingay notes, “[Psalm 96’s] stress on the everyday nature of the worship appropriate to Yhwh does not support the idea that the psalm was used on just one occasion in the year.” John Goldingay, *Psalms*, vol. 3, *Psalms 90–150*, BCOT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 102.

7–13) made up of two parts each (vv. 1–3 with vv. 4–6 and vv. 7–9 with vv. 10–13).¹⁴

“The familiar form of the hymn, summons to praise followed by the reason or content of praise, is used twice.”¹⁵

In the first call to worship (vv. 1–3), the whole earth is thrice called to sing to the LORD. This is mirrored by three commands to (1) bless the LORD’s name (v. 2), (2) proclaim good tidings of God’s salvation from day to day (v. 2), and (3) tell of God’s glory among the nations and His wonderful deeds among all peoples (v. 3). Two out of these three commands show that witnessing is a proper response of God’s obedient people.

In addition, W. Dennis Tucker Jr. and Jamie A. Grant note the global nature of the call to worship found in Psalm 96. They write,

Typically, the call to worship is characterized by plural commands of vocal praise and the language of approach and worship. The call to worship in Psalm 96 incorporates these elements (vv. 1–2a) but goes beyond by including commands of proclamation and declaration (vv. 2b–3). . . . The real surprise is the full extent of the address: *the whole earth* is called to praise Yahweh (i.e., “the LORD,” Israel’s God). Not just Israel but the whole earth, without exception, is called to praise Israel’s God. It is this unusual address that leads to Psalm 96’s being described as a “new song.” For the Israelite singing Psalm 96, there is little if anything new in terms of content. But a song giving praise to Yahweh as Creator and ruler of the whole earth would, indeed, be new to the lips of any non-Israelite.¹⁶

As a result, John Goldingay understandably perceives a possible implication

¹⁴ See Willem A. VanGemeran, *Psalms*, vol. 5 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, rev.ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 722. VanGemeran, *Psalms*, 722.

¹⁵ James Luther Mays, *Psalms*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 307–8. Like VanGemeran, Mays clearly notes the recurring parallelism, but he puts vv. 1–3 and vv. 4–6 in the first section and vv. 7–12 with v. 13 in the second section. Goldingay divides Psalm 96 into three sections. See John Goldingay, *Psalms*, 101.

¹⁶ W. Dennis Tucker Jr. and Jamie A. Grant, *Psalms*, vol. 2, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 413. Willem A. VanGemeran proposes that the “occasion of praise is a new act of ‘salvation’” and that “the acts of the Lord are acts of deliverance whereby he assures his people of deliverance and victory.” He admits that while “the exact nature of the salvation is not specified . . . it may include all acts in redemptive history—creation and redemption (vv. 2, 11–12; cf. 136:4–25).” See VanGemeran, *Psalms*, 723. Longman submits that the new song is “a phrase that normally occurs in warfare contexts and implies that it is a shout of victory.” Longman III, *Psalms*, 341.

for “a missionary commission to Israel”¹⁷ in Psalm 96. He observes that there is no “immediate way in which the nations themselves hear”¹⁸ this call to worship. In Psalm 79, it is the nations that invaded Jerusalem. Additionally, in Psalm 83, it is the nations that plotted against Israel and God. Yet, in Psalm 96, God is to be praised as the majestic King, and He and His works are to be spoken of among the nations. All of the earth is invited/commanded to sing to the Lord. It is clear that God’s heart is for the nations, but how are they to hear? The answer: God’s people are to be witnesses of God and His works.

Verses 4–6 provide the rationale for the commands found in verses 1–3. It is plain and polemical. The nations are to heed the imperatives from the opening call to worship because the LORD is the great Creator. He is greatly to be praised. He is to be feared above all gods. All the gods of the nations are idols; they are nothing. The LORD, on the other hand, made the heavens (v. 5). God is splendid and majestic. Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. He “*undeniably* is worthy of worship.”¹⁹ He “has done something significant; these ‘nonentities’ have not. Yahweh thus has legitimate claim to the royal attributes listed in verse 6.”²⁰

Verses 7–13 make up the progressive second section of Psalm 96 which contains another call to worship (vv. 7–9). In recurring fashion, the psalmist thrice calls for the families of the peoples to give ascription to the LORD. They are to ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Furthermore, they are to bring an offering, come into the courts of the LORD, worship Him in holy attire, and tremble before Him (vv. 7–9).

Tucker and Grant emphasize,

¹⁷ Goldingay, *Psalms*, 108.

¹⁸ Goldingay, *Psalms*, 108.

¹⁹ Tucker and Grant, *Psalms*, 416.

²⁰ Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 307.

This call is a summons to declare loyalty and commitment. The psalmist is not interested in the nations’[s] merely offering *words* of praise—he calls for a complete giving over of self, power, and glory to Yahweh and to him alone. . . . This address is of particular significance because it echoes the missional promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1–3 that through him “people [the same Hebrew word as in Ps 96:7] on earth” will be blessed. Clearly Psalm 96 has a proleptic, universal perspective—it envisions a time in the future when the praise of God will be sung by all nations. . . . In Psalm 96 all nations of the earth are invited to join [the] community of the elect by offering worship to Yahweh. . . . The nations are reclothed in priestly garb that sets them apart also to worship in the presence of God every bit as much as Israel was set apart for worship before God.²¹

Willem A. VanGemeren notes that “all may worship [the LORD], but the motivation is as important as the manner. Yahweh expects reverence, submission, holiness, and awe of his divine majesty and presence.”²² One cannot come into the LORD’s presence however one pleases. These verses show that the proper response to the divine King is full surrender (repentance) and fitting worship.

Later, in Mark 1:14–15, Jesus comes preaching the gospel and commands those who hear him to “repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Repentance occurs, as we will observe in the section on Romans 10:14–17, as a result of witnessing—something that we have already noticed is an integral part of Psalm 96. Thus, properly understanding Psalm 96 in its full canonical context requires us to see that God desires the nations to submit to Him and that such submission occurs in the context of witnessing. For Christians, who understand something of the outworking of God’s purposes in Jesus Christ, this serves as justification for personal witnessing among unbelievers.

In the closing section of Psalm 96 (vv. 10–13), the content/rationale for the second call to worship is heard. In verse 10, the psalmist enjoins, “Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.” He is “a power that [can] set things right, a might that can be trusted.”²³ All of creation is called on to rejoice in the coming of the LORD. In a

²¹ Tucker and Grant, *Psalms*, 417–18.

²² VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 724.

²³ Mays, *Psalms*, 309.

sevenfold call, the heavens, earth, sea, all the seas contain, fields, all the fields contain, and trees of the forest are called on to worship God the righteous and faithful judge (vv.11–13). This is not a response afforded to a worthless false god. Rather, this is worship that is due God the Creator King, who is the just Judge.

In verse 13, the psalmist writes, “[the LORD] cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” (v. 13b). But when? James Luther Mays concludes, “The past ‘comings’ of the LORD have a future. The liturgy remembers and anticipates.”²⁴ Thus, although, “the focus of the psalm lies on the present, the theological and canonical function stretches to the eschatological hope, when God’s rule is fully established.”²⁵

In the New Testament, Jesus is the one who “ultimately draws the nations into the worshipping community.”²⁶ He is God in the flesh (John 1:14). It is the revelation of “God in Christ [which] begins the process of consummation”²⁷ where all will acknowledge God the King. Thus, Psalm 96 points us forward to Jesus Christ, and now summons Christians, through the personal sharing of His gospel with unbelievers, “to call others to join their ranks”²⁸ and give God the righteous Judge and King the worship that is due Him.

Mark 1:14–15

The Gospel of Mark serves as a helpful place to turn next as one considers the biblical and theological basis for Christians living as personal witnesses. It is often attributed (due to the testimony of the early church) to John Mark, Barnabas’s cousin

²⁴ Mays, *Psalms*, 309.

²⁵ VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 725.

²⁶ Tucker and Grant, *Psalms*, 423.

²⁷ Tucker and Grant, *Psalms*, 423.

²⁸ Tucker and Grant, *Psalms*, 423.

(Col 4:10) and associate of the apostles Peter (Acts 12:12; 1 Pet 5:13) and Paul (2 Tim 4:11). It is commonly viewed as the first Gospel to have been written.²⁹ In Mark, “for the first time the words and deeds of Jesus [are] remembered and proclaimed in written form.”³⁰

Mark’s purpose, to tell the good news of Jesus Christ, is straightforward. Indeed, Mark begins his book with these words: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). For Mark, Jesus is both “the story and the point of the story.”³¹

Mark follows Jesus as He ministers in Galilee and Jerusalem. His book reaches its first climax in Mark 8:29 with Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ and moves to its second climax in Mark 15:39 as the Roman centurion standing before Jesus at His crucifixion declares: “Truly this man was the Son of God.”³² Noteworthy emphasis (almost half of the book) is given to the final week of Jesus’s ministry and to His death and resurrection as “these events are central”³³ to Mark.³⁴ Throughout his book, Mark wants his listeners to notice and hear Jesus in action and embrace Him.

Mark 1:14–15: An Analysis

For the purposes of this chapter, Mark 1:14–15 is especially important. As the first Gospel in the New Testament canon, it was Mark’s purpose to serve as a *witness* to

²⁹ See Darrel L. Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, vol. 11, *Matthew and Mark*, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2005), 393–94. Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 393–94.

³⁰ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, NICNT (1974; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 1.

³¹ Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 397.

³² Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 1–2.

³³ Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 399.

³⁴ This is important as one contemplates how the gospel message that Jesus proclaimed in this text came to include the message of the cross and resurrection that we find in passages such as 1 Corinthians 15:1–5.

Jesus Christ.³⁵ Fifteen verses into his book, Mark indicates without delay that his book will be about the good news of Jesus, the one who fulfills the messianic hope of the Old Testament.³⁶ What is more, Mark's very first recorded words from the mouth of Jesus are found in Mark 1:15, and they are of Jesus *proclaiming* the gospel. The Lord Jesus, Himself the good news, came to announce the good news (Luke 4:18–19; John 1:1–18). The value that both Jesus and Mark placed on the proclamation of the gospel is evidently observed.

Mark 1:14–15 reinforces the view that the Bible teaches that Christians are to be personal witnesses who share the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers by showing (1) the example of Jesus and Mark announcing the gospel as well as the value they placed on that proclamation and (2) how they declared the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit.³⁷ Faithful followers of Jesus Christ are to follow in Jesus's and Mark's footsteps as they bear witness to the gospel (Mark 8:34). They are to value the gospel and its proclamation as Jesus and Mark did. Furthermore, as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19), Christians are to share the gospel with unbelievers as they live and walk by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:25)—the One who testifies of and glorifies Jesus (John 15:26; 16:13–

³⁵ Lane notes that the Gospel of Mark is “a *witness document* that found its creative impulse in the early apostolic preaching of salvation through Jesus Christ. . . . It is proclamation. . . . Mark bears witness to the word of revelation that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.” See Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 1. Even the term “gospel” came to be (and continues to be) used as a “literary label” that indicated a church book about Jesus. See R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 5.

³⁶ Guelich writes, “In the context of 1:1–3; 1:14–15 represents the concluding element in Mark's ‘beginning’ of the gospel concerning Jesus Messiah, Son of God, according to Isaiah's promise (1:1–3).” See Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 42.

³⁷ The Spirit descended upon Jesus in Mark 1:10. Jesus, preparing his disciples for his ascension, states in John 16:12–14: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.” The New Testament books, like the books of the Old Testament, were written as men were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:2). Second Timothy 3:16 informs us that “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God.” Although in its original context, this likely referred to the Old Testament writings, it is right to see this attribute assigned to the books of the New Testament. Both Jesus (Luke 4:18–19; John 14:26) and Mark were empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the gospel.

14).

Mark 1:14–15 clarifies the content of the good news which Christians are expected to steward.³⁸ Mark 1:14–15 serves as “a synopsis of Jesus and his message”³⁹ and allows its recipients to hear and embrace the exact substance of Jesus’s proclamation. It elucidates the God-glorifying, distinctive, explosive, and timeless message (Mark 13:31; John 6:63; Rom 1:16) of Jesus Christ which is sent out by God to accomplish His purposes (Isa 55:11). This gospel, itself a “dynamic missionary force,”⁴⁰ compels Christians to share it with their neighbors.

Early in his Gospel, Mark puts forward John the Baptist as the fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecy which foretold of the Lord sending a messenger who would prepare the way for the Christ (Mark 1:2–4). Mark then informs us that John the Baptist was taken into custody and that “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14–15).⁴¹

“Jesus declares that the critical moment has come: God begins to act in a new and decisive way, bringing his promise of ultimate redemption to the point of fulfillment.”⁴² Darrel Bock explains, “In [Mark] 1:2, Scripture as written by Isaiah is

³⁸ According to Robert Guelich, “Structurally, 1:14 serves as an introduction for the message in 1:15. . . . The message itself consists of two pairs of statements, each constructed in synthetic parallelism. . . . The first pair make declarative statements and are set in the perfect indicative; the second pair are admonitions set in the present imperative and grow out of the declarations. . . . The account of Jesus’ ministry that follows in 1:16–16:8 is synonymous with Jesus’[s] preaching as expressed in 1:14–15. . . His work and words in 1:16–16:8 declare the coming of the appointed time and proclaim the Kingdom of God.” Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, vol. 34A of Word Biblical Commentary, (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), 41–42.

³⁹ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 45.

⁴⁰ Robert L. Plummer, *Paul’s Understanding of the Church Mission: Did the Apostle Paul Expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelize?* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 65. Plummer notes that the church’s missionary endeavor is motivated by the “Spirit, Command, and Word.” See Plummer, *Paul’s Understanding of the Church Mission*, 67.

⁴¹ John’s “role as the promised precursor ends with the coming . . . of the ‘Greater One’ who would ‘baptize with the Spirit.’ (1:9–13).” See Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 42.

⁴² Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 64. Guelich writes, “The first declaration is set against

fulfilled; here the appointed and predicted time described by that Scripture is realized.”⁴³ Centuries after the Old Testament prophecies of a coming Messiah King were made, those prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10).

Jesus’s announcement that “the kingdom of God is at hand”⁴⁴ clarifies what Jesus meant when he said “the time is fulfilled.” It demonstrated that the “reign of God [which] was initially manifested in Israel’s history in the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, [was now] supremely manifested in the advent of a future Messiah, whose reign would usher in the eternal and heavenly reign of God.”⁴⁵ As a result, Jesus commands, “Repent and believe in the gospel.”

The gospel demands that humans are to turn from their “wayward ways in total surrender to God”⁴⁶ and “believe that the Kingdom ha[s] approached and embrace it in faith.”⁴⁷ James R. Edwards, expounding on the commands to repent and believe in the gospel, writes,

Both verbs in Greek are present imperatives, that is, they enjoin living in a condition of repentance and belief as opposed to momentary acts. Repentance and belief cannot be applied to certain areas of life but not to others; rather, they lay claim to the total allegiance of believers. Repentance . . . is used in the summary description

a prophetic-apocalyptic background that corresponds to the expectation of Dan 7:22; Ezek 7:12; 9:1; 1 Pet 1:11; Rev 1:3. The term “appointed time” . . . generally connotes a decisive moment in time, an appointed time, a fixed season (cf. 11:13; 12:2) rather than an expanse or period of time. . . . The perfect tense indicates that the event has come to pass now with lasting significance, and the passive voice indicates that God is at work in bringing it to pass. . . . It is God’s ‘appointed time’ that has come—the eschaton.” See Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 43.

⁴³ Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 408.

⁴⁴ The idea of the “kingdom of God” is found throughout the Scriptures and may be defined as “God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule.” See Goldsworthy, “Gospel and Kingdom,” in *The Goldsworthy Trilogy*, 120.

⁴⁵ Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 45. It is a reign that awaits a fuller realization in the future (Luke 22:15–18) but has truly and effectively come in Jesus Christ. Guelich notes that one is left [in Mark 1:15] with “a context denoting ‘arrival’ and a Greek verb which generally denotes ‘nearness’—an apparent syntactical contradiction.” He continues, “Thus the Kingdom of God has ‘come into history,’ the appointed time ‘has been fulfilled,’ even though the full appearance is yet to come.” See Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 44.

⁴⁶ Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 45.

⁴⁷ Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 409.

of the proclamation of John (1:4), Jesus (1:15), and the disciples (6:12). . . . Belief appears frequently in Mark, in both word and concept, and assumes the act of repentance.⁴⁸

William L. Lane adds,

Provision has been made for men to repent, but there is no time for delay. Only through repentance can a man participate with joy in radical decision. In Jesus men are confronted by the word and act of God; he himself is the crucial term by which belief and unbelief come to fruition. Jesus proclaims the kingdom not to give content but to convey a summons. He stands as God's final word of address to man in man's last hour. *Either* a man submits to the summons of God *or* he chooses this world and its riches and honor. The either/or character of this decision is of immense importance and permits of no postponement. That is what repentance is all about . . . Jesus himself, though veiled in the midst of men, becomes the crucial term by which men enter the kingdom of God, or exclude themselves from it.⁴⁹

The gospel thus makes demands on all humanity. Its very force consequently compels Christians to share it with unbelievers. In Luke 24:47, Jesus fittingly instructs his disciples that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.”⁵⁰ The gospel message simply cannot be a message that goes unshared by Christians. Rather Christians, following in the steps of Jesus and their leaders, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and compelled by the living word of God, are to share the gospel with the world.

In the rest of his Gospel, Mark expounds on the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, showing that they are the grounds, by which, the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God has come near, and we may repent of our sins and trust in Jesus. These matters of primary significance, prominently addressed in 1 Corinthians 15:1–5, then further sharpen the biblical witness that Christians are to be individuals who share the gospel with unbelievers.

⁴⁸ Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 47.

⁴⁹ Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 66.

⁵⁰ Here in Luke's Great Commission passage, Luke includes the content of the message the disciples are to preach.

1 Corinthians 15:1–5

In Acts 1:4–8, Luke recounts how the resurrected Jesus gathered his disciples together and commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Holy Spirit. He informed them that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them and that they would be his witnesses to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Indeed, the rest of the book of Acts reveals how God proceeded to advance his kingdom through his disciples—even bringing salvation to the Gentiles (Acts 11:18; 13:47; 15:6–11; 28:28).

Openly and powerfully, God continued to work after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. As the gospel spread from Jerusalem, Jesus’s disciples were empowered to witness to unbelievers concerning the kingdom of God which had come in Jesus Christ and the need to repent and believe in the gospel.⁵¹ One individual that God particularly used to bring the gospel to the Gentiles was the apostle Paul (Acts 9:15).

Paul was a persecutor of Christians (1 Tim 1:13), but God powerfully transformed Paul—saving him and changing him into a witness for Christ (Acts 26:15b–18). The difference was remarkable. In Acts 9:20–21, Luke even records how those who heard Paul preaching stood amazed at how a former enemy of Christ instead testified of Christ. The living and active word of God (Heb 4:12) constrained Paul—moving him to share the gospel with unbelievers. In Romans 1:16, Paul emphatically wrote to the Christians in Rome and said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the

⁵¹ The message that the disciples preached was the same message that Jesus preached. See Luke 24:44–49. For example, concerning the ongoing call for repentance (which is an integral part of the gospel message that Jesus preached and which was examined in Mark 1:14–15), Mark J. Boda points out, “As the kingdom spreads from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:1–8) repentance remain[ed] key to the message and response of those who embrace[d] the kingdom, whether Jew or Gentile. The apostolic witness (Romans–Jude) reveals that repentance is not only necessary for those entering the kingdom, but has continuing relevance for Christians through the life of discipleship. It is not merely an initiatory rite, but due to the dual nature of kingdom restoration (already, not yet) it is an essential rhythm of the life of grace with God. Those who continually respond to the call to repentance are identified as the overcomers who will enjoy the full and final restoration of the kingdom in the eschaton (Revelation).” See Mark J. Boda, *Return to Me: A Biblical Theology of Repentance*, NSBT (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 181.

Greek.”

Paul worked hard, even in the midst of much suffering (2 Cor 11:23–28; Col 1:24–29), to be a witness for Jesus Christ. Appropriately then, in Acts 18:1–11, Luke records how Paul, for eighteen months, taught the word of God in Corinth. Then, some three years after his one and a half year stint in Corinth, while he was in Ephesus on his third missionary journey, Paul is thought to have written his first canonical letter to the church in Corinth (1 Cor 16:21).⁵² It, along with 2 Corinthians, “have long been considered among the most important windows into the life of the early-first-century church.”⁵³

1 Corinthians 15:1–11: An Analysis

Explaining Paul’s purpose for writing 1 Corinthians, Alan F. Johnson states, “We have every reason to believe that Paul was deeply concerned for the church’s well being. . . . Many characteristics of the cultural life of first-century Corinth were seeping into the life of the Christian community. . . . Therefore Paul writes in order to correct the non-Christian behavior that has manifested itself in the life of the community.”⁵⁴

Thus, in 1 Corinthians, Paul confronts such issues as division, sexual immorality, and selfishness. He also challenges false beliefs, and in 1 Corinthians 15: 12, it is manifest that one of the ways in which falsehood had entered the Corinthian church was in the Corinthian rejection of the resurrection of the dead.⁵⁵ For Paul, this was

⁵² Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 21.

⁵³ Alan F. Johnson, *1 Corinthians*, IVPNTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 13.

⁵⁴ Johnson, *1 Corinthians*, 22–23.

⁵⁵ No reason is given in the biblical text as to the cause for this denial of the resurrection. Anthony C. Thiselton notes that some scholars posit that a group at Corinth did not believe in any kind of “post mortal experience.” Others suggest that this group may have held that the resurrection had already occurred. Still others propose that this group did not believe in a *bodily* resurrection. Finally, some hold that there may have been more than one group with more than one rationale. See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1172–76.

preposterous. The Corinthians were rejecting something that was entirely indispensable to the gospel, and the consequences of this kind of rejection were lethal. Thus Paul retorted,

If there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep (1 Cor 15:13–20).

Clearly, it was not acceptable for the Corinthians to fail to believe in the resurrection. “The resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of believers were early in the church recognized as absolutely essential matters of Christian belief.”⁵⁶ The Corinthian rejection of the resurrection meant a rejection of the resurrection of Christ—which meant that the Christian faith was worthless. This was false and untenable, so Paul revisited the gospel message that he had preached to the Corinthians, and readers of his letter are blessed that God used the failures of the Corinthian church to be an occasion for such a clear and powerful explanation of the gospel message.

Paul begins his summary of his gospel with these words in 1 Corinthians 15:1–2: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.”⁵⁷ Paul wanted the Corinthians “to know what they should already know since they believed the gospel that he preached to them.”⁵⁸ This is how they were saved and should they fail to continue to

⁵⁶ Johnson, *1 Corinthians*, 280.

⁵⁷ For 1 Corinthians 11:1–5 being a summary of Paul’s gospel, see Jerram Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001), 169–70.

⁵⁸ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 682.

believe in the gospel, they will have believed in vain. The “Corinthians owe their entire existence as believers to the gospel Paul preache[d], with its central affirmation of Christ’s bodily resurrection.”⁵⁹

In verses 3–5, Paul describes the gospel as a received message which he delivered “first of all” to the Corinthians.⁶⁰ This description should markedly impact, propel, and conform Christians of every period in Christian history. Paul went on to explain: “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.”

Thus the life, death, and resurrection of Christ are shown to be the “means necessary for entrance into the forgiveness, life, and power of God’s presence and rule.”⁶¹ Earlier, in Mark 1:14–15, it is clear that Mark did not include any discussion, in that scriptural passage, of the death or resurrection of Jesus Christ. Initially in the book of Mark, the term “gospel” referred to the substance of Jesus’s message. However here, with Christ’s work on earth completed, the “gospel” included the news of Jesus’s death and resurrection. Edwards explains,

In early Christian tradition the term [gospel] . . . increasingly include[d] the proclamation *about* Jesus as the story of his life, death, and resurrection. Thus Jesus proclaimed the gospel, but he also *was* the gospel. The fact that early Christians referred to both the message of Jesus and the message about Jesus with this word [gospel]—and bequeathed a third sense to the term by designating the written accounts of Jesus’s life as “Gospels”—indicates how inseparably these various

⁵⁹ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 801.

⁶⁰ The gospel is foundational and takes priority in importance. Garland writes, “‘among the first things’ means ‘the most important things,’ or ‘things of first importance.’ What was first in importance was also probably spoken first.” See Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 682. Fee notes, “as of first importance” could also mean priority in time, meaning “that this is what he preached and they believed from the very beginning of their coming to Christ.” However, Fee states that “both the form and the language suggest that [‘as of first importance’] is Paul’s concern.” See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 802. Hans Conzelmann translates the Greek phrase as “above all,” and sees it as “referring to order: ‘in the first instance.’” See Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 251.

⁶¹ Bock, *The Gospel of Mark*, 410.

understandings are present in this one term.⁶²

Therefore, throughout the New Testament, in various contexts and with diverse words, the gospel came to plainly address 1) humanity's accountability before the Creator God, 2) humanity's sinful status before God and God's impending judgment, 3) God's action to save humanity through the person of Jesus Christ and his historical life, death, and resurrection and 4) the gift of salvation that men can receive by repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ.⁶³ These are, as Paul demonstrated in 1 Corinthians 15:3, matters of first importance and therefore *pressing* truths that Christians must witness of among unbelievers.

Thus, 1 Corinthians 15 gives us a proper outlook on life and the primacy of the gospel. Craig Blomberg accordingly declares, "we dare never truncate our gospel so that we do not . . . offer the spiritual deliverance that only Jesus can give and that alone can spare humans from an eternity far more unpleasant than anything they have experienced in this life."⁶⁴

Christians are stewards of a superior, unique, and unchanging message that is grounded in the biblical and historical realities of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. It is a message that takes precedence over other concerns, and Christians must therefore be urgent, bold, and obedient to take that exclusive, life-giving gospel message to unbelievers. Failure to do so will mean that our neighbors will be eternally condemned.

Romans 10:14–17

The last text we will examine in this chapter will be a passage found in the book of Romans. It is held that Paul wrote one other scriptural letter to the Corinthian church (2 Corinthians) before personally revisiting the city (Acts 20:1–3). While he was

⁶² Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 45.

⁶³ See Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 32.

⁶⁴ Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 311–12.

there, it is reckoned that the industrious Paul wrote to another church, the church in Rome.⁶⁵ Although the book of Romans is not an exhaustive summary of Paul's theology, it "is a kind of Christian manifesto"⁶⁶ and tremendously "shapes the way we think about so much of the universe we inhabit."⁶⁷ John Stott writes that this letter is "the fullest, plainest and grandest statement of the gospel in the New Testament."⁶⁸ In it is "unfolded the good news of freedom[—]freedom from the holy wrath of God upon all ungodliness, freedom from alienation into reconciliation, [and] freedom from the condemnation of God's law."⁶⁹ It is an appropriate final place to examine the Bible's teaching on the Christian's need to personally evangelize.

Douglas Moo posits that the Christian movement began in Rome as a result of Roman Jews who brought Christianity back with them to Rome after being converted in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.⁷⁰ Later, because of persecution brought on by the Roman Emperor Claudius, Jews and Jewish Christians were expelled from Rome.⁷¹ As a result, "the Gentile element in the churches, undoubtedly present before the

⁶⁵ See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 2–5.

⁶⁶ John R.W. Stott, *The Message of Romans*, BST (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 19. Schreiner notices that while the book of Romans is "more comprehensive than other Pauline letters," significant parts of Paul's teachings (ex. Paul's ecclesiology, eschatology, and Christology) are marginally addressed or left unaddressed in the Book of Romans. See Schreiner, *Romans*, 15–16.

⁶⁷ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 16.

⁶⁸ Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 19.

⁶⁹ Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 19. Moo notes that "the word 'gospel' and the cognate verb 'evangelize' are particularly prominent in the introduction ([Rom] 1:1, 2, 9, 15) and conclusion ([Rom] 15:6, 19) of Romans—its epistolary 'frame.'" Additionally, he points out that while Paul does "speak of the interplay of salvation, the interplay of Jew and Gentile, and justification by faith, . . . they are all elaborations of . . . the gospel." See Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 29–30.

⁷⁰ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 4.

⁷¹ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 4–5. Moo observes that the Roman historian Suetonius, in his work *Life of Claudius*, stated that Claudius "expelled the Jews from Rome because they were constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus." "Most scholars agree that "Chrestus" is a corruption of the Greek *Christos* and that the reference is probably to disputes within the Jewish community over the claims of Jesus to be the *Christos*, the Messiah." Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 4–5.

expulsion, . . . c[a]me into greater prominence. . . . Theologically this . . . meant an acceleration in the movement of the Christian community away from its Jewish origins.”⁷²

Paul wrote to the Roman church to introduce himself, explain the gospel, and solicit prayer and support.⁷³ Paul wanted to bring the Jewish and Gentile Christians together in the gospel so they would jointly worship God and understand “that their unified worship fulfilled what the OT Scriptures taught.”⁷⁴ He also wanted prayer to be lifted up on his behalf (Rom 15:30–32) and desired to inform the Roman Christians of his plan to go to Spain and “secure, or at least . . . prepare the way for securing, their interest and active assistance”⁷⁵ (Rom 15:24).

Romans 10:14–17: An Analysis

In the book of Romans, Paul addressed “a context charged with uncertainty and controversy over the gospel’s relationship to the OT.”⁷⁶ However, Paul steadfastly held that the gospel was “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom 1:16). Reasonably then, Romans 10:14–17 sits in a passage of Scripture (Rom 9:30–10:31) where Paul explained that Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness by faith (Rom 9:30; 10:20) and that Jews, God’s Old Covenant people, failed to attain righteousness since they sought it by works instead of by faith (Rom 9:31–32; 10:21).⁷⁷

⁷² Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 5.

⁷³ Schreiner, *Romans*, 22.

⁷⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 21–22.

⁷⁵ C. E. B Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans, International Critical Commentary 2*. (1979; repr., New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 815. Schreiner subsumes all these goals under the purpose that “Paul ultimately wrote Romans as a servant of God to honor his Lord.” See Schreiner, *Romans*, 23.

⁷⁶ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 30.

⁷⁷ Moo, *Romans*, 342–43.

In Romans 10:16, Paul “zeros in on the Jews”⁷⁸ and shows that they have not believed in the Christ.⁷⁹ Paul asserts, “they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?” Paul stresses that God has already sent messengers to declare the gospel to the Jews (Rom 10:8; 16–21), but they have refused to obey. “The Jews stumbled—as Paul did before his conversion—at the message of a crucified Messiah (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23), concluding that it was scandalous to identify one cursed of God as the Messiah (Deut. 21:23).”⁸⁰ “Despite her zeal . . . Israel [was] guilty of not understanding and submitting to God’s righteousness in Christ.”⁸¹ “This [was] the issue in Romans 10.”⁸²

Paul wholeheartedly knew that the “salvation of many from both Jews and Gentiles brings honor to God’s name.”⁸³ In Romans, he unashamedly explained that despite the fact that all humans are sinners deserving of death (Rom 3:23), eternal life and freedom from condemnation could be found in Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23; 8:1). He declared that Jesus Christ died for sinners (Rom 5:8) and rose again and that those who simply believe in Jesus would be saved (Rom 10:9–13). While no human being could be justified by the works of the law (Rom 3:20), Christ is “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom 10:4). Therefore, Paul emphatically states, quoting Joel 2:32, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Rom 10:13).

Then in Romans 10:14–15a, “Paul uses four rhetorical questions to outline the

⁷⁸ Schreiner, *Romans*, 569.

⁷⁹ See Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans, International Critical Commentary* 2:536.

⁸⁰ Schreiner, *Romans*, 570. Sadly, this kept the Jews from salvation. John MacArthur correctly notes, “The cross of Jesus Christ is the sum and the focus of the gospel according to Paul. . . . In Pauline theology, the cross is a symbol of atonement. ‘Christ crucified’ is a message about redemption for sinners.” John MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Paul* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 2017), 76.

⁸¹ Moo, *Romans*, 343.

⁸² Moo, *Romans*, 351. “The Jews have really had full opportunity to call upon the name of the Lord.” So Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans, International Critical Commentary* 2:533.

⁸³ Schreiner, *Romans*, 23.

sequence if a person is to be ‘saved’ (cf. v. 13). The steps are (in reverse order to what Paul cites): the sending of preachers, preaching, hearing the message about Christ, believing in Christ, and calling on ‘the name of the Lord.’”⁸⁴ Verse 17 “sums up the content of verses 14–15”⁸⁵ and reads, “so then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” In other words, “that word through which God is now proclaiming the availability of eschatological salvation and which can awaken faith in those who hear it is ‘the word of Christ’: the message whose content is the lordship and resurrection of Christ.”⁸⁶ Schreiner thus notes,

Those who call on the Lord in a saving way must believe in him, but this belief is not possible apart from the *hearing* of a message that someone preaches. And the message is not preached unless one is sent by God. Finally, one does not truly proclaim the message unless one heralds the gospel of God’s Son ([Rom] 1:2–4), who is the resurrected Lord and who has accomplished salvation for his people through his work on the cross. When one combines [Romans] 1:18–32 and [Romans] 10:14–17, it seems fair to conclude that people are not saved apart from the preaching of the gospel. It is this conviction that has driven the missionary impulse throughout history.⁸⁷

The Bible teaches that unbelievers are, apart from receiving the gospel, condemned. Schreiner continues, “[what] is communicated in [Romans] 10:14–15 and 17 is a principle that applies equally to both Jews and Gentiles. The steps of the chain must be realized if people are going to call on the Lord and be saved.”⁸⁸ People only believe in Jesus if they believe the gospel message of/about Jesus. Accordingly, Paul demonstrates

⁸⁴ Moo, *Romans*, 343.

⁸⁵ Schreiner, *Romans*, 566.

⁸⁶ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 606. Mark A. Seifrid writes, “It is ‘in the gospel’ that the ‘righteousness of God’ is revealed. . . . ‘God’s righteousness’ is his ‘vindicating act’ of raising Christ from the dead *for us*. . . . That which is to take place at the day of judgment for those who believe is manifest here and now in the crucified and risen Christ. . . . In Christ’s resurrection God has been vindicated and has defeated his enemies. . . . Moreover, the gospel is ‘the power’ of God unto salvation’ because the ‘righteousness of God’ revealed in it entails nothing less than the resurrection from the dead.” See Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification*, NSBT (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 46–47.

⁸⁷ Schreiner, *Romans*, 567–68.

⁸⁸ Schreiner, *Romans*, 567.

the “indispensable necessity of evangelism.”⁸⁹ Thus, Christians should be compelled by biblical truth as well as love for God and neighbor to be personal witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Given the length of this chapter, it was not feasible to expound on every Scripture that speaks on the biblical necessity for Christians to engage in personal evangelism. Nonetheless, the four passages considered in this chapter (Psalm 96, Mark 1:14–15, 1 Corinthians 15:1–5, and Romans 10:14–17) provide broad, biblical, theological, and intertestamental support for the principle that Christians are to be personal witnesses who share the gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers. The clearly defined gospel of Jesus Christ is a matter of first importance (1 Cor 15:3). It is the very power of God unto salvation (Rom 1:16) and simply cannot be left unshared by Holy Spirit indwelt Christians who are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. All of the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus (John 5:39), and God likewise desires His people to lovingly and obediently share the life giving gospel message of the unrivaled, crucified, and resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with the dying world.

⁸⁹ Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 285.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO BEING A PERSONAL WITNESS

In Psalm 119:105, the psalmist unreservedly proclaims that God’s word is a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. In the previous chapter, four significant biblical passages gave scriptural and theological rationale for Christians to live as personal witnesses. Since the purpose of this project was to develop adult volunteers into personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church in Paterson, New Jersey, it is also suitable to address some of the theoretical, practical, and historical issues related to being a personal witness for Jesus Christ.¹ While this chapter cannot cover all of the concerns related to this topic, it is beneficial for Christians to be alert to certain assistances and hindrances to personal evangelism.

First, this chapter affirms the reality that personal evangelism involves spiritual warfare and requires dependence on God. Second, this chapter maintains that effective and sensitive evangelism strategies and practices can create avenues for winsome gospel witness. Finally, this chapter holds that gospel witness is strengthened by understanding and countering arguments which are contrary to the gospel. In total, this chapter firmly asserts that Christians must aim to overcome spiritual, historical, cultural, intellectual, and relational barriers to personal evangelism.²

¹ Proverbs 14:15 states, “The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.” Consider how the book of Proverbs commends the correct use of knowledge, the giving of thought to how Christians are to speak, and the value of being persuasive in speech (see Prov 15:2; 28; 16:23). Since evangelism refers to the presentation of the good news of Jesus Christ to lost persons, these scriptural passages are particularly pertinent and may give Christians added motivation, in order to be better witnesses, to examine the theoretical, practical, and historical issues related to being a personal witness.

² Take the apostle Paul as an example of persistence in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. In

Spiritual Warfare and Personal Evangelism

Brian Borgman and Rob Ventura note that many people, particularly in the West, “deny a world that God governs in which the devil and his demons are our enemies.”³ In contrast, “proponents of the other extreme treat spiritual warfare as the lens through which they perceive everything.”⁴ Both perspectives are problematic.

The Scriptures inform us of a genuine spiritual war.⁵ According to Chuck Lawless, this fact has to “almost intentionally [be] ignore[d] . . . to miss . . . when reading the Bible.”⁶ Nonetheless, “if we think of the overall emphasis of the New Testament epistles, we realize that very little space is given to discussing demonic activity in the lives of believers or methods to resist and oppose such activity. The emphasis is on telling believers not to sin but to live lives of righteousness.”⁷ Thus, a good way forward is for Christians to be on their guard against the schemes of Satan (2 Cor 2:11), resist and stand firm against him in the armor that God has provided (Eph 6:10–20; 1 Pet 5:8–9; Jas 4:7), and “not wrongly blame Satan and demons for every problem [they] face.”⁸ When the Scriptures are allowed to inform Christians about the nature and practice of spiritual warfare, believers can be equipped to affirm the vital importance that spiritual warfare plays in personal evangelism (Matt 13:19; 2 Cor 4:3–4; Eph 2:1–3; Col 1:13; 2 Tim

the face of many hurdles, he refused to lose heart or tamper with the word of God (2 Cor 4).

³ Brian Borgman and Rob Ventura, *Spiritual Warfare: A Biblical & Balanced Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), 2.

⁴ Borgman and Ventura, *Spiritual Warfare*, 2.

⁵ John Gilhooly explains that spiritual warfare “is a theological term used to describe the ongoing battle between the church and the Devil and his angels. The term is not used in the Bible but is derived from a conception of the struggle of the Christian life. . . . The cosmic struggle that [Paul] describes [in Eph 6:12] is the struggle to which ‘spiritual warfare’ generally refers.” See John Gilhooly, *40 Questions about Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 23.

⁶ Chuck Lawless, “9 Risks of Not Teaching about Spiritual Warfare,” Chucklawless.com (blog), January 10, 2017, accessed November 28, 2022, <http://chucklawless.com/2017/01/9-risks-of-not-teaching-about-spiritual-warfare/>.

⁷ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 420.

⁸ Borgman and Ventura, *Spiritual Warfare*, 3.

2:24–26) as well as reject the falsehoods of this age.⁹

The History of Spiritual Warfare

Colossians 1:16 declares that all things “that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,” were created by and for the Son of God.¹⁰ Since the Bible portrays Satan¹¹ as evil from his first appearance in the garden of Eden in Genesis 3:1,¹² there must have been, before Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, “a rebellion in the angelic world with many angels turning against God and becoming evil.”¹³

While the Scriptures do not answer the question of *when* Satan fell morally—since such an inquiry was “not significant to the [biblical authors’s] message about the Messiah”¹⁴—and while “the Bible may not directly answer every specific question we may have [in regards to spiritual warfare], it does provide us with an overall framework for understanding the nature and activities of the evil spiritual realm.”¹⁵ As Gary Dennis

⁹ Gilhooly insists, “spiritual warfare must begin with personal holiness which is achievable only by believing the gospel and pursuing our Lord. From there, discernment is needed to discuss the nature of demonic or angelic visitations, but the evidence for territorial spirits and various ‘warfare practices,’ such as binding demons or breaking seals, is limited almost solely to anecdotes.” See Gilhooly, *40 Questions about Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare*, 26.

¹⁰ See also Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 148:2, 5.

¹¹ The name “Satan” means adversary. Consult *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 10th printing, s.v. “שָׂטָן.” It is the personal name of the chief of the demons. See Job 1:7–2:7; 1 Chr 21:1; Zech 3:1; Matt 4:10; Luke 10:18.

¹² “The serpent” is used to name Satan in Gen 3:1. See also Gen 3:14, 2 Cor 11:3, and Rev 20:2. In Revelation 12:9, John writes, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Other names used for Satan include: “the devil” (Matt 4:1; 13:39; 25:41; Rev 12:9; 20:2), “Beelzebub” (Matt 10:25; 12:24; 27; Luke 11:15), “the prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph 2:2), and “the wicked one” (Matt 13:19; 1 John 2:13). See Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 414–15.

¹³ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 412. See also 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

¹⁴ Gilhooly, *40 Questions about Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare*, 97. Gilhooly also writes, “On the issue of [Satan’s] fall, the Scriptures are silent. There is no description of what exactly precipitated Satan’s initial sin, what the logistics of his temptations were, or any other details about the event. However, the Christian tradition has largely agreed that his sin was pride.” See 1 Tim 3:6 and Gilhooly, *40 Questions about Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare*, 100.

¹⁵ Clinton E. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker

writes,

An explanation of the conflict within people, within and between societies, and throughout the earth may be found in the Bible. Behind and beyond earthly conflicts is a cosmic struggle between God and Satan for control of humanity and earth. The first eleven chapters of the Bible describe the beginning of human life and the spreading of evil that engulfed the earth after humanity's fall. The last book of the Bible describes the ultimate resolution of the conflict at the end of the ages when evil is banished and followers of Christ inherit a redeemed and restored, "new" earth.¹⁶

It was in the garden of Eden where Satan craftily opposed God's authority, distorted His word, and tempted the first humans to sin. After Adam and Eve failed miserably by eating the fruit that God had forbidden them to eat, God cursed both man and woman. However, before cursing humanity, God spoke to the serpent and declared, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen 3:15). Theologians refer to this declaration as the protoevangelium or "first gospel." Here, "God promises that a male offspring of the woman (Eve) will come and crush the serpent. Someone . . . will conquer the evil one and restore to humanity what was forfeited when humans disobeyed God in the garden. This deliverer will come from the seed of woman."¹⁷

Wonderfully, in the fullness of time, the Son of God took on human flesh and came into the world, fulfilling the first gospel proclamation, overthrowing the kingdom of darkness, and bringing the kingdom of God.¹⁸ Borgman and Ventura announce,

Every time Jesus cast out a demon, healed the sick, or raised the dead, He was assaulting the kingdom of darkness. Jesus was entering the strong man's house, binding him with His superior strength, and plundering his stolen property (see Luke 13:16). Jesus'[s] ultimate overthrow of Satan . . . took place at the cross. . . . At the cross, Jesus was stripping Satan of his power and performing the ultimate

Academic, 1997), 18.

¹⁶ Gary Dennis, "Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism," *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 73, http://www.baptistcenter.net/journals_page.html.

¹⁷ Daniel L. Akin, "The Person of Christ," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, Bruce Riley Ashford, and Kenneth Keathley (Nashville: B&H, 2014), 392.

¹⁸ See Chapter 2 and Matthew 12:25–29.

rescue operation (John 12:27–31). The cross was an act of judgment evicting the ruler of this world. Years later, the apostle John would reflect on the incarnation and death of Jesus with these words: “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).¹⁹

As a result of Christ and His work, Christians are presently delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God’s Son (Col 1:13). However, Christians are still engaged in spiritual warfare,²⁰ for the kingdom of God is “here but not yet.”²¹ Soon the God of peace will crush Satan under the feet of believers (Rom 16:20), but for now the “ultimate redemption of the believers has not yet been gained. . . . Darkness, evil days, and demonic activity still persist.”²² As the kingdom of God continues to grow (Matt 13:31–33), the Lord remains patient, not willing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9), and the church is charged with the task of making disciples for Jesus Christ (Matt 28:18–20).

Personal Evangelism Involves Spiritual Warfare

As Christians go about the task of making disciples of all nations, they are to proclaim the gospel message—which is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes (Rom 1:16). Kevin Springer notes that the reason the gospel message contains such power “lies in what salvation means: the coming of the kingdom of God.”²³ It is no wonder then that the kingdom of darkness opposes personal evangelism.

Gary Dennis articulates,

¹⁹ Borgman and Ventura, *Spiritual Warfare*, 4–5.

²⁰ In John 17, as Jesus prepares for his crucifixion and His return to heaven, he prays to the Father for his disciples who remain in the world: “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil” (John 17:14–15). See also Eph 6:12 and 1 Pet 5:8.

²¹ See Chapter 2.

²² Clinton E. Arnold, *Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1989), 115.

²³ John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen Books, 2009), 26.

Central to the issue of spiritual conflict is the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news of Jesus Christ communicated through the power of the Holy Spirit is the means by which people experience salvation. The gospel alone has the power to effect the transfer of people from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God. The gospel alone has the power to bring people into conformity with the will of God. . . . [Thus] evangelism and spiritual warfare are interrelated realities vital to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.²⁴

Article Twelve of the Lausanne Covenant Statement of Faith (a document released by the Lausanne Movement)²⁵ alerts believers, insisting that Christians are “engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization.”²⁶

While there are many instances where Satan flees before the face of believers (Jas 4:7), Satan works numerous schemes in order to harass believers and keep unbelievers in darkness.²⁷ Christians must not be ignorant of these schemes (2 Cor 2:11) as they go about evangelizing their neighbors. Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer note, “[the] battle . . . will be won . . . [but] victory will not come if [believers] fail to understand the nature of the enemy and discern the challenges [they] face in overcoming him.”²⁸

Intelligence on the enemy. Paul the apostle, in 2 Corinthians 4:3–4, made clear that if the “gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of

²⁴ Dennis, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 74.

²⁵ The Lausanne Movement is a movement that connects influencers and ideas for global mission, with a vision of the gospel for every person, an evangelical church for every people, Christ-like leaders for every church, and kingdom impact in every sphere of society. See <https://www.lausanne.org/about-the-movement>.

²⁶ “The Lausanne Covenant,” Lausanne Movement, accessed November 9, 2019, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant#cov>.

²⁷ When Satan failed in his temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, Luke informs us that the devil departed from Jesus until an opportune time (Luke 4:13).

²⁸ Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions: The Battle for God’s Glory among the Nations* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 72.

Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” Lawless, noting the multiplicity of strategies that Satan uses to keep unbelievers blinded, observes,

Satan’s strategies for keeping unbelievers blinded are several. The enemy provides lies to which unbelievers cling . . . He makes sin attractive and alluring, convincing the unbeliever that following God will mean a loss of pleasure . . . More specifically, Satan blinds unbelievers to the gospel by promoting distorted views of the gospel itself. . . . False teachers, disguised as apostles of Christ (2 Cor 11:13), proclaim[] another Jesus whom [the apostles did] not preach[] ([2 Cor] 11:4).²⁹

Additionally, it is not only unbelievers that Satan attacks. The Devil also battles with believers. Lawless, likewise perceiving the array of tactics that Satan uses to oppose believers, notes,

Satan entices believers with temptation, seeking to lure them into patterns of their former walk (Eph 4:17–32). After influencing believers to sin, he then heaps accusations on them; the tempter quickly becomes the accuser (Rev 12:10). . . . Moreover, Satan endeavors to cultivate strife among believers, thereby weakening the church’s united witness (see John 17:20–21).³⁰

Satan does all these things and more,³¹ even if he “knows that the Christ who lives in the believer makes that person more than a match for any demon.”³² His objectives are to rob God of his glory, oppose the gospel of Jesus Christ, and keep men and women dead in the domain of darkness (Col 1:13). Since “evangelism is the tip of the spear of spiritual warfare,”³³ believers must be strong in the Lord and be aware of the ploys of the enemy. “Conversion, baptism, and learning to obey all that Jesus taught

²⁹ Charles E. Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001), 32, <http://www.sbts.edu.ezproxy.sbts.edu/resources/publications/journal-of-theology/>. It is important to note that these are not the only ways in which Satan attacks unbelievers. For example, Jesus and Paul both cast out demons who afflicted and resided in individuals (see Mark 5:1–20; Mark 9:20–27; Acts 16:16–18). In another example, in Matthew 13:19, Jesus explained: “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil *one* comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. (Matt 13:19).

³⁰ Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 32.

³¹ For example, Paul the apostle recounts in 2 Corinthians 12:7 how a messenger of Satan, a thorn in Paul’s flesh, buffeted Paul.

³² Timothy M. Warner, *Spiritual Warfare: Victory over the Powers of This Dark World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991) 80.

³³ Dennis, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 76.

might be possible after the message is communicated, but it is the proclamation of the gospel message that initially opens the eyes of blinded hearts to believe in Christ.”³⁴ Believers, who are engaging in personal evangelism, must therefore put on the full armor of God, that they may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil (Eph 6:10–11).

Standing firm in personal evangelism. At the close of his letter to the Ephesians, in a very well-known passage on spiritual warfare, Paul writes,

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Eph 6:10–13).

Christians must understand that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 28:18). As such, they are to stand firm and advance in the task of personal evangelism. Although Satan slanders and accuses Christians, his accusations are not potent for their sins have been forgiven at the cross of Jesus Christ, and they have been radically delivered from Satan’s domain (Rom 8:1; Col 2:13–15). As they boldly engage in spiritual warfare, Christians have a source of strength in them, the Lord, who is mightier than any demonic force (1 John 4:4). Since “Jesus is [their] victory,”³⁵ believers must remain dependent on Him as they evangelize, and they must fight with the armor and weaponry that the Lord provides (2 Cor 10:3).

Paul lists truth, righteousness, the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the word of God as components which make up the armor of God (Eph 6:14–17). Rankin notes,

Each piece of armor is tied to a principle of the Christian life. God specifically calls

³⁴ Dennis, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 76.

³⁵ Jerry Rankin, *Spiritual Warfare: The Battle for God’s Glory* (Nashville: B&H, 2009), 28.

[Christians] to defend [themselves] in these arenas of life because they are the places where Satan attacks. Because he is the father of lies, he attacks truth. The adversary seeks to bring division so [Christians] need to defend unity. Most of all, Satan seeks condemnation for [believers] so [they] need salvation.³⁶

Additionally, Christians are to pray (1) at all times in the Spirit, (2) for all the saints, and (3) for others that utterance may be given in the opening of mouths to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel (Eph 6:18–20).³⁷

Paul understood that it is God who opens the door for witness and provides Christians with the ability to proclaim the gospel.³⁸ Accordingly, as believers strive to make disciples of all nations, they must press forward in the truth that evangelism involves spiritual warfare and requires dependence on God. “The Church has many legitimate functions, but none is more basic than evangelism. . . . And this is always a power encounter.”³⁹

Evangelism Strategies and Practices

In the face of much spiritual warfare and numerous obstacles to the Christian faith, Paul instructed his mentee, Timothy, to discipline himself “unto godliness” (1 Tim 4:7) and to “keep that which [was] committed” to him (1 Tim 6:20). So too, Christians should heed these instructions and seek to be disciplined and faithful in their personal

³⁶ Rankin, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions*, 69. Lawless elaborates, “The essence of putting on the armor is living daily in truth, righteousness, faith, and hope, while always being ready to proclaim the gospel of peace found in the Word. . . . This process is not about mystical prayer that magically applies the weaponry to believers’ lives each day. Rather, it is about discipleship and spiritual growth that affect all of one’s life. Wearing the armor is about *daily living* as a follower of Christ. See Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 38.

³⁷ Cook and Lawless point out, “Prayer should not be considered simply another weapon in the believer’s arsenal but the means by which one stands firm and uses the sword of the Spirit. . . . [It] may be the believer’s greatest and most effective way of wielding the weapons of spiritual warfare, especially when it involves intercession.” See William F. Cook III and Chuck Lawless, *Spiritual Warfare in the Storyline of Scripture: A Biblical, Theological, and Practical Approach* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2019), 149–50.

³⁸ In Colossians 4:2–4, Paul writes to Christians in Colossae, saying, “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”

³⁹ Warner, *Spiritual Warfare*, 119–20.

evangelism. Here, effective and sensitive evangelism strategies and practices can help believers, since they can create avenues for winsome and resilient gospel witness.

Evangelism Strategy and Practice Fundamentals

First, as obvious as it may seem, basic to any evangelism strategy or practice is the fact that evangelism refers to the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰

Christians must therefore deliberately work to lucidly understand and communicate the gospel.⁴¹ It is not biblical evangelism to simply teach moral principles unrelated to the person and work of Christ, live a godly life in front of others, give our testimonies, or engage in apologetics that do not communicate the gospel. While these can be good and useful, “to be *evangelism*, the gospel must be clearly communicated.”⁴²

Additionally, any evangelism strategy or method should stress holiness and the cultivation of a witness’s personal relationship with the Lord. This emphasis is especially appropriate in light of the fact that personal evangelism involves spiritual warfare and requires dependence on God. In all our strategizing, we must bear in mind that “basic, simple, faithful Christian obedience dislodges the enemy”⁴³ and “as evangelists, we share the gospel most effectively when our lives are pure and when fellow believers are praying for us.”⁴⁴ After all, disciple makers should first be disciples themselves.

Concerning soul-winning, Spurgeon once remarked, “How is a person to be

⁴⁰ The “key to biblical evangelism . . . is not primarily about style, methodology, or programs and pragmatics. The first and preeminent concern in all our evangelistic efforts must be the gospel. . . . Its message is about [Jesus Christ] and what He has done to redeem sinners.” So John MacArthur and Jesse Johnson, introduction to *Evangelism: How to Share the Gospel Faithfully*, ed. John F. MacArthur (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), viii–ix.

⁴¹ See Chapter 2 for the gospel message.

⁴² Mark Dever, *The Gospel & Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 75.

⁴³ Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 39.

⁴⁴ Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” 39.

useful? ‘Attend a training class,’ says one. Quite right; but there is a surer answer than that—follow Jesus, and He will make you fishers of men.”⁴⁵ J. Mack Stiles adds,

Without coming to grips with some basic principles about who we are to be as evangelists, we can produce some unhealthy evangelism. So become a healthy evangelist by first asking, ‘Who do we want to be as people who share their faith?’ And we must ask, ‘Who would Jesus have us be—period?’ This is a bedrock question. And the answer, in a nutshell: Jesus asks his followers to *be* people of faith. . . . Then, springing out of faith in Christ’s work and commitment to his teaching, we endeavor to live faithful lives.⁴⁶

Thus “evangelism is never a matter of simply learning the right techniques. Because it is part of the Christian life it should flow from the life which is given over to God and in service to Him.”⁴⁷ Ultimately, evangelism is *God’s* idea and work (Phil 2:12–13), and God delights to use His children to share Christ with the world.⁴⁸ Since, salvation is of the Lord and “of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things” (Rom 11:36), Christians must purposefully trust in the Lord with all their hearts, refuse to lean on their own understanding, and acknowledge Him in all their ways. As they do so, the Lord will direct their ways in life and in evangelism (Prov 3:5–6).⁴⁹

Abiding in Christ will also enable Christians to be secure and remain encouraged in the face of rejection or persecution. This is important as people respond in different ways to the gospel, and believers must not cease evangelizing if their neighbors

⁴⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *The Soul-Winner* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1895), 277.

⁴⁶ J. Mack Stiles, *Marks of the Messenger: Knowing, Living and Speaking the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 17–18.

⁴⁷ John C. Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel: A Down-to-Earth Guide to Sharing Your Faith* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1985), 120–21.

⁴⁸ John Stott exclaims, “The nations are not gathered in automatically. If God has promised to bless ‘all the families of the earth,’ he has promised to do so ‘through Abraham’s seed’ (Gen 12:3; 22:18). Now [Christians] are Abraham’s seed by faith, and the earth’s families will be blessed only if [Christians] go to them with the gospel. That is God’s plain purpose.” See John R. W. Stott, “The Living God Is a Missionary God,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 4th ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 9.

⁴⁹ Christians who feel inadequate because they are not yet perfect need not feel inhibited from engaging in the work of evangelism (Phil 3:12). Evangelism is one way that Christians can actually grow in their walks with the Lord and in their love for their neighbors. Additionally, faithful witnesses prayerfully plead with their neighbors (2 Cor 5:20) but understand that spiritual rebirth only comes from the Lord (John 1:13; 3:6) and leave the response of others to the gospel in God’s hands.

altogether reject them and the God they proclaim.⁵⁰ To be sure, Christians can expect to suffer for Jesus (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12), and their approach to evangelism must embrace the fact that God uses suffering *strategically* and positively (Rom 8:28) to advance His purposes in the world. Josef Tson remarks,

Christ united Himself with His brethren in a union that is comparable to His union with the Father (John 17:21–26). Christ lives in them and continues His work in the world through them. But He has not changed the strategy He used when He was in the world. His method is still the method of the cross. With this in mind, Christ told His disciples that He would send them into the world just as His Father had sent Him into the world. In other words, He sent them to be in the same position and to conquer by the same method—namely, the method of the cross. For precisely this reason, Jesus asked them to take up their own crosses and to follow His example by going into all the world to preach the gospel (to witness), to serve others, and to die for others.⁵¹

Indeed, Jesus’s warnings to his disciples provide Christians with sobering instructions:

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me (John 15:18–21).

Therefore while Christians are not masochists, they should remain at peace and be clear-headed: the vast majority of the world rejects Jesus Christ (Matt 7:13), the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing (1 Cor 1:18), and one of the goals in evangelism is not to please men but God (Gal 1:10). Since Jesus has overcome the world and calls believers to bear their crosses and follow Him (Matt 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23), Christians are of good cheer in the face of tribulation (John 16:33), continue to advance in the task of making disciples of all the world, and consider it all joy when they encounter various trials (Matt 5:11–12; Jas 1:2). God is *the* expert at turning evil situations around (Gen 50:20).

⁵⁰ For example, see the response to the gospel in Lystra in Acts 14.

⁵¹ Josef Tson, “Suffering and Martyrdom: God’s Strategy in the World,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 4th ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 196.

Christians committed to God and to resolutely grounding their evangelistic strategies and practices in an abiding relationship with Christ and His word should expect to be fruitful. As Paul reminded Timothy, “all scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:16–17). This is why, with strong evangelism strategies and practices which emphasize the gospel and its proclamation, holiness and the cultivation of a witness’s personal relationship with the Lord, and a deep rooted gladness and contentment in the face of persecution and difficulties, Christians can expect to be winsome and resilient in their gospel witness.

Communication Strategies for Evangelizing

Loyal Christians should also aim to grow in their *ability* to communicate the gospel since “whether [they] are witnessing to someone [they] have known for only a few minutes or a lifelong friend, [evangelism] all starts with launching a conversation,”⁵² Tactically, Christians can learn much from the way Jesus and the early church communicated the gospel. While the Bible “does not give...a simple method or a technique that [Christians] can learn that will turn [them] into good communicators,”⁵³ it “does teach [Christians] some basic principles of communication.”⁵⁴ Will Metzger, commenting on some very important lessons believers can learn from Jesus’s witness to the Samaritan woman in John 4, points out,

Jesus breaks through several barriers that often stop [Christians] cold. He speaks to

⁵² Jim Stitzinger III, “Starting the Conversation: A Practical Approach to Real-Life Evangelism,” in *Evangelism: How to Share the Gospel Faithfully*, ed. John F. MacArthur, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 172.

⁵³ Jerram Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 183.

⁵⁴ Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 183.

a woman (sex and cultural barriers of the day), who is a Samaritan (religious and ethnic barriers). He is never condescending but rather asks help of her. Moving from a common concern on the physical level (water, thirst), he develops a conversation about spiritual matters. He never manipulates her nor compromises the truth. He brings her back to the central issue again and again. He is patient, he exposes her unspoken needs, and he speaks to her conscience.⁵⁵

Jesus regularly, lovingly, perceptively, boldly, and intentionally initiated and sustained spiritual conversations with others. So too, if Christians prayerfully take the time to obediently and lovingly engage their neighbors in dialogue and listen to their stories, cares, questions, answers, and concerns, they should expect to find opportunities to relevantly, compassionately, and purposefully evangelize.⁵⁶ As they interact with their neighbors, believers do not need to “affirm and accept all that the unbeliever says, but [Christians should] enter every conversation with [their] mind[s] set on understanding him, looking for the best opportunity to present whatever portion of the gospel the Lord allows.”⁵⁷

“Communicating the Gospel is a personal endeavor, one person to another,”⁵⁸ and a Christian’s “approach in evangelism [will] probably [be] different according to the

⁵⁵ Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel Wholly by Grace Communicated Truthfully & Lovingly*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 213.

⁵⁶ Sam Chan observes that “conversation topics exist in three concentric circles, like layers of an onion. The outermost layer of conversation is where we talk about interests, . . . the middle layer is where we talk about values, . . . [and] the central layer is where we talk about worldviews.” Chan encourages believers to be “alert to what people are saying” and to “learn to ask questions that transition from one layer of the conversation to the next.” See Sam Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 49–50. Randy Newman also notes that with Jesus, “answering a question with a question was the norm.” See Randy Newman, *Questioning Evangelism: Engaging People’s Hearts the Way Jesus Did*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004), 27.

⁵⁷ Jim Stitzinger III, “Starting the Conversation: A Practical Approach to Real-Life Evangelism,” 174. Christians should also be aware that the good deeds they perform (John 15:1–8; Eph 2:10) often create opportunities for witness, encourage a watching world to give glory to God (Matt 5:16), and powerfully adorn the gospel message. Christians should make the most of these opportunities (Eph 5:16) since “the power of a redeemed, changed life is a strategic means of winning those who are spiritually indifferent.” See Joe Aldrich, *Lifestyle Evangelism: Learning to Open Your Life to Those Around You* (New York: Multnomah, 1993), 36. As John Chapman points out, “Any and every situation is one which we are to witness to the fact that Jesus is our Lord, by the way we live. Equally, any and every situation is one where we may be able to witness, by speaking, of that same Lord. Any situation in which we find ourselves in relationship with others is a potential evangelistic situation.” See Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel*, 82.

⁵⁸ Jerram Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 182.

relationship”⁵⁹ he has with the person or people with whom he is communicating. Culture and context also have an effect on witness. For example, Jesus, based on the occasion and the relationship(s) He had with the individual(s) He was evangelizing, “used a great variety of means to communicate the truth to people.”⁶⁰ Paul also expressed his own willingness to adapt to culture in non-sinful ways when he stated, “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor 9:22). Thus, while the gospel message does not change, Christians should be sensitive and willing to change their evangelistic methods in order to speak clearly and faithfully to the individual(s) with whom they are evangelizing.

Additionally, while Jesus was proficient at naturally and relevantly communicating “many different aspects of the truth of God’s Word, depending on the needs, the confusion, or the ignorance of the people whom he sought to reach,”⁶¹ this does not mean that believers should not make use of training programs and more structured methods of evangelism.⁶² Christians, who are undergoing the process of sanctification, often need help in communicating the gospel.

Many Christians are not disciplined in their practice of evangelism and “are not assertive enough in bringing Christ into [their] conversation[s].”⁶³ Fear and excuses often get in the way.⁶⁴ This is where more structured programs or methods of evangelism

⁵⁹ Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel Wholly by Grace Communicated Truthfully & Lovingly*, 213. Metzger suggests that our relationships can be broken down into the following categories: long-term intimate, long-term acquaintance, short-term intimate, and short-term acquaintance. He also points out that Christians interact with many different *types* of people, including: the ignorant and indifferent, the self-righteous, the synthetic Christian, the deliberate atheist, and the seeker. See Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 213–15.

⁶⁰ Jerram Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009), 249.

⁶¹ Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*, 249.

⁶² These days there are many training programs and structured methods of evangelism that are available. As examples, believers can be trained in Evangelism Explosion, The Way of the Master, or the use of gospel tracts and surveys to initiate evangelistic conversations.

⁶³ Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 216.

⁶⁴ Proverbs 29:25 tells us, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the

can be helpful as “seed methods for how to relate [gospel theology] to non-Christians”⁶⁵ are used.

Jesus Himself “placed a premium on training His disciples to equip them to form the nucleus for His church and take the gospel to the world.”⁶⁶ Additionally, “it is obvious that Jesus appreciated the power of basic training to mobilize His disciples by helping to overcome the inertia of their uncertainty, fear, and lack of experience.”⁶⁷ While it is true that “all [evangelistic] methods [are] developed in specific contexts by specific individuals with certain personalities, gifts, passions, and talents,”⁶⁸ we can learn from [these methods] and possibly apply them in our lives, since they are the “fruit of others’ successes and failures, intelligent thought and hard work.”⁶⁹

Christians should “find a method which [they] can use with the gifts [they] have, given the opportunities which come [their] way.”⁷⁰ By appropriately using training programs or structured methods of evangelism, believers can become more disciplined, obedient, and faithful in their evangelism.⁷¹ As Mark McCloskey notes: “Training, strategy, tools and methodology are inseparably linked to the concept of biblical

LORD shall be safe.”

⁶⁵ Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 211.

⁶⁶ Mark McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well: Making the Most of Witnessing Opportunities* (San Bernardino, CA: Here’s Life, 1985), 206. McCloskey references Matthew 10:5–23, Luke 9:1–6, and Luke 10:1–16 as examples of Jesus providing specific instructions to his disciples as to how they were to go about sharing the good news.

⁶⁷ McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well*, 207.

⁶⁸ J. D. Payne, *Evangelism: A Biblical Response to Today’s Questions* (Colorado Springs: Biblica, 2011), 94.

⁶⁹ McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well*, 210.

⁷⁰ Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel*, 151.

⁷¹ Metzger testifies, “Nothing works automatically, but as we obey Jesus’ command to speak of him to others, he will help us find a method that is compatible to our gifts and personality.” See Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 212.

effectiveness.”⁷² Thus, a structured method of evangelism in an evangelism strategy or practice which emphasizes the gospel, Spirit filled living, endurance, and adept communication skills can assist in enhancing and sustaining gospel witness.

Apologetics

The final theoretical, practical, and historical issue this chapter addresses in regard to being a personal witness is the matter of apologetics. Apologetics, “the defence of Christian belief and of the Christian way against alternatives and against criticism,”⁷³ is an important task that can be executed by destroying arguments against Christianity (2 Cor 10:3–4; Titus 1:9–11) and/or by putting forward support for the Christian faith (Acts 1:3; Rom 1:19–20).⁷⁴ This chapter appreciates the practice of apologetics⁷⁵ and holds that gospel witness is strengthened by understanding and countering arguments which are contrary to the gospel.

⁷² McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well*, 207.

⁷³ *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3 rev ed., s.v. “apologetics,” accessed September 19, 2018, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-389?rskey=GoCHal&result=1>.

⁷⁴ Steven B. Cowan explains, “[Apologetics] is an intellectual discipline that is usually said to serve at least two purposes: (1) to bolster the faith of Christian believers, and (2) to aid in the task of evangelism. Apologists seek to accomplish these goals in two distinct ways. One is by refuting objections to the Christian faith. . . . This apologetic task can be called *negative* or *defensive apologetics*. The second, perhaps complementary, way apologists fulfill their purposes is by offering positive reasons for the Christian faith. The latter, called *positive* or *offensive apologetics*, often takes the form of arguments for God’s existence or for the resurrection and deity of Christ but are by no means limited to these.” See Steven B. Cowan, introduction to *Five Views on Apologetics*, ed. Steven B. Cower (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 8.

⁷⁵ “In the classic sense of the word, ‘apologetics’ derives its meaning from the Greek word *apologia*, which means ‘defense.’ A judicial term, it describes the way a lawyer deliberately and rationally presents a verbal defense of a particular claim. Or, more precisely, apologetics is to ‘speak away’ (*apo* = away, from; *logia* = speech, word) the charge brought against an individual. . . . In secular society, the use of apologetics as a defense against an attack occurred as early as the 5th century BC when Socrates presented his own defense before an Athenian court, which was later chronicled by his student, Greek philosopher Plato, in *The Apology*. During the 1st century AD, Josephus offered an apologetic on the ancient origin of the Jewish religion in his *Against Apion* (AD 93–95).” See H. Wayne House and Joseph M. Holden, *Charts of Apologetics and Christian Evidences* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), Chart 1.

Apologetic Foundations

While “the Bible does not discuss apologetics as an academic discipline, [] it does speak about defending the faith.”⁷⁶ Indeed, the Bible as a *whole* makes a defense of the truth and thoroughly substantiates apologetics as a scriptural practice. As John Frame explains,

We can see that defense of the gospel appears frequently in the Bible. There is a strong apologetic element in the “signs” of the fourth gospel (John 20:30–31), and in Luke’s attempt to impart “certainty” to Theophilus (Luke 1:4; cf. “proofs” in Acts 1:3). Paul’s epistles contain much defense of his gospel against objectors. This emphasis on defense goes back to Jesus’s own confrontations with opponents and, still earlier, to God’s prophetic indictments of unfaithful Israel. . . . In the Bible God presents his truth over against error, speaking it into a sinful world, always having in view the objections of his opponents. The authors of the Bible, divine and human, seek to present their message cogently, rationally, persuasively. This is not to say that the Bible is a collection of rational syllogisms, but that in all its genres, even in its poetic, narrative, and wisdom teaching, it seeks to present God’s message as right, true, and persuasive.⁷⁷

Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr. add,

Although perhaps none of the New Testament writings should be classified as a formal apologetic treatise, most of them exhibit apologetic concerns. The New Testament writers anticipate and answer objections and seek to demonstrate the credibility of the claims and credentials of Christ, focusing especially on the resurrection of Jesus as the historical foundation upon which Christianity is built. Many New Testament writings are occupied with polemics against false teachings, in which the apologetic concern is to defend the gospel against perversion from within the church.⁷⁸

Unsurprisingly then, in the years following the close of the biblical canon, those who claimed to follow Christ continued to seek to defend the Christian faith.⁷⁹ This

⁷⁶ John M. Frame, “Apologetics,” in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2005), 57.

⁷⁷ Frame, “Apologetics,” 57.

⁷⁸ Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 13.

⁷⁹ Examples of apologists in history include individuals such as Justin Martyr and Origen in the early church; Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries; Anselm and Aquinas in the Middle Ages; Luther and Calvin during the Reformation; Blaise Pascal and Joseph Butler in the post-Reformation period; William Paley and Charles Hodge in the 18th and 19th centuries; B. B. Warfield, James Orr, Abraham Kuyper, Herman Dooyeweerd, and Cornelius Van Til in the 19th and 20th centuries; and Carl F. H. Henry, Edward John Carnell, William Lane Craig, John M. Frame, J. P. Moreland, Norman Geisler, Francis Schaeffer, Alvin Plantinga, C. Stephen Evans, and David K. Clark in the 20th and 21st centuries. For a more detailed look at these individuals, their thinking on apologetics, and their responses to the challenges they

defense has occurred despite the broad range of opinions regarding the way apologetics should be conceived and practiced. Indeed, while many Christians have rightly supported the task of apologetics,⁸⁰ they have often employed differing apologetic methods. Categorizing these methods is difficult,⁸¹ but modern discussions related to epistemology (the study of knowledge) have helped to shed light on how varying apologetic approaches relate the Christian worldview to all spheres of knowledge.⁸²

All the same, since Christianity stands on the authority of the triune God and His Scriptures, “it is only right that an examination and defense of biblical Christianity begin with the Bible.”⁸³ While some may argue that defending the Bible with the Bible is to use a circular argument, Wayne Grudem points out that this kind of argument is valid since “all arguments for an absolute authority must ultimately appeal to that authority for proof: otherwise the authority would not be an absolute or highest authority.”⁸⁴

faced, see Boa and Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons*, 14–32.

⁸⁰ Some reasons particular Christians may reject apologetics include: a fear or uncomfortableness with debate, a confusion of “arguments on issues with attacks against a person,” the belief that “apologetics is ineffective in evangelism,” the assumption that “apologists believe reason and evidence can save someone,” and the assumption “that the improper manner/attitude of some apologists invalidates the apologetic task.” See House and Holden, *Charts of Apologetics and Christian Evidences*, Chart 2.

⁸¹ Cowan admits there is “no hard and fast rule” in distinguishing the various apologetic methods employed by apologists. He states, “Issues like religious epistemology, the relationship between faith and reason, the noetic effects of sin, and so on, will no doubt play important roles, and sometimes, . . . any one of these areas may be decisive in demarcating one particular apologetic method from others. But what distinguishes one method from another might also be none of these.” See Cowan, introduction, 14.

⁸² Boa and Bowman Jr. demarcate four basic approaches to apologetics based on the criteria used to defend Christianity: (1) classical (emphasizes logical criteria), (2) evidentialism (relies primarily on empirically and historically verifiable facts), (3) Reformed (grounded in the truth of Christianity), and (4) fideism (emphasizing personal encounter). See Boa and Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons*, 33–45.

⁸³ Nathan Busenitz, *Reasons We Believe: 50 Lines of Evidence That Confirm the Christian Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 23. John Frame asserts, “The Bible is normative for apologetics. It does not teach apologetics in a focused or systematic way. . . . However, it has much to say about the theistic worldview; the nature of the gospel, knowledge, wisdom, the noetic effects of sin, and regeneration; the opposition of belief and unbelief; the Spirit’s illumination; God’s revelation in the natural world; and the role of Scripture itself as our authority for all areas of human life.” See Frame, “Apologetics,” 57.

⁸⁴ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 78–79. Additionally, Grudem explains that the Bible is “self-attesting,” and that “the argument for the Bible as God’s Word and our ultimate authority is *not* a typical circular argument. The process of persuasion is perhaps better likened to a spiral in which increasing knowledge of Scripture and increasingly correct understanding of God and creation tend to supplement one another in a harmonious way, each tending to confirm the accuracy of the other. This is not to say that our

Additionally, doing apologetics from a position which affirms the self-attesting nature of the Scriptures does not mean a Christian cannot or should not make use of other apologetic methods. While “external evidence does not *establish* the truthfulness of the Christian faith, . . . external evidence does *corroborate* the claims of Christianity,”⁸⁵ and it simply “doesn’t follow that if God’s Spirit plays a vital role [in conversion], then reason and persuasion play none.”⁸⁶ “People are indeed either dead in sins or born again, lost or found, unjustified or justified. But they may be closer or further away from crossing over from life to death, depending on what they believe or do not believe.”⁸⁷ Thus the use of any biblically permissible apologetic method to understand and counter arguments which are contrary to the gospel can be used by the Holy Spirit to draw someone to Christ.

Defending the Faith

The Holy Spirit in 1 Peter 3:15 commands us to “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet 3:15). Accordingly, all Christians are to have a “mind-set rooted in Christ’s uncontested lordship”⁸⁸ and be ready to give a

knowledge of the world around us serves as a higher authority than Scripture, but rather that such knowledge, if it is correct knowledge, continues to give greater and greater assurance and deeper conviction that the Bible is the only truly ultimate authority and that other competing claims for ultimate authority are false.” See Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 78–80.

⁸⁵ Busenitz, *Reasons We Believe*, 23.

⁸⁶ Gregory Koukl, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 35. Koukl, pointing out that the apostle Paul did not see a conflict between reason, persuasion, and the Spirit’s work, references Acts 17:2–4 which reads, “And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead. . . . And some of them were persuaded.” See Koukl, *Tactics*, 35.

⁸⁷ Boa and Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons*, 516.

⁸⁸ J. Daryl Charles, *1 Peter*, in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 13, *1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 335. Charles, *1 Peter*, 335.

rational defense of our Christian hope—all while “striving to be faithful to Christ both in what we say and in how we live.”⁸⁹ To do this, Christians should pray to grow in “the basic *knowledge* necessary for the task, . . . the kind of *wisdom* that makes our message clear and persuasive, . . . [and the] character”⁹⁰ which enables us to defend our faith attractively.

While it is not necessary for Christians to become expert apologists before they start to evangelize, preparation to answer many of the fundamental questions which are common to the minds and lips of the world (such as questions concerning existence, purpose, the human condition, and salvation) can be beneficial.⁹¹ The answers that people have to these kinds of questions make up their worldview,⁹² and faulty answers pose significant challenges to the reception of the gospel message. Therefore, understanding and addressing erroneous atheistic, pantheistic, and theistic challenges enables Christians to fittingly fortify their witness and relevantly show how consistent, coherent, truthful, and unique the Christian worldview is in contrast to other worldviews.⁹³

In making their defense, Christians may choose from an assortment of apologetic methods and reasons. They should “always favor the one which leads toward the gospel rather than away from it”⁹⁴—since they should “not only [] answer people’s questions but [] do it in such a way that they will consider the gospel and become

⁸⁹ Boa and Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons*, 14.

⁹⁰ Koukl, *Tactics*, 24–25.

⁹¹ See Abdu H. Murray, *Grand Central Question: Answering the Critical Concerns of the Major Worldviews* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 31–34.

⁹² A worldview is an “ordered set of propositions that one believes, especially propositions about life’s most important questions.” See J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 15.

⁹³ Since Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6), there will be contradictions and falsehoods in any non-biblical worldview.

⁹⁴ Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel*, 147.

Christians themselves.”⁹⁵ An apologetic of the Christian hope can certainly be the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, but in those moments when believers use an apologetic which does not explicitly declare the good news of Jesus, personal witnesses should seek to use honest arguments which “help clear away obstacles to faith that many people erect[] and . . . show that faith in Christ is reasonable.”⁹⁶ While such arguments do not save, gospel witness will be reinforced.

Conclusion

D. James Kennedy once urged, “There are opportunities to witness all around [believers]. [Their] responsibility is to develop the alertness of mind and the zeal for sharing God’s love that will enable [them] to take advantage of every opportunity the Lord leads [them] into, day in and day out.”⁹⁷ In the spirit of this exhortation and in an effort to develop adult volunteers into personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church, this chapter sought to address some of the theoretical, practical, and historical issues related to being a personal witness for Jesus Christ.

First, this chapter affirmed the reality that personal evangelism involves spiritual warfare and requires dependence on God. Second, this chapter maintained that effective and sensitive evangelism strategies and practices can create avenues for winsome gospel witness. Finally, this chapter held that gospel witness is strengthened by understanding and countering arguments which are contrary to the gospel. While this chapter could not cover all of the concerns related to these matters, this chapter sought to raise awareness on particular assistances and hindrances to personal evangelism and

⁹⁵ Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel*, 147.

⁹⁶ Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Evidence I & II Fully Updated in One Volume to Answer the Questions Challenging Christians in the 21st Century* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), xxxi.

⁹⁷ D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion: Equipping Churches for Friendship, Evangelism, Discipleship, and Healthy Growth*, 4th ed. (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1996), 19.

firmly asserted that Christians must aim to overcome spiritual, historical, cultural, intellectual, and relational barriers to personal evangelism.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

As stated previously, the purpose of this project was to develop adult volunteers as personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church in Paterson, New Jersey. To support this purpose, I developed an eight session curriculum that could be used to train adult volunteers in the gospel, the biblical basis for personal evangelism, and the practice of personal evangelism. I then used this curriculum to equip four adults who had volunteered to take a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.¹

Preparation

In addition to the goal of developing my curriculum, I sought to assess the knowledge (of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism) that my volunteers/students possessed—along with their practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. To do this, I created two surveys prior to the implementation of my project: the Gospel and Personal Evangelism Knowledge Inventory (GPEKI) and the Personal Evangelism Inventory (PEI).

After receiving approval of my Research Profile from my doctoral supervisor and the Research Ethics Committee, I began the curriculum development phase of my project. This curriculum development phase took up the first half of the sixteen weeks which I allocated for my project. While I originally aimed to produce a lesson per week during this phase, it worked best for me to allot the initial three weeks to praying, reviewing the first three chapters of my project, doing additional reading and research,

¹ These adults were either members of our church or individuals who frequently attended our church's ministry functions but currently do not have church membership.

and deliberating over the best ways to fulfill the goals of my project. After these three weeks were concluded, I used the remaining five weeks to author lesson plans.

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, in order to meet the requirements of a Doctor of Ministry project as well as train and release adult volunteers to engage in personal evangelism in a swift yet effective manner, eight weeks of curriculum preparation along with eight weeks of training seemed appropriate. Nevertheless, eight once a week training sessions (each lasting approximately two hours) meant that while my evangelism course would provide robust training, it would be limited in the amount of material it could cover. Furthermore, I knew that most of my students, due to issues in scheduling, were planning to meet in an online format.

With these considerations in mind, I sought to address (in both content and delivery) the kinds of crucial and relevant topics and skills that an adult seeking to be trained in personal evangelism (in person or online) would find advantageous. Consequently, my eight week training was arranged into the following eight lessons: (1) The Gospel; (2) What Is Evangelism? Why Do It?; (3) Salvation—Part I; (4) Salvation—Part II; (5) Evangelism Methods, Tools, Techniques, and Strategies; (6) Evangelism and Spiritual Warfare; (7) Evangelism and Apologetics; and (8) Evangelism and the Local Church.

Once my curriculum was completed, I sent it to my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Timothy K. Beougher, for his review. Dr. Beougher is both a professor of evangelism and church growth at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a local church pastor. He has done and continues to do extensive work on the topic of evangelism. Upon evaluating my curriculum for biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability, he enthusiastically encouraged me to move forward with its implementation. His encouragement was valuable, as was his recommendation that I should highlight the main points of the gospel in such a way that a trainee who has never shared the gospel could have a “template” from which to ground their evangelism. I

incorporated his recommendation into my course, and with this final modification, the course was ready for implementation.

Implementation

I began teaching my course during the first full week of June 2022, and it ran once a week for eight weeks till the last full week of July 2022. Three out of four of my volunteers met with me online for live trainings on Wednesday evenings.² One of my participants could not attend these trainings, so we met in person on the weekends throughout the course of the eight weeks.³

We began the course with participants taking the Gospel and Personal Evangelism Knowledge Inventory (GPEKI) and the Personal Evangelism Inventory (PEI). These surveys gave me a baseline of where the participants were in their knowledge, practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. Those who did not fill out the surveys with pen and paper received the surveys by email and sent me their survey results via email or text message.⁴ After the pre training survey results were collected, I began the course with the following question: “Why do you want to be trained in evangelism?” Then, I explained the goals of the course and set expectations. I

² Since the arrival of COVID-19 onto the world stage, Mustard Seed Church has, like many other churches, increasingly used online delivery services for various functions. We met for this training using videotelephony services provided by Zoom Video Communications, Inc. (commonly known as Zoom). Mustard Seed Church had a paid subscription to use these services. Because of a scheduling conflict, we did reschedule one session’s training to another day during the week. Additionally, if one of these three individuals did not make it to a particular session, I met with that individual separately, online at a mutually suitable time, to provide adequate coverage of the material.

³ Most of these sessions were at my residence, although we also made use of a local bakery-café. We worked off the same lesson plans. However, based on availability for this trainee, I would sometimes cover more or less than one lesson per training session. For example, if this trainee missed a week but had extra hours available for training in the following week, we would cover additional material during the session in which he was available. Nevertheless, with proper planning, this trainee, like the other three participants, completed his training in the last full week of July 2022.

⁴ I followed a similar process in transmitting each session’s notes to the participants. Those who did not receive hard copies of the lesson notes received the lesson notes as an email attachment prior to the beginning of each session. This allowed all the participants to have the session notes in front of them as we worked through the material.

explained that I wanted the trainees to be equipped to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently, and that I aimed to provide a foundational yet robust personal evangelism training. Having introduced the course, I began the eight session training.

Each of the sessions began with a time of corporate prayer where all the participants had an opportunity to pray. This was an important time that allowed us to depend on the Lord and prepare for the training to come. The fact that every participant was encouraged to have three people for whom they could ask God for an opportunity to share the gospel also intensified our prayer times.⁵ Beginning in the second session, time was also available at the start of every session for any thoughts, questions, comments, or testimonies. In this way, students were given the chance, very early in each training session, to bring forward any input or concerns. Moreover, also beginning in the second session, time was scheduled for Scripture memory review.⁶ Finally, I launched every session with openers meant to stimulate thought, reflection, and conversation. These starters introduced the session to the participants and took the form of pertinent questions, Bible verses, and quotes.

Training sessions were conducted in a lecture format. Each participant followed along as I worked through each session's notes but was free to ask questions or make comments as I lectured. This gave the sessions a dialogic quality. There were many unscripted remarks (by the participants or me), but the session notes, which were the core of the training, helped to keep these conversations connected to the session's material. As each session came to a close, I aimed, through questions, comments, and participant

⁵ Participants were asked at the end of lesson 1: "Who are 3 people with whom you can pray God will give you an opportunity to share the gospel?" Students were then instructed: "Commit to praying for them throughout the course of this training—the next 2 months. Look for opportunities to share the gospel with them." Our corporate prayer times gave us additional occasions to pray for these individuals and opportunities.

⁶ A new memory verse or verses were assigned at the end of every lesson. Participants were assigned verses from the book of Romans, along with John 3:16–19, that give an easy explanation of the gospel message. This Scripture memory review time also gave us a chance to review the gospel "template."

involvement, to apply each session's material to the lives of my participants. Then, we closed each session with prayer.

After the conclusion of all eight training sessions, each of the trainees participated in a post training interview that was used to determine whether the training was effective.

Content Overview

The lessons in this training were designed to work in conjunction with one another. These lessons, taken together, aimed to develop vigorous personal witnesses who depend on the Lord and rightly handle the word of God. Much care was taken to direct students to the biblical text, so they could examine for themselves the teaching they were receiving.

The Gospel

In the first session, I taught my students the gospel message. While any genuine Christian believes in the gospel message, efforts should be made to equip Christians to think about the gospel clearly and to articulate its message faithfully. I explained that the word “gospel” means “good tidings.” In particular, it is the good news of the Lord who saves, the anointed One, who offers salvation to anyone who repents of their sins and believes in Jesus. It is the message, in accordance with the Scriptures, of the Son of God, the truly divine and truly human Jesus Christ, and His life, death on the cross for sins approximately 2,000 years ago, and resurrection from the dead (1 Cor 15:1–4).⁷

⁷ The gospel “template” my participants used to help them remember and share the gospel was: Christ, God, Man, Christ, Response. The excellent “God, Man, Christ, Response” outline was provided by Greg Gilbert; I inserted “Christ” for a second time at the very beginning of this outline in order to highlight for my students that the gospel message is the message of Jesus. This seems, at least to me, to have a good, humbling, and focusing effect on a personal witness. Indeed, it is through believing in the good news about Jesus that people come to even know God in the first place. Nevertheless, since an outline is often used to remember the key points a personal witness wants to cover in a gospel presentation, the “God, Man, Christ, Response” outline is also suitable. See Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 32

The gospel is a message for the whole world (Mark 1:14–15; Luke 24:46–47). It is a message that God graciously commands all created humans to receive, and it must be received in order for a person to be saved. Every individual must make his/her own decision about Jesus. Those who do not repent and believe in the gospel are condemned, for all humans are sinners deserving of sin's penalty (death) (Pss 51:5; 58:3; Isa 53:6; Rom 3:10, 23; 5:12–20; 6:23; Heb 9:27). Nevertheless, those who believe in Jesus have everlasting life the moment they believe in Jesus (John 1:12; 3:16–18; 5:24; 6:28–29; Rom 10:9–13; 1 John 5:13). This is a life that is not earned. Rather, it is a gift of God's grace that is received by faith alone (Rom 3:28; Eph 2:8–9; Titus 3:5).

Understandably, someone who is saved will bear good fruit. While Christians are saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone, a Christian's faith is shown to be true by his/her Holy Spirit empowered good works. In other words, works perfect faith; they complete faith or bring faith to maturity (Matt 7:17–20; Rom 6:1–2; Gal 5:19–25; Eph 2:10; Jas 2:20–24; 2 Pet 1:2–11).

In due course, Christians who perish awaiting the return of Jesus still die a physical death. However, they, unlike sinners, are not sent to hell (Luke 16:23–24). Rather, they immediately and gloriously go into the Lord's presence (Luke 23:42–43; Acts 7:59; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21–23; Heb 12:22–23). One day, all humans will be resurrected and judged, but Christians need not fear condemnation (John 5:24; 28–29; Rom 8:1; 1 Cor 3:8–15; 2 Cor 5:10). Resurrected Christians will receive a glorified body and will dwell eternally with the Lord in the new earth, while resurrected sinners will have their part in the lake of fire (Rom 8:19–22; 1 Cor 15:51–55; Phil 3:20–21; 2 Pet 3:10–13; Rev 3:12; 21:1–4). This place of embodied punishment, the second death, is also the final destination for Satan and his demons.

The gospel is a matter of first importance (1 Cor 15:1–4), and in a course on personal evangelism, it was fitting to have it be the topic of our first lesson. Participants gave positive feedback at the end of the lesson, and it was deemed to be a good starting

point for the rest of the course.

What Is Evangelism? Why Do It?

The second session explained what evangelism is, and why every Christian (though they are not all called to be evangelists) should evangelize and be personal witnesses. Christians benefit when they have a proper understanding of what evangelism is as well as the reasons behind doing it.

Evangelism is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ, and it is a very biblical practice. The word comes from the Greek words for (1) “gospel” (Gk. *euangelion*) and (2) “to announce glad tidings” (Gk. *euangelizo*). Those who do not believe that Christians are to evangelize, or those who define evangelism as something other than the announcement of the gospel fail to be the kinds of personal witnesses of Christ that the Bible would have Christians be.

In this lesson, I gave eight biblical reasons why Christians should evangelize. Together, they make a strong case that it is God’s will for Christians to be personal witnesses.

First, love for God and for our neighbors compel Christians to evangelize (Mark 12:28–31). Second, the Holy Spirit as well as the Scriptures both bear witness to Jesus (John 5:39; 15:26–27). Christians are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16), and we are to live according to the word of God. It is therefore apparent that Christians living by the Spirit and the Scriptures will bear witness to Jesus.

Third and similarly, Christians are disciples of Jesus, and while we do not do everything Jesus did, Jesus, Himself the good news, bore witness to the good news (Mark 1:13–15). Christians following the example of Christ should do the same.

Fourth and fifth, the apostles were commissioned to make disciples (their disciples were to make their own disciples who would then make their own disciples), and the early church evangelized (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 8:1–4). In other words, the

church, which is made up of believers, has always been an evangelizing body.

Sixth, the Bible makes clear that Christians are ambassadors for Christ and have the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18–20). Seventh, the gospel is a matter of first importance. It is the means by which humans are saved, and it is the truth upon which Christians must continue to stand (Rom 1:16; 10:13–17; 1 Cor 15:1–4). Christians are to understand these truths and be moved to witness for Christ.

Finally, the nations are called to worship the Lord (Psalm 96:1–6), but they cannot worship the Lord aright if they do not hear the gospel. God’s people are given the task to evangelize and tell of God’s glory and wonderful deeds among the nations.

Salvation—Part I

In my third lesson, we took a deeper look at the Bible’s teaching on salvation. Since the amount of material I sought to cover on this topic was sizeable, I divided this topic into two lessons. This first lesson sought to answer more fully why people need salvation as well as what happens to people when they are saved. Additionally, we took time to more closely examine the gospel message.

The Bible is clear: humans need salvation because we are sinners deserving of God’s wrath (Ps 58:3; Isa 53:6; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10, 23; 5:18–19; 7:18; Eph 2:1–3). Whether humans acknowledge it or not, apart from God’s saving grace, we are totally depraved (Ps 58:3; Isa 53:6; Jer: 17:9; Rom 3:10, 23; 5:18–19; 7:18). This does not mean that humans are as “bad” as they can be (God has graciously put restraints on sin in the world), but it does mean that, apart from God’s salvation, we are unable to please Him and that all our “good” deeds are unacceptable to God (Isa 64:6; John 15:5; Rom 8:8, 14:23; Heb 11:6). Because of our sinful state, in order for someone to enter the kingdom of heaven, a person must be regenerated. We must have new life and be born again of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5–8).

Sinners need the gospel message. The gospel message is the “power of God

unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom 1:16). It is the saving message of truth (Col 1:5), hope (Col 1:23), and peace (Eph 6:15). It is the message of the Kingdom (Matt 24:14; Mark 1:15) and brings life and immortality to light (2 Tim 1:10).⁸ Anyone may come to Jesus and receive salvation (Matt 11:28; Luke 19:10; John 5:24; Acts 10:42–43; Rom 10:13; 1 Tim 1:15; 2:1–4), and when someone is saved, they are no longer guilty in God’s sight. They are justified, forgiven, and rescued from the wrath of God (Isa 53:5–6, 11; Rom 4:6–8; 5:1; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 4:31–32).

Saved Christians have new life. They are born again. They are regenerated. But that is not all. The reason why Christians receive mercy instead of wrath is because Jesus is their propitiation (Rom 3:24–24; 1 John 4:10). Furthermore, Christians are redeemed (bought and rescued by the blood of Christ) (Eph 1:7–8; 1 Peter 1:17–19), reconciled to God (Rom 5:10), adopted into the family of God as His sons and daughters (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6–7; 1 John 3:10), sanctified (set apart by God for Himself) (Acts 20:32; 26:16–18; Eph 1:18–21), and sealed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 12:13; 2 Cor 1:21–22; Eph 1:13–14).⁹

Salvation—Part II

My fourth lesson was the second part of two lessons on the topic of salvation. While the gospel is simple enough for a child to understand, Christians can take the rest of their lives growing in their understanding. Consequently, Christians can be strengthened in their personal witness for Christ, dependence on the Lord, and thanksgiving, as they carefully study the Bible’s teaching on salvation. In this lesson, we examined how a person is saved. We learned that God predestines and elects, all while people make real choices. We also considered how a Christian perseveres in faith.

⁸ See Mark McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well: Making the Most of Witnessing Opportunities* (San Bernardino, CA: Here’s Life, 1985), 18–21.

⁹ See McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well*, 21–27.

By now, it was clear to my participants that anyone could receive salvation freely. Nevertheless, many will not believe in Jesus and be saved. Sinful humans reject God and His word, and God rightly holds them accountable (Matt 7:13; John 3:18–19; Acts 7:51; Rom 1:20–25). In addition, the Bible teaches that sinners refuse to trust in Jesus because they “are not of [Jesus’s] sheep” (John 10:25–26). “No one can come unto [Jesus], except it were given unto him of [Jesus’s] Father” (John 6:64–65).

If anyone comes to Jesus, it is because God overcomes a person’s sinful rebellion and graciously and irresistibly brings the person to saving faith (John 1:12–13; 6:35–37; Acts 16:14). No merit or work of the person causes this act of God; God’s unconditional election of His children as well as His non-election of the reprobate is exclusively His just choice and kind work (Rom 9:10–26). As a result of God’s election, an election determined by God before the foundation of the world, Christians will, without fail and acting freely, trust in Jesus (Rom 8:23–30; 1 Cor 1:21–24; 2 Cor 4:3–6; Eph 1:3–6; 2 Tim 2:24–25;). God’s grace is irresistible and His election unconditional.

Moreover, while Jesus died for all, He did not die for all in the same way. Jesus is indeed the perfect, powerful, sufficient sacrifice for all the sins of all men, and the gospel genuinely declares salvation to the entire world (John 2:1–2; 6:51; 2 Cor 5:18–19). Certainly, anyone who believes in Jesus will be saved (John 3:16). Nevertheless and furthermore, at the cross, Jesus established the new covenant and particularly/definitely atoned for the sins of Christians (Jer 31:31–34; 32:39–41; Luke 22:20; John 10:11, 15; Rom 5:10; 8:32; Gal 3:13; Heb 9:15). In this way, Christ’s atonement is “limited.”

Finally, Christians (those who are chosen by God, positionally sanctified and progressively being sanctified) are preserved by God (Mark 13:13; John 10:27–30; Rom 8:13; Phil 2:12–13; 1 John 3:19). Thus, saints persevere in their faith and are ultimately glorified (Rom 8:30). While Christians do continue to sin every day (1 John 1:8), they will not renounce the faith nor exit the joyful fight of faith. Those who ultimately leave the faith show that they were not genuine Christians (1 John 2:19).

Evangelism Methods, Tools, Techniques, and Strategies

In the fifth session of this course, we examined the subject of evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies. I placed this lesson at this juncture of the course because this lesson was just past the half way point of the course. I wanted my participants, having received crucial instruction on the gospel, evangelism, and salvation (sessions one to four), to reflect more practically (and biblically) on the subject of evangelism. Additionally, I wanted to equip my participants with skills and resources they could use in their attempts to evangelize.

Very early in this lesson, I reminded my students that evangelism is the announcement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is indispensable. The word of God is the means by which the Holy Spirit brings people to faith, so while evangelism methods and strategies may change, a faithful witness must disseminate the biblical gospel. Furthermore, a personal witness, while being a disciple maker, should be a disciple himself (Mark 1:17; John 15:1–4; Phil 2:12–13). Personal witnesses should strive to please God, not men (Gal 1:10), and they should understand that the “preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness” (1 Cor 1:18). They should be committed to following Christ and evangelizing even in the face of difficulty and suffering (Matt 5:11–12; Mark 8:34–35; John 15:18–21; 16:33; Phil 3:8–11; Jas 1:2–4; Rev 21:7), and as those loved by God, personal witnesses are to be lovers of God who love their neighbors (Exod 32:32–33; Ezek 18:23; Luke 10:27; 19:41–42; John 3:16; Rom 9:3; 1 Cor 13:1).

Personal witnesses may use a variety of methods to evangelize—provided they are faithfully bearing witness to Christ. Preaching (Matt 11:1; Mark 1:39; Luke 9:6; Acts 5:42; 8:3–4) and dialogue (John 4:5–26) are both very biblical, and Christians using these methods should ask God for opportunities as well as wisdom to present the gospel clearly and winsomely.¹⁰ Additionally, personal witnesses can use braille or sign language

¹⁰ Without changing the gospel, the kind of relationship someone has with another individual,

(where needed), distribute printed Bibles or gospel tracts, and utilize audio, visual, and digital resources such as the Jesus film, texts/chats, and internet websites and videos (Isa 55:11; John 17:17; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16; Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 1:22–23). Tools like tracts may be especially beneficial in supporting believers in their attempts at evangelism while providing a way to leave something behind with an individual with whom a personal witness has had a conversation. Furthermore, personal witnesses should endeavor to adorn the gospel message with good works (Matt 5:13–16; 1 Pet 3:1), and they may make use of evangelism programs if the structure/training will enable them to evangelize more effectively.

Evangelism and Spiritual Warfare

The sixth session covered the topic of evangelism and spiritual warfare. While the topic of the fifth session (evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies) was very important, it would be foolhardy to think that personal witnesses can/should evangelize in human strength alone. The Scriptures are plain: “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12).

Satan is a real foe. While we do not know all the details of how he became evil, readers of the Bible are introduced to this adversary in Genesis 3. There, we read how Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan’s temptation and sinned against God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Still today, Satan opposes God, but Jesus was revealed to decisively destroy Satan’s works (John 12:27–31; 1 John 3:8), and through His work on the cross, Jesus has overpoweringly transferred Christians from the domain of darkness to His very own kingdom (Col 1:13).

One day, God will crush Satan under the feet of believers (Rom 16:20), but for

or the topic of a conversation can affect how we evangelize. Likewise, cultural and societal concerns may have an effect (1 Cor 9:20–23). My participants and I made sure to take time to discuss ways we can attempt to bring the gospel to bear in different relationships and situations.

now we must continue to engage in spiritual warfare. We must stand firm, girding our loins with truth, putting on the breastplate of righteousness, shodding our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, taking up the shield of faith, donning the helmet of salvation, and deploying the word of God (Eph 6:14–17). We must depend on the Lord and pray (Matt 6:13; Luke 22:40; John 17:15; Acts 2:29–31; Eph 6:18–20; Col 4:2–4) as we strive to walk in obedience to God and in resistance to the devil, his schemes, and his demonic forces (Matt 4:1–11; Mark 9:17–27; 2 Cor 10:3–6; James 4:7).

Spiritual warfare is particularly intense on the frontlines of evangelism. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), and His gospel message is eternally true. It is the very “power of God unto salvation” (Rom 1:16). People who believe in Jesus are delivered from darkness to light. In contrast, the devil is a murderous liar who comes to kill, steal, and destroy (John 8:44; 10:9). Therefore, it is no wonder that Satan and his followers actively work to disturb Christians (2 Cor 11:13–15; 1 Thess 2:18; Rev 12:10) and keep unbelievers in darkness (Matt 13:19; 2 Cor 4:3–4).

However, Christians are under the lordship of Christ, and all authority in heaven and earth is His (Matt 28:18). So while we “walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)” (2 Cor 10:3–4), and we boldly advance, with the promise of Jesus’s abiding presence, to “teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever [He has] commanded [us]” (Matt. 28:19–20).

Evangelism and Apologetics

In the seventh training session, we looked at the connection between evangelism and apologetics. As we saw in session six, personal witnesses are to be engaged in spiritual warfare. What people believe or do not believe about the gospel has eternal ramifications, and Christians are to “cast[] down imaginations, and every high

thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring[] into captivity every thought to obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor 10:5).

Apologetics is “the defence of the Christian belief and of the Christian way against alternatives and against criticism.”¹¹ While it is true that the gospel message (the only message that saves) is the most powerful apologetic for the hope that is in believers, and one does not need to be an expert in apologetics before doing evangelism, personal witnesses do well to prepare to attractively and truthfully answer common questions or arguments against the Christian faith (Prov 16:23). As an academic and Christian discipline, apologetics is both biblical and helpful (1 Pet 3:15). It seeks to reinforce the faith of believers and assist in the task of evangelism by clearing objections and highlighting truth.

We should ground our defense of the Christian faith on the Bible and its teachings and be free to employ a variety of apologetic methods as we reason with others.¹² Since God and His word are true, all valid extra-biblical evidences will agree with the truth of Scripture. Furthermore, objections to the Christian faith are inherently faulty, and personal witnesses should strive to be alert to these realities.

The Christian faith can handle scrutiny, and it confronts the lies of the world. Personal witnesses do not need to be afraid to step out in faith to have conversations about Jesus. God can use their words to bring someone to Christ. Additionally, as in the lesson on evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies, personal witnesses doing the work of evangelism and apologetics should aim their conversations to Jesus and the gospel, know how to make good use of questions, be winsome and wise, and discern when it is appropriate to walk away from a conversation.

¹¹ *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3 rev ed., s.v. “apologetics,” accessed September 19, 2018, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-389?rskey=GoCHal&result=1>.

¹² We explored classical apologetics, evidentialism, Reformed apologetics, and fideism in this session.

Evangelism and the Local Church

In the eighth and final session, I covered the topic of evangelism and the local church. This was an important lesson as it helped my participants reflect on their lives as personal witnesses, the context in which evangelism takes place, how disciples should be disciplined, and the value and role of local churches and parachurch ministries. Through this lesson, I sought to bring the entire eight session course to a close and equip my students to see the connection between personal evangelism and the discipleship life of the local church.

When God saves an individual, He makes him alive with Christ and places him with other believers in God's household (Acts 2:41–47; Eph 2:1–22). In other words, those who accept the gospel message are not only reconciled to God, they are brought into the fellowship of the church. Since God desires His children to bear witness to Christ, it is reasonable to conclude that evangelism should take place in the context of the local church. Indeed, the Bible shows us that evangelism by members of God's new covenant family naturally took place in the context of the local church (Matt 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1–5; 9:17; 13:1–3).

Those who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior should be encouraged to plug into a biblically, healthy local church. They should partake in the Christ worshipping, gospel infused, church disciplining, and sacramental life of the church (Matt 18:15–17; Acts 2:41–47; 1 Cor 11:18–26; Heb 10:23–25). They should be trained as disciples who personally witness for Christ and make other disciples of Christ (Matt 28:18–20), and local church leaders should lead the way, modeling an evangelistic lifestyle and providing evangelism training (Eph 4:11–13; 2 Tim 4:5).

Many parachurch ministries focus on evangelism and do excellent work. However, the main function of these ministries should be to come alongside the local church to assist them in their witness for Christ. To be sure, evangelism is not the only thing local churches do, but personal witnessing in the New Testament takes place in the

context of the local church. Hence, parachurch ministries that focus on evangelism should seek to connect their efforts with the evangelistic efforts of the local church.

Conclusion

When the final training session came to a close and the last post training interview was conducted, it was evident that the gracious and sovereign hand of God had protected and provided for everyone involved in this personal evangelism course. The development and implementation of this course was a great blessing. No question, without God's favor, none of it would have been possible. With the course completed, it was useful to reflect on this project, and in the next chapter, I provide my evaluation.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This final chapter presents an evaluation of this project. First, I evaluate the project's purpose and answer if its purpose was fulfilled. Second, I gauge if its goals were met. Third, I try to identify its strengths. Fourth, I seek to catalog its weaknesses. Fifth, I answer what I would do differently if I were to do the project again. Sixth, I provide some theological reflections. Finally, before bringing this presentation to a close, I write some personal reflections.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

In Chapter 1, I described how my church, Mustard Seed Church (MSC) in Paterson, New Jersey, has prayerfully striven to be a healthy, biblically faithful, and gospel-centered church. We are a small church, but size and human strength never stop God from doing the good things He wants to do. We pray that God will multiply our “five loaves and two fish,” and seek to use our resources to be faithful disciples of Jesus that make disciples for Jesus. Our families, friends, co-workers, and neighbors desperately need the Lord, and we want them to have a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are hopeful that God will do great things in, through, and around us, and we know that Jesus desires us to be fruitful (John 15:16).

God wants Christians to bear witness of Jesus. Each believer has the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18) and is called to be personal witnesses of Jesus—even if they are not called to be an evangelist. The church is the means that God has ordained to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. Yet, oftentimes, because of sin, spiritual warfare, or lack of training (among other factors), many Christians are hesitant

to share the gospel. As a pastor, I am mindful of these realities and understand that I am to endeavor “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12).

Given where Mustard Seed Church is (in location and maturity) and the demands of the Great Commission, the purpose of this project was to develop adult volunteers as personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church (Paterson, NJ). That was a good purpose. The people of Mustard Seed Church want more. They want to walk closer with God. They want to bear fruit. They want more wisdom, understanding, training, and skills. While we are not a large church, we are a growing church, and we want to be a faithful church. Since we had not yet developed or implemented a formal course on evangelism, this project was appropriate and beneficial. It was also well-received.

On the question of whether the project fulfilled its purpose, my answer is yes. But, more work needs to be done. While each and every participant had something positive to share when asked about their attempts at evangelism during the course of this training, confidence in evangelism can wane, and as salt and light, we are often tempted to become tasteless or hidden (Matt 5:13–16). Furthermore, not all the individuals my participants selected to share the gospel with were evangelized, and training sessions as well as attempts at evangelism unearthed immaturities and fears. But sanctification is a lifelong process, God is faithful, and this training in particular equipped my participants with more knowledge, skills, and motivation to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Throughout the eight weeks of training, the gospel was shared, co-workers and neighbors heard the good news of Jesus Christ, and my participants grew as personal witnesses.

Evaluation of the Project’s Goals

The goals of this project were fivefold. Each of the goals combined with the other goals in order to move this project to the desired end of developing personal witnesses of Christ.

The first goal was to assess the knowledge (of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism) possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was successfully achieved after the Gospel and Personal Evangelism Knowledge Inventory (GPEKI) was administered to the participants and its results collected, recorded, and considered. The data collected in this survey yielded an effective assessment of the knowledge possessed by the participants.¹

I was pleased to see that all four participants indicated that they could define the word “gospel” (item one; one agreed, three strongly agreed). Furthermore, the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: “Jesus is the only way to the Father” (item three; three out of three responding participants strongly agreed), “All humans are sinners by nature” (item nine; four strongly agreed), “Anyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven” (item eleven; four strongly agreed), “The gospel is foolishness to unbelievers” (item twenty seven; four strongly agreed), “The person, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are necessary components of the gospel message” (item forty eight, four strongly agreed), and “If Jesus is not a person’s Lord, He is not that person’s Savior” (item forty nine, four strongly agreed). These answers were encouraging and revealed that the participants had a fairly healthy understanding of the gospel. They understood that humans are sinners accountable to their creator God and that we must repent and believe in the fully divine and fully human Jesus Christ who genuinely lived, died on the cross for sins, and resurrected from the dead.

However, participants expressed more difficulty in explaining biblical, soteriological terms. For example, at least one participant indicated “not sure” for the following statements: “I can explain the meaning of ‘regeneration’” (item twelve), “I can explain the meaning of ‘justification’” (item fourteen), and “I can explain the meaning of

¹ One participant did not answer two of the questions. This appeared to be a random error.

‘propitiation’” (item fifteen). Likewise, participants had increased difficulty with theological terms such as “limited atonement” (item nineteen, one strongly disagreed with being able to explain this term, one was not sure, one agreed, one strongly agreed) and “irresistible grace” (item twenty four; one strongly disagreed, two agreed, one strongly agreed). This showed that participants could benefit from a deeper and more comprehensive examination of the Bible’s teaching on the gospel and salvation.

Finally, the results of the GPEKI indicated that participants could gain from further development of their knowledge of the biblical basis for why Christians are to personally evangelize. For instance, each of the following statements elicited some indication of disagreement: “The gospel is the message the Holy Spirit uses to save sinners” (item two; one strongly disagreed, one agreed, two strongly agreed), “A Christian without the gift of evangelism should evangelize” (item seven; one strongly disagreed, three strongly agreed), “I can give a biblical explanation for why all Christians are to evangelize” (item twenty one; one disagreed, one agreed, two strongly agreed), and “A Christian does not evangelize if he/she does not share the gospel message” (item thirty six; one disagreed, one agreed, two strongly agreed). While these results showed that participants generally concurred that the Bible teaches that all Christians are to be personal witnesses for Jesus, this agreement was not held in unanimity. It was important for participants to be further taught and fortified in the biblical basis for personal evangelism.

The second goal was to assess the practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism of the same adult volunteers that volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was successfully achieved after the Personal Evangelism Inventory (PEI) was administered to the participants and its results collected, recorded, and considered. The data collected with this survey yielded an effective assessment of the practice, motivation, and confidence in

personal evangelism of the course's participants.²

The PEI clearly showed that participants believed that “evangelism is a required activity for all Christians” (item one; four strongly agreed). Most respondents indicated that they were “comfortable having spiritual conversations with non-Christians” (item two; one not sure, two agreed, one strongly agreed), and that they “intentionally try to have evangelistic conversations with others” (item three; one disagreed, three agreed). Yet, participants did not rate their experiences with evangelism as having “gone well” (item seven; one out of three respondents disagreed, two were not sure), and respondents indicated that they did not feel “theologically ready to evangelize” (item eleven; two out of three respondents strongly disagreed with feeling ready, one disagreed) or “practically ready to evangelize” (item twelve; two out of three respondents disagreed to feeling ready, one not sure). These results showed that the participants wanted to evangelize but needed to be further trained. Since no participants indicated that their experiences with evangelism had gone well, it was important to provide development, feedback, and encouragement.

Furthermore, participants were more confident sharing the gospel with their friends (item sixteen; one of three respondents not sure, one agreed, one strongly agreed) than with their family members (item fifteen; one of three respondents strongly disagreed, one disagreed, one strongly agreed) or with strangers (item seventeen; one of three respondents disagreed, one not sure, one strongly agreed), and only one participant felt “confident in leading someone through to the point where he/she makes a decision for Christ” (item six; one strongly disagreed, two disagreed, one agreed). Taken as a whole, these results showed that confidence in evangelism was lagging. Confidence levels

² One participant did not answer one of questions. Another participant, an online student, made an error of not sending in answers to thirteen of the questions. Since all the survey items were independent of each other and sought to make the same assessment, I was still able to assess the practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism of this participant—albeit, unfortunately, with less data points. These errors appeared to be simple oversight and random errors.

changed depending on conversation partners and, more often than not, the participants were not confident in leading people to a point of a decision. Hence, a boost in confidence was needed.

Finally, while I was heartened to see that respondents agreed that “good deeds are not sufficient for evangelism” (item nine; one of three respondents agreed, two strongly agreed), I was sobered by the result of the participants’s comfort level in using the Bible in evangelism (item twenty six; two disagreed that they were comfortable, two strongly agreed). Two out of three respondents also disagreed to using use “various methods to evangelize” (item twenty three; one agreed) and not a single participant indicated that they attempt to connect their evangelism efforts with the local church (item four; one disagreed, three not sure). Thus, this survey showed that training in strong biblical practices was desirable to helpfully develop the participants’s practice of evangelism.

The third goal was to develop an eight session curriculum that would be used to train adult volunteers in the gospel, the biblical basis for personal evangelism, and the practice of personal evangelism. This goal was successfully achieved after my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Timothy K. Beougher, approved my curriculum for utilization after evaluating it for biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability.

The fourth goal was to increase the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by the adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church. This goal was evaluated by conducting a post training interview that sought to ascertain whether participant knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, had increased as a result of participating in the personal evangelism course.

During the course of the interview, one participant stated that her knowledge of the gospel became “deeper,” while another stated that his knowledge of the gospel “changed for the best.” This participant further shared that he had difficulty growing after

he was baptized, but that participating in this course was already having an impact, beyond him, on his cousin to whom he was ministering. A third participant indicated that while he did not “necessarily” learn anything new about the gospel, this training was more “focused” on Jesus saving, and a fourth participant, while likewise stating that she thought her “basic knowledge of the gospel” stayed the same, indicated that the gospel was something that was “constantly mentioned” in our ministry and that “over time” her understanding of the gospel had been formed.

Additionally, all four participants affirmed that the Bible taught that all Christians are to be personal witnesses for Jesus Christ and expressed that this course had positively impacted their knowledge of the biblical basis for personal evangelism. Three out of four participants specifically mentioned the scripture references they had received during the training as support for doing evangelism, and the fourth participant acknowledged, “I had this kind of conception, that each and everybody is gifted in his own way....Then later on, as we studied more... You have to wake up and go tell somebody else.” Thus, this fourth goal to increase the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by the adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church was successfully achieved as the results of the post training interview showed that this goal had been met.

The fifth goal was to equip adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently. This goal was assessed by conducting a post training interview that sought to ascertain whether participation in the personal evangelism course resulted in participants evangelizing more obediently, winsomely, and confidently.

During the interview, all four participants noted that the training enhanced or strengthened their intentionality and practice of evangelism. Two participants pointed out that the training served as reinforcement. One participant noted that before this training

he “was a little bit timid,” but now he had “some boldness,” while another stated that she found the training particularly helpful for her “to be intentional” in her approach.

Additionally, three out of four participants verified that the training diversified and grounded the methods they used or considered using in sharing the gospel.³ One of these participants admitted, “I thought there was one way method of evangelism. But I realized there are other ways to do it.” Another commented, “Definitely the knowledge that was taught about Christ and his work has helped me in my personal outreach to people.” Still another explained that while he used to rely heavily on using personal experiences (and still brings in his personal experience “once in awhile”), he now goes to the Bible because “for a person to repent and change...the true word...has to come from God.”

Finally, all four participants affirmed that this training raised their confidence in sharing the gospel with non-Christians. One participant remarked that she was helped by how the training equipped her to ask questions, increased her knowledge in “knowing which verses to focus on for evangelism,” and provided her with lessons she could use as a “reference.” She emphasized that she felt more confident in the verses now that she “[had] them.” Another participant explained that this training “raised” his confidence, while a third participant explained that this training resulted in him being “bold like a lion.” A final participant wisely concluded that while the course “helped,” she still has room to grow. Because there’s always room.” Thus, this fifth and final goal to equip adult volunteers who volunteer for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently was successfully achieved as the results of the post training interview established that this goal was attained.

³ The final participant happily concluded that the training “may have given [him] different ways of doing [evangelism.]”

Strengths of the Project

The first strength of this project was the course's scope and sequence. This course was designed to cover the kinds of pertinent topics and skills an adult seeking to be trained in evangelism would find beneficial. This training explained the gospel message and the meaning of evangelism. It moved to an examination of the doctrine of salvation, equipped participants with evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies, and trained participants in the connection between evangelism and spiritual warfare, apologetics, and the local church. Overall, this course gave foundational yet robust training in personal evangelism.

A second strength of this project was its length and delivery. Eight weeks of curriculum development along with eight weeks of training meant that a curriculum that met the requirements of a Doctor of Ministry project could be developed, suitably reviewed, and deployed in such a way that adult volunteers who wanted to engage in personal evangelism could be trained and released in a swift and effective manner.

The course is reproducible and deployable in both online and in person settings. I ran a course online and also met with a participant in person, and the curriculum was conducive in both venues. The lecture format helps to keep the sessions moving along, but participant involvement was encouraged, and the freedom provided for participants to give input by way of prayer requests, testimonies, questions, comments, and concerns kept the sessions from becoming a monologue.

Additionally, because the participants were encouraged to select three individuals to both pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize, participants had a way to try out what they were learning. This, along with other evangelistic encounters that the participants experienced, helped to encourage a dependency on God, inspire steps of faith, and highlight fears and deficiencies. The applicable nature of the material helped to produce substantial discussions during the training.

A third strength of this project was its biblical focus, depth, and richness. The

Bible is clear: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4), and “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:16–17).

This project’s purpose was to develop adult volunteers as personal witnesses; it had to be saturated in biblical truth, and by God’s grace, it was. The biblical text was regularly presented to the participants and allowed to speak for itself. We repeatedly went to the Scriptures to seek answers and guidance, and every week, participants had a new scripture passage they were expected to memorize.

There are so many false gospels circulating in our world today, but my participants learned the message of the biblical gospel (1 Cor 15:1–4; Gal 1:6–8), and they learned where they could turn to in their Bibles to explain critical Christian doctrines. They learned from God Himself why they should be personal witnesses as well as what He had to say about salvation. And they learned about their enemy, how to defend the truth, and who their companions are in spiritual warfare. They also memorized a gospel outline which they could readily access and use to assist them in sharing the gospel faithfully.

A fourth strength was the project’s emphasis on the need to depend on the Lord. Evangelism takes place at the frontlines of spiritual warfare, and “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12). It can be tempting to want to do God’s work in man’s strength alone, but this course clearly taught that personal witnesses must depend on the Lord.

What the participants learned in the course as well as what they experienced as they attempted to evangelize helped them internalize the truth that we are weak without the Lord. Personal witnesses should not fear, for the battle is the Lord’s. Yet, we must be

mindful to pray. Every training began and ended with a time of prayer. We regularly prayed for each other and for those we wanted to see come to the Lord. Participants were also encouraged to pray outside of the training sessions.

A fifth and final strength was the participants themselves. A training like this cannot run without individuals who are committed to the training. My participants in my online course showed up week in and week out in order to take part in this evangelism training. When a session had to be rescheduled, or an individual could not make it to a particular session, participants adjusted their lives and schedules in order to be trained. The same could be said for the one individual with whom I met with in person. The participants in my course considered how they could provoke one another “unto love and to good works” (Heb 10:24). All the participants were motivated for the training, and each one served as an encouragement to others. When obstacles to evangelism were confronted, it was uplifting to have the support of people who believe in Jesus and want to tell others about Him.

Weaknesses of the Project

This project had both strengths and weaknesses. The first weakness was this project’s lack of additional, practical evangelistic training experiences. When I developed this curriculum, I knew that most of my students, due to issues in scheduling, were planning to meet in an online format. With this in mind, I sought to develop a course that was usable in both online and in person settings. This flexibility was a strength, but since we were not able to find a time when all the participants in the course could get together in person, this training lacked the kind of additional, practical evangelistic training experiences that are often beneficial for developing personal witnesses.

I therefore sought to mitigate the fear, inexperience, or laziness that can often hinder evangelism by seeking to maximize the time we had together, role playing and modeling how one could evangelize in a variety of situations, encouraging my

participants to step out in evangelism as well as to select three individuals whom they could pray for and evangelize, supplying tools and resources that could aid my participants as they sought to evangelize, and providing for regular moments of testimony throughout the training sessions where participants could share and receive questions or feedback about their evangelistic encounters.

Nevertheless, this project could have used more “hands on” evangelistic training experiences. Often as a person steps out in faith to evangelize, he grows in the ability to evangelize. There are so many things one experiences when one shares the gospel (e.g., the Holy Spirit’s presence and power to speak boldly and clearly, growth in communication and ability to direct conversations to the gospel, excitement, anxiety, fear, or resistance). Experience in evangelism allows individuals to develop. In the case of my participants, not all the individuals they selected to share the gospel with were evangelized, and additional evangelistic experiences would have been helpful.⁴

Additionally, it can be advantageous to have someone with you who can prepare and pray beside you, evangelize alongside you, and debrief an evangelistic encounter with you. As such, not only should there have been more practical evangelistic training experiences, these experiences could have been enhanced by more team based evangelism (Mark 6:7; Luke 10:1) Granted, while some evangelistic settings may only be open to specific Christians, team evangelism is something this training lacked.

A second weakness was the length of the course. I stated earlier that this was a strength. And while it is true that the course’s length enabled adult volunteers who wanted to engage in personal evangelism to be trained and released in a swift and effective manner, I think more time would have allowed for further growth in knowledge and additional evangelistic opportunities. This potential growth in knowledge and

⁴ In one case, one of my participants wanted to share the gospel with her sister, but her sister became disengaged in the conversation. In a different instance, another participant wanted to share the gospel with her co-worker, but her work and meetings had gone online and the time restricted, videoconferencing setting presented some challenges to evangelism.

experience could lead to a greater confidence in sharing the gospel with different people in various situations. Additionally, this potential growth makes it more likely that the participants would be able to train someone else in evangelism.

More time would have given us the ability to more carefully examine other evangelism strategies, programs, and methods. In this way, participants could try something new, reflect on what might work for them, and add to their evangelistic tool belts. Furthermore, the subject of apologetics could be examined more closely. Personal witnesses may benefit by moving beyond the foundational training provided in this course, and additional time would have afforded my participants the ability to receive that kind of extra training.

Finally, an extension in the course length would have given participants more time to evangelize the three individuals they selected to evangelize. In one instance, by the end of the eight week course, one of my participants had just broached whether he could share the gospel with one of his co-workers. His co-worker agreed, and shortly after the course was concluded, this participant informed me that he was able to tell his co-worker the gospel. This “win” was invigorating, and extending the length of the course could have given the participants additional opportunities to experience these kinds of galvanizing “wins” and answers to prayer.⁵

A third weakness was found in the data that was collected for this project. While the GPEKI and PEI (and the data received from these surveys) were satisfactory, I could have gained additional insight into my participants’ knowledge as well as their practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism by using supplementary assessments. Additionally, more time and attention should have been given to verifying that all the pre survey questions had been answered.

⁵ I am mindful, however, that there is always room to grow and at some point, the course needs to come to end. In light of the benefits of keeping the course to its current length, I would be disinclined to change the length of the course. Nevertheless, if I were to run this course again, I would look to mitigate the weaknesses of keeping the course at its current length.

A fourth and final weakness was the size of the group that took part in this project. While I am thankful for each and every participant, a larger group would have enhanced the predictive ability of this project.

What I Would Do Differently

If I were to do this project again, I think I would keep its purpose, length, mode of delivery, and goals the same. However, I would want to further broaden the knowledge base of the course's participants and give the volunteers additional occasions to evangelize on their own and with others. I would also want to incorporate additional opportunities for participants to see good models of evangelism, obtain more detailed assessments of my participants's knowledge, practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism, and further propel the participants on a trajectory of continued growth in personal witnessing after the end of the course.

To do this, there are several things I would consider changing. First, I could add additional information to the lessons. The lessons were already hearty, and the training times were full, but more content that delves deeper into particular evangelism methods or specific defenses of the Christian faith would be beneficial and could be done in a way that does not overwhelm the participants. Furthermore, providing more resources that volunteers could follow up with after the course's completion would be advantageous.

Second, if the participants were willing, I could send daily reminders via email or text message of the weekly Scripture memory passage. I could also send a small encouragement, challenge to evangelize, or prayer. Small reminders throughout the week can help solidify truth in minds and hearts and encourage participants to lean on the Lord and evangelize. We could also create a community group on a social media platform to communicate, pray, challenge, and encourage.

Third, a group evangelism time or several group evangelism times could be

incorporated into the course. If all the participants were not able to attend, I could coordinate separate evangelism times with smaller groups or individual persons. Participants could also coordinate their schedules with one another to meet up with each other to evangelize.⁶ Additionally, in an effort to enhance the practice of evangelism, video resources of evangelistic encounters that model evangelism for my participants could be used. These video resources could be our own, or they could come from another ministry.

Finally, I would want to obtain more detailed assessments of my participants's knowledge, practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. In particular, I could ask my participants to use their own words to answer some of the survey questions that assessed for knowledge, and I could ask my participants to describe, by themselves, their practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. Additionally, all pre surveys responses should be verified. This could be facilitated by having the pre surveys filled out on a different day prior to start of instruction.

Theological Reflections

As I reflect upon this project, my heart is filled with gratitude. In Romans 8:29–30, Paul writes, “For whom [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” I am grateful to God the Father for predestining me to become conformed to the image of His Son. I was a dirty, foolish, lost, and ignorant sinner, but God set His love upon me, called and justified me, and will one day glorify me. I do not deserve this kind of love and grace, but God is

⁶ This gospel proclamation would be in addition to the evangelism that takes place with the three individuals participants select to evangelize. Participants should also be encouraged to continue to pray and follow up with their three individuals even if they have not shared the gospel with these individuals by the end of the course.

infinitely kind and good. The Scriptures declare, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5:8). I am unworthy, but God loves His children, and I thank God for who He is and for His great love. I want to love Him with all that I am.

I also bless and thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is He who came as light into this dark and broken world (John 3:19). “He [was] despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” (Isa 53:3). It astounds me how God the Son put up with the maltreatment of the world. Even today, people ridicule Him and use His precious name as a cuss word, but He remains patient. Sure, He was crucified and killed by human hands, but no one took His life from Him. He laid it down on His own initiative. Authority to lay down His life and take it up again was His (John 10:18). I bless and praise Jesus Christ. I want to love Him with all that I am.

Likewise, I hail and acclaim the Holy Spirit. In John 3:5–8, Jesus tells Nicodemus,

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit that caused me to be born again. This was not something I earned. This was something He sovereignly and graciously did in my life. He opened my eyes. He is my ever present Helper that bears witness of Jesus (John 15:26). Without Him, I would never have come to know God. I worship the Holy Spirit. I want to love Him with all that I am.

God is a communicating God, and I am thankful that not only do the heavens tell of the glory of God (Ps 19:1), but through the Scriptures I am able to come to know God through Jesus Christ (John 5:39). In 1 Peter 1:23, Peter tells Christians that they

have been born again “not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

Additionally, in Romans 10:11–17, Paul writes,

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

For me, this project has reinforced the power of the word of God. I am grateful that my parents taught me the word of God. While I have had periods in my life where I struggled mightily with my faith, I do not recall a time in my life where I did not know Jesus as my Lord and Savior. The word of God has been a lamp to my feet and a light to my path ever pointing me to my Savior (Ps 119:105).

I am thankful that my father and mother both heard and believed upon the gospel. I bless God because they are both Christians. I’m appreciative of the individuals who labored and gave of their lives and talents to sow the message of the gospel. As a result of people bringing the word of God to us, we believed and were saved. We need to bring the gospel message to others. How shall people “believe in him of whom they have not heard” (Rom 10:14)? This project has reinforced in my life the call of God upon every believer’s life to take the life giving message of Jesus Christ to those around us.

This project has also underscored for me the importance of the church of Jesus Christ to the mission of God. Christians are to be disciples of Jesus who make disciples for Jesus. The church is to take the message of the gospel to the nations (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:4, 8; Rom 10:15). I was particularly blessed by the participants in my course who showed up to every training session and sought to grow as personal witnesses. They were an answer to prayer and a source of encouragement to me. I thank God, who “always

causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place” (2 Cor 2:14).

Finally, this project has alerted me to the realities of spiritual warfare. I must be on the alert as my “adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet 5:8). In the course of living for Christ, I may get discouraged. Many are on the broad way that leads to destruction, while Jesus calls me to enter by the narrow gate. There are days when it feels that my attempts at evangelism are falling on deaf ears. Sometimes, believers may want to say, like the prophet Elijah, “I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts...and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (1 Kgs 19:10). But, God has His elect, and I am to take on “the whole armour of God, that [I] may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Eph 6:13).” Truly, “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not” (2 Cor. 4:4), and I “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph 6:12). Yet, I am “more than [a] conqueror[] through him that loved us.” (Rom 8:37), and I take much comfort knowing that the God of peace will soon crush Satan under the feet of His children (Rom 16:20).

Personal Reflections

Taking the time and energy to complete this project has helped me to: (1) rest in Jesus Christ, (2) advance in faith, and (3) simply do my job (what God has called me to do) with joy and trust. Developing adult volunteers as personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church has had a positive effect on my life. The content of this project centered me on the gospel, and its execution trained me to work and find my identity in Jesus alone.

This project pressed me to pray. It inspired me to praise. Great is the Lord and worthy to be praised! Indeed, “sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day”

(Ps 96:1–2).

Furthermore, this project prompted me to prepare. A pastor has to work with the biblical text. He must study it, meditate upon it, practice it, and apply it. As Paul tells Timothy, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). This takes dependence on God and hard work. Certainly, this project helped to establish practices of working, studying, and writing that I want to take with me beyond the completion of this project. I grew in my ability to work and resist distraction; I experienced the joy of deeper study; and I enjoyed the clarity that increased writing could bring.

What is more, this project motivated me to not just work with the biblical text, it pushed me to work with people. Peter tells me,

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Pet 5:1–4).

I need to be an example to the flock. As I did this project, I was reminded that if I want those in my church to be disciples of Jesus who make disciples for Jesus, I should endeavor to be a disciple of Jesus who makes disciples for Jesus. I should be actively looking to make disciples that follow Jesus and join the Christ worshipping, gospel infused, church disciplining, and sacramental life of the church.

The training sessions in this project was just as much for me as it was for my course participants. I need to “preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim 4:2). If I want my church to evangelize, it makes good sense that I should be evangelizing.

Finally, this project stirred me to be a godlier husband and father. The gospel is for my family too. The Bible tells me that I am to love my wife (Eph 5:25), and if I love my wife, I should be pushing her to Jesus and encouraging her to be a personal witness

for Him. Furthermore, I want my children to know the Lord and love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30). As a father, I am instructed to bring my children up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph 6:4). This project encouraged me to continue to share the gospel with my family. It also intensified my desire to have my family live faithfully and die well.⁷

Conclusion

In Revelation 5:12, John describes an angelic declaration he has the privilege of hearing. Thousands upon thousands of angels said with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Jesus is that “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

After His resurrection from the dead and prior to His ascension into heaven, Jesus told his disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt 28:18–20).

All authority has been given to the Lamb of God who is worthy of praise. His bride, the church, is to be about the business of being disciples of Jesus that make disciples for Jesus. This Doctor of Ministry project was an attempt to develop personal witnesses of Jesus Christ at Mustard Seed Church (Paterson, NJ).

I am grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to have done this project. I pray that God will continue to bear fruit through this work and in the lives of every individual who took part in this project. May God be glorified. “Let the heavens be glad, and let the

⁷ In my house, we call death graduation.

earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth” (1 Chr 16:31).

APPENDIX 1

GOSPEL AND PERSONAL EVANGELISM KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY (GPEKI)

This survey sought to assess the knowledge, of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism, possessed by adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess your knowledge of the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism. This research is being conducted by Peter Kim for purposes of project research. In this research, you will complete this survey before participating in a course on personal evangelism. 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. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Directions:

Answer the following multiple choice questions by placing a check in the appropriate box.

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I can define the word "gospel"					
2. The gospel is the message the Holy Spirit uses to save sinners.					
3. Jesus is the only way to the Father.					
4. Where people go, prior to the return of Jesus and immediately after their death, is not where they will spend eternity.					
5. A person can have eternal life now.					
6. All humans will be resurrected bodily.					
7. A Christian without the gift of evangelism should evangelize.					
8. All Christians have the ministry of reconciliation.					
9. All humans are sinners by nature.					
10. I feel comfortable explaining the doctrine of total depravity.					
11. Anyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven.					
12. I can explain the meaning of "regeneration."					

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
13. A person must have access to the gospel in order to be saved.					
14. I can explain the meaning of "justification."					
15. I can explain the meaning of "propitiation."					
16. I can explain the meaning of "salvation."					
17. I can explain the meaning of "sanctification."					
18. I can explain the Great Commission.					
19. I can explain the meaning of "limited atonement."					
20. God does not save us based on His foreknowledge of our response to Him.					
21. I can give a biblical explanation for why all Christians are to evangelize.					
22. God desires all people to be saved.					
23. A person who makes a decision for Christ may yet be unsaved.					
24. I can explain the meaning of "irresistible grace."					
25. I can explain the meaning of "unconditional election."					
26. Preaching is a biblical method of evangelism.					
27. The gospel is foolishness to unbelievers.					
28. Christians should expect to face tribulations in this world.					
29. Cultural and societal contexts may affect, without changing the gospel, how Christians witness.					
30. God created Satan.					
31. As long as they are faithful to the gospel, various evangelism methods, tools, techniques, or methods may be used.					
32. As we walk in the flesh, we are not to war according to the flesh.					

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
33. The Bible calls Satan the ruler of this world.					
34. Satan flees from believers if believers resist him.					
35. Prayer is a critical practice for personal witnesses.					
36. A Christian does not evangelize if he/she does not share the gospel message.					
37. I can define the word apologetics.					
38. Christians may engage in apologetics.					
39. There are various apologetic methods.					
40. The Bible is the best place to ground one's defense of the Christian faith.					
41. Arguments which oppose the Christian faith are inherently faulty.					
42. A sound argument may not always cause someone to be saved.					
43. Sometimes personal witnesses should keep quiet or walk away.					
44. Evangelism is not the only thing a local church should do.					
45. Evangelism should take place in the context of a local church.					
46. When God reconciles sinners to Himself, he also places them with other believers in God's household.					
47. I can distinguish between the local church and parachurch ministries.					
48. The person, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are necessary components of the gospel message.					
49. If Jesus is not a person's Lord, He is not that person's Savior.					
50. I can explain the meaning of "perseverance of the saints."					

APPENDIX 2

PERSONAL EVANGELISM INVENTORY (PEI)

This survey sought to assess the practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism of the adult volunteers who volunteered for a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church.

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess your practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. This research is being conducted by Peter Kim for purposes of project research. In this research, you will complete this survey before participating in a course on personal evangelism. 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. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Directions:

Answer the following multiple choice questions by placing a check in the appropriate box.

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I believe evangelism is a required activity for all Christians.					
2. I am comfortable having spiritual conversations with non-Christians.					
3. I intentionally try to have evangelistic conversations with others.					
4. I try and connect my efforts in evangelism with the local church.					
5. I try to be persuasive in my evangelism.					
6. I feel confident in leading someone through to the point where he/she makes a decision for Christ.					
7. My experiences with evangelism have gone well.					
8. Sharing one's testimony is not sufficient for evangelism.					
9. Good deeds alone are not sufficient for evangelism.					
10. I have led someone to faith in Jesus Christ.					

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. I feel theologically ready to evangelize.					
12. I feel practically ready to evangelize.					
13. I emphasize the Bible's teaching on sin and repentance.					
14. In evangelistic conversations, I often find that I clearly explain the gospel.					
15. I feel confident sharing the gospel with my family.					
16. I feel confident sharing the gospel with a friend.					
17. I feel confident sharing the gospel with a stranger.					
18. Evangelism is an active spiritual discipline in my life.					
19. I approach evangelism with prayerful dependence on the Lord.					
20. I readily apply the gospel to myself.					
21. I believe that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes.					
22. In the past week, I have witnessed to at least one person.					
23. I use various methods to witness.					
24. I feel comfortable training others in personal evangelism.					
25. Success in evangelism is not only measured by how many people I lead to Christ.					
26. I am comfortable using the Bible in evangelism.					
27. I can explain the main points of the gospel message in 3 minutes.					
28. I know where to turn to in the Bible in order to show someone the main points of the gospel.					
29. I have a few verses memorized that I am comfortable using during evangelism.					

Please check the appropriate box	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
30. I enjoy evangelizing.					

APPENDIX 3

POST TRAINING INTERVIEW

This interview was designed to ascertain whether participation in a personal evangelism course conducted by Mustard Seed Church increased participant knowledge of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism. It was also used to determine whether participation in this course resulted in participants evangelizing more obediently, winsomely, and confidently.

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to ascertain how an eight week training on personal witnessing, conducted by Mustard Seed Church, impacted your knowledge of the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism. It is also designed to assess how this training affected your practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism. This research is being conducted by Peter Kim for purposes of project research. In this research, you will answer the following interview questions. 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.

By your completion of this interview, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Directions:

Please answer the following interview questions:

1. How has your knowledge of the gospel changed as a result of this training?
2. Do you believe the Bible teaches that all Christians are to be personal witnesses for Jesus Christ? How has your knowledge of the biblical basis for evangelism changed as a result of this training?
3. How did this training affect your intentionality in (and practice of) evangelism?
4. How did this training affect the methods you use when sharing the gospel?
5. How did this training affect your confidence in sharing the gospel with non-Christians?

APPENDIX 4

PERSONAL EVANGELISM TRAINING CURRICULUM/SESSION NOTES

This personal evangelism training curriculum was created for developing personal witnesses for Jesus Christ. Eight session notes are included.

Lesson 1. The Gospel

1. Why do you want to be trained in evangelism?
2. Goals of this 8 week personal evangelism course.
 - a) Glorify God.
 - b) Assess and increase your knowledge of both the gospel and the biblical basis for personal evangelism.
 - c) Assess and increase your practice, motivation, and confidence in personal evangelism.

We want you to be equipped to evangelize more obediently, winsomely, and confidently!

While we cannot cover everything, we aim to provide a foundational yet robust personal evangelism training.

3. The lessons in this training:
 - I. The Gospel
 - II. What is Evangelism? Why Do It?
 - III. Salvation—Part I
 - IV. Salvation—Part II
 - V. Evangelism Tools, Techniques, and Strategies
 - VI. Evangelism and Spiritual Warfare
 - VII. Evangelism and Apologetics
 - VIII. Evangelism and The Local Church
4. Surveys:
 - a) Gospel and Personal Evangelism Knowledge Inventory (GPEKI)
 - b) Personal Evangelism Inventory (PEI)

5. Lesson 1: The Gospel

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. —Paul the Apostle

6. What does “gospel” mean?

According to the Oxford Dictionary:

Etymology: Old English *godspel*, good tidings.

According to the New Bible Dictionary:

Gospel (Gk. *Euangelion*, 'good news'). In classical literature the word designated the reward given for good tidings. It also indicated the message itself, originally the announcement of victory, but later applied to other messages bringing joy. That it is found more than 75 times in the NT indicates a distinctly Christian connotation. The gospel is the good news that God in Jesus Christ has fulfilled his promises to Israel, and that a way of salvation has been opened to all.

7. The Gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ.
It is glad tidings of the Lord who saves.
It is the message of the divine Son of God, Jesus Christ, and His life, death for sins, resurrection, and extension of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:1–11 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

8. The gospel is a message for all people. It is a message God graciously commands created humans to receive.

Mark 1:14–15 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Luke 24:46–47 And (Jesus) said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

9. Each person must individually believe in Jesus Christ.

John 3:16–18 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be

saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name

To believe in Jesus Christ is to receive Jesus Christ.

10. The gospel is the means by which God saves.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 10:13–17 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

11. The gospel is good news because we are all sinners, and we all have sinned.

Romans 5:12–20 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound

12. Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalm 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Isaiah 53:6a All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

13. The penalty for sin is death.

Romans 6:23a For the wages of sin *is* death

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

14. Until Jesus returns, all humans, except for a few exclusions in history (Enoch and Elijah), have experienced or will experience a physical death.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

15. Prior to the final judgment, those who die in their sins will go to a place of conscious torment and will experience separation from God. This is a disembodied state often translated “hell” (from Hb. *Sheol*/Gk. *Hades*). Note: In the Bible, *Sheol/Hades* can sometimes simply refer to the grave. Context will help determine meaning.

Luke 16:23–24 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

16. Before the final judgment, all sinners will be physically resurrected. After the final judgment, those who are unreconciled to the Lord will have their part in the lake of fire. Also known as “hell” (Gr. *Gehenna*), this is the ultimate destination for sinners. This place of embodied punishment is known as the second death. It is the final destination for Satan and his demons as well.

Revelation 20:10–14 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

17. Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sin.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Hebrews 2:14–15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Hebrews 10:5; 11–14 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

18. Three days after he died on the cross, Jesus rose again from the dead.

Matthew 28:5–6 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Romans 8:34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Acts 13:33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

19. Repent and trust in Jesus, and you will be saved! You will have eternal life now.

Romans 10:9–13 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made

unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

1 John 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:28–29 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

20. You cannot earn salvation. It is a gift you receive from God by faith alone. It comes by God's grace alone, not by works.

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

21. Someone who is saved will bear good fruit. While you are saved by Christ's grace alone through faith alone, one's faith is shown to be true by his/her Holy Spirit empowered good works. Works perfect faith. They complete faith or bring faith to maturity.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

James 2:20–24 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Matthew 7:17–20 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt

tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

22. Romans 6:1–2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Galatians 5:19–25 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

23. 2 Peter 1:2–11 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

24. We must all appear before the judgment seat of God. Christians are not condemned, but they will be judged on their works. Sinners will be condemned.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

John 5:24; 28–29 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Romans 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

25. 1 Corinthians 3:8–15 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

26. Christians who die before the return of the Lord will go immediately into the presence of Jesus. This place where God dwells is called heaven. For Christians, this intermediate state is disembodied yet sinless and glorious.

Luke 23:42–43 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

27. 2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Philippians 1:21–23 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Hebrews 12:22–23 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

28. Christians will be resurrected with a glorified body like that of the Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:51–55 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on

immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

Philippians 3:20–21 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

29. God will establish a new heaven and a new earth (with a new Jerusalem).
Christians will forever live on the new earth, worshiping the Lord with glorified bodies and enjoying His presence.

2 Peter 3:10–13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

30. Romans 8:19–22 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

31. Revelation 21:1–4 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.

32. Conclusion:

What is the gospel? Greg Gilbert in his book, *What Is the Gospel?*, summarizes the issues addressed by the gospel as: God, Man, Christ, Response. With Christ as your foundation, this is a helpful outline to memorize and use.

1 Corinthians 15:1–2 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

1 Peter 1:23–25: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

33. How has this lesson clarified your thinking on the gospel message? Do you think you can more faithfully explain the gospel to yourself and others?

34. Questions/Comments

35. Who are 3 people with whom you can pray God will give you an opportunity to share the gospel?

Commit to praying for them throughout the course of this training—the next 2 months. Look for opportunities to share the gospel with them.

36. Memory Verse:

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God

Memorize Gospel Outline:

Christ, God, Man, Christ, Response

Lesson 2. What Is Evangelism? Why Do It?

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests

2. What do you think about when you hear the word evangelism? Do you think every Christian should do it?

3. Review Memory Verses

I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God

4. Luke 24:45–47 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and

remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

5. ‘Not called!’ did you say? ‘Not heard the call,’ I think you should say. Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear him bid you go and pull sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitiful wail for help. Go stand by the gates of hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father’s house and bid their brothers and sisters, and servants and masters not to come there. And then look Christ in the face, whose mercy you have professed to obey, and tell him whether you will join heart and soul and body and circumstances in the march to publish his mercy to the world.” — William Booth
6. Evangelism is the announcement of glad tidings. As it pertains to the good news of Jesus Christ, evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The word comes from the Greek words *euangelion* (glad tidings/gospel) and *euangelizo* (to announce glad tidings).

Oxford English Dictionary defines evangelism as:

The preaching or promulgation of the Gospel; performance of the function of an evangelist.

While not all Christians are called to be evangelists, all Christians are called to evangelize.

7. Why should all Christians evangelize?
8. Love for God and love for our neighbors compel us to evangelize.

Mark 12:28–31 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

2 Corinthians 5:14–15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

9. The Holy Spirit and the Scriptures bear witness of Jesus.

John 15:26–27 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Christians, temples of the Holy Spirit, rightly living by the Spirit and the Scriptures will live and speak in such a way to bear witness to Jesus for the Spirit and the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus.

10. Jesus, the one on whom the Holy Spirit remained, Himself the good news, bore witness to the good news.

Mark 1:13–15 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

While Christians do not do everything Jesus did, Christians are to follow Him. Christians following the example of Christ should evangelize.

11. The apostles were commissioned to make disciples. Their disciples were to make their own disciples who would then make their own disciples.

Matthew 28:18–20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

12. The early church evangelized.

Acts 8:1–4 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

13. Christians, ambassadors for Christ, have the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18–20 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in

Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

14. The gospel is a matter of first importance. It is the means by which humans are saved, and it is the truth upon which Christians must continue to stand. Christians should know this and be compelled to witness for Christ.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. —Paul the Apostle

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

15. Romans 10:13–17 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
16. The nations are called to worship the Lord. Christians, who are to live for the glory of God, are to evangelize and tell of God's glory and wonderful deeds among the nations.

Psalm 96:1–6 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. For the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised: he *is* to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations *are* idols: but the LORD made the heavens. Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

The nations cannot worship the Lord aright if they do not hear the gospel.

17. How has this lesson impacted your view on whether all Christians should personally witness for Christ?
18. Questions/Comments

19. Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.

20. Memory verse:

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Lesson 3. Salvation—Part I

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests

2. Why do we need to be saved? What happens when someone is saved?

Let's take a closer look at the Bible's teaching on salvation.

3. Review Memory Verses

I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

4. 1 Peter 2:9–10 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

5. Whether humans acknowledge it or not, human beings are in deep trouble. We are totally depraved. This does not mean that all humans are as bad as they can be. God has graciously put restraints to sin in the world (ex. conscience, parents, government, and the church). Nevertheless, we are sinners by nature, descendants of Adam, unable to please God.

Romans 7:18a For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:

Psalm 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

6. Romans 5:18–19 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

7. Not only are we sinners by nature, we are sinners by choice. We are, once again, totally depraved, unable to please God.

(Total Depravity)

Isaiah 53:6a All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

8. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Ephesians 2:1–3 And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

9. As sinners, everything we do is sin. Even our “good” deeds are unacceptable to God. We cannot come to God on our own ability or goodness. Instead, we deserve death and hell.

Romans 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 14:23c for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

10. BUT

God loves sinners and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to be the perfect, once for all, atoning sacrifice for the sin. Jesus lived the perfect life we could not live, died on the cross, resurrected from the dead, ascended to heaven, and is coming back. His shed blood at Calvary is sufficient to atone for all the sins of all mankind. Therefore, anyone who hears the good news of Jesus Christ and believes in Jesus will be saved.

John 3:16–19 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And

this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Romans 10:9–10 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11. Anyone may come to Jesus and find forgiveness and salvation.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

12. 1 Timothy 1:15 This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Acts 10:42–43 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

1 Timothy 2:1–4 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

13. In order for someone to enter the kingdom of heaven, he/she must be born again of the Holy Spirit.
(*Regeneration*)

John 3:5–8 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound

thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

You need brand new life.

14. In order for someone to believe in Jesus, he/she must have access to the gospel.

Romans 10:13–17 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

15. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Romans 1:16).

Its saving message is:

- a) A message of the Kingdom (Matthew 24:14; Mark 1:15)
- b) A message of Truth (Colossians 1:5)
- c) A message of Hope (Colossians 1:23)
- d) A message of Peace (Ephesians 6:15)
- e) A message that brings life and immortality to light (2 Timothy 1:10)

I am much helped here and in the sections on what salvation means for believers by Mark McCloskey's Tell It Often-Tell It Well (p. 18–19).

16. Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Colossians 1:5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Ephesians 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

2 Timothy 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

17. Saved Christians are regenerated. They are born again. They are new creations.

James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

John 1:12–13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

18. Saved Christians are justified—they are declared “not guilty” by God. Christians have right standing with God through Jesus Christ. They are forgiven and rescued from the wrath of God.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Isaiah 53:5–6, 11 But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

19. Romans 4:6–8 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, *Saying*, Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Ephesians 4:31–32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

20. Saved Christians receive mercy instead of wrath—Jesus is their propitiation.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

Romans 3:24–25 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

21. Saved Christians are redeemed—they have been bought and rescued by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 1:7–8 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

1 Peter 1:17–19 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

22. Saved Christians are reconciled to God.

Romans 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

23. Saved Christians are adopted into the family of God. Once children of wrath and of the devil, Christians are now sons and daughters of God.

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Romans 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Galatians 4:6–7 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

24. Saved Christians are sanctified—the Lord has set them apart for Himself. In Christ, they are saints, truly.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Acts 26:16–18 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Ephesians 1:18–21 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

25. Saved Christians are sealed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13–14 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

2 Corinthians 1:21–22 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

26. How does the Bible's teaching on human sinfulness affect your view of yourself, the church, and the world?

How does learning what God has done in salvation affect you?

Which part of the today's lesson had a particular impact on you? Why?

How does examining what the Bible teaches on salvation alter your motivation and practice of evangelism?

27. Questions/Comments

28. Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.

29. Memory Verse:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Lesson 4. Salvation—Part II

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests

2. How is someone saved?

3. Review Memory Verses

- I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
- II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
- III. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

4. 1 Peter 2:9–10 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

5. Although the world may receive salvation freely, many will not believe in Jesus and be saved. Sinful humans reject the rule and reign of their Creator God. God rightly holds sinners accountable for their sins and unbelief.

Romans 1:20–25 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

6. Acts 7:51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye.

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

John 3:18–19 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

7. Sinners refuse to repent and trust in Jesus because they are not one of God's sheep.

John 6:64–65 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

John 10:25–26 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

8. God overcomes sinful rebellion and irresistibly and graciously brings His children to saving faith. No work or merit from the sinner adds to this or causes this. The Father draws His children to the Son. He grants them faith and repentance.
(Irresistible Grace and Unconditional Election)

John 1:12–13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 6:35–37 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

9. God's unconditional election of His children is solely God's prerogative and work. It is an election that was determined by God, for His glory, before the foundation of the world. As a result of God's predestination, Christians will, acting freely, believe in Jesus and be saved. This will happen infallibly.

Romans 8:28–30 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Ephesians 1:3–6 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

10. Acts 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

2 Timothy 2:24–25 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

11. 1 Corinthians 1:21–24 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3–6 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus's sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

12. God is just and kind in his election of the saved and in his non-election of the reprobate.

Romans 9:10–26 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over

the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

13. Jesus died for all. But not all will be saved. While Jesus died for all, Jesus did not die for all in the same way. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for all the sins of all men. The gospel genuinely declares salvation to the world. Anyone who believes in Jesus will be saved. Jesus's sacrifice is powerful and sufficient. Nevertheless and furthermore, at the cross, Jesus particularly/definitely atoned for the sins of His people—those who in fact believe(d)/will believe in Jesus. Jesus's sacrifice at the cross establishes the new covenant and all the benefits of the new covenant—including saving faith.
(*Limited atonement*)

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

2 Corinthians 5:18–19 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

1 John 2:1–2 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

14. John 10:11, 15 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep... As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Romans 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

15. Jeremiah 31:31–34 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 32:39–41 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

16. Christians, members of the New Covenant, unconditionally elected by God, are positionally sanctified as well as progressively being sanctified. They will persevere in their faith and will bear good fruit because the God who chose them and loves them will preserve them. Christians will continue to sin each day, but they will not renounce the faith nor exit the joyful fight of faith. They will ultimately be glorified. Those who leave the faith finally show that they were not genuine Christians.
(*Perseverance of the Saints*)

John 10:27–30 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. I and *my* Father are one.

Romans 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

17. Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Mark 13:13 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Philippians 2:12–13 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

18. 1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

19. Was there anything in this lesson that surprised you?

God predestines and elects. God uses means. People make real choices. How does learning what the Bible teaches about salvation give you more freedom to share the gospel?

How does learning what the Bible teaches about salvation affect how you see your own salvation?

20. Questions/Comments

21. Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.

22. Memory Verse:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lesson 5. Evangelism Methods, Tools, Techniques, and Strategies

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests
2. How should/can we evangelize? What are some of the evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies that you have used in the past?

3. Review Memory Verses

- I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
- II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
- III. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
- IV. Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4. Any method of evangelism will work if God is in it. —Leonard Ravenhill

5. Recall:

Evangelism is the announcement of glad tidings. As it pertains to the good news of Jesus Christ, evangelism is the announcement of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The word “evangelism” comes from the Greek words *euangelion* (glad tidings/gospel) and *euangelizo* (to announce glad tidings).

Oxford English Dictionary defines evangelism as:

The preaching or promulgation of the Gospel; performance of the function of an evangelist.

While not all Christians are called to be evangelists, all Christians are called to evangelize. Each Christian is to be a personal witness.

6. It may seem evident, but it is very important to mention: faithful, biblical personal witnesses properly announce the Word of God and the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ. This is absolutely critical. Evangelism methods and strategies may change, but biblical evangelism is the announcement of the gospel. A faithful witness must promulgate the biblical gospel. Faithful witnesses understand that the Word of God is the means by which the Holy Spirit brings people to faith. While seeking to be sensitive to the leading of Holy Spirit in the evangelism methods they use, personal witnesses hold fast to and promulgate the biblical gospel, recognizing that an unbeliever cannot believe and be saved if he/she does not have access to the gospel.

Romans 10:13–17 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Psalm 119:41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

Psalm 119:105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

7. Psalm 119:130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

8. Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

9. A personal witness, a disciple maker should be a disciple him/herself. Evangelism should be a fruit of a person's relationship with Jesus. It should be an act of joyful, loving, and faithful obedience to King Jesus.

Mark 1:17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

John 15:1–4 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Philippians 2:12–13 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

10. Personal witnesses should understand that the gospel message is foolishness to unbelievers, and they should strive to please God, not men.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

11. A personal witness should love. Christians love God and love their neighbors as a result of being loved by God through Jesus Christ,

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Ezekiel 18:23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: *and* not that he should return from his ways, and live?

Luke 19:41–42 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

12. Exodus 32:32–33 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

Romans 9:3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

Luke 10:27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

13. A personal witness should be committed to evangelize even in the face of difficulty, suffering, and persecution.

Mark 8:34–35 And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

James 1:2–4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

14. Philippians 3:8–11 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ¹¹ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

John 15:18–21 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Matthew 5:11–12 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

15. Personal witnesses may use a variety of methods in order to faithfully announce the gospel. One particularly biblical method is preaching (both indoors and outdoors).

Matthew 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

Luke 9:6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

Mark 1:39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

Acts 5:42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:3–4 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

16. Personal witnesses may also engage their neighbors in dialogue and seek to relevantly, compassionately, and purposefully evangelize.

John 4: 5–26 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

17. “Jesus breaks through several barriers that often stop us cold. He speaks to a woman (sex and cultural barriers of the day), who is a Samaritan (religious and ethnic barriers). He is never condescending but rather asks help of her. Moving from a common concern on the physical level (water, thirst), he develops a conversation about spiritual matters. He never manipulates her nor compromises the truth. He brings her back to the central issue again and again. He is patient, he exposes her unspoken needs, and he speaks to her conscience.” —Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel Wholly by Grace Communicated Truthfully & Lovingly*

In dialogue:

We do not need to “affirm and accept all that the unbeliever says, but [we should] enter every conversation with [our] mind[s] set on understanding him, looking for the best opportunity to present whatever portion of the gospel the Lord allows.” —Jim Stitzinger III, “Starting the Conversation: A Practical Approach to Real-Life Evangelism,” in *Evangelism: How to Share the Gospel Faithfully*.

18. The kind of relationship we have with someone, along with the type of person someone is, can affect how Christians engage in dialogue. Christians should ask God for wisdom and discernment as they look to witness clearly and winsomely.

Will Metzger helpfully proposes that our relationships can be broken down as: long-term intimate, long-term acquaintance, short-term intimate, and short-term acquaintance. He advises that there are many different *types* of people, including: the ignorant and indifferent, the self-righteous, the synthetic Christian, the deliberate atheist, and the seeker.

19. “Conversation topics exist in three concentric circles, like layers of an onion. The outermost layer of conversation is where we talk about interests, . . . the middle layer is where we talk about values, . . . [and] the central layer is where we talk about worldviews. . . . Learn to ask questions that transition from one layer of the conversation to the next.” —Sam Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable*

20. Cultural and societal context can also affect how personal witnesses witness. While the gospel message does not change, Christians may change their evangelism methods in order to faithfully and fruitfully bear witness.

1 Corinthians 9:20–23 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*.

21. Personal witnesses may make use of other mediums or tools to convey the gospel message. For example, they may use braille or sign language, give out Bibles or gospel tracts, or make use of technological means such as the Jesus film, text messages, or websites.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

22. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it not as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

1 Peter 1:22–23 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

People are born again through the word of God. The word of God is living and powerful. Get it into the world.

23. Tools, like tracts, may be particularly beneficial in assisting new believers in sharing the gospel and may enable personal witnesses to helpfully leave something with a person with whom they have had a conversation.

24. Personal witnesses may follow an evangelism structure/training if it will enable them to evangelize more winsomely, boldly, and consistently.

“Training, strategy, tools and methodology are inseparably linked to the concept of biblical effectiveness...It is obvious that Jesus appreciated the power of basic training to mobilize His disciples by helping to overcome the inertia of their uncertainty, fear, and lack of experience.” — Mark McCloskey, *Tell It Often-Tell It Well: Making the Most of Witnessing Opportunities*

“Find a method which we can use with the gifts we have, given the opportunities which come our way.” —John Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel: A Down-to-Earth Guide to Sharing Your Faith*

25. Personal witnesses should seek to adorn the gospel message with good works.

Matthew 5:13–16 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a

candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

1 Peter 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

26. How has this lesson helped to establish some ground rules for you as a personal witness?

How has this lesson clarified your thinking in regard to evangelism methods, tools, techniques, and strategies?

27. Resources:

Audio Bibles and Gospel Films: www.faithcomesbyhearing.com

Jesus Film: www.jesusfilm.org

Southern Seminary Experiencing God's Grace Gospel Tract:
<https://sbts-wordpress-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/sbts/uploads/sites/8/2017/05/Grace-tract-2015.pdf>

28. Questions/Comments

Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.

29. Step out in faith and engage someone else with the gospel. What is one evangelism method or strategy you would like to try?

30. Memory Verse:

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Lesson 6. Evangelism and Spiritual Warfare

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests
2. What is Spiritual Warfare? How aware are you of spiritual warfare? What stories do you have of spiritual warfare?
3. Review Memory Verses
 - I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
 - II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

- III. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
 - IV. Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - V. Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
4. Ephesians 6:10–13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Spiritual warfare is real. Personal witnesses are to be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might

5. Spiritual warfare is “a theological term used to describe the ongoing battle between the church and the Devil and his angels. The term is not used in the Bible but is derived from a conception of the struggles of the Christian life... The cosmic struggle that [Paul] describes [in Ephesians 6:12] is the struggle to which ‘spiritual warfare’ generally refers.” —John Gilhooly, *40 Questions about Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare*

An explanation of the conflict within people, within and between societies, and throughout the earth may be found in the Bible. Behind and beyond earthly conflicts is a cosmic struggle between God and Satan for control of humanity and earth. The first eleven chapters of the Bible describe the beginning of human life and the spreading of evil that engulfed the earth after humanity’s fall. The last book of the Bible describes the ultimate resolution of the conflict at the end of the ages when evil is banished and followers of Christ inherit a redeemed and restored, “new” earth. —Gary Dennis, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry*

6. God made all of creation for Him.

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

We do not know all the details, but at some point between his creation and his introduction in Genesis 3, Satan sinned against God.

Personal witnesses read of their adversary, the serpent of old, the devil/Satan, the accuser, early on in the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

7. Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan's temptation and sinned against God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Before cursing humanity, God cursed the serpent:

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Jesus is the fulfillment of this word.

8. Every time Jesus cast out a demon, healed the sick, or raised the dead, He was assaulting the kingdom of darkness. Jesus was entering the strong man's house, binding him with His superior strength, and plundering his stolen property (see Luke 13:16). Jesus's ultimate overthrow of Satan . . . took place at the cross. . . . At the cross, Jesus was stripping Satan of his power and performing the ultimate rescue operation (John 12:27–31). The cross was an act of judgment evicting the ruler of this world. Years later, the apostle John would reflect on the incarnation and death of Jesus with these words: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). —Brian Borgman and Rob Ventura, *Spiritual Warfare: A Biblical & Balanced Perspective*

John 12:27–31 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

9. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He has transferred Christians from the domain of darkness to His very own kingdom. God will soon crush Satan under the feet of believers. For now, Christians who remain in this world take part in spiritual warfare. Evangelism, the means by which the Holy Spirit saves, takes place at the frontlines of spiritual warfare.

Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

John 17:14–15 have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

10. Personal witnesses should be aware of the schemes of the devil.

2 Corinthians 2:10–11 To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Christians are “engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization.” —Lausanne Covenant Statement of Faith

11. The devil and his followers actively work to derail believers and keep unbelievers in darkness.

2 Corinthians 11:1–15 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*. For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. But though *I be* rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things. Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all *things* I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

12. Ephesians 4:17–32 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

13. Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

2 Corinthians 4:3–4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

14. Personal witnesses are to resist the devil, his schemes, and his demonic forces.

Matthew 4:1–11 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written

again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

15. Mark 9:17–27 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

16. James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 John 2:15–17 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

2 Corinthians 10:3–6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Ephesians 6:14–17 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the

fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

17. “Each piece of armor is tied to a principle of the Christian life. God specifically calls us to defend ourselves in these arenas of life because they are the places where Satan attacks. Because he is the father of lies, he attacks truth. The adversary seeks to bring division so we need to defend unity. Most of all, Satan seeks condemnation for us so we need salvation.” —Jerry Rankin, *Spiritual Warfare: The Battle for God’s Glory*

“The essence of putting on the armor is living daily in truth, righteousness, faith, and hope, while always being ready to proclaim the gospel of peace found in the Word. . . . This process is not about mystical prayer that magically applies the weaponry to believers’s lives each day. Rather, it is about discipleship and spiritual growth that affect all of one’s life. Wearing the armor is about *daily living* as a follower of Christ.” — Charles E. Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001).

18. Personal witnesses must depend on God. We must pray.

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Luke 22:40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

Ephesians 6:18–20 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

19. Colossians 4:2–4 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

Acts 4:29–31 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

20. “Prayer should not be considered simply another weapon in the believer’s arsenal but the means by which one stands firm and uses the sword of the Spirit. . . . [It] may be the believer’s greatest and most effective way of wielding the weapons of

spiritual warfare, especially when it involves intercession.” —William F. Cook III and Chuck Lawless, *Spiritual Warfare in the Storyline of Scripture*

21. Central to the issue of spiritual conflict is the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news of Jesus Christ communicated through the power of the Holy Spirit is the means by which people experience salvation. The gospel alone has the power to effect the transfer of people from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God. The gospel alone has the power to bring people into conformity with the will of God. . . . [Thus] evangelism and spiritual warfare are interrelated realities vital to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. —Gary Dennis, “Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism.”

Matthew 28:18–20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

All authority, in heaven and on earth, has been given to Jesus. Go and make disciples!

22. How has your views on spiritual warfare changed as a result of this lesson?
23. What prayer requests do you have as this lesson comes to a close?
24. What ways of thinking do you need to bring into obedience to Christ?
25. How does your awareness to Satan and his schemes, fears, lies, and worldly values strengthen you in your evangelism?
26. Questions/Comments
27. Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.
28. What evangelism tool, method, or strategy would you like to try?
29. Memory Verses:

Romans 10:9–11 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Lesson 7. Evangelism and Apologetics

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests

2. What is apologetics? How are apologetics and evangelism related? What has been your experience with apologetics?
3. Review Memory Verses
 - I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
 - II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
 - III. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
 - IV. Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - V. Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
 - VI. Romans 10:9–11 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
4. 2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

5. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church defines “apologetics” as: “the defence of the Christian belief and of the Christian way against alternatives and against criticism.”

“In the classic sense of the word, ‘apologetics’ derives its meaning from the Greek word *apologia*, which means ‘defense.’ A judicial term, it describes the way a lawyer deliberately and rationally presents a verbal defense of a particular claim. Or, more precisely, apologetics is to ‘speak away’ (*apo* = away, from; *logia* = speech, word) the charge brought against an individual. . . . In secular society, the use of apologetics as a defense against an attack occurred as early as the 5th century BC when Socrates presented his own defense before an Athenian court, which was later chronicled by his student Greek philosopher Plato in *The Apology*. During the 1st century AD, Josephus offered an apologetic on the ancient origin of the Jewish religion in his *Against Apion* (AD 93–95).” —H. Wayne House and Joseph M. Holden, *Charts of Apologetics and Christian Evidences*.

6. [Apologetics] is an intellectual discipline that is usually said to serve at least two purposes: (1) to bolster the faith of Christian believers, and (2) to aid in the task of evangelism. Apologists seek to accomplish these goals in two distinct ways. One is by refuting objections to the Christian faith. . . . This apologetic task can be

called *negative* or *defensive apologetics*. The second, perhaps complementary, way apologists fulfill their purposes is by offering positive reasons for the Christian faith. The latter, called *positive* or *offensive apologetics*, often takes the form of arguments for God's existence or for the resurrection and deity of Christ but are by no means limited to these." —Steven B. Cowan, *Five Views on Apologetics*

7. Various methods are used do Christian apologetics. Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr. point out four basic apologetic methods in their book, *Faith Has Its Reasons: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*. These are: (1) classical (emphasis on logical criteria), (2) evidentialism (emphasis on empirical and historical facts), (3) Reformed (emphasis on the truth of Christianity), and (4) fideism (emphasis on personal encounter).

8. The word of God is living and powerful. It is fitting to ground your defense of the Christian faith on the Bible.

9. Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Psalm 119:160 Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

10. In the Bible God presents his truth over against error, speaking it into a sinful world, always having in view the objections of his opponents. The authors of the Bible, divine and human, seek to present their message cogently, rationally, persuasively. This is not to say that the Bible is a collection of rational syllogisms, but that in all its genres, even in its poetic, narrative, and wisdom teaching, it seeks to present God's message as right, true, and persuasive. —John M. Frame, "Apologetics," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*.

11. Personal witnesses may use other methods to reason. Because God and the Bible are true, genuine extra-biblical evidences will agree with the Bible's testimony.

One does not need to be an expert in apologetics before doing evangelism. The gospel message, the only message that saves, is the most powerful apologetic for the hope that is in you. Nevertheless, God can use other apologetics to clear obstacles and draw people to Christ. The Christian faith can handle scrutiny. Stepping out in faith to have conversations will strengthen your faith.

1 Peter 3:14–15 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be*

ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

12. Personal witnesses should be winsome and wise while engaging in the work of evangelism and apologetics.

2 Timothy 2:14, 23–26 Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers... But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

13. Since God the Creator and His word are true, objections to the Christian faith will inherently be faulty. Be on the lookout for these flaws.

Examples (from *Tactics* by Gregory Koukl):

“There is no truth.” (Is this statement true?)

“There are no absolutes.” (Is this an absolute?)

“You can only know truth through experience.” (What experience taught you that truth?)

“Never take anyone’s advice on that issue.” (Should I take your advice on that?)

14. As in the lesson on Evangelism Methods, Tools, Techniques, and Strategies, personal witnesses in a dialogue with others may find it extremely beneficial to ask questions.

“Sometimes the little things have the greatest impact. Using simple leading questions is an almost effortless way to introduce spiritual topics to a conversation without seeming abrupt, rude, or pushy. Questions are engaging and interactive, probing yet amicable. Most important, they keep you in the driver’s seat while someone else does all the work.”
—Gregory Koukl, *Tactics*

15. Sometimes personal witnesses need to walk away or keep silent. Ask God for wisdom.

Mark 6:11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Proverbs 23:9 Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

Matthew 21:27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

16. “There is nothing magical about a sound line of logic. For some people, reason doesn’t matter. Some other barrier stands in the way. Sometimes people have emotional reasons for resisting. Bad experiences with Christians or with churches, or pressures from family or culture are enough to blind a person to our appeals. Others balk because of prejudice. They never really consider our message because their minds are already made up. Finally, for many people, simple rebellion is the best explanation for rejection...Steamrollers overpower you with strong personalities and interrupt constantly...Step one, stop the interruption graciously but firmly, then briefly negotiate an agreement. Step two, shame him by making a very direct request for courtesy. Step three, leave. Never match a steamroller’s incivility with rudeness. Instead, let him have the last word, then calmly walk away.” — Gregory Koukl, *Tactics*

17. Personal witnesses will do well to prepare for common questions or arguments. These include concerns on: the truth, the existence and nature of God, evil, the Bible and its trustworthiness, the person and work of Jesus Christ, Jesus’s resurrection, the church, other religions and worldviews, miracles, the afterlife, science, marriage and family, and politics.

Proverbs 16:23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

18. Answer with wisdom and seek to direct the conversation to Jesus.

We should “always favor the one which leads toward the gospel rather than away from it...Our aim is not only to answer people’s questions but do it in such a way that they will consider the gospel and become Christians themselves.” —John Chapman, *Know & Tell the Gospel: A Down-to-Earth Guide to Sharing Your Faith*.

19. How does this lesson equip you in your task to be a personal witness for Jesus?

20. Which apologetic method are you most comfortable using?

21. What specific question(s) do you find difficult to answer?

22. General Questions/Comments

23. Continue to pray for and look for opportunities to evangelize your 3.

24. Step out in faith and engage someone else with the gospel.

25. Memory Verse:

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Lesson 8. Evangelism and The Local Church

1. Thoughts/Questions/Comments/Testimonies/Prayer Requests
2. What is the relationship between evangelism and the local church?
3. Review Memory Verses
 - I. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
 - II. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
 - III. Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
 - IV. Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - V. Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
 - VI. Romans 10:9–11 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
 - VII. Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
4. Evangelism leads to a right relationship with God. As a result, evangelism also leads to fellowship with the church. When God saves an individual, He makes him/her alive with Christ. He reconciles the sinner to Himself, and He places him/her with other believers in God's household.

Ephesians 2:1–22 And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

5. Converts should plug into a biblically healthy local church. Along with church leaders and other believers, they should partake in the Christ worshipping, gospel infused, church disciplining, sacramental life of the church.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:41–47 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

6. Matthew 18:15–17 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

1 Corinthians 11:18–26 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

7. Personal witnesses should be in a local church. Evangelism by members of God's new covenant family inherently takes place in the context of the local church. Parachurch ministries, many of which do excellent work in assisting personal witnesses, should understand their role in coming alongside the local church. Local church leaders should train individuals in evangelism.

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Acts 1:8, 2:1–5, 11 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth... And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven... Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

8. Acts 9:17–20 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

Acts 13:1–3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and

Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

Ephesians 4:11–13 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

9. Evangelism is not the only thing churches do, but healthy, worshipping, local churches consistently bear witness to Christ and His work in our lives.

2 Timothy 2:1–2 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

1 Timothy 3:14–16 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

2 Timothy 4:1–2 I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

10. Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 14:24–25 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

John 13:34–35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

2 Corinthians 2:15–16 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

11. How do you view the local church?

Ephesians 5:25–27 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

12. How has this lesson influenced your thinking in regard to the relationship between evangelism and the local church?

13. How can you more closely align your personal witnessing efforts with the local church?

14. How can churches more closely align their assemblies with the task of personal witnessing?

15. Questions/Comments/Review of Lesson and Course

16. Memory Verses:

John 3:16–19 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

17. Feedback on this whole course.

18. Post Training Interviews.

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING PERSONAL WITNESSES AT MUSTARD SEED CHURCH IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

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This project aimed to develop adult volunteers into personal witnesses at Mustard Seed Church in Paterson, New Jersey. Chapter 1 describes the context, rationale, purpose, goals, research methodology, pertinent definitions, limitations, and delimitations of the project. Chapter 2 exegetes four biblical texts to demonstrate that the Bible teaches that Christians are to be personal witnesses who proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical, practical, and historical issues that are related to being a personal witness and establishes that personal witnesses should aim to overcome spiritual, cultural, intellectual, religious, and relational barriers to personal evangelism. Chapter 4 provides project details and describes the preparation and implementation of the project. Chapter 5 examines and evaluates the entire project and supplies theological and personal reflections.

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