

Copyright © 2024 John Randall Breedlove

All rights reserved. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has permission to reproduce and disseminate this document in any form by any means for purposes chosen by the Seminary, including, without limitation, preservation or instruction.

EQUIPPING THE DIACONATE OF MEXIA BAPTIST  
CHURCH IN FRISCO CITY, ALABAMA, IN THE  
PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM

---

A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

---

by  
John Randall Breedlove  
December 2024

**APPROVAL SHEET**

EQUIPPING THE DIACONATE OF MEXIA BAPTIST  
CHURCH IN FRISCO CITY, ALABAMA, IN THE  
PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM

John Randall Breedlove

Read and Approved by:

Faculty Supervisor: Timothy K. Beougher

Second Reader: Joseph C. Harrod

Defense Date: October 21, 2024

For the glory of God

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
PREFACE .....	viii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Context .....	1
Rationale .....	4
Purpose .....	4
Goals .....	4
Research Methodology.....	5
Definitions and Delimitations .....	6
Conclusion .....	7
2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR EQUIPPING A DIACONATE .....	8
The Message of the Gospel That Believers Are to Share (Rom 3:22–25; Luke 24:46–49) .....	8
The Content of the Gospel Message Is Contained in (Rom 3:22–25; Luke 24:46–49) .....	9
The Content of the Gospel Is Powered By the Spirit that Indwells Romans 3:22–25 .....	11
The Holy Spirit as the Empowerment for the Believer to Evangelize (Acts 1:8) .....	13
Pastors/Leaders Are Equippers for the Laity to Do Great Commission Ministry (Eph 4:11–13) .....	16
Faith in God’s Sovereignty and Grace Sustains the Believer in Evangelism (Isa 55:10–11) .....	20
Conclusion .....	23

Chapter	Page
3. THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO EQUIPPING A DIACONATE .....	24
Common Barriers in Evangelism and Paths to Overcome Them .....	24
Deficiencies of Western Cultural Christianity .....	30
Common Methods of Evangelism.....	34
The FAITH Evangelism Model.....	38
Conclusion .....	41
4. DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT .....	43
Project Overview.....	43
Teaching the Lessons .....	44
Session 1: What Is Evangelism?.....	45
Session 2: What Is the Gospel Message? .....	48
Session 3: How Should One Evangelize?.....	52
Session 4: How to Communicate the Gospel to Western Cultural Christianity .....	56
Session 5: Common Methods of Evangelism to Effectively Share the Gospel.....	59
Session 6: Common Barriers in Evangelism and Paths to Overcome Them .....	68
Conclusion .....	74
5. ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, AND REFLECTION ON THE PROJECT.....	75
Evaluation of the Purpose .....	75
Evaluation of the Goals.....	76
Goal 1.....	76
Goal 2.....	77
Goal 3.....	78
Strengths of the Project .....	79
Weaknesses of the Project and What I Would Do Differently .....	80

	Page
Theological and Personal Reflections .....	81
Conclusion .....	82
 Appendix	
1. PRE-EVANGELISM ASSESSMENT SURVEY .....	83
2. CURRICULUM EVALUATION TOOL .....	86
3. POST-EVANGELISM PRACTICES SURVEY .....	88
4. T-TEST RESULTS .....	91
5. BETHLEHEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION PASTORS EXPERT PANEL REVIEW.....	92
6. PRE-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES .....	95
7. POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES.....	97
8. EVANGELISM COURSE LISTENING GUIDES .....	99
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	111

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
A1. Pre-project questionnaire responses .....	96
A2. Post-project questionnaire responses .....	98



## PREFACE

What a joy it is to serve the people of Mexia Baptist Church in Frisco City, Alabama. Among these people are men who faithfully and sacrificially serve as deacons. It is with great gratitude to our Lord and these deacons that I put together this project to assist the church in making disciples of all peoples.

I want to offer my deepest gratitude to the professors and staff at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who instructed and encouraged me to further pursue the Lord's calling on my life and equip the saints of my faithful church. I want to thank Betsy Fredrick for her style and formatting assistance. Thank you to my faculty supervisor, Timothy Beougher, for taking on this project.

Thank you to my wife, Missy, and our children, Cameron, Caroline, Claire, and Carson, who supported and encouraged me as I read, studied, and wrote for many nights. Thank you for your patience, love, and belief in me. I am deeply grateful for your unwavering support.

Randy Breedlove

Frisco City, Alabama

December 2024

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The mission statement of Mexia Baptist Church (MBC) is “loving God as we strive to make disciples of Christ in all we do while declaring the wonders of His name to all people.” Through church ministries, outreach, and personal relationships, the church strives to declare the wonders of Christ’s name as well as make disciples of Christ followers. Equipping the diaconate in principles of personal evangelism supports the church by making disciples that will declare Christ’s name to the world. Training the diaconate in evangelism supports disciple-making through proclaiming the gospel message, teaching them Christ’s commands (John 14:15), and seeking to obey the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20). For this reason, this project sought to equip the diaconate in the principles of personal evangelism.

#### **Context**

MBC in Frisco City, Alabama, was chartered in 1911. MBC is a Southern Baptist church with an active membership of about 250 people and a resident membership of 792. MBC desires to share the gospel within its immediate mission field, Monroe County, and beyond. The training of the diaconate in evangelism equips them to share their faith and assist the church in fulfilling its mission. The church has three full-time ministers and a full-time secretary, as well as nine active deacons. These ministerial staff and deacons provide the leadership for MBC.

MBC is in rural southwest Alabama, just three miles from Monroeville, the county seat. The church currently conducts two Sunday morning worship services as well as Wednesday and Sunday night ministries for all age groups. MBC desires to do its part

in being an evangelistic witness within the county. The training of the diaconate in evangelism will support the church's evangelistic efforts.

Monroeville was the longtime home of Vanity Fair Industry, which was the largest employer in the county. Most families in Monroeville had some connection to this large employer. Vanity Fair no longer operates in the county, yet the area has tree logging plants, a hospital, public and private schools, and a community college, in addition to a large trucking employer and concrete manufacturer. All the deacons work and serve within the county's variety of industries and thus need adequate evangelistic training to engage their workplace with the gospel message.

MBC is an evangelical Southern Baptist church that preaches the gospel message through its ministries. MBC believes in the inerrancy and sufficiency of the Scriptures as its foundation for ministry. The pulpit ministry exhibits expository preaching in worship services. The church has active children, student, adult, senior adult, and mission ministries. These ministries focus on making disciples in all that they do. Some of these ministries include children's AWANA program, youth and adult small group discipleship, adult mission groups, adult choir, and praise band. The diaconate serves within these vital ministries to help advance the gospel message.

MBC is a loving church fellowship that hospitably welcomes others. Guests and other community newcomers are made to feel welcome upon visiting services or other ministries. The membership is marked by their southern hospitality and motivated to befriend guests by their love for Christ. MBC's Wednesday night fellowship meals, homecoming service with fellowship dinner, and annual fall festival event are examples of loving church fellowship ministries that truly are hospitable and engaging to those who attend.

An additional strength for MBC is its generosity in giving and service unto others. MBC members are generous in their willingness to give to help each other, the community, and support mission causes. The church regularly meets members' tangible

needs and provides ongoing benevolence assistance to community members for water bills, electricity bills, and other temporary needs. The church has regularly met or exceeded its mission giving goals. MBC has several talented carpenters and handymen that construct home projects for the elderly or others in need in the community. It truly is a blessing to watch the generous giving and service of the membership on display within the community.

There are also areas of concern within the ministry of MBC. Although the church believes and practices prayer, the corporate prayer strategy is weak. MBC holds a midweek prayer meeting for adults, which focuses on praying for church and community needs, while also providing a relevant Bible study. A few of the church's Bible study groups have ongoing prayer lists that are updated and encourage members to intercede for one another. MBC also utilizes an email prayer chain to share urgent needs with the membership. MBC needs a prayer coordinator to integrate prayer emphasis into every ministry within the church context.

Another ministry area of concern is that of personal evangelism. The church has a regular visitation program to visit prospects and share the love of Christ. During my ministry tenure, I have observed that the number of members equipped in personal evangelism is small. Also, the number of members participating in the visitation program is small. It seems that few MBC members are trained in personal evangelism and subsequently few participate in the church's visitation program.

The membership needs to be equipped, especially the diaconate, in personal evangelism. In the past year, MBC has developed a church mission statement and corresponding vision strategy. The mission statement reads, "Loving God as we strive to make disciples of Christ in all we do while declaring the wonders of His name to all people." The church mission statement has guided the work of the church's seven-person "vision team." This team prays and deliberates on how to practically implement the mission statement. The team is comprised of a cross-section of members, including two

deacons. The MBC mission statement guides the equipping of members, especially deacons, in personal evangelism and to develop Christ followers through discipleship.

### **Rationale**

Since few church members are trained or participating in evangelism, this weakness must be addressed with MBC leaders first. The MBC diaconate needs to be trained in evangelism to fulfill this Great Commission task of making disciples of Christ. The need for training in personal evangelism was addressed first by evaluating the diaconate's personal evangelism practices. Next, I sought to equip the diaconate through a six-session course on the principles of personal evangelism. As the diaconate was trained in personal evangelism, they further assisted in the ministry aims of the vision strategy: more concentrated outreach efforts in the community, a revitalized discipleship plan, and the development of a complete mission strategy to reach into the state, nation, and beyond. The vision plan also recommends current church renovations and facility expansion. This "vision strategy" was based on the mission statement. MBC's diaconate, trained in evangelism, assists in carrying out the mission statement and vision strategy. My hope for the diaconate, trained in evangelism, is to actively share their faith with family, their workplace, and throughout their daily lives. Further, I pray that the diaconate will be a healthy model of an evangelistic lifestyle for all members to emulate. To this end, the diaconate will be more compassionate for the lost and rely on the empowering of the Holy Spirit as they are equipped in evangelism.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to increase the familiarity in evangelism through teaching the diaconate a six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism.

## **Goals**

The following goals were established to help determine the success of the project.

1. The first goal was to assess the current evangelism familiarity among the diaconate at Mexia Baptist Church.
2. The second goal was to develop a curriculum to teach the biblical understanding, purpose, and God-centered practices of personal evangelism.
3. The third goal was to teach the diaconate of Mexia Baptist Church the principles of personal evangelism.

Definitive research methodology measured when the three goals had been accomplished. The research methodology and instruments used to measure success of each goal are detailed and explained in the following section.

## **Research Methodology**

The success of this project depended upon the completion of the three goals. The first goal was to assess the current evangelism familiarity among the diaconate at Mexia Baptist Church. This goal was measured by administering a Pre-Evangelism Assessment Interview (PEAI) to deacons at Mexia Baptist Church.<sup>1</sup> The goal was considered successfully met when six deacons or more completed the PEA and the inventory had been analyzed, yielding a clearer picture of the current evangelism practices among the Mexia Baptist Church diaconate.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to teach the biblical understanding, the purpose, and God-centered practices of personal evangelism. The curriculum taught the principles of evangelism through a six-session curriculum. The source for theology is found in the sufficiency of Scripture alone. The evangelism course taught that God is revealed through Scripture. John Stott shares, “Without the Bible, world evangelization

---

<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1. All the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

would be not only impossible but actually inconceivable.”<sup>2</sup> Scripture is the source for knowing who God is and what he has done to save mankind. Romans 1:16 states, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also to the Greek.”<sup>3</sup> This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.<sup>4</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level.

The third goal was to teach the diaconate of Mexia Baptist Church the principles of personal evangelism. The equipping of the diaconate in evangelism assists in fulfilling the church’s mission statement. MBC aims to make disciples in all that it does. The deacons must be models for disciple making within the church. Therefore, disciple-making begins with equipping the diaconate in the discipline of evangelism. As the diaconate is equipped in evangelism, they will be witnesses of God’s grace to their families, the church, and the community. This goal was measured by administering a PEAI and a Post-Evangelism Practices Survey (PEPS) that measured each deacon’s familiarity with evangelism.<sup>5</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the PEAS and PEPS scores.

### **Definitions and Delimitations**

To reach the desired goal of equipping deacons in the principles of personal evangelism, a few definitions must be clarified.

---

<sup>2</sup> John Stott, quoted in Timothy K. Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism: Sharing the Gospel with Compassion and Conviction* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021), 43.

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.

<sup>4</sup> See appendix 5.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 3.

*Diaconate.* The term refers to the deacon body of MBC. The diaconate is the target group to be trained in this project in the principles of evangelism.

*Evangelism.* For this project, Timothy Beougher's definition for evangelism is used: "Evangelism is the compassionate sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ with lost people, in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of bringing them to Christ as Savior and Lord, that they in turn might share him with others."<sup>6</sup> When discussing personal evangelism in this project, evangelism refers to the activity of expressly sharing the gospel with others.

One delimitation was placed upon the project. The participants were drawn from the deacon body of MBC. The deacons are committed followers of Christ who strive to faithfully serve the Lord. The prerequisite for participation in this project is to be a deacon of MBC.

## **Conclusion**

Evangelism is the compassionate sharing of Jesus Christ with lost people with the aim to bring them to saving faith in Christ. Evangelism must become an integral part of the lives of MBC's church leaders, namely the diaconate. The desire to see the diaconate become more evangelistic is the motivating force behind equipping these men.

Chapter 2 explains the biblical and theological basis for equipping the diaconate in evangelism. Chapter 3 outlines the practical, theoretical, and historical basis for training the diaconate in evangelism. Chapter 4 details the six-session evangelism curriculum used to train the diaconate in evangelism. Chapter 5 is an evaluation of the ministry project.

---

<sup>6</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 9.



CHAPTER 2  
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS  
FOR EQUIPPING A DIACONATE

Evangelism is a God-given means for all followers of Christ to implement the message of the Great Commission. Through five New Testament passages one discovers the message for evangelism in Romans 3:22–25 and Luke 24:46–49, the empowerment for evangelism in Acts 1:8, the equipping of the laity in Ephesians 4:11–13 to accomplish the task of evangelism, and God’s sovereignty, seen in Isaiah 55:10–11, causes the believer to be faithful in evangelism. The biblical support of these five scriptural passages will make clear that evangelism is a God-given means for all followers of Christ to implement the message of the Great Commission.

**The Message of the Gospel That Believers Are to  
Share (Rom 3:22–25; Luke 24:46–49)**

Evangelism is a God-given means for all followers of Christ to implement the message of the Great Commission. The message of the gospel proclaims that sinners need a redeemer who is Christ Jesus. Romans 3:23 sums up the human tragedy that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”<sup>1</sup> Sin is the dark stain on all of humanity that cannot be removed by human effort. Sinners find a gracious redeemer in Christ, which Romans 3:24 proclaims.<sup>2</sup> Leon Morris states, “Were it not for our sin there would have been no need for Christ’s redemptive activity.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 176.

<sup>2</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 177.

<sup>3</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 177.

## The Content of the Gospel Message Is Contained in Romans 3:22–25

The apostle Paul “speaks of the righteousness of God, the sin of man, and the salvation of Christ,” in this Romans 3:22–25.<sup>4</sup> First, man is expected to conform to God’s righteousness, his uprightness.<sup>5</sup> The message of the gospel begins with God and his righteousness, yet no one can achieve this righteousness in their own efforts. Next, Paul makes an explicit statement about Christ’s involvement in securing salvation for the sinner (Rom 3:24).<sup>6</sup> John Murray distinguishes who is a sinner, sharing that “all without exception or discrimination are in the category of sinners.”<sup>7</sup> Leon Morris shares, “Universal sinfulness is basic to Paul’s understanding of the human predicament and also of the salvation Christ brought.”<sup>8</sup> Finally, salvation is secured by the finished work of Christ. Paul speaks of redemption in Christ in verse 24, which is tied to the picture of a ransom: the release of prisoners on payment of a price.<sup>9</sup> Because of the gospel, the message of God’s righteousness, man’s sinfulness, and Christ’s salvific sacrifice must be examined.

This gospel message begins with God’s righteousness, highlighted in verse 22. *Dikaiosúnē* is the Greek word used for righteousness.<sup>10</sup> Spiros Zodhiates writes that it means “justice or righteousness; it is the essence or that which is just or of him who is just or righteous.”<sup>11</sup> Zodhiates describes *dikaiosúnē* as “conformity to the higher claims of higher authority and stands in opposition to anomia, lawlessness.”<sup>12</sup> God’s

---

<sup>4</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 173.

<sup>5</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG, 1993), 459.

<sup>6</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 174.

<sup>7</sup> John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 112.

<sup>8</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 177.

<sup>9</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 179.

<sup>10</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 458.

<sup>11</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 458.

<sup>12</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 458.

righteousness is contrasted with one trying to keep the law in his own strength. God's righteousness is the perfect standard whereas man is incapable of keeping God's law perfectly. The offer of the righteousness of God is made available to anyone through faith in the propitiatory death of Jesus.<sup>13</sup>

The gospel begins with God's righteousness and includes grace to justify sinful men (v. 24). God justifies sinners through redemption in Christ. Zodhiates writes that when *dikaióo* is used in the New Testament, "it never means to make one righteous, by himself bearing the condemnation and the imposed sentence."<sup>14</sup> Romans 3:24 states that man is justified by God's grace. This justification is achieved only by Christ's redemptive work. Morris writes that this redemption is a picturesque statement "having its origin in the release of prisoners of war on payment of a price (the 'ransom')."<sup>15</sup> Christ is the ransom paid for the release of sinners.<sup>16</sup> Zodhiates writes that *Apolútrósis* is the Greek word used for redemption and "it means to let go free for a ransom."<sup>17</sup> The gospel message proclaims captives are freed by Christ's ransom and justified by his grace.

Finally, in Romans 3:25, God set forth Jesus Christ "as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men."<sup>18</sup> Christ was the willing sacrifice for mankind and provided an appeasement of the wrath of God. God must punish all sin and chose to accept the perfect sacrifice of Christ to atone for man's sin. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were offered, by the priests, to temporarily atone for people's sins and underscore the absolute holiness of God. These Old Testament sacrifices were intended to teach the people the cost of sin,

---

<sup>13</sup> William Robertson Nicoll, "Commentary on Romans 3," *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, accessed on February 27, 2023, <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/egt/romans-3.html/>.

<sup>14</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 463.

<sup>15</sup> Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 179.

<sup>16</sup> Nicoll, "Commentary on Romans 3."

<sup>17</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 232.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Crossway Classic Commentary (Grand Rapid: Eerdmans, 1993), 93.

and the sacrifices evidence the cost for removal of sins. Christ is ultimate sacrifice for man's sin: atoning for sin and appeasing God's wrath. The wrath of God is turned away by the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. The gospel message hinges on this propitiatory sacrifice set forth in Christ.

The message of the gospel that believers are to share is articulated through the exegesis of Romans 3:22–25. Man must achieve conformity to God's righteousness or his perfect standard for salvation. Man cannot earn or merit God's righteousness, but through one's faith in Christ, divine righteousness can be appropriated to man. Humanity has no salvific hope due to their sinfulness, yet God provides Christ as a propitiation, satisfying God's wrath and atoning for man's sin.

### **The Content of the Gospel Is Powered by the Spirit That Indwells (Luke 24:46–49)**

Jesus articulates the five parts of his mission statement in Luke 24:46–49. First, the disciples are called to preach Jesus's death and resurrection.<sup>19</sup> Second, the message is a call to repentance. In this a "turning" is demanded, Darrell Bock describes it as "bound up in the Hebrew concept of repentance."<sup>20</sup> Third, the offer made is forgiveness of sins. Bock records that the offer of forgiveness shows "God's willingness to be gracious" and cancel one's sin debt.<sup>21</sup> Fourth, the authority for the message rests in Jesus's name. Finally, the message is for all peoples and the proclaiming of such will begin in Jerusalem. The promise of the coming Spirit is the Old Testament fulfillment of the Spirit that will indwell believers.<sup>22</sup> This gospel message that Christ died and rose again to

---

<sup>19</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, IVP New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1994), 388.

<sup>20</sup> Bock, *Luke*, 389.

<sup>21</sup> Bock, *Luke*, 389.

<sup>22</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 621.

cancel the sinner's debt is to be preached to all nations. Believers, filled with the Spirit, are commissioned to be witnesses of this Christocentric message.

The gospel message in Luke 24:46–49 is worthy of further examination. In verse 46, one sees the disciples are to preach Christ's death and resurrection. The early church returned to Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 as proof that Christ must suffer.<sup>23</sup> Other Lukan passages confirm that the Son of Man will suffer as well (Luke 9:22; 17:25). Jesus's suffering will end in his death, followed by his resurrection, which was foretold. Christ's death, serving as a ransom for sinners, is prophesied in Isaiah 53:4–6. This Jesus is also the fulfillment of his own prophecy: "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day" (Mark 9:31). The gospel content, which all believers must share, includes the necessary suffering, death, and miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Further, verse 47 confirms that the message of repentance and forgiveness of sins must be preached. Sinners are called to repentance, referring to a change of mind or turning from sins.<sup>24</sup> Robert Stein shares, "The message of repentance for the forgiveness of sins is a central theme in Luke and must always be a central part of the gospel message."<sup>25</sup> Repentance involves the recognition of sin in thought or deed and turning from it. Worldly sorrow leads to death, but true repentance comes from a "godly sorrow" that leads to eternal life (2 Cor 7:10).

The authority for this gospel message rests in the one who gives the commission, that is Jesus. In Luke 24:44, Christ shares that all things written about Him (Old Testament passages) must be fulfilled. Christ does fulfill the Old Testament prophecies, namely through his suffering and death on the cross. He now commissions his followers to be his

---

<sup>23</sup> Stein, *Luke*, 620.

<sup>24</sup> Stein, *Luke*, 128.

<sup>25</sup> Stein, *Luke*, 128.

witnesses as they preach his name to all the nations.<sup>26</sup> Jesus gives his witnesses his authority to accomplish this task. Today, Jesus grants his authority to contemporary believers to preach his name, wherever they might go.

### **The Holy Spirit as the Empowerment for the Believer to Evangelize (Acts 1:8)**

The Holy Spirit is the empowerment for the believer to evangelize all peoples. As a part of the triune God, the Holy Spirit is given after Christ's ascension to heaven. The apostles want answers to when the kingdom will be restored to Israel (Acts 1:6), but Jesus states that answer is limited to the Father's knowledge.<sup>27</sup> Christ does reveal that the empowerment for evangelism will be provided through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

As Christ is departing from the apostles, he provides a helper for their ministry. The Lord Jesus supplies the divine gift of the Holy Spirit. The followers of Christ are commissioned to all regions of the earth as his witnesses and are graced with the divine Spirit to carry out their task.<sup>28</sup> The Spirit empowers God's agents for mission.<sup>29</sup>

In the Old Testament, the Spirit would not permanently reside within followers of God. Now, in the New Testament, the promise is that God's Spirit will permanently reside within believers. The disciples should be well equipped to continue the work of Christ. These followers of Christ observed his miracles, teachings, and selfless sacrifice, which was displayed on the cross of Calvary. Yet, Christ informs the disciples they are to wait for a special grace gift, the Spirit of God.<sup>30</sup> The teachings of Christ should have instructed his followers on radical Christ-like character, yet the believer's transformation

---

<sup>26</sup> Bock, *Luke*, 389.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas C. Oden, ed., *Acts, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, vol. 5* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2006), 8.

<sup>28</sup> Oden, *Acts*, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Craig S. Keener, *Acts: Introduction and 1:1–2:47* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 690.

<sup>30</sup> James Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, Great Texts of the Bible (Grand Rapid: Baker, 1976), 9.

comes only from a filling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>31</sup> The Spirit is power, and this power transforms an ordinary believer into a masterful instrument of God.

Acts 1:8 details how the apostles were to receive the Holy Spirit. First, they must wait for it. They waited in Jerusalem until the gift of the Holy Spirit was received (Acts 2:1–4). The apostles waited patiently and with expectation. Further, the apostles prayed for the power of the Holy Spirit. These prayed in the upper room in Jerusalem with all their might as they expected to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:13–14). James Hastings shares, “If power is to come at all, it is the most precious thing in the world, it is a thing for which to agonize in prayer.”<sup>32</sup> For believers in contemporary times, the Holy Spirit is resident in and empowers them to evangelize all peoples.

Craig Keener writes that there is much scholarly agreement that the primary role of the Spirit in Acts “is the empowering of witnesses for their mission.”<sup>33</sup> The gift of the Spirit for empowerment for this mission is given to the apostles (1:8), but the same power is promised to the church (Acts 2:38–39). All Spirit-empowered believers are to be active witnesses, speaking for Christ, as portrayed by the church leaders (Acts 4:8) or the laity (Acts 4:31).<sup>34</sup> God’s Spirit is also attributed to providing physical strength (Judg 14:6) and empowering prophets to boldly stand against false prophets (Mic 3:8).<sup>35</sup> In summary, the key role of the Spirit is to empower witnesses for their mission. The Spirit additionally provides physical strength and empowers believers for bold stances against false teaching.

The apostles, equipped with the Spirit, were commissioned to be witnesses of Christ and his ministry. Luke uses the Greek word *márturos*, translated witnesses, which

---

<sup>31</sup> Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, 10.

<sup>32</sup> Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Keener, *Acts: Introduction and 1:1–2:47*, 689.

<sup>34</sup> Keener, *Acts: Introduction and 1:1–2:47*, 689.

<sup>35</sup> Keener, *Acts: Introduction and 1:1–2:47*, 690.

Zodhiates describes as means “one who has information or knowledge of something, and hence, one who can bring to light or confirm something.”<sup>36</sup> A witness for Jesus is someone who tells the truth about him.<sup>37</sup> These apostles were to “tell the truth” about Jesus in Jerusalem.<sup>38</sup> Then, the witness of Christ must be carried to all geographic locations beyond Jerusalem. Acts 1:8 outlines the remainder of the book of Acts, where Luke reveals the advance of Christianity from Jerusalem into Samaria and through the known Roman world.<sup>39</sup>

The church, the corporate body of believers, is God’s plan to advance Christianity to the known world. The individuals who comprise God’s church are Spirit-filled, and the Spirit is permanently gifted to said individuals.<sup>40</sup> The gift of the Spirit is constant. Unlike the transitory nature of the Spirit in the Old Testament, now the Spirit will remain with all believers as they are mobilized to evangelize the nations. The Spirit is not transitory or occasional in its work empowering Christians in the church. The Lord gave the Holy Spirit as a guide for individual believers, but also as the source of power for the corporate body of the church.<sup>41</sup>

The Spirit empowers the church to carry out evangelism. Churches, scattered throughout the nations, share this same mission of evangelism to carry out the words of Jesus in Acts 1:8. The content of the gospel, as examined in Romans 3:22–25 and Luke 24:46–49, must be communicated in ways that are suitable to the time and circumstances of each era.<sup>42</sup> Twenty-first century and first-century Christians may hold the same

---

<sup>36</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 947.

<sup>37</sup> John MacArthur, *Acts 1–12, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 21.

<sup>38</sup> Oden, *Acts*, 10.

<sup>39</sup> MacArthur, *Acts 1–12*, 22.

<sup>40</sup> Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, 13.

<sup>41</sup> Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, 13.

<sup>42</sup> Hastings, *Acts–Romans I–VIII*, 20.



Christian beliefs, yet their methodology of evangelism can differ. All witnessing should be Holy Spirit driven and Christ-centered.

**Pastors/Leaders Are Equippers for the Laity to  
Do Great Commission Ministry (Eph 4:11–13)**

As the church is God’s chosen assembly of believers to advance Christianity to the world, pastors are among God’s equipping agents for this task. Paul speaks of the unity and diversity of the church in Ephesians 4, and God graces the body of Christ with a variety of leaders: apostles, prophets, pastors, evangelists, and teachers. These church leaders have unique roles in proclaiming God’s Word and training the saints.<sup>43</sup>

The leadership roles of the church are to advance God’s kingdom through proclaiming the Word and training the saints for ministry. John MacArthur notes that in Ephesians 4:11 the apostles and prophets had three chief responsibilities: “to lay the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20); to receive and declare the revelation of God’s Word (Acts 11:28); and to give confirmation of that Word through signs and wonders and miracles (2 Cor 12:12, Heb 2:3–4).”<sup>44</sup> Both apostles and prophets were uniquely used to preach the Word and speak revelation from God during the New Testament time frame. Since that time, both offices appear to have ceased (Eph 2:20).<sup>45</sup>

Evangelists are listed next as a part of God’s kingdom-advancing team. As apostles and prophets laid the foundation for the church, evangelists built upon it by winning the lost for Christ.<sup>46</sup> John MacArthur shares, “Evangelists are men who proclaim the good news.”<sup>47</sup> These men preach and explain the good news of salvation in Jesus

---

<sup>43</sup> John MacArthur, *Ephesians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 141.

<sup>44</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 141.

<sup>45</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 142.

<sup>46</sup> Warren Wiersbe, *Be Rich: Ephesians* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1989), 102.

<sup>47</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 143.

Christ. The evangelist is a gifted man provided to a church to reach unsaved persons and train up these new believers in the Word. This specific term, evangelist, is used once in the Bible, in Ephesians 4:11. Yet, the verb *euangelizó* (to proclaim the good news) is used fifty-four times and the accompanying noun *euangelion* (good news) is used seventy-six times.<sup>48</sup> In short, some are called to the office of evangelist, but all believers are called to do the work of evangelism: proclaiming the good news to the lost.

Finally, pastors and teachers are a key part of advancing God’s work through equipping the saints (Eph 4:11–12). Pastors and teachers are best understood as one office of leadership in the church.<sup>49</sup> Paul says pastor-teachers are to “prepare God’s people for works of service” (Eph 4:12). William Yount writes that the word prepare means “to mend, to complete, to make one what he ought to be.”<sup>50</sup> Every believer is called to serve Christ and others; God uniquely gifts believers to help the work of the church.<sup>51</sup> The result of preparing God’s people for service is that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph 4:12) and the aim of the pastor-teacher is to build up the saints until they reach the maturity of Christ (Eph 4:13). Training believers to share the gospel message is part of the pastor-teacher’s work. As a leader trains believers in evangelism, he must learn to model evangelism in his personal life. James Smart writes, “The pastor who refuses to get involved in the personal aspects of teaching is like a farmer who simply scatters seed and refuses to do anything else to encourage a successful harvest.”<sup>52</sup> Pastor-teachers must personally train believers to develop their gifts, especially in the discipline of evangelism.

---

<sup>48</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 142.

<sup>49</sup> William R. Yount, “The Pastor as Teacher,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 38, no. 2 (1996): 18.

<sup>50</sup> Yount, “The Pastor as Teacher,” 18.

<sup>51</sup> Yount, “The Pastor as Teacher,” 19.

<sup>52</sup> James Smart, *Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 23.

The pastor-teacher is to equip believers for the work of ministry while striving to bring the church to the maturity of Jesus Christ.<sup>53</sup>

The church's mission is to unify the two mandates from God: the creation and the mission mandate.<sup>54</sup> R. Paul Stevens notes, "The creation mandate (Gen 1:26–28) calls man (male and female) to be stewards of creation, just as Joseph provided for his family and his neighbors."<sup>55</sup> The creation mandate includes the full array of work from farmers to teachers, business executives to homemakers. This work is good and part of the Christian mission. The second mandate, the mission mandate, is summarized in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–49). Stevens argues that the second mandate was given to restore the first. The goal of evangelism is to restore "the whole person in relation to God, to neighbor and to the environment."<sup>56</sup> The gospel should cause Christians to become the best citizens in their communities regardless of whether one is a pastor-teacher or a lay Christian. Stevens explains that the two mandates form a unity: "Our call to work to sustain the world and our call to evangelize the world with the message of redemption through Christ are both implicit in the life for which Jesus saves us."<sup>57</sup>

As ministers equip their flocks for the mission in Ephesians 4:11–13, a balanced ministry approach should be promoted. Believers should focus on both groups God has placed in their lives: believers and nonbelievers. Believers can be limited on time to minister to nonbelievers due to the time demands of church programming.<sup>58</sup> The believer should see his workplace, family, and social groups as key mission fields to share the

---

<sup>53</sup> Yount, "Pastor as Teacher," 19.

<sup>54</sup> R. Paul Stevens, *Liberating the Laity: Equipping all the Saints for Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1985), 94.

<sup>55</sup> Stevens, *Liberating the Laity*, 94.

<sup>56</sup> Stevens, *Liberating the Laity*, 94.

<sup>57</sup> Stevens, *Liberating the Laity*, 95.

<sup>58</sup> Stevens, *Equipping for Mission*, 99.

gospel. Ministers should strive to promote the equal value of evangelizing nonbelievers and thus reduce church programming to allow for such.

In the most contemporary contexts, pastor-teachers must equip believers for evangelism in a post-Christian world. For many years in western culture (specifically America), shared moral values were accepted by the majority and these values influenced the culture. In recent years, cultural values have drastically changed, reflecting the individualism and self-determined truth that many have adopted.<sup>59</sup> Now, churches and their pastor-teachers must equip believers to evangelize in a post-Christian culture. Within a culture that embraces relative truth and has been stripped of shared moral values, evangelism will be met with negative responses. Albert Mohler shares three responses to evangelism in a post-Christian culture. First, evangelism will be met with hostility and evangelists will be marginalized. Second, evangelism will be met “with befuddlement.”<sup>60</sup> The culture simply will not understand. Third, the gospel will be met with indifference. To do effective evangelism within this culture, believers must unashamedly share the promises of Scripture in the person of Jesus. Mohler writes, “As we evangelize, we must keep the gospel and the person of Christ central, and we must . . . winsomely teach our evangelical commitments.”<sup>61</sup>

As ministers follow God’s plan for building up the church (Eph 4:11–13), spiritual results will follow. MacArthur shares three results from following God’s plan to build up the church. First, a unity of the faith will result from proper biblical teaching and a faithfulness to do the work of service. “The faith” (Eph 4:13a) could be described as the content of the gospel. A oneness in fellowship cannot be achieved if the doctrinal foundation is unbiblical. Therefore, doctrinal integrity is needed to attain a unity of the

---

<sup>59</sup> R. Albert Mohler Jr, “Keeping the Evangel in Evangelism,” in *Essential Reading on Evangelism*, ed. R. Albert Mohler Jr. et al. (Louisville: Southern Equip, 2019), 2.

<sup>60</sup> Mohler, “Keeping the Evangel in Evangelism,” 3.

<sup>61</sup> Mohler, “Keeping the Evangel in Evangelism,” 5.

faith. Another result of building up the church God's way is attaining "the knowledge of the Son of God (Eph 4:13b)."<sup>62</sup> Paul is referring to the deep knowledge (*epignósis*, full knowledge that is correct and accurate) in a relationship with Christ that comes from prayer, Bible study and obedience.<sup>63</sup> Finally, the third result of following God's design for his church is spiritual maturity. This maturity is to be that of Christ, the perfect, mature man. To walk in the manner of the Lord is to conform to his likeness and live a life of prayer and obedience. Ministers are to devote themselves to building up a church to bring all to the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, and to a maturity likened unto Christ.

### **Faith in God's Sovereignty and Grace Sustains the Believer in Evangelism (Isa 55:10–11)**

As ministers are to devote themselves to helping believers conform to the likeness of Christ, there is a dependence on God's sovereignty to sustain this work. Isaiah 55:10–11 reveals that faith in God's sovereignty and grace sustains the believer to be faithful in evangelism. Evangelism is telling others about the good news of Christ and combines God's sovereignty with one's evangelistic efforts. Before one can answer this question, it is necessary to define God's sovereignty. The sovereignty of God is the same as his lordship. God, as sovereign, exercises his rule of his universe. When using sovereign with God, the reference is to his authority, control, and exercising such over creation. As one evangelizes, a faith in the sovereignty or lordship of God will sustain faithfulness in this spiritual discipline.

The subject of Isaiah 55 is an invitation to be a part of God's covenant community and enjoy the spiritual blessings of God. In Isaiah 55:6 there is a clear call "to seek the Lord while He may be found." This direction to seek is connected to one going

---

<sup>62</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 157.

<sup>63</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 157.

to the temple to pray for God's help so that someone can live.<sup>64</sup> This type of seeking is an earnest endeavor. Verse 7 speaks of the need for repentance, with the promise of a pardon if the wicked repents. Isaiah then contrasts God's ways and thoughts with man's in verses 8–9. The difference between the mighty ways of a sovereign God and mortal man makes the offer of redemption in this passage remarkable.<sup>65</sup> The passage then articulates the reliability and effectiveness of God's Word in verses 10–11. These verses provide a clear biblical example of why to trust in God's sovereignty in evangelism.

The believer demonstrates his belief in God's sovereignty in several ways. First, when one prays to God, he is revealing his confidence in a sovereign God.<sup>66</sup> Usually, prayer shows the believer's dependence on God. Next, the believer's gratitude and humility for salvation is an indication of faith in God's sovereign grace. If God is sovereign, exercising his control over creation, then he is the one that provides and offers salvation to man. Additionally, as one daily denies self and follows Christ, there is an apparent trust in the sovereignty of God. As God is evidenced as sovereign in the way the believer lives by faith, this does not dismiss the believer's responsibility to evangelize.<sup>67</sup>

The dual existence of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are evident in Isaiah 55:10–11. These potentially competing conclusions must be considered to shed light on understanding the passage. Isaiah makes clear the reliability of everything God plans in these verses.<sup>68</sup> Yet, verses 10–11 imply that man has a responsible role in both the agricultural work (v. 10) and the gospel proclamation (v. 11). The prophet shows a

---

<sup>64</sup> Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, New American Commentary, vol. 15B (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 507.

<sup>65</sup> John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 377.

<sup>66</sup> J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2008), 18.

<sup>67</sup> Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, 23.

<sup>68</sup> J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1983), 457.

comparison between what happens in nature (v. 10) and what happens with the words of God (v. 11). The rain and snow represent the God-given moisture that yields crops (v. 10). Similarly, the Word of God goes forth with God's authority and will reliably accomplish God's purposes (v. 11).<sup>69</sup> To reconcile God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in the Christian experience, what must be decided? J. I. Packer wisely instructs, "Refuse to regard the apparent inconsistency as real; put down the semblance of contradiction to the deficiency of your own understanding."<sup>70</sup> In short, two seemingly contradictory truths can peacefully coexist in one's understanding. In Isaiah 55:10–11, God will accomplish his purposes in both nature and biblical proclamation. In the same context, man is responsible to scatter the seed in nature and scatter the divine seed of the Word of God to fulfill his evangelistic role in God's economy.

To be faithful in evangelism one must trust in the sovereignty of God. If one senses that the preciseness and eloquence of the gospel presentation will bring about the most conversions, then he is trusting too much in his efforts alone. Conversely, if the believer holds that God has divinely chosen those to be saved and therefore man has no responsibility to share Christ with lost people, this too falls short. Evangelism is the privilege of every believer to share that Christ came to redeem sinful man and this message is sustained by a sovereign God who will accomplish his redemptive plan. To be faithful in evangelism, one must do two things: (1) believe the sovereign hand of God is ordering one's steps and that he will accomplish his redemptive purposes as the Word is proclaimed and (2) present a gospel message that includes the appropriate categories of God, man, Christ, and response.<sup>71</sup> Let the motivation for the believer be that God receives the glory as he faithfully shares a Christ-centered gospel in evangelism. Further, the believer should allow the love and concern for the souls of men to motivate him for evangelism.

---

<sup>69</sup> Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 457.

<sup>70</sup> Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, 28.

<sup>71</sup> Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, 78.

The sovereignty of God sustains one's evangelistic efforts as the focus is on God's glory as well as the salvation of the souls of men.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, evangelism was portrayed as a God-given means for all followers of Christ to implement the message of the Great Commission. The chapter clarified the content of the gospel, examined the empowerment for Great Commission ministry, reviewed the pastoral role to equip the laity, and offered an understanding of the relationship between God's sovereignty and faithful evangelism.



CHAPTER 3  
THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES  
RELATED TO EQUIPPING A DIACONATE

This chapter will address common barriers to engaging in evangelism as well as commonly used evangelism methods. First, common barriers in personal evangelism will be highlighted in addition to necessary paths necessary to overcome them. Second, the culture shift in the western world will be examined along with evangelism approaches for witnessing to cultural Christians. Third, common methods of evangelism that can be utilized to effectively engage the lost will be discussed. Lastly, key evangelism methods will be shared as useful tools to effectively engage others in evangelism.

**Common Barriers in Evangelism and  
Paths to Overcome Them**

For the evangelical Christian, sharing the gospel is commanded by the Lord Jesus. Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:19-20a). The faithful Christian, as he attempts to share Christ, will confront barriers or obstacles when presenting this message of hope. Will McRaney shares Bill Bright’s thoughts on effective witnessing: “Simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”<sup>1</sup> Certainly successful evangelism will include faithfulness and fruitfulness. Christians are commanded to share Christ, be faithful in this process, and leave the results to God.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bill Bright, quoted in Will McRaney Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Nashville: B & H, 2003), 190.

However, evangelical believers can expect to encounter internal and external barriers as they share Christ.

A Christian witness must be aware of both the internal and external barriers that they will face. First, this section will consider several of the internal barriers to witnessing. According to McRaney, fear is the number one barrier to personal evangelism.<sup>2</sup> Fear can be real or imagined. Fear manifests itself in different ways, such as a fear of rejection. No one wants to be turned away or rejected for sharing Christ. The personal evangelist must realize that people are primarily rejecting Christ, not the sharer of the news of Christ. One may have a fear of failure. One fears failure because of how the failure reflects on oneself. Having a healthy or biblical view of evangelism success will lower the fear of failure. Further, there can be a fear of loss of relationship. One may fear that sharing Christ might ruin or change the relationship with the person with whom the message is shared. Conversely, one's love for people's souls should be the greater motivation in the relationships. Sharing Christ always involves some risk, yet the result of not sharing Christ risks that the friend will spend eternity without Christ. Finally, a lack of knowledge may bring fear into the evangelist's mind.<sup>3</sup> One may be fearful of the questions that will be asked during a conversation or fearful of using the wrong evangelistic method. There are a variety of methods, and the believer must pick one and trust that the Spirit will give the appropriate words to share. Timothy Beougher shares a story from D. L. Moody as he was confronted by a person who disapproved of his witnessing method. Moody replied to the person, "What methods do you use?" "Oh, I don't have a method," the critic replied. "Well," Moody replied, "I think I like the way I do it better than the way you don't!"<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 191.

<sup>3</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 193.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy K. Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism: Sharing the Gospel with Compassion and Conviction* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021), 127.

Another internal barrier to consider is the apathy that plagues believers and hinders their witness for Christ. The apathetic believer will rarely witness. Believers must base the decision to witness on the truth of Scriptures rather than mere emotion. The apathetic believer needs to be reminded of one's own lost soul without Christ and allow God to stir, within the heart, a conviction to compassionately share the hope of Christ with those around them. One is reminded that their lives are brief; therefore, one should develop an urgency to witness. James 4:14 reminds the Christian that life is like a "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanished."<sup>5</sup> Dwelling on the brevity of time will bring a sense of urgency for evangelism.

Ignorance of the gospel message is a common internal barrier to witnessing. A Christian might claim that they do not have enough knowledge of the Bible to be an effective witness for Christ. This ignorance claim is pervasive amongst believers. A lack of biblical knowledge should never prohibit one from witnessing. Evangelist Scott Dawson shares, "Evangelism in its purest form is me sharing with you what Christ has done in my life."<sup>6</sup> Anyone with a relationship with Christ is equipped to share with others about Christ. The Christian must also remember that the Holy Spirit will give the words to speak in witnessing encounters. Matthew 10:20 states, "For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you." Though ignorance is a common witnessing barrier, it can be overcome by trusting and relying on the Spirit for words and confidently testifying about Christ's work in one's own life.

Introspection can be another internal barrier for the witness. This barrier comes from individuals thinking they have enough problems of their own that must be addressed prior to attempting to witness.<sup>7</sup> In confronting this barrier, the introspection claims are

---

<sup>5</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 131.

<sup>6</sup> Scott Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook: Expert Advice on Reaching Others for Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 13.

<sup>7</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 132.

somewhat of a “straw man argument.” Will there ever be a day in which one has perfectly straightened out all one’s problems and feels ready to witness? It is not likely this “perfect condition” of fully reconciling one’s personal problems ever arrives. Therefore, the response for those dealing with introspection is to realize there are no perfect witnesses and one can be used as an effective witness despite present shortcomings.<sup>8</sup> Beougher reminds that the early Christians did not wait until achieving spiritual perfection before witnessing: “The Samaritan woman began telling people immediately about the love of Christ!”<sup>9</sup> Further, the original disciples were not perfect, yet learned to boldly share about Christ with others. If one experiences the introspection barrier, they should remember that God’s grace has transformed and will equip the most worrisome witness to be faithful in evangelism.

Hypocrisy is a final internal barrier to witnessing. Believers will tell themselves that the inconsistency of their Christian walk prevents them from sharing their faith. Though, this fear of hypocrisy is not a valid barrier to witness. As the gospel is shared, the seeker is responding to the merits of the person of Christ, not the merits of the believer himself.<sup>10</sup> There are hypocrites in Christianity, just as there are in every other sector of life. What response should believers give to seekers accusing them of hypocrisy? Believers should acknowledge hypocrisy yet point seekers to the person of Christ and him alone. In addition to these internal witnessing barriers there are external barriers as well.

External barriers to witnessing exist that may hinder the believer’s attempts to evangelize. Many people have negative preconceptions about the gospel, and this presents a barrier. These individuals have heard faulty information about the gospel or had poor experiences with the church. These preconceptions present themselves as walls, constructed up by the individual, that must be overcome through listening to others’ experiences or points of view. The negative preconceptions may be premature conclusions

---

<sup>8</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 132.

<sup>9</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 133.

<sup>10</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 136.

and can be engaged as one listens to their story to better understand. Listening to others is a powerful way to demonstrate interest and compassion. Listening can build a bridge to help individuals see how God is working in their lives and creates the opportunity to share the love of Christ within this new empathetic construct.

Another external barrier is encountered when someone has theological objections to the gospel message. These objections could be based in skepticism or genuine curiosity of the listener. One does not need to have all the answers to theological objections; rather, demonstrating humility and a willingness to understand the objection will cultivate an engaging discussion about the gospel. One example of such questions could be, “What about those who have never heard the gospel?” As 2 Peter 3:9 states, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” God is concerned for people of all nations, which is why one should witness.<sup>11</sup> The believer could respond to this question stating that the concern for others’ souls is noble, yet the most pressing need is for the listener to trust in Christ.

As one witnesses, language differences can be a challenging external barrier. What options does the witness have when the person does not speak the language of a certain culture? First, the Christian should obtain bilingual evangelism tracts. Tracts that contain both the native language and the language the witness speaks can be effective to communicate the gospel. Second, enlist a translator to communicate in the native tongue. Translators can bridge the language barrier in a witnessing encounter. Certainly, obtaining a translator requires advance planning, yet translators are inexpensive in many Spanish speaking or Latin/South America cultures as well as other less developed countries.

In almost all witnessing settings, one will encounter distractions or diversions that can take away from sharing the gospel. One example might be on an evangelistic home visit that a small child begins to cry, or a large dog enters the rooms and disrupts the

---

<sup>11</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 83.

conversation. The barrier of distractions can be anticipated, but many times one must react and rely on the aid of the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells in Luke 12:12, “For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.” In the moments of distraction, one can trust the Holy Spirit to provide an answer, or an appropriate response aimed to keep the gospel conversation moving forward. Certainly, as one witnesses and encounters distractions, they should use common sense and be sensitive to the individual’s response. At times a series of distractions may prevent a complete gospel presentation and there may need to be a follow up conversation at another time. Again, the focus is trusting one’s words to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

In some settings, people will not be willing to listen to a gospel presentation and this presents another external barrier to the witness. One may be engaged in a conversation and begin to turn the subject to spiritual matters and the individual becomes close-minded to such things. Certainly, it is advisable to be sensitive to objections to the gospel in conversations. Wisdom from the Holy Spirit is needed to know how to proceed. Regardless of receptivity to the gospel, the believer should attempt to leave an “open door” for another gospel conversation later. Pray for the unreceptive listener and pray the Lord sends more gospel witnesses into their life. When a person rejects the gospel message and does not want to hear anything further, Jesus says, “And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them” (Mark 6:11). Some will not want to hear the gospel. The believer should trust the Holy Spirit for guidance, pray for the individual, and ultimately if they reject Christ following the words of Mark 6:11.

Barriers exist when one attempts to share the gospel message. The believer must identify both the internal and external barriers in evangelism. Yet, the identification of these barriers is merely the first step as one must then learn to overcome the barrier with the aim of faithfully sharing Christ with a lost and unreached world. It is helpful to remember that most people in biblical times who testified about Jesus had little to no

training in evangelism.<sup>12</sup> Though untrained in evangelism, these people still gave credible testimonies about Christ and his power to save and transform. Barriers will exist, yet Christ is greater and will provide a way for faithful Christians to be resourceful and find ways to share Christ.

### **Deficiencies of Western Cultural Christianity**

Western culture has become characterized by individuals who hold to a form of cultural Christianity. Cultural Christians are morally good, attend church with some regularity, and are familiar with Christian lingo enough to speak the Christian language.<sup>13</sup> This cultural Christianity includes patriotic expressions at ballfields, rehearsed prayers over meals, and the practice of religion over demonstrating a personal relationship with Jesus. The gospel of Jesus is usually not a part of the cultural Christian's theology.<sup>14</sup> One merely "thinks" he is a Christian by virtue of his morality, occasional church attendance, or religious rituals that are practiced. To effectively communicate the gospel to cultural Christians, the evangelist must help the individual see that he is lost before he can be saved. Scripture reminds that only the repentant, not the religious, will enter the kingdom of God. Jesus says in Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven." Understanding the problems of cultural Christianity is the first step to becoming an effective evangelist able to properly communicate the gospel.

Cultural Christianity holds to a religion without salvation.<sup>15</sup> The religious cling to the morality of one's deeds, the ritual of one's church attendance, and the rehearsal of Christian phrases or platitudes for one's eternal security. These religious traits by no means

---

<sup>12</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 128.

<sup>13</sup> Dean Inserra, *The Unserved Christian: Reaching Cultural Christianity with the Gospel* (Chicago: Moody, 2019), 13.

<sup>14</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 21.

secure salvation for the individual, yet these traits characterize cultural Christianity. There are two reasons to consider why some people hold to a religion without salvation. First, it is likely the individual has never heard the gospel message clearly. The cultural Christian has listened to inspirational messages about the positive traits of God's love and mercy, yet the reality of the sinfulness of man and his need for repentance are unknown to the individual.<sup>16</sup> Second, the cultural Christian has an absence of the fear of a powerful, sovereign God.<sup>17</sup> Cultural Christians view God as the "kind Grandfather upstairs" and certainly have reverence for him, but have little fear of his might and power. The apostle Paul wrote, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." (2 Cor 5:11). "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20).<sup>18</sup> The cultural Christian needs to hear the true gospel message that God created all things, man sinned, Christ was provided as a sacrifice, and all must respond and receive forgiveness and salvation. As individuals discover the problem of one's own sin there becomes a healthy fear of almighty God. Having a fear of God combined with a clear witness of the gospel gives the cultural Christian the opportunity to be awakened from one's religion without salvation.

False assurance of salvation is also a trait of cultural Christianity.<sup>19</sup> Many adults cling to a false assurance of salvation based upon a childhood prayer of salvation that has borne little to no fruit in one's life. The cultural Christian misunderstands the biblical doctrine of eternal security or perseverance of the saints. Wayne Grudem defines the perseverance of the saints as "the means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and

---

<sup>16</sup> Matt Queen, *Everyday Evangelism* (Fort Worth, TX: Seminary Hill, 2014), 17.

<sup>17</sup> Queen, *Everyday Evangelism*, 37.

<sup>18</sup> Queen, *Everyday Evangelism*, 37.

<sup>19</sup> Wayne Grudem, quoted in Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 63.



that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.”<sup>20</sup> The false assurance that cultural Christians hold to is based upon the misused phrase of “once saved, always saved.” This phrase is a poor rendering of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, which has just been defined. It is a false assurance of salvation to reference a childhood salvation prayer that yielded little to no spiritual fruit as the only evidence of one’s salvation. Cultural Christians have been convinced of a false assurance of salvation due to a religious experience from childhood that has likely yielded little fruit. The individual needs to become aware of the marks of genuine salvation. Marks of conversion include repentance of sins, desire to grow spiritually in one’s faith in Christ, a hunger for God’s Word and spiritual things, and a regular pattern of spiritual fruit.<sup>21</sup> Dean Inserra summarizes this salvation assurance problem: “There is a time when someone believes the gospel by confessing Christ and turning from sin. The glitch in the system is when weight is placed on the experience of that moment, rather than the saving work of Christ.”

Common barriers must be overcome in the effort to reach cultural Christians. Inserra shares several barriers that exist in the cultural Christian’s theology. First, cultural Christians believe in God and in heaven.<sup>22</sup> Certainly these two beliefs are important, yet these are topical and shallow beliefs that represent a strong familiarity with Christian terms yet lack true evidence of good works to accompany one’s faith. Scripture records that faith without works is dead and that one should produce works in keeping with one’s faith (Jas 2:18-20). Another barrier is related to the heritage of cultural Christians. The religious heritage of the cultural Christian may be elevated above true saving faith. In other words, an individual may cling to the religious faith of a grandparent as one’s own faith without repenting of sin and trusting in Christ. The cultural Christian must come to acknowledge

---

<sup>20</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 64.

<sup>21</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 67.

<sup>22</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 57.

that a grandparent's faith in Christ will not gain access to heaven for them. Inserra shares, "A legacy of faith should be celebrated, but a faith that is inherited is no faith at all."<sup>23</sup>

A final barrier for cultural Christians is the rites of passage which are deemed salvific.<sup>24</sup> Rites of passage may include a first communion, infant baptism, or confirmation. It is good for young people to participate in the rites of passage. Yet, the rites of passage in and of themselves hold no saving power to convert the individual. A parent may point to an isolated rite of passage as the proof of a child's saving faith when the child has lived a fruitless life for Christ since that rite of passage moment. The participation in a rite of passage does not place someone in good standing with God. This rite of passage barrier is common amongst cultural Christians and should be tactfully addressed with the aim of saving faith evidenced by spiritual fruit being the life one lives. These barriers can allow for a cultural Christian to hold to some nominal form of Christianity yet miss the true saving faith that is only found in Christ.

The final challenge that cultural Christians face is the myth of human goodness. If one does not commit the most egregious sins and is generally a good person, then one's morality will be enough to gain entrance to heaven. This type of thinking is held by the cultural Christian. Unfortunately, personal morality is not the standard for saving faith in Christ. The Bible teaches that man has a total lack of moral goodness and man's heart is desperately wicked.<sup>25</sup> Will Metzger provides at least three biblical views to awaken the cultural Christian from this moralist view. First, God's providential kindness is shown to everyone. Matthew 5:45 says, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous." In short, everyone experiences God's grace.

---

<sup>23</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 61.

<sup>24</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 62.

<sup>25</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 62.

Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel to the Whole Person by Whole People* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 202), 122.

Second, one must realize the tendency to rank some sins as not as bad as others.<sup>26</sup> God's holiness is the standard by which all people are measured. James 2:10 states, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it." Third, the moralist view is repulsed by God's judgment of what one might consider kind, good people.<sup>27</sup> The myth of human goodness prevents a person from realizing anyone could spend eternity in a literal hell. The cultural Christian must be presented with God's holiness as the standard by which all men are judged, and all men will fall short of this standard. Considering these three biblical truths, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, may help the cultural Christian see the myth of human goodness and turn one to faith in Christ. Next, common methods of evangelism will be considered to effectively engage the unsaved.

### **Common Methods of Evangelism**

Communicating the gospel message clearly and understandably is essential for effective evangelism. In this section, effective evangelism methods will be examined and briefly explained. Numerous evangelism methods are available for the believer to utilize in witnessing, but only a few will be considered here. Mark Dever's evangelism helps, evangelist Scott Dawson's guidebook for evangelism, and a few other resources will be shared as examples of useful tools for effective evangelism.

In the FAITH evangelism model, part of the evangelistic method is learning to formulate and share a clear personal testimony. A personal testimony contains three parts: life before Christ, a life changing experience, and one's life with Christ.<sup>28</sup> All believers will have a testimony of faith in Christ. An effective testimony is brief, sharing only the highlights of conversion. First, a testimony will share a pre-conversion experience that illustrates life without the assurance of heaven followed by a summary of conversion.

---

<sup>26</sup> Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 122.

<sup>27</sup> Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 123.

<sup>28</sup> Bobby H. Welch and Doug Williams, *Faith Evangelism: Discipling for Evangelism and Ministry* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2008), 35.

Lastly, the testimony concludes with a few recent benefits of one's conversion. Benefits would include the blessings of forgiveness and assurance of salvation, to name a few. This three-part testimony can be an effective witnessing tool, though certainly there are more evangelistic methods.

Dawson's *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook* shares Larry Robertson's method of gospel clarity.<sup>29</sup> Though it may seem obvious, the gospel must be presented with clarity. The witness should employ five components when sharing the gospel: clarity, authenticity, authority, conviction, and invitation.<sup>30</sup> First, clarity of the gospel message of Jesus's death and resurrection must be the center of the message while the witness should possess a reputable faith that demonstrates authenticity. The blatant hypocrisy, of a witness, damages the effectiveness of sharing the gospel. Next, the gospel message must use Scripture to demonstrate the authority of God's Word while relying upon the power of the Holy Spirit to bring the sinner under conviction. Finally, the last component of this evangelistic method includes an invitation to respond to the gospel. The message of Jesus's death and resurrection begs a response from the listener. The goal of the gospel message is for people to turn from sin and turn to God. In summary, a gospel presentation must include the components of clarity, authenticity, authority, conviction, and invitation.

Mark Dever gives a biblical model of how one should evangelize. He is clear that in one's evangelistic efforts there must be a balance of honesty, urgency, and joy.<sup>31</sup> First, an honest message must be communicated that repentance and faith in Christ are necessary to be saved. Dever urges the witness to include the reality of one's sin and the need for repentance. These topics may seem negative to the listener, yet each is necessary for the listener to assess his condition without Christ. Dever shares, "So however we evangelize, we aren't to hide problems, to ignore our own shortcomings, or deny

---

<sup>29</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 70.

<sup>30</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 57.

difficulties. We must be honest.”<sup>32</sup> Second, one must admit the urgency for repentance and faith required for salvation. The listener should decide today whether to trust Christ by faith. Second Corinthians 6:2 reads, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” The urgent nature of salvation is not a strategy to manipulate, it is simply telling the listener the truth of Scripture. Paul shares in 2 Corinthians 5:10–15 that Christ’s love compels believers to share the good news with others. The gospel message must be shared honestly, urgently, and with great joy and the joy of salvation should be communicated as part of one’s gospel witness.

One should be familiar with bridges to the gospel that can be used to move from general conversation to specific spiritual things. Beougher provides several examples of gospel bridges that can be used to transition conversations from the secular to the sacred. This section will consider some of these bridges to the gospel.

First, one should consider church bridge questions. A few questions to ask are, “Were you brought up in a particular religious tradition? Or do they talk about heaven much in your church?”<sup>33</sup> If the listener identifies with a church, then the question about heaven can move the conversation from religion to one’s need for Christ. Second, questions that provide an intellectual bridge might be used when talking with college students or other intellectual groups. One intellectual bridge question could be, “Has anyone ever shared with you the main message of the Bible?”<sup>34</sup> If the listener answered, “no,” then one could proceed to briefly share the Bible’s main message and dialogue about these truths. Intellectuals use reason, facts, and logic to understand one’s world. An intellectual bridge question can be a helpful tool to engage the listener and get to the heart of the matter.

Polls are used regularly by secular groups to gauge opinions. A personal opinion bridge question can gauge what listeners think about spiritual questions. One example of

---

<sup>32</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 57.

<sup>33</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 187.

<sup>34</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 188.

a personal opinion bridge could be, “In your personal opinion, what is a Christian?”<sup>35</sup> This question will reveal what the listener is thinking. One can respond by sharing how the Bible answers this question. Current issues bridge questions are relevant ways to discuss the gospel considering current events. The contents of the local newspaper will likely be the center of people’s conversations. Christians should be aware of current events and seek to engage with provoking questions to transition conversations to spiritual things.

In a sports-obsessed world, a sports bridge question is always a relevant way to witness. One question might be, “Did you know that Deion Sanders is a Christian?”<sup>36</sup> Witnesses should choose the Christian sports figure carefully by remembering to use athletes with credible testimonies. Sports bridge questions can be especially useful amongst men. Men may listen to the words of a respected athlete more than a respected minister. The believers should keep these sports bridge questions or others similar ready in the evangelistic arsenal.

Finally, a prayer bridge or a heaven bridge question could be used. The prayer bridge question is extremely versatile. One could use this bridge question with a waiter before a meal, or a friend who may seem troubled during a daily conversation. Simply ask, “Is there something I could pray about for you?”<sup>37</sup> This prayer bridge may meet the listener at the point of their need and begin a gospel conversation. The final bridge question to consider is the heaven bridge question. Everyone has an opinion on heaven and the afterlife, so this question allows for a dialogue that can spark a gospel interaction. A few examples of such a question would be: “Do you think heaven is a perfect place? or do only good people go to heaven when they die?”<sup>38</sup> These questions allow for a discussion about the requirements for entrance into heaven. Many will answer the

---

<sup>35</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 189.

<sup>36</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 190.

<sup>37</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 191.

<sup>38</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 191.

question confirming that good people go to heaven. One can share that only those who come by faith in Christ, in his finished salvific work, gain entrance into heaven. The use of bridge questions can easily assist the witness to gain access to a gospel conversation. Believers should be creative in considering other bridge questions and allow the leadership of the Holy Spirit to prompt them in witnessing encounters.

In this section, common methods and models were shared on how to witness. The gospel message must include the need for repentance and faith in Christ yet there are dozens of different ways to share this message. This section included the sharing of a personal testimony model, Larry Robertson's model of clarity, and Dever's model of honesty, urgency, and joy, as well as Beougher's list of bridge questions to introduce the gospel message. Certainly, many more methods can be used in evangelism. One such effective model, the FAITH evangelism method, will be considered in the next section.

### **The FAITH Evangelism Model**

The discipline of witnessing is dependent on prayer and the Holy Spirit. Yet believers are called to prepare for such witnessing encounters. In this section one such prepared model for witnessing will be presented. Again, there are many useful models for evangelism. The FAITH evangelism model is gospel-centered, clear, and makes use of a helpful acrostic of the word FAITH. The apostle Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom 10:15). This evangelism model will prepare the witness with a useful tool to engage lost people with the gospel.

Christians who receive evangelism training are more confident to witness, invite a friend to a church service, or even lead a person to make a commitment to Christ. Among Southern Baptists, 21.7 percent of Christians receiving witnessing training will lead a person to make a commitment to Christ.<sup>39</sup> This statistic translates to one out of five

---

<sup>39</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 21.

trained believers likely leading someone to faith in Christ. This should give Christians great motivation to be equipped, in some way, to share the gospel. As the FAITH evangelism model is explained, those who learn and use it will have the opportunity to impact heaven by helping others find the way as well as impacting one's church through adding believers to the body of Christ. The FAITH evangelism tool is one effective model to train a believer in witnessing to be better equipped for gospel conversations.

The FAITH evangelism model is taught so that a three-person team can utilize it in a personal visit with an unsaved person. The basics of the FAITH model will be explained for an individual to utilize. Certainly, an individual can use one's personal testimony, as previously explained, to introduce the gospel. The FAITH model would then be shared by employing what is known as the "key question," which states, "In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to get to heaven and have eternal life?"<sup>40</sup> This question serves as the launching pad for a gospel presentation. The listener will respond with one of four types of answers: faith, works, unclear, or no opinion.<sup>41</sup> Regardless of the response, an open door is created to make a transition statement and share the Bible's answers to how one can have eternal life. Hopefully, the listener will give the witness permission to share the Bible's findings on this question and one may proceed. The heart of the FAITH model is an acrostic based on the word that is the core of the evangelistic tool.

Using the word FAITH, the Bible will answer who can enter heaven. First, the letter F is for forgiveness, which only God can provide. Everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness, as Romans 3:23 says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Also, God's forgiveness is in Jesus only, as seen in Ephesians 1:7: "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches

---

<sup>40</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 35.

<sup>41</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 35.



of His grace.”<sup>42</sup> The next letter in the acrostic is A, which represents that God’s forgiveness is available for all, as seen in John 3:16: “God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” Further, God’s forgiveness is available but not automatic, as referenced in Matthew 7:21: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>43</sup> The listener will likely understand that God’s forgiveness is available yet struggle to understand why God’s forgiveness is not automatic. At this point, the witness must help the listener see that just being religious will not grant forgiveness. A person must admit sin and receive the necessary forgiveness of God. Next, the acrostic considers the letter I and the subject of entrance to heaven.

In the FAITH acrostic, the letter I represents impossible, as it is impossible to get into heaven on our own. The scriptural support is found in Ephesians 2:8-9: “By grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift -not from works, so that no one can boast.” Based on this statement and Scripture, the model prompts this question, “So how can a sinful person have eternal life and enter heaven?”<sup>44</sup> Certainly, the listener may need help understanding this critical truth. The witness should take time to explain and expound upon the truth that God’s grace, not one’s own works, is what makes access to heaven possible. The full answer to how sinners can enter heaven is provided by the next letter of the acrostic, which is T.

The letter T stands for turn, which refers to the need to repent or turn from sin. One is to turn to Jesus alone as Savior and Lord, as seen in John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”<sup>45</sup> Having shared the hope of salvation, found in Christ alone, the witness should then offer a question, which

---

<sup>42</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 76.

<sup>44</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 88.

<sup>45</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 11.

leads to the final letter, “What happens if a person is willing to repent of their sins and confess Christ?”<sup>46</sup> The listener will be told the outcome of repent and faith in the description accompanying the final letter, H.

The final letter is H, which represents heaven, the place where one will live with God forever, as seen in John 14:3: “If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also.” The witness would share that eternal life begins now with Jesus, as seen in John 10:10: “I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance.” Now, the listener has heard the full FAITH acrostic and what remains is to invite this individual to respond to Christ’s saving call through an invitation. If the listener is ready to trust Christ as Savior and Lord, then the witness would take the opportunity to lead in praying to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Upon leading a listener to pray a prayer of salvation, one would rejoice with the new convert and invite them to either attend church to connect and get involved in kingdom service. The FAITH acrostic can be an effective tool to practically and biblically share the gospel. The acrostic is merely a tool; the witness must remember to depend on the Holy Spirit to guide conversations as his leadership is essential in any witnessing encounter.

The discipline of witnessing requires preparation through prayer and training. The FAITH model is one way to prepare a witness to biblically share the gospel message with a straightforward, relatable acrostic based on the word FAITH. It is impossible for one to enter heaven on one’s own merits unless the person turns from sin and self and trusts Christ alone. Upon trusting Christ alone, one receives the grace of God and may gain entrance to heaven as Scripture confirms.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter discussed four evangelism components that can create more effective evangelistic efforts. First, common barriers to personal evangelism were discussed

---

<sup>46</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 11.

and corresponding approaches to overcome each were presented. In the second section, the challenges that exist in the western culture of cultural Christianity were discussed. Approaches to engage and evangelize the so-called “unsaved Christian” were presented. Third, some common evangelistic models or methods were shared with the aim of preparing the witness with more evangelistic tools to engage the lost. Finally, a key evangelistic method, the FAITH model, was presented and discussed as an effective witnessing tool. This chapter aimed to better equip the believer to be more evangelistic and model one’s life after the words of the Lord: “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

## CHAPTER 4

### DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this ministry project was to create an urgency for evangelism in the diaconate, which was accomplished by increasing their knowledge of evangelism, through teaching the diaconate a six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism. Six sessions were provided to teach about evangelism. Topics covered in these sessions included what is evangelism, what is the gospel message, how one is to evangelize, the deficiencies of cultural Christianity, common methods of evangelism, and common barriers in evangelism. The project results and the evaluation of the project will be given in chapter 5. This ministry project aimed to adequately equip the MBC diaconate to become better Christian witnesses within their community and ministry setting.

#### **Project Overview**

To address the need for evangelism training within the leadership of MBC, an evangelism course was developed to train the diaconate. The project originated during the Project Methodology phase of the DMin program during the Summer of 2022. As chapters 2 and 3 were developed and written, the theology, purpose, and practice of evangelism were explained in detail. The biblical and theological basis for evangelism combined with theoretical and practical issues were shared in these previous chapters. Throughout these foundation chapters a framework was under development for the six-session evangelism training course. The evangelism curriculum focused upon the theology, purpose, and practice of evangelism and its development continued.

On April 9, 2024, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee approved the research profile for this project, allowing for project

implementation to begin. The seven-man diaconate of MBC was given a pre-project Evangelism Assessment Survey (PEAS) to assess each man's knowledge of evangelism and practices. The deacons completed their PEAI and turned them in before the first evangelism session, which began on April 21, 2024. The analysis of the surveys revealed the level of familiarity the deacons had with evangelism and their practices of sharing the gospel. The survey responses revealed that most of the diaconate showed room for growth or learning in their familiarity of evangelism and its theology, purpose, and practice.

An expert panel of pastors was enlisted to review the evangelism course based upon the curriculum evaluation tool.<sup>1</sup> The expert panel of Southern Baptist pastors, holding doctorate degrees from accredited theological seminaries, reviewed the curriculum and gave their feedback.<sup>2</sup> Feedback from the expert panel was incorporated into the evangelism curriculum.

Beginning on April 21, 2024, the first evangelism course session was taught, and the six-session course continued through August 4, 2024, as the summer scheduling required some flexibility to accommodate the participants. Each session was about sixty minutes teaching with discussions. All sessions occurred at MBC. The post-project Evangelism Practices Survey (PEPS) was given to all participants after the course completion on August 4, 2024, to assess their increase in evangelism knowledge. All seven participants completed and returned their PEPS forms after the six-session course concluded.

### **Teaching the Lessons**

The six-session evangelism course began on April 21, 2024, with the MBC diaconate participants. The six-session course had some scheduling adjustments due to a busy summer of ministry and the final session was completed on August 4, 2024. In the

---

<sup>1</sup> See appendix 2.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix 5.

course, the diaconate was taught (1) what is evangelism; (2) what is the gospel message; (3) how should one evangelize; (4) what are the deficiencies of cultural Christianity and how to engage them with the gospel; (5) practical methods to communicate the gospel; and (6) common barriers to evangelism and ways to overcome them. Each of the evangelism lessons had an accompanying “Listening Guide,” which was distributed to the participants during each session.<sup>3</sup>

### **Session 1: What Is Evangelism?**

The word evangelism is derived from the Greek word *euangelion*, translated “the gospel.”<sup>4</sup> The root word evangel simply means good news. This “good news” details who God is and includes his plan to reconcile humanity. In short, evangelism announces the good news.<sup>5</sup> One finds the command to share this good news in Mark’s Gospel: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (16:15). Jesus is commanding Christians to do more than merely be moral in actions; he is commanding the use of words to share this good news.<sup>6</sup> Timothy Beougher defines evangelism as follows: “Evangelism is the compassionate sharing of Jesus Christ with lost people, in the power of the Holy Spirit with the purpose of bringing them to Christ as Savior and Lord, that they in turn might share Him with others.”<sup>7</sup> When discussing personal evangelism in this study, evangelism will be used to refer to the activity of sharing the gospel with others.

When considering a definition for evangelism, three main aspects should be included: sharing the good news of Jesus with the unconverted, the utility of the Holy Spirit, and the aim of bringing individuals to faith in Christ. Evangelism not merely sharing

---

<sup>3</sup> See appendix 8.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy K. Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 9.

<sup>6</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 9.

facts about Jesus or aiming to convert someone to saving faith in Christ. Evangelism combines the power of the Holy Spirit when one shares the gospel message toward the aim of converting sinners.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Can you think of a time when you shared Christ in an evangelistic way?
2. How would you describe your witnessing experience?

An illustration on evangelism is shared by evangelist, Luis Palau. Palau shares about the efforts of Robert Woodruff, the Coca-Cola president from 1923–1955. After the conclusion of World War II, he made the aggressive statement that he wanted everyone in the world to have a taste of Coca-Cola in his lifetime. Woodruff and his team planned and worked hard to fulfill this vision. Millions around the globe tasted this refreshing beverage due to the vision of this one man.<sup>8</sup> So, how big is your vision to reach others with the gospel of Jesus? Have you ever considered what God could do through you as you commit to reach your generation?<sup>9</sup>

### *How Do People Come to Saving Faith in Christ?*

There are two extreme positions on this subject. One position is that everything depends on God.<sup>10</sup> God is the creator, sovereign ruler, and savior of mankind. So certainly, salvation depends upon God, yet he invites us to be witnesses of this salvation. A danger in this first position is that man has no responsibility and becomes passive in evangelism.

A second position is that everything depends on man and his efforts. Will McRaney shares a few dangers that stem from this position. First, the witness may be

---

<sup>8</sup> Scott Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 9.

<sup>9</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Will McRaney Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Nashville: B & H, 2003), 14.

tempted to manipulate those who are “spiritually searching” to decide for Christ.<sup>11</sup> In evangelism, all people should be honored and treated as “image bearers of God” (Gen 1:26). Second, the witness may attempt to use witnessing methods which are suspect, or as some have stated, “out-of-bounds.” The witness should avoid using manipulative methods that would negatively reflect on one’s Christian witness.<sup>12</sup>

God’s involvement in evangelism is essential. While man’s involvement in evangelism is commanded by Scripture. Christ commands believers to preach the gospel to all the world (Mark 16:15). God brings people to saving faith and, in many ways, uses his followers to share the gospel (Acts 8:34–38).

### *Discussion Questions*

1. How should Christians respond to the command to evangelize?
2. What is a caution if one thinks evangelism is dependent on man’s efforts?
3. Can you think of an example in Scripture where God used a believer to witness? (Acts 8:34–38, Acts 26:24–29)

### *Why Should One Evangelize?*

There are four reasons why one should evangelize. First, there is a mandate in both Great Commissions found in Matthew 28:18–20 and Mark 16:15–16. Second, Scripture communicates that God is to be glorified. Sharing the gospel communicates the good news of salvation and these efforts bring glory to God. Third, winning souls to Christ is wise (Prov 11:30). Fourth, witnessing not only brings glory to God, but it brings joy to the believer. As the believer shares about Christ with the aim of bringing others to faith, joy will follow. These four reasons are sufficient biblical proofs for the believer to be faithful in evangelism.

---

<sup>11</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 15.



### *Discussion Questions*

1. What are three key parts of a definition of evangelism?
2. How does one come to saving faith in Christ?
3. What are at least two reasons why one should evangelize?

### **Session 2: What Is the Gospel Message?**

Session 1 shared that the gospel was the good news of who God is and includes his plan to reconcile humanity. Everything about God's plan to redeem mankind is a part of the gospel. What is shared in communicating the gospel must be anchored in biblical truths. First, the gospel begins with God; he is the creator and maker of all things, including man, thus man is accountable to God. Second, the gospel includes man and his rebellion to God. All mankind has sinned, as Romans 3:23 declares, and man is spiritually separated from his creator. Third, one sees that Christ is the only hope. Graciously, God provides man his only Son who lives a perfect life, dies a sacrificial death, and is miraculously resurrected (1 Cor 15:3–4). One can see that Christ is the provisional for sinful man. Lastly, the gospel requires man's response of repentance and faith. The content of the gospel will be shared through this four-part framework of the gospel message, which includes God, man, Christ, and response.<sup>13</sup>

How important is it to remember the content of the gospel message? In J. Mack Stiles's *Marks of the Messenger*, a great reminder is given.<sup>14</sup> The book focuses on the communicator of the gospel—the messenger. Stiles notes that one can observe a disturbing pattern with religious movements.<sup>15</sup> Beougher summarizes this pattern in his book *Invitation to Evangelism*. He shares that after the gospel is first accepted, believed, and

---

<sup>13</sup> Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 31.

<sup>14</sup> J. Mack Stiles, *Marks of the Messenger: Knowing, Loving and Speaking the Gospel* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2010), 17.

<sup>15</sup> Stiles, *Marks of the Messenger*, 17.

embraced, after a period the gospel can be assumed.<sup>16</sup> It might be asked, how do you know the gospel is being assumed? It is assumed when one hears it stated, “Oh, we’ve already heard that before.”<sup>17</sup> Stiles shares, in Beougher’s work, “It is not a very far cry from the gospel being assumed to the gospel being confused; then, it is not a far step from the gospel being confused to the gospel being lost.”<sup>18</sup> Be vigilant to believe this gospel and share it faithfully and regularly.

The focus of session 2 will be on a four-part outline of the gospel message. Greg Gilbert helps one see this four-part summary of the gospel in his book, *What Is the Gospel?* As shared earlier, “The summary of these four major points include: God, man, Christ, and response.”<sup>19</sup> The topic of the gospel message was explored in session 2.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. The gospel is the good news. What is the content of this good news?
2. Why must one remember and share the content of this gospel?
3. What are the four parts of the gospel which were presented?

### *The Gospel Content Outline*

Throughout the New Testament, the message of the gospel appears. Gilbert notes that the apostles’ New Testament writings reveal what they learned from Jesus about the good news. The four-part structure of the gospel appears in the apostle Paul’s letters, the Gospel accounts, and other New Testament writings. First, God is to whom man is accountable. Mankind is not self-sustaining. Humanity is created by God and dependent on God. Romans 1:21 reveals, “They did not honor him as God . . . but they became

---

<sup>16</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 101.

<sup>17</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 101.

<sup>18</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 101.

<sup>19</sup> Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*, 31.

futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”<sup>20</sup> All have chosen to not honor God and must realize they are each accountable to God.

The second part of the gospel outline is humanity’s rebellion against God.<sup>21</sup> Romans 3:23 demonstrates man’s sinfulness: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” and the verse teaches that, “the wages of sin is death.”<sup>22</sup> The problem with sin is greater than one thinks. Mark Dever shares, “Our problems aren’t fundamentally that we have messed up our own lives or simply failed to reach our full potential, but that we have sinned against God.”<sup>23</sup> One may say to oneself, “I haven’t committed a serious sin such as murder or another capital offense; therefore, my sins are minor or insignificant in God’s eyes.” When one considers sin, the book of James has a humbling message: “Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking it all” (Jas 2:10). One sin makes anyone guilty of breaking all of God’s laws. Continual sin leads to a spiritual death and an eternal separation from God; this is a serious and grave predicament.

The third part of the gospel outline is the message about Jesus and his complete work of redemption.<sup>24</sup> Behavioral modifications or self-improvement will not bring forgiveness from sins or remove the guilt of the same. Jesus is the only hope for sinners who are guilty of breaking God’s laws. Jesus is the promised Messiah written about in the Old Testament. Isaiah prophesies, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Isa 53:4). This prophecy foretells of Jesus’s unwarranted punishment on the cross to pay for sins and provide redemption for any man. Jesus perfectly lived and

---

<sup>20</sup> Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*, 28.

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*, 29.

<sup>22</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 105.

<sup>23</sup> Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 35.

<sup>24</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 107.

sacrificially died on a cross. Jesus is the Son of God who came to earth. He is both fully God and fully man. Matthew 1:21 tells that Jesus is Emmanuel, meaning “God with us.”<sup>25</sup> As one who is both God and man, Jesus is the perfect mediator between sinful men and a holy God. Jesus’s death on the cross both paid for sins and appeased the wrath of God. Jesus’s resurrection shows his victory over death and that one can have victory over sin and death through Christ. The angel of the Lord spoke to Jesus’s grave visitors in Luke 24:5 saying, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” Jesus’s resurrection shows there is hope for forgiveness and salvation for those who come to him by faith.

Finally, the gospel message requires a response. When someone considers the God of the Bible, their own rebellion or sin against God, and then hears of the hope for forgiveness found in the person and work of Christ, what must one do?<sup>26</sup> The response God demands is to repent of sin and trust in Christ alone. Jesus himself begins to preach with this simple message in Mark 1:15: “Repent and believe the good news!”<sup>27</sup> Repenting is a turning from sin and believing is fully relying on the message that is heard. When one hears the news of the gospel it can change their mind. Dever shares, “The word for ‘repent’ is metanoia and means literally ‘to change your mind.’”<sup>28</sup> So, a response to the gospel requires repentance and faith as seen in Acts 8:37 and Acts 20:21. Phillip and Paul, respectively in these passages, are calling for the hearers to turn from sin and believe in Christ. This is the type of response required for saving faith.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. What is important to know about God and how man relates to him?
2. How has humanity responded to God in the way we live?

<sup>25</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 107.

<sup>26</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 40.

<sup>27</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 41.

<sup>28</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 42.

3. How is sin destructive for mankind? Does God have to judge our sin? If so, why?
4. What is one thing about the person of Christ and his work completed for mankind?
5. What type of response is needed to be saved?

The focus in this session was on the four-part outline of God, man, Christ, and response. It is essential that Christians know and believe the gospel message while committing to share it with those whom they encounter. As today's sinful culture needs to hear and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, the church must also be vigilantly reminded of the content of the gospel. Believers are to embody the message of the gospel and faithfully share it as commanded by the commissions in Matthew 28:18–20 and Mark 16:15–16.

### **Session 3: How Should One Evangelize?**

Session 3 intended to teach the diaconate how to communicate the gospel. It has been shared that one evangelizes by preaching the Word and sharing the message.<sup>29</sup> This session explains how one should communicate this message. In the previous session, the content of the gospel message was explained: God, man, Christ, and response. This message is timeless and can be shared through a variety of venues: preaching, small group discussion, digital print, or media, as well as personal conversation. So, how then does one spread this gospel?

A few things should be prioritized in gospel sharing. Mark Dever and Will Metzger are quite helpful in pointing to some essentials in gospel communication. First, one must commit to tell the truth of the gospel. Next, the gospel message should be shared with urgency, as Scripture communicates, “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Heb 9:27).<sup>30</sup> Time is limited, so evangelism must reflect a sense of urgency. In addition, one must know that prayer is essential for all gospel

---

<sup>29</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 57.

communication, as God calls believers to pray for the lost or unconverted. Finally, ask God to grant a godly love for all those needing the gospel. When communicating the gospel, one must combine these ingredients so that truth, urgency, prayerfulness, and godly love are evident. It should be noted that there is an interdependence amongst these gospel communication elements.

An examination of these gospel communication elements is necessary. First, tell the truth of the gospel message. The culture is pluralistic and allows for each person to have their “own truth.” As the world shifted from postmodernism to what appears to be a post-Christian culture, there is a need for the truth of the gospel. As was shared in session 2, the gospel can be accepted and believed, but after a period it can become assumed. As one assumes people know the gospel, the gospel is shared less and ultimately the gospel message can be lost. Salvation comes through repentance and faith in Christ, which is the biblical message needed today.<sup>31</sup> If one repents and believes in Christ, life transformation will occur. Paul shares the results of living a Christian life in his second letter to Timothy: “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Tim 3:12). As one tells the truth of the gospel, he may encounter difficulty. Telling the truth requires representing the negative and positive aspects of the gospel message.<sup>32</sup> One might think sharing about the reality of sin and its consequences are negative, but these truths are necessary in gospel communication for the listener to be aware of his helpless, sinful situation. Telling the truth also includes more positive things like the grace and mercy of God, which is available only through Christ. Telling the truth encompasses both the positive and negative aspects of the gospel message so the listener is accurately presented with the whole truth. Telling the truth is essential so that a biblical message is represented to persons hearing the gospel.

---

<sup>31</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 56.

<sup>32</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 56.

Believers must share the gospel with a sense of urgency. The message of the gospel is a serious message that requires careful consideration yet requires urgency as the witness shares its message. When it comes to sharing the gospel, one must realize that time is short, and the message of Christ's love is compelling.<sup>33</sup> Scripture says that Christ is not one of the ways to God; rather, he is "the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Salvation is exclusive; it is found only in the person and the work of Christ. Acts 4:12 says, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." It is repeated throughout the New Testament that Christ is the only way to salvation and man's time to respond is short. Hebrews 9:27 reads, "It is appointed for man to die once, but after this the judgment." One must share the gospel urgently, yet not hastily. It must be remembered that urgency should be combined with truth, prayerfulness, and love when sharing Christ. Sharing the gospel urgently without prayerfulness may be perceived as a forceful message. Sharing the gospel in truth with no mixture of godly love may appear legalistic. Further, sharing the gospel while focusing on love and mercy with no mixture of truth is incomplete.<sup>34</sup> There is a necessary balance of all these traits when witnessing. One should employ a sense of urgency in evangelism as the time of opportunity for a person to respond to Christ will end one day, and no one knows the hour or the time.

Effective evangelism includes prayer, and God calls believers to pray for all peoples. Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:1, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men." Paul reveals God's heart for the salvation of men by sharing that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). Based on these passages, it seems that

---

<sup>33</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 59.

<sup>34</sup> Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel to the Whole Person by Whole People* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002), 51.

prayers for people should include petitions for their salvation.<sup>35</sup> Paul records another example of interceding for unbelievers when he prayed for unbelieving Israel: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved” (Rom 10:1). Paul’s burden for his countrymen’s salvation prompted him to pray for them to come to saving faith in Christ.<sup>36</sup> Finally, one also sees in Scripture that Jesus models interceding for the unconverted. As Jesus hung on the cross for the sins of the world, he prayed for the very sinners who crucified him. Luke writes of this in his account: “There they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do’” (Luke 23:33b–34). As Christ prayed for forgiveness for the transgressors at the cross, one of the criminals called for a pardon from Christ.<sup>37</sup> Jesus heard his plea and granted him salvation on that day. As one can see, prayer for the lost has its roots in Scripture. Paul prayed for his unconverted countrymen and emphasized the need to pray for all peoples as well. Furthermore, Jesus modeled intercessory prayer for the lost and calls one to follow his example by praying for those who are unconverted.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. What are some ways you have shared the gospel with someone?
2. What are some of the elements that should be included when sharing the gospel?
3. What is most difficult for you when sharing the gospel?
4. What areas do you need help in when sharing the gospel?

<sup>35</sup> Matt Queen, *Everyday Evangelism* (Fort Worth, TX: Seminary Hill, 2014), 27.

<sup>36</sup> Queen, *Everyday Evangelism*, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Queen, *Everyday Evangelism*, 26.



#### **Session 4: How to Communicate the Gospel to Western Cultural Christianity**

Western culture has become characterized by individuals that hold to a form of cultural Christianity. Cultural Christians are those who are morally good, attend church with some regularity, and are familiar with the Christian lingo enough to speak the Christian language.<sup>38</sup> This cultural Christianity includes patriotic expressions at ballfields, rehearsed prayers over meals, and the practice of religion over demonstrating a personal relationship with Jesus. The gospel of Jesus is usually not a part of the cultural Christians' theology.<sup>39</sup> One merely "thinks" he is a Christian by virtue of his morality, occasional church attendance, or religious rituals that are practiced. To effectively communicate the gospel to cultural Christians, the evangelist must aim to help the individual see he is lost before being saved.<sup>40</sup> Scripture reminds that only the repentant, not the religious, will enter the kingdom of God. Jesus's words in Matthew 7:21 are helpful: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven." Understanding the problems of cultural Christianity is the first step to becoming an effective evangelist able to properly communicate the gospel.

Cultural Christianity holds to a religion without salvation.<sup>41</sup> The religious cling to the morality of one's deeds, the ritual of one's church attendance, and the rehearsal of "Christian phrases or platitudes" for eternal security. These religious traits by no means secure salvation for the individual, yet these traits characterize cultural Christianity. There are two reasons why some people hold to a religion without salvation. First, it is likely the individual has never heard the gospel message clearly. The cultural Christian has listened to inspirational messages about the positive traits of God's love and his

---

<sup>38</sup> Dean Inserra, *The Unserved Christian: Reaching Cultural Christianity with the Gospel* (Chicago: Moody, 2019), 13.

<sup>39</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 14.

<sup>40</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 21.

mercy, yet the reality of the sinfulness of man and his need for repentance are unknown to such individuals.<sup>42</sup> Second, cultural Christians have an absence of the fear of a powerful, sovereign God. Cultural Christians view God as the “kind Grandfather upstairs” and certainly have reverence for him, but little fear of his might and power. The cultural Christian needs to hear the true gospel message that God created all things, man sinned, Christ was provided as a sacrifice, and all must respond and receive forgiveness and salvation. As individuals discover the problem of one’s own sin, there comes a healthy fear of almighty God. Having a fear of God combined with a clear witness of the gospel gives the cultural Christian the opportunity to be awakened from religion without salvation.

False assurance of salvation is also a trait of cultural Christianity.<sup>43</sup> Many adults cling to a false assurance of salvation based upon a childhood prayer of salvation that has borne little to no fruit in their life. The cultural Christian misunderstands the biblical doctrine of eternal security or perseverance of the saints.<sup>44</sup> Wayne Grudem defines the perseverance of the saints as “the means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.”<sup>45</sup> The false assurance that cultural Christians hold to is based upon the misused phrase of “once saved, always saved.” This phrase is a poor rendering of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, which has just been defined. It is a false assurance of salvation to reference a childhood salvation prayer that yielded little to no spiritual fruit as the only evidence of one’s salvation. Cultural Christians have been convinced of a false assurance of salvation due to a religious experience from childhood that has likely yielded little fruit. The

---

<sup>42</sup> Queen, *Everyday Evangelism*, 17.

<sup>43</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 64.

<sup>45</sup> Wayne Grudem, quoted in Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 64.

individual needs to become aware of what genuine salvation is marked by. Marks of conversion would be repentance of sins, desire to grow spiritually in one's faith in Christ, a hunger for God's Word and spiritual things, and a regular pattern of spiritual fruit in one's life. Dean Inserra summarizes this salvation assurance problem: "There is a time when someone believes the gospel by confessing Christ and turning from sin. The glitch in the system is when weight is placed on the experience of that moment, rather than the saving work of Christ."<sup>46</sup>

Common barriers must be overcome in the effort to reach cultural Christians. Inserra shares five barriers that exist in the cultural Christian's theology. First, cultural Christians believe in God and in heaven. These two beliefs are important, yet these topical and shallow beliefs represent a strong familiarity with Christian terms, celebrations, and even Bible stories, yet lack true evidence of good works to accompany one's faith.<sup>47</sup> James 2:20 reveals that faith without works is dead and that one should produce works in keeping with one's faith. The second barrier is values, which cultural Christians hold. The center of the cultural Christian belief is that one's goodness merits salvation rather than the grace and forgiveness of Christ. The moralist must be confronted with biblical passages such as Romans 3:10: "There is no one righteous, not even one." The cultural Christian believes good, moral people go to heaven. This flawed view is founded in their moral works, raising "nice children," and being religious. These individuals think good is determined by themselves rather than by God alone. The third barrier is related to the heritage of cultural Christians. The religious heritage of the cultural Christian is elevated above true saving faith. In other words, an individual may cling to the religious faith of a grandparent as one's own faith without repenting of sin and trusting in Christ. The cultural Christian must come to acknowledge that a

---

<sup>46</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 67.

<sup>47</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 58.

grandparent's faith in Christ will not gain access to heaven for them. Inserra shares, "A legacy of faith should be celebrated, but a faith that is inherited is no faith at all."<sup>48</sup> There are two final barriers for cultural Christians to overcome to find saving faith.

The fourth barrier for cultural Christians is the rites of passage that are deemed salvific. Rites of passage may include a first communion, infant baptism or confirmation. It is good for young people to participate in the rites of passage. Yet, the rites of passage in and of themselves hold no saving power to convert the individual. A parent may point to an isolated rite of passage as the proof of a child's saving faith when the child has lived a fruitless life for Christ since that rite of passage moment. The participant in a rite of passage does not place someone in good standing with God. This rite of passage barrier is common amongst cultural Christians and should be tactfully addressed with the aim of saving faith evidenced by spiritual fruit being the life one lives. The final barrier that cultural Christians face is merely ignorance. One must truly know what is necessary for saving faith in Christ. Cultural Christians usually have not been exposed to biblical preaching that clearly proclaims the gospel message. The cultural Christian is ignorant of the gospel message, the call to repentance, and faith. This ignorance is troubling and could cause a person to miss the gospel altogether. These five barriers can allow a cultural Christian to hold to some nominal form of Christianity yet miss the true saving faith only found in Christ.<sup>49</sup>

### **Session 5: Common Methods of Evangelism to Effectively Share the Gospel**

Communicating the gospel message clearly and understandably is essential for effectiveness in evangelism. In this fifth session, effective evangelism methods were examined and briefly explained. Numerous evangelism methods are available for the

---

<sup>48</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 59.

<sup>49</sup> Inserra, *The Unserved Christian*, 61.

believer to utilize in witnessing, but only a few will be considered here. Dever's evangelism helps, evangelist Scott Dawson guidebook for evangelism, and other resources were shared as examples of tools that can be used in effective evangelism.

In the FAITH evangelism model, part of the evangelistic method is learning to formulate and share a clear personal testimony. A personal testimony contains three parts: life before Christ, a life changing experience, and one's life with Christ. All believers have a testimony of faith in Christ. The sharing of a personal faith testimony is a helpful method to introduce the gospel message. To be effective, this testimony must be short and share the highlights of conversion. The evangelist should strive to craft a testimony that can be shared in three minutes. The three-part testimony should include the pre-conversion experience, conversion experience, and the recent benefits of conversion. Benefits would include the blessings of forgiveness and assurance of salvation, to name a few. This testimony covers the change in one's life through Christ and is intended to be brief. A method of witnessing is to share a clear three-part testimony proposed by the FAITH evangelism model.<sup>50</sup> Certainly, though, there are more evangelistic methods available for witnessing use.

Scott Dawson's *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook* shares Larry Robertson's method of gospel clarity. Though it may seem obvious, the gospel must be presented with clarity. The witness should employ five components when sharing the gospel: clarity, authenticity, authority, conviction, and invitation.<sup>51</sup> Each component will be briefly considered.

First, clarity of the gospel message of Jesus's death and resurrection must be the center of the message. Second, the message must have authenticity, and this occurs when the witness is actively living the Christian message in one's life. Third, the gospel

---

<sup>50</sup> Bobby H. Welch and Doug Williams, *Faith Evangelism: Discipling for Evangelism and Ministry* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2008), 35.

<sup>51</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 73.

message must use Scripture as its theme to demonstrate the authority of God's Word. God's Word is more powerful than human wisdom and the Word of God will go forth and accomplish its purposes (Isa 55:11).<sup>52</sup> Fourth, the witness should rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit to bring conviction upon the sinner. The Holy Spirit's job is to bring about conviction in the sinner's life and the witness must be careful to not to use fleshly tactics yet trust the Holy Spirit. Finally, the last component of this evangelistic method includes an invitation to respond to the gospel. The message of Jesus's death and resurrection begs a response from the listener. The goal of the gospel message is for people to turn from sin and turn to God. In summary, a gospel presentation must include the components of clarity, authenticity, authority, conviction, and invitation.

Dever gives a biblical model of how one should evangelize. He is clear that in one's evangelistic efforts there must be a balance of honesty, urgency, and joy.<sup>53</sup> First, an honest message must be communicated that repentance and faith in Christ are necessary to be saved. Dever urges the witness to include the reality of one's sin and the need for repentance. These topics may seem negative to the listener, yet each is necessary for the listener to assess his condition without Christ. Dever shares, "So however we evangelize, we aren't to hide problems, to ignore our own shortcomings, or deny difficulties. We must be honest."<sup>54</sup> Second, one must admit the urgency for repentance and faith required for salvation. The listener should decide today whether to trust Christ by faith. The urgent nature of salvation is not a strategy to manipulate, it is simply telling the listener the truth of Scripture. As Paul shares in 2 Corinthians 5:10–15, Christ's love compels his people to share the good news with others. Finally, the gospel message must be shared with great joy. One must share the honest need for repentance yet combine that with the joy of the blessings found in salvation. One should be familiar with bridges to the gospel that can be

---

<sup>52</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 72.

<sup>53</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 57.

<sup>54</sup> Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 57.

used to move from general conversation to specific spiritual things. There are several examples of gospel bridges, which can be used to transition conversations from the secular to the sacred. This section will consider some of these bridges to the gospel.

First, one should consider church bridge questions. A few questions to ask are, “Were you brought up in a particular religious tradition? Or do they talk about heaven much in your church?”<sup>55</sup> If the listener identifies with a church, then the question about heaven can move the conversation from religion to one’s need for Christ. Second, questions that provide an intellectual bridge might be used when talking with college students or other intellectual groups. One intellectual bridge question could be, “Has anyone ever shared with you the main message of the Bible?”<sup>56</sup> If the listener answered, “no,” then one could proceed to briefly share the Bible’s main message and dialogue about these truths. Intellectuals use reason, facts, and logic to understand one’s world. An intellectual bridge question can be a helpful tool to engage the listener and get to the heart of the matter.

Polls are used regularly by secular groups to gauge opinions. One example of an opinion bridge could be, “In your personal opinion, what is a Christian?”<sup>57</sup> This question will reveal what the listener is thinking. One can respond by sharing how the Bible answers the question. An opinion question values the listener’s thinking and transitions the conversation to biblical answers that move toward a gospel-oriented discussion. Current issues bridge questions are relevant ways to discuss the gospel considering current events. One such question could be, “May I share with you some great news that you won’t find in today’s newspaper?”<sup>58</sup> The contents of the local newspaper will likely be the center of people’s conversations. Christians should be aware of current

---

<sup>55</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 187.

<sup>56</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 188.

<sup>57</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 189.

<sup>58</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 189.

events and seek to engage with provoking questions to transition conversations to spiritual things.

In a sports-obsessed world, a sports bridge question is always a relevant way to witness. One question might be, “Did you know that Deion Sanders is a Christian?”<sup>59</sup> Choose Christian sports figures carefully; use athletes with credible testimonies. Sports bridge questions can be especially useful amongst men. Men may listen to the words of a respected athlete more than a respected minister. Believers should keep these sports bridge questions or others similar ready in their evangelistic arsenal.

Finally, two more bridge questions could be used: a prayer bridge or a heaven bridge question. The prayer bridge question is extremely versatile. One could use this bridge question with a waiter before a meal, or with a friend who may seem troubled during a daily conversation. Simply ask, “Is there something I could pray about for you?”<sup>60</sup> This prayer bridge may meet the listener at the point of their need and begin a gospel conversation. The final bridge question to consider is the heaven bridge question. Everyone has an opinion on heaven and the afterlife, so this question allows for a dialogue that can spark a gospel interaction. A few examples of such a question would be: “Do you think heaven is a perfect place? Or do only good people go to heaven when they die?”<sup>61</sup> These questions allow for a discussion about the requirements for entrance into heaven. Many will answer the question confirming that good people go to heaven. One can share that only those who come by faith in Christ, in his finished salvific work, gain entrance to heaven. As one can see, the use of bridge questions can assist the witness to easily gain access to a gospel conversation. One should use creativity to consider other bridge questions and allow the leadership of the Holy Spirit to prompt in witnessing encounters.

---

<sup>59</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 190.

<sup>60</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 191.

<sup>61</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 191.



In this section common methods and models were shared on how to witness. There are dozens of different ways to share this message, but the gospel message must include the need for repentance and faith in Christ. This section included the sharing of a personal testimony model, Larry Robertson's model of clarity, Dever's model of honesty, urgency, and joy, as well as Beougher's bridge questions to introduce the gospel message, though certainly many more methods can be used in evangelism. One such effective model, the FAITH evangelism method, will be considered in the next section.

### *Essentials of the FAITH Evangelism*

The discipline of witnessing is dependent on prayer and the Holy Spirit. Yet believers are called to prepare for such witnessing encounters. In this section one such prepared model for witnessing will be presented. The FAITH evangelism model is gospel-centered, clear, and makes use of a helpful acrostic of the word FAITH. As the apostle Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom 10:15). This evangelism model prepares the witness with a useful tool to engage lost people with the gospel.

Christians that have received evangelism training are more confident to witness, invite a friend to a church service, or lead a person to making a commitment to Christ. Among Southern Baptists, it is observed that 21.7 percent of Christians that receive witnessing training will lead a person to make a commitment to Christ.<sup>62</sup> This statistic translates to one out of five trained believers likely leading someone to faith in Christ. This should give one great motivation to be equipped, in some way, to share the gospel. As the FAITH evangelism model is explained, those who learn and use it will have the opportunity to impact heaven by helping others find the way as well as impacting their church through adding believers to the body of Christ. The FAITH evangelism tool is one

---

<sup>62</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 21.

effective model that trains a believer in witnessing to be better equipped for gospel conversations.

For the purposes of this session, the basics of the FAITH model will be explained. Certainly, an individual can use one's personal testimony, as previously explained, to introduce the gospel. The FAITH model would then be shared by employing what is known as the "key question," which states, "In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to get to heaven and have eternal life?"<sup>63</sup> This question serves as the launching pad for a gospel presentation. The listener will respond with one of four types of answers: faith, works, unclear, or no opinion.<sup>64</sup> Regardless answer given, an open door is created to make a transition statement. Hopefully, the listener will give the witness permission to share the Bible's findings on this question and one may proceed. The heart of the FAITH model is an acrostic based on the word, which is the core of the evangelistic tool.

Using the word FAITH, the Bible will answer who can enter heaven. First, the letter F is for forgiveness, which only God can provide. This truth tells of the need for forgiveness and establishes that only God can provide it. This and all subsequent points are supported by Scripture. Everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness, as explained in Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Also, God's forgiveness is in Jesus only, as seen in Ephesians 1:7.

The next letter in the acrostic is A, which represents that God's forgiveness is available for all, as seen in John 3:16: "God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." Further, God's forgiveness is available but not automatic, as referenced in Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven."<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 35.

<sup>64</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 35.

<sup>65</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 76.

The listener will likely understand that God’s forgiveness is available yet struggle to understand why God’s forgiveness is not automatic. At this point, the listener must be helped to see that just being religious will not grant forgiveness. One must admit sin and receive the necessary forgiveness, which God’s provides. The FAITH model gives specific training here concerning universalism (that everyone will be saved) and God’s nature, including truths whether God sends some to hell while allowing others entrance to heaven. Next, the acrostic considers the letter I and the subject of entrance to heaven.

In the FAITH acrostic, the letter I represents impossible, the impossibility of sinners achieving heaven on their own. The scriptural support is found in Ephesians 2:8–9: “By grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift—not from works, so that no one can boast.” Based on this statement and Scripture, the model prompts this question, “So how can a sinful person have eternal life and enter heaven?”<sup>66</sup> Certainly, the listener may need help understanding this critical truth supported by Ephesians 2:8–9. The witness should take time to explain the truth that God’s grace, not one’s works, is what makes access to heaven possible. The full answer to how sinners can enter heaven is provided by the next letter of the acrostic, which is T.

The letter T stands for turn in the FAITH acrostic. Turn means to repent, that is to turn away from sin and self, as Luke 13:3 shares, “Unless you repent, you will all perish as well.”<sup>67</sup> A person is to turn to Jesus alone as Savior and Lord, as seen in John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father except through Me.” Having shared the hope of salvation, found in Christ alone, the witness should then offer the question which leads to the final letter, “What happens if a person is willing to repent of their sins and confess Christ?”<sup>68</sup> The listener will be told the outcome of repent and faith in the description accompanying the final letter H.

---

<sup>66</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 88.

<sup>67</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 102.

<sup>68</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 11.

The letter H stands for heaven, which is a place where one will live with God forever, as seen in John 14:3: “If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also.” The witness would share that eternal life begins now with Jesus, as seen in John 10:10: “I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance.” The next step is to share that H can also stand for how, as in the question, “How can a person have God’s forgiveness, eternal life, and heaven? By trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord.”<sup>69</sup> Now, the listener has heard the full FAITH acrostic and what remains is to invite the individual to respond to Christ’s saving call through an invitation. One could share this question, “Understanding what we have shared, would you like to receive this forgiveness by trusting in Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?”<sup>70</sup> Finally, if the listener is ready to trust Christ as Savior and Lord, then the witness should lead the listener in praying to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. FAITH training provides a prayer that can be prayed by the candidate that includes confessing sin and acknowledging Jesus’s death and resurrection, as well as placing one’s faith in Christ alone for salvation. Upon leading a listener to pray a prayer of salvation, one would rejoice with the new convert and invite them to either attend church to connect and get involved in kingdom service.

This section articulated several common methods for effectively sharing the gospel. The discipline of witnessing requires preparation through prayer and training. The FAITH model is one way to prepare a witness to biblically share the gospel message with a relatable acrostic based on the word FAITH. These witnessing methods, combined with the aid of the Holy Spirit, can better equip a believer for witnessing opportunities.

---

<sup>69</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 11.

<sup>70</sup> Welch and Williams, *Faith Evangelism*, 11.

## **Session 6: Common Barriers in Evangelism and Paths to Overcome Them**

In this sixth session, two major categories of common barriers in personal evangelism were shared and explained to the MBC diaconate. The list of barriers was helpful to articulate in this evangelism training to better equip these men as witnesses. This session provided biblical solutions to overcoming the shared barriers. When considering barriers in evangelism, one must be reminded of the mandate to share the gospel in Matthew 28:19–20 and be confident that God will use the efforts of a faithful witness, according to his will.

For the evangelical Christian, sharing the gospel is commanded by the Lord Jesus: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:19–20a). The faithful Christian, as he attempts to share Christ, will confront barriers or obstacles when presenting this message of hope. One should ask what success is in sharing the gospel. Bill Bright shares, “Simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.”<sup>71</sup> Certainly, successful evangelism will include faithfulness and fruitfulness. Christians are commanded to share Christ, be faithful in this process, and leave the results to God. Evangelical believers can expect to encounter barriers as they share Christ. There are two general categories of barriers: internal and external.

Barriers are real in one’s life. They can obstruct or limit access and they keep things from coming in or going out. Christian witnesses must be aware of both internal and external barriers. First to consider are the internal barriers to witnessing. Fear is the number one barrier to personal evangelism. Fear can be real or imagined and manifests itself in different ways. There is a fear of rejection—no one wants to be turned away or

---

<sup>71</sup> Bill Bright, quoted in McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 47.

rejected for sharing Christ. The personal evangelist must realize that people are primarily rejecting Christ, not the sharer of the news of Christ.<sup>72</sup>

One may have a fear of failure. One fears failure because of how the failure reflects on oneself.<sup>73</sup> Having a healthy or biblical view of evangelism success will lower the fear of failure. Further, there can be a fear of loss of relationship. One fears that sharing Christ might ruin or change the relationship with one whom the message is shared. Conversely, one's love for people's souls should be the greater motivation in one's relationships. Sharing Christ always involves some risk, yet the result of not sharing Christ runs the risk that a friend may never know Christ and spend eternity without him. Finally, a lack of knowledge may bring fear into the evangelist's mind. One may be fearful of what questions will be asked during a conversation or fearful of using the wrong evangelistic method. There are a variety of methods. The witness must choose one and trust the Spirit will give the appropriate words to share. Next, there are additional internal barriers to consider.

Apathy plagues believers and hinders their witness for Christ. The apathetic believer will rarely witness. Believers must base the decision to witness on the truth of Scriptures rather than mere emotion. The apathetic believer needs to be reminded of one's own lost soul without Christ and allow God to stir, within one's heart, a conviction to compassionately share the hope of Christ with those around them. Beougher is helpful in guiding believers to develop compassion for the lost by sharing that one step is to recognize time is short. James 4:14 is a reminder that life is like a "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."<sup>74</sup> When one dwells on the brevity of time, it will bring a sense of urgency for evangelism.

---

<sup>72</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 192.

<sup>73</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 192.

<sup>74</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 131.

Another internal barrier to be considered is relational distance. One may say that a person is too close or too distant to witness to them. This excuse of relational distance causes the witness to wait for the person who is “just right” in this relational distance paradigm. The concern of using relational distance as an excuse is that the “just right” person rarely comes along. Instead, one should strive to close the relational gap with intentional acts of kindness.<sup>75</sup>

Ignorance of the gospel message is a common internal barrier to witnessing. Christians might claim that they just do not have enough knowledge of the Bible to be an effective witness for Christ. This ignorance claim is pervasive amongst believers. A lack of biblical knowledge should never prohibit one from witnessing. Dawson shares, “Evangelism in its purest form is me sharing with you what Christ has done in my life.”<sup>76</sup> Anyone with a relationship with Christ is equipped to share with others about Christ. One must also remember that the Holy Spirit will give the words to speak in witnessing encounters. Second Timothy 3:16–17 reminds of the Word of God’s usefulness: “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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Though ignorance is a common witnessing barrier, it can be overcome by trusting the Spirit for words and recalling Scripture to testify about Christ and his offer of salvation.

Introspection can be another internal barrier for the witness. This barrier comes from individuals thinking they have enough problems of their own that must be addressed prior to attempting to witness. Or the witness may want to “straighten out” their own problems, and then they will start witnessing. Both excuses can be categorized as introspection barriers to witnessing. In confronting this barrier, the introspection claims

---

<sup>75</sup> McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 195.

<sup>76</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 13.

are somewhat of a “straw man argument.” Will there ever be a day in which one has perfectly straightened out all their problems and feels ready to witness? It is not likely this “perfect condition” of fully reconciling one’s personal problems ever arrives. Therefore, the response for those dealing with introspection is to realize there are no perfect witnesses and one can be used as an effective witness despite present shortcomings.<sup>77</sup> Beougher reminds that the early Christians did not wait until achieving spiritual perfection before witnessing: “The Samaritan woman began telling people immediately about the love of Christ!”<sup>78</sup> Further, the original disciples were not perfect, yet they learned to boldly share about Christ with others.

Hypocrisy is an internal barrier to witnessing. Believers may tell themselves that the inconsistency of their Christian walk prevents them from sharing their faith. However, the fear of hypocrisy is not a valid barrier to witness. As the gospel is shared, the seeker is responding to the merits of the person of Christ, not the merits of the believer.<sup>79</sup> There are hypocrites in Christianity, just as there are in every other sector of life and believers should acknowledge the reality of hypocrisy yet point seekers to the person of Christ and him alone. In addition to these internal witnessing barriers, there are external barriers.

External barriers to witnessing may also hinder the believer’s attempts to evangelize. Many people have negative preconceptions about the gospel, and this presents a barrier. These individuals have heard faulty information about the gospel or had poor experiences with the church culture. These preconceptions present themselves as walls, constructed by the individual, that must be overcome through listening to a person’s experience or point of view. The negative preconceptions may be premature conclusions and can be engaged as one listens to the believer’s story to better understand. Listening to others is a powerful way to demonstrate interest and compassion. Listening can build a

---

<sup>77</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 132.

<sup>78</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 133.

<sup>79</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 136.



bridge to help the individual see how God is working in their lives and creates the opportunity to share the love of Christ within this new empathetic construct.

Another external barrier is encountered when someone has theological objections to the gospel message. These objections could be based in skepticism or genuine curiosity. The Christian does not need to have all the answers to theological objections, but instead demonstrate humility and a willingness to understand the objection to cultivate an engaging discussion about the gospel. An example of such questions could be, “What about those who have never heard the gospel?” Jay Strack responds to this concern by noting the biblical evidence that God places a high value on men and women.<sup>80</sup> Second Peter 3:9 states, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” God is concerned for people of all nations, which is why believers should witness.<sup>81</sup>

As one witnesses, language differences can be a challenging external barrier. What options does the witness have when one does not speak the language of a certain culture? First, the witness should obtain bilingual evangelism tracts. Tracts that contain both the native language and the language the witness speaks can be effective to communicate the gospel. Second, enlist a translator to communicate in the native tongue. Translators can bridge the language barrier in a witnessing encounter. Certainly, obtaining a translator requires advance planning, yet translators are inexpensive in many Spanish speaking or Latin/South America cultures as well as other less developed countries.

In almost all witnessing settings, one will encounter distractions or diversions that can take away from sharing the gospel. One example might be on an evangelistic home visit in which a small child begins to cry, or a large dog enters the rooms and disrupts the

---

<sup>80</sup> Jay Strack, quoted in Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 83.

<sup>81</sup> Dawson, *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 83.

conversation. One can trust the Holy Spirit in the moment of distractions to provide an answer or an appropriate response aimed to keep the gospel conversation moving forward. Certainly, as one witnesses and encounters distractions, they should use common sense and be sensitive to the individual's response. At times, a series of distractions may prevent a complete gospel presentation and there may need to be a follow up conversation at another time. Again, the focus is trusting one's words to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

In some settings, people will not be willing to even listen to a gospel presentation, which presents another external barrier to the witness. The believer may be engaged in a conversation and begin to turn the subject to spiritual matters, and the individual becomes close minded to such things. Certainly, it is advisable to be sensitive to objections to the gospel in conversations. Again, wisdom from the Holy Spirit is needed to know how to proceed. Regardless of their receptivity to the gospel, always attempt to leave an "open door" for another gospel conversation later. The Christians should pray for the unreceptive listener to hear the gospel from other Christians. One should trust in the sovereignty of God since he is always working in people's lives. The apostle Paul continued to share Christ in Corinth as seen in Acts 18:11: "And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."<sup>82</sup> The witness should trust the Holy Spirit for guidance, pray for the individual, and believe in the sovereignty of God through the process of evangelism.

Barriers exist when one attempts to share the gospel message. It is helpful to remember that most people in biblical times who testified about Jesus had little to no training in evangelism. Though untrained, they gave credible testimonies about Christ and his power to save and transform. Barriers exist, yet Christ is greater and will provide a way for faithful Christians to be resourceful and find ways to share Christ.

---

<sup>82</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 54.

## **Conclusion**

The evangelism course project was developed and implemented through several months of research and preparation. The informal and formal feedback from the diaconate indicated that the course was useful and effective in increasing the evangelism knowledge among the participants. Chapter 5 will provide an evaluation of the project in its success of meeting the purpose and goals.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, AND REFLECTION ON THE PROJECT

This chapter provides analysis, evaluation, and personal reflections of the project. First, a description is offered on why evangelism training is needed for the diaconate of MBC and the purpose of the project. Second, the project goals are restated and evaluated. Third, the research data is presented and evaluated. The fourth and fifth sections identify the strengths of the project and describe how this project could be improved for future use. The sixth section is a theological reflection on what God has revealed during this process. Finally, there are concluding observations on how this project affected me as a pastor.

#### **Evaluation of the Purpose**

The diaconate of MBC are willing and faithful servants of the Lord. It is my joy to serve alongside them and equip them for more effective ministry. As I evaluated the church's ministry, it appeared that most of the evangelistic efforts were driven by staff or a few key leaders. In response, the need to train the diaconate in evangelism appeared to be a necessary step to revitalize MBC. Members observe the deacons closely and it was my desire for the diaconate to be trained in evangelism to model this practice for other members. The purpose of this project was to create an urgency for evangelism in the diaconate and this was accomplished by increasing their knowledge of evangelism, through teaching the diaconate a six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism.

This project provided theological, purposeful, and practical training in evangelism. All the men in the deacon body had some familiarity of what it means to

witness for Christ or do evangelism, yet this project provided a biblical foundation for what the Scriptures say about evangelism and equipped these men on how to do evangelism faithfully. This training aimed to equip an evangelistic diaconate that would encourage the remainder of the church body to also be more faithful in evangelism.

In teaching the theology, purpose, and methods of evangelism, the deacon body would be biblically educated and equipped to be more faithful witnesses. This project provided a foundation for understanding what the Bible says about being a witness for Christ to all peoples as well as provided the men with a sample of practical methods on how to do evangelism.

### **Evaluation of the Goals**

There were three goals for this project. This section offers an evaluation of each goal that guided the project and sought to make it meaningful and effective.

#### **Goal 1**

The first goal was to assess the current familiarity of evangelism among the diaconate at MBC. To accomplish this, a pre-project evangelism assessment survey (PEAS) was developed.<sup>1</sup> This was measured by administering the PEAS to the deacons at MBC. This instrument assessed the evangelism knowledge and practices of the deacons before taking the evangelism course. The research instrument used is a thirteen-question interview with a five-point Likert scale provided for participants to indicate their responses. Participants in this course were active deacons in MBC's deacon body. The deacons were instructed merely to provide their current understanding of the evangelism questions in the PEAS.

The PEAS included three categories of questions concerning evangelism: theology, purpose, and practice. These three categories comprised the structure of the six-

---

<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1.

session evangelism course that was taught. The instrument used a 1 to 5 graduated measurement matrix where 1 represented not at all familiar and 5 characterized extremely familiar. Participants were asked to give their opinion on thirteen questions using these 1 to 5 scales.

The PEAS was given to all deacons prior to the first evangelism session on April 21, 2024. The data from the PEAS revealed the diaconate's familiarity with evangelism knowledge and practices. The analysis of the diaconate's surveys revealed there was ample room for growth in the deacons' familiarity with the theology, purpose, and practices of evangelism. Data from the PEAS was considered alongside the data from the post-Evangelism Practices Survey (PEPS) to assess the third goal. The mean score from the PEAS was 42.285 from all seven participants. The mean score of 42.285 initially revealed that the diaconate possessed evangelism familiarity between somewhat familiar and moderately familiar on the five-point Likert scale.<sup>2</sup> Goal 1 was accomplished by (1) developing and implementing the PEAS which assessed the diaconate's familiarity with evangelism knowledge and practices, and (2) ensuring at least six of the seven deacons needed to successfully complete the PEAS.

## **Goal 2**

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to teach the biblical understanding, purpose, and God-centered practices of personal evangelism. The six-session course was designed to equip each man in the discipline of evangelism. This goal was measured by an expert panel of two senior pastors in the Bethlehem Baptist Association in Monroe County, Alabama, who utilized a rubric to evaluate the curriculum's biblical accuracy, scope, pedagogy, and practicality.<sup>3</sup> The expert panel feedback was helpful and incorporated

---

<sup>2</sup> See appendix 4 for *t*-test results for the mean score of the pre-test total.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix 2 for the Curriculum Evaluation Tool, see appendix 5 for the Expert Panel Review.

into the curriculum. The six-session curriculum included these topics: what is the evangelism; what is the content of the gospel message; why one should evangelize; how to share the gospel with cultural Christians; common methods of evangelism and lastly common barriers in evangelism and paths to overcome such were taught.

The goal was considered successfully met when the Curriculum Evaluation Tool completed by the expert panel revealed that 100 percent of the criterion exceeded the minimum required level of 90 percent.<sup>4</sup>

### **Goal 3**

The third goal was to equip the diaconate of MBC in personal evangelism. The six-session course was designed to further the diaconate's understanding of biblical evangelism as well as encourage each man in their efforts to be faithful in evangelism. The course was taught between April 21, 2024, and August 4, 2024, at MBC. Chapter 4 details the teaching of the evangelism curriculum.

Goal 3 was measured by administering the PEPS with the diaconate and using a *t*-test to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum in increasing the diaconate's familiarity of evangelism. A *t*-test for dependent samples was used to compare the pre-project and post-project scores of the same individuals (deacons). Goal 3 was successfully met when a *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-interview scores:  $t(6) = 5.0750466, p = .00227$ . The teaching of the evangelism curriculum to the select group of deacons made a statistically significant difference resulting in the increase of their familiarity of evangelism principles:  $t(6) = 5.0750466, p = .00227$ .<sup>5</sup>

Another observation of the *t*-test reveals that the mean score of the post-project scores was 54.857 amongst all seven participants. The mean score of 54.857 reveals that

---

<sup>4</sup> See appendix 5, Bethlehem Baptist Association Pastors Expert Panel Review.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 4.

the participants now possess evangelism familiarity between moderately familiar and extremely familiar.

### **Strengths of the Project**

Several strengths were identified in the implementation and evaluation of this project. First, the training of the diaconate in evangelism helped improve accountability amongst the participants another regarding the practice of evangelism. Each course session included training, yet also made time for discussion and encouragement about how to be more faithful in evangelism. The training sessions allowed the deacons to ask questions about evangelism in a group setting that benefitted everyone. One example of encouragement occurred when a deacons shared about how he carries copies of a men's devotional and regularly hands them out to men he meets. This deacon had given a copy of this devotional to one of our deacons and me, his pastor. This devotional distribution plan was one way that an MBC deacon was modeling how to share the gospel for the other men in the diaconate.

Second, parts of the evangelism course were used to train one of the church's mission teams in evangelism prior to the mission trip. The evangelism session that taught the content of the gospel was shared without the seventeen-member mission team to prepare them ahead of their five-day mission trip to New York City in the summer of 2024. Team members, ranging from teenagers to middle-aged adults, were equipped on the content of the gospel message and a few simple methods to share it. This mission team being equipped with part of the evangelism course was a great opportunity to train an additional group in evangelism outside the diaconate.

A final strength of this project is the further usefulness of this evangelism course for other age groups, churches, or associations. This six-session evangelism course would be an effective training curriculum for adults or youth within MBC church context as well as other churches. The evangelism training material, with some modifications, could also be a template to train groups in evangelism over a weekend retreat setting or selected



sessions could be used as singular evangelism training times. This evangelism course is ready to be used to equip a variety of groups in evangelism.

### **Weaknesses of the Project and What I What I Would Do Differently**

In a project of this size, there are a few things that I would do differently. One weakness could be the lack of variety in teaching methodology. The evangelism course was well received by the deacons and contained printed listening guides and discussion questions each session, yet some sessions had more lecture-style teaching than others. The incorporation of video-driven aspects of learning, possible “role-play” in sharing testimonies amongst the deacons, and different teaching methodologies could have been utilized to add more variety in the teaching.

Another opportunity that could have been included in this project is a set time for evangelistic visits. Although the course trained the diaconate in practical evangelism methods, and there were times of sharing from their own witnessing experiences, it would have been beneficial to have made some evangelistic outreach visits that allowed participants to apply the taught principles. The evangelistic outreach visits would have been a great opportunity to apply evangelistic principles and subsequently share about the positives and negatives from their evangelistic visits in the following training sessions. I will look to incorporate the trained deacons in more outreach opportunities now that they have been equipped through this evangelism course.

A final weakness of the project was the challenge that a few weeks of the course occurred during the busy summer ministry schedule. In addition to this six-session evangelism course, MBC had six different weeks of ministry events (on and off the campus) during June and July of 2024. These events included Vacation Bible School, a church music camp, two children’s camps, a youth mission trip, and a New York mission trip. The combination of these important events had to be considered when scheduling the

evangelism course sessions. In retrospect, I would schedule the six-session evangelism course exclusively during the spring months.

### **Theological and Personal Reflections**

My concentration for doctoral studies has been in church revitalization. As I considered applying for the doctoral program years ago, I often considered what was needed to further the efforts of church revitalization in my ministry context. Certainly, I was influenced by the doctoral seminars focusing on church revitalization. A church needs faithful, biblical preaching, a focus on prayer, and a commitment to the Great Commission, just to name a few key revitalization ingredients. After much prayer and discussion with key individuals, I decided to focus my project efforts on training key church leaders in evangelism. I love MBC's deacon body and desired to equip these men to be more faithful witnesses for Christ. Therefore, the equipping of the diaconate in the evangelism principles was set as the focus of my doctoral project. I was regularly reminded of the opening words of Jesus's sermon in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Jesus's message of repentance and belief in him is the core of the gospel message. This biblical theme was part of the foundation of what the evangelism course would teach.

As I progressed in the doctoral program, professors like Dr. Tim Beougher, Dr. Justin Irving, Dr. Joseph Harrod, and Dr. Matthew Haste were influential in helping me develop a deeper understanding of what church revitalization is and the importance of Great Commission teaching throughout the ministry of the local church. These professors, fellow doctoral students, and others increased my knowledge of church revitalization principles and inspired me to train church leadership in the principles of evangelism. The evangelism course project was quite enjoyable as I had the opportunity to equip the diaconate and grow closer to each of them relationally through this process. Formal and informal feedback revealed that the evangelism training was effective. Yet beyond the sessions, the deacon body grew closer as they learned each other's strengths and

weaknesses not only in evangelism but in other areas of life. This project equipped these men for evangelism as well as strengthened personal relationships. As the diaconate's knowledge of evangelism has grown through this course, my prayer is that MBC has taken a significant step in church revitalization. Through this process, I was pleased with the growth within the deacon body, which should make the diaconate more faithful witnesses for Christ. I am grateful for the many professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as they have taught and shared their personal ministry experiences about church revitalization. I have grown as a theologian and practitioner of ministry through the past two and a half years of the program, and I am inspired to persevere in the principles I have learned.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of the project was to create an urgency for evangelism in the diaconate and this was accomplished by increasing their knowledge of evangelism, through teaching the diaconate a six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism. As church revitalization is my program concentration, the evangelism training was an effort to help revitalize MBC's deacon body and church body as well. This was accomplished by developing a six-session evangelism course that equipped the diaconate in evangelism principles. The evangelism curriculum was taught to the seven-member diaconate and each of the three goals established were met through this project.

The project successfully equipped the diaconate of MBC in the principles of evangelism, as measured by the stated goals. I pray that these men have a better understanding of the mandates of the Great Commission and feel more equipped to faithfully witness for Christ for years to come. My hope is that there may be more applications for this evangelism course for continued and expanded use and that God may receive all the glory for any spiritual fruit that is produced.

APPENDIX 1  
PRE-EVANGELISM ASSESSMENT SURVEY

This appendix contains the interview tool that assessed the current familiarity of evangelism among the diaconate at MBC. The deacons were the participants that completed these surveys, and the tool is a part of goal 1.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview adapted from Karlos Dierecko Felton, “Training Young Adult Members of the Zion Number One Missionary Baptist Church in Barton, Alabama, to Become Committed Disciples of Jesus Christ” (Dmin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021), 88–89.

## Pre-Evangelism Assessment Survey

### Agreement to Participate

You are being requested to participate in a study to reveal your familiarity with biblical evangelism. This research is being conducted by John Breedlove for the purposes of doctoral project research. In this research, a person will complete an interview based upon the questions listed below. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completing this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of the responses to this project.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] I agree to participate [ ] I do not agree to participate  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please mark the response that best describes your level of familiarity with what is asked in each question.

### Theology

1. How familiar are you with what the Bible shares about evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
2. How familiar are you with what is God’s role in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
3. How familiar are you with what is man’s role in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
4. How familiar are you with Bible verses that can be used when engaging someone in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

### Purpose

5. How familiar are you with what the Great Commission teaches the Christian about the importance of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

6. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about the lay person engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
7. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about pastors engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
8. How familiar are you with the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
9. How familiar are you with a biblical definition of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

### **Practice**

10. How familiar are you with some of the common barriers to engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
11. How familiar are you with any methods or tools to engage others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
12. How familiar are you with the role of prayer when engaging someone in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
13. How familiar are you with responding to common objections, to the gospel message, in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

## APPENDIX 2

### CURRICULUM EVALUATION TOOL

This appendix contains the Curriculum Evaluation Tool, which evaluated the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum. The expert panel was composed of Bethlehem Baptist Association pastors. This tool was used as a part of goal 2.

Name of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Curriculum Evaluation Tool</b>					
<b>1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary</b>					
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Biblical Accuracy</b>					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.					
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.					
<b>Scope</b>					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.					
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.					
<b>Pedagogy</b>					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.					
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.					
<b>Practicality</b>					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.					
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.					

Other Comments



APPENDIX 3  
POST–EVANGELISM PRACTICES SURVEY

This instrument is an Evangelism Assessment Survey to assess the diaconate’s familiarity with evangelism learned from this course.<sup>1</sup> This instrument was a part of goal 3.

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview adapted from Karlos Dierecko Felton, “Training Young Adult Members of the Zion Number One Missionary Baptist Church in Barton, Alabama, to Become Committed Disciples of Jesus Christ” (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021), 88–89.

## Post-Evangelism Practices Survey

### Agreement to Participate

You are being requested to participate in a study to reveal your familiarity with biblical evangelism. This research is being conducted by John Breedlove for the purposes of doctoral research project. In this research, a person will complete an interview based on the questions listed below. A 5-point Likert scale is used to indicate your response. Please mark only one response. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completing this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of the responses to this project.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  I agree to participate  I do not agree to participate.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please mark the response that best describes your level of familiarity with what is asked in each question.

### Theology

1. How familiar are you with what the Bible shares about evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
2. How familiar are you with what is God’s role in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
3. How familiar are you with what is man’s role in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
4. How familiar are you with Bible verses that can be used when engaging someone in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

### Purpose

5. How familiar are you with what the Great Commission teaches the Christian about the importance of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
6. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about the lay person engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

7. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about pastors engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
8. How familiar are you with the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
9. How familiar are you with a biblical definition of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

### **Practice**

10. How familiar are you with some of the common barriers to engaging others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
11. How familiar are you with any methods or tools to engage others in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
12. How familiar are you with the role of prayer when engaging someone in evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar
13. How familiar are you with responding to common objections, to the gospel message, in the process of evangelism?  
1-Not at all familiar, 2- Slightly familiar, 3-Somewhat familiar, 4 – Moderately familiar, 5-Extremely familiar

APPENDIX 4  
T-TEST RESULTS

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	Pre-Test Total	Post-Test Total
Mean	42.2857143	54.8571429
Variance	67.9047619	42.8095238
Observations	7	7
Pearson Correlation	0.62839873	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	6	
t stat	-5.0750466	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.00113831	
t Critical one-tail	1.94318028	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.00227663	
t Critical two-tail	2.44691185	

## APPENDIX 5

### BETHLEHEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION PASTORS EXPERT PANEL REVIEW

This instrument is the evaluation of the curriculum by an expert panel of Bethlehem Baptist Association Pastors. Pastors from the Bethlehem Baptist Association completed this review, and it was used as a part of goal 2.

Pastor A & B

### **Biblical Accuracy**

- Rating -4 (both pastors indicated a 4)
- Comments – Scripture was utilized frequently throughout the course as core content. The verses were used consistently with orthodox theology.

### **Scope**

- Rating – 4 (both pastors indicated a 4)
- Comments – The content contained information consistent with both academic and practical treatment of the material. The curriculum establishes fidelity to biblical methodology through the centrality of Scripture usage.

### **Pedagogy**

- Rating – 4 (both pastors indicated a 4)
- Comments – Each individual lesson had a clear focus on the content and intent of the session. The listening guide reinforces the material and assists the participant in tracking the arguments and applications of the lesson. Discussion questions also contribute to the sessions.
- Comments - There were a few places that seemed to be slightly redundant. Also, the listening guide for session one contained a reference to an illustration that was not in the main session.

### **Practicality**

- Rating – 4 (both pastors indicated a 4)
- Comments – The curriculum is thorough in teaching people of the foundation, need, and praxis of evangelism.

Other Comments: (Pastor A)

This is a very strong, well-constructed, and well thought out project. Each session flows into the next one. There is a sufficient usage of Scripture. The listening guides are constructed in such a way that would cause the student to pay attention, and the discussion questions are well crafted, open-ended, and seem like they will cause good interaction between the instructor and other students.

I came across several grammatical and style errors in the project. I did not mark them, however, since the rubric did not call for this metric.

I would suggest more clarification be added for the statement “once saved always saved.” It seems your argument against that phrase is that it’s typically used by people who look to a religious experience as assurance of salvation, but never produce fruit and therefore have a false assurance of salvation. While I agree that happens, however, if a person is truly saved, then they are indeed always saved (Eph 4:30, John 3:15-16), and will indeed produce fruit. I would call the phrase “once saved always saved” misunderstood or misused rather than I would call it faulty.

Other Comments: (Pastor B)

The content seems to flow better as a presentation than as a written report. The interaction of the discussion questions would be impossible to replicate in a didactic setting. Giving allowance for discussion and interaction of personal experience that comes from interactive training like the project dictates, the course seems well developed.

One small point of consideration could be tightening up the listener guide to the content. One example would be the listener guide for chapter five containing two apparent treatments of FAITH while leaving out Dever's honest, urgent, joy method.

As a project, the training of a diaconate in and for evangelism is a worthy endeavor. While some of the material would hopefully be rehashing with church leaders, the choice for clarity over possibly presuming too much from the men is warranted. The project is a solid addition to evangelism and deacon development.

## APPENDIX 6

### PRE-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

This appendix contains the pre-project questionnaire responses used to assess the deacons' evangelism understanding. The deacons participated in giving these responses and this instrument applies to goal 1.



Table A1. Pre-project questionnaire responses

Statement	Number of participants that answered each survey not at all familiar (1) through extremely familiar (5)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Avg
1. How familiar are you with what the Bible shares about evangelism?			4	3		3.420
2. How familiar are you with what is God's role in the process of evangelism?			4	2	1	3.507
3. How familiar are you with what is man's role in the process of evangelism?			2	5		3.710
4. How familiar are you with bible verses that can be used when engaging someone in evangelism?		1	4	1	1	3.280
5. How familiar are you with what the Great Commission teaches the Christian about the importance of evangelism?		1	3	2	1	3.420
6. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about the lay person engaging others in evangelism?		4	2	1		2.570
7. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about pastors engaging others in evangelism?		2	4	1		2.850
8. How familiar are you with the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of evangelism?			4	2	1	3.570
9. How familiar are you with a biblical definition of evangelism?		1	4	2		3.140
10. How familiar are you with some of the common barriers to engaging others in evangelism?		2	2	3		3.140
11. How familiar are you with any particular methods or tools to engage others in evangelism?		2	3	1	1	3.140
12. How familiar are you with the role of prayer when engaging someone in evangelism?		1	2	3	1	3.570
13. How familiar are you with responding to common objections, to the gospel message, in the process of evangelism?		4	2		1	2.710

APPENDIX 7  
POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

This appendix contains the post-project questionnaire responses used to assess the deacons' evangelism understanding. The deacons participated in giving these responses and this instrument applies to goal 3.

Table A2. Post-project questionnaire responses

Statement	Number of participants that answered each survey not at all familiar (1) through extremely familiar (5)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Avg
1. How familiar are you with what the Bible shares about evangelism?			1	4	2	4.14
2. How familiar are you with what is God's role in the process of evangelism?				2	5	4.71
3. How familiar are you with what is man's role in the process of evangelism?				3	4	4.57
4. How familiar are you with bible verses that can be used when engaging someone in evangelism?			3	3	1	3.71
5. How familiar are you with what the Great Commission teaches the Christian about the importance of evangelism?			1	1	5	4.57
6. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about the lay person engaging others in evangelism?			3	3	1	3.71
7. How familiar are you with what the Bible says about pastors engaging others in evangelism?			4	1	2	3.71
8. How familiar are you with the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of evangelism?				2	5	4.71
9. How familiar are you with a biblical definition of evangelism?			1	4	2	4.14
10. How familiar are you with some of the common barriers to engaging others in evangelism?				4	3	4.42
11. How familiar are you with any particular methods or tools to engage others in evangelism?			1	5	1	4.0
12. How familiar are you with the role of prayer when engaging someone in evangelism?			1	1	5	4.57
13. How familiar are you with responding to common objections, to the gospel message, in the process of evangelism?			2	4	1	3.85

## APPENDIX 8

### EVANGELISM COURSE LISTENING GUIDES

These listening guides were handouts provided to the participants during the six-session evangelism course. These listening guides assisted in learning the evangelism curriculum. These guides were a part of goal 2.

## Session 1: Listening Guide

### A. What is evangelism?

Evangelism is from the Greek word meaning the gospel. Evangel means good news.

What is the good news? God's plan to reconcile humanity.

Definition of evangelism: "Evangelism is the compassionate sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ with lost people, in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of bringing them to Christ as Savior and Lord, that they may in turn share him with others."<sup>1</sup>

Three parts to the definition of evangelism:

1. The compassionate sharing of the good news of Jesus.
  2. Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit.
  3. The purpose is to bring others to Jesus as Savior.
- Evangelism is not merely sharing facts about Christ or aiming to convert someone to faith in Christ.
  - Quote to remember: "Share the gospel at all times, and use words, because they are necessary."<sup>2</sup>

*Questions:*

- Can you think of a time when shared the gospel of Jesus with someone?
- What was this witnessing experience like?

### B. How do people come to saving faith? There are two extreme positions.

1. It depends on man. Mark 16:15-16
2. It depends on God. John 6:44

---

<sup>1</sup> Timothy K. Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism: Sharing the Gospel with Compassion and Conviction* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 6.

God's involvement in evangelism is essential and man's involvement is commanded.

*Questions:*

- How should Christians respond to the command to evangelize?
- How do people come to saving faith in Christ?
- Can you think of an example in Scripture where a believer shared a gospel witness?

(Acts 8:34-38, Acts 26:24-29)

C. Why should one evangelize?

1. One is commanded to evangelize by the Great Commission passages. Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16
2. God is glorified through the proclamation of the gospel to all peoples. Ps 67:2-4, 1 Tim 2:4-5
3. Winning souls to Christ is wise. Prov 11:30
4. Witnessing brings joy to the believer. Gal 5:22-23

*Questions:*

- What are three parts of a definition of evangelism?
- How do people come to saving faith in Christ?
- What are, at least, two reasons why one should evangelize?

## Session 2: What Is the Gospel Message? Listening Guide

### A. What is the content of the gospel?

Everything in God's plan to redeem mankind is part of the gospel.

An illustration is shared about why one should believe and share the gospel.

One can see a four-part structure, in the New Testament, to help us better understand the content of the gospel.

The Gospel Message is outlined.

1. God. Gen 1:1, Gen 1:26-27
2. Man. Rom 3:10-11, Rom 3:23
3. Christ. 1 Cor 15:3-4
4. Response. Acts 20:21

#### Questions:

- What is the gospel? It is the good news of what?
- Why must one remember and share the content of the gospel?
- What are the four parts of the gospel outline?

### B. We see the gospel unpacked.

The message of the gospel appears throughout Paul's letters, the gospel accounts, and other New Testament writings.

1. God is to whom all mankind is accountable.

Man is not self-sustaining. We do not exist just for ourselves. Rom 1:21, Rom 6:23

2. Man's problem is his rebellion against God. Rom 3:10-11, Rom 3:23, Rom 5:8, Rom 6:23
3. The message of the gospel is about Christ. Isaiah 53:4, Matt 1:21, Luke 24:5-7
4. What kind of response is required? Repentance and belief. Mark 1:15

Questions:

- How has humanity responded to God; in the way we live?
- How is sin destructive? Does God judge man's sin?
- Share how Christ has redeemed sinful mankind.



## Session 3 Listening Guide

### Theme: How should we evangelize?

#### Review:

In past sessions, we shared that the gospel is good news of who God is and includes his plan to reconcile humanity.

#### *Definitions of evangelism:*

“Evangelism is the compassionate sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ with lost people, in the power of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of bringing them to Christ as Savior and Lord, that they might in turn share him with others.”<sup>3</sup>

-Everything in God’s plan to redeem us is part of the gospel.

***We also shared a 4-part outline to the gospel: God, man, Christ, and response.***

#### The Gospel Message -outline

- A. God. Gen 1:1, 26-27
- B. Man. Rom 3:10-11, 23
- C. Christ, 1 Cor 15:3-4
- D. Response, Acts 20:21

Today, we’ll discover what are some elements that should be included when communicating the gospel.

#### **How should we evangelize?**

1. One must commit to share the gospel.
  2. The gospel should be shared with a sense of urgency.
  3. In evangelism, we must pray for God to reach the hearts of the lost.
  4. Ask God to give you a passion for those which are lost.
- These elements of communicating the gospel are dependent upon each other.
  - There’s a balance needed in communicating the gospel effectively.

---

<sup>3</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 9.

Discussion questions:

- Name the elements that should be included when communicating the gospel.
- Is there a caution if you emphasize one element more than the other?

**Communication of the gospel explained.**

**1. Telling the truth in gospel sharing.**

- Recognize that we live in a pluralistic culture.
- Emphasize both the positive and negative elements of the gospel.
- 2 Timothy 3:12

**2. Share the gospel with urgency.**

- The gospel requires careful consideration with an urgent presentation (Heb 9:27, 2 Cor 6:2)
- Salvation is exclusive. John 14:6, Acts 4:12

**3. Effective evangelism includes intercessory prayer.**

- Passages: 1 Tim 2:1-4, Romans 10:1, Luke 23:33-34

**4. We should pray that God would give us a love for lost peoples.**

- Passage: Matthew 9:36-38, Romans 10:1

*Discussion questions:*

- What are some ways that you have shared the gospel with someone?
- How have those you've witnessed to receive the gospel message?
- What are some of the elements that should be included when sharing the gospel?
- What is most difficult for you when sharing the gospel?
- What areas do you need help in when sharing the gospel?

**Session 4: Listening Guide**  
Evangelism Training  
“Sharing the Gospel with Cultural Christians”

1. Question: Who is a cultural Christian?

“Those who are morally good, attend church with regularity and are familiar with Christian lingo enough to speak the Christian language.” (Dean Inserra)

Pictures/Examples of Cultural Christian expressions:

- “Good people go to heaven.”<sup>4</sup>
- “One is born into Christianity rather born again spiritually.”<sup>5</sup>

Scriptures to remember: Matt 7:21  
Matt 23:27-28  
2 Timothy 3:5

2. Our gospel goal with cultural Christians:

“Aim to help the individual see that he is lost before he can be saved.”<sup>6</sup>

3. Cultural Christianity holds to a religion without salvation.

2 Reasons people hold to a religion without salvation.

a. It’s likely the individual has never heard the gospel message clearly.

b. There’s an absence of the fear of a powerful, almighty God. Scripture:  
2 Corinthians 5:11, 20-21

4. Cultural Christianity is characterized by individuals having a false assurance of salvation.

We need a biblical understanding of Eternal security.

Wayne Grudem quote about the perseverance of the saints.<sup>7</sup>

There should be marks of genuine conversion in the life of the believer.

---

<sup>4</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 51.

<sup>5</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 59.

<sup>6</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Inserra, *The Unsaved Christian*, 64.

- A. Repentance of sins.
- B. Desire to grow spiritually.
- C. Hunger for God's word.
- D. A pattern of spiritual fruit.

5. Common barriers to reaching the "cultural Christians."

a. Cultural Christians have a nominal belief in God.

-James 2:18-23

b. Cultural Christians believe their goodness or morality merits salvation.

- Romans 3:10, 3:23, 6:23

c. Cultural Christians elevate their religious heritage above true saving faith.

d. The rites of passages which may be considered salvific:

Examples of Rites of passage: childhood baptism, attending church.

e. The final barrier for the cultural Christian is genuine faith.

They may be ignorant of the gospel message and the call to repentance and faith.

**Session 5 Listening Guide**  
**Evangelism methods to effectively communicate the gospel**

1. Learn to share your three-part testimony.
2. Gospel clarity method. This method is comprised of five components.
3. Bridge questions can be used to prompt dialogue about the gospel.
4. The FAITH evangelism method employs a simple acronym to share the gospel.

Today, we'll be sharing a few evangelism methods that can be used to share the gospel. There are many methods that can be used; we'll share a few different approaches to help in your gospel witnessing.

**First, let's learn how to share your testimony.** The FAITH evangelism model teaches a Christian how to share a three-part testimony.

What are the three parts to a testimony?

- a. Life before Christ.
- b. I had a life-changing experience.
- c. Life after conversion.

**Our second method is the gospel clarity method which is comprised of 5 components.**

This method is discovered in Scott Dawson's The Complete Evangelism Handbook and focuses on clarity.

The Five (5) components of the gospel clarity method are:

- a. Clarity. The message of Jesus' death and resurrection must be central.
- b. Authenticity. The Christian message must be evident in one's life.
- c. Authority. Scripture, the authority of God's word, is essential in any presentation.  
Isa 55:11
- d. Conviction. Rely upon the Spirit to bring conviction.
- e. Invitation. Offer a chance to respond to the gospel message.

**A third method of sharing the gospel is by using “bridge questions.”**

A bridge question helps transition the conversation from the secular to the sacred.<sup>8</sup>

Types of “Bridge Questions”.

- a. Church bridge.
- b. Intellectual bridge.
- c. Personal opinion bridge.
- d. Prayer bridge and a heaven bridge.

**A final method of sharing the gospel is using the FAITH acrostic.**

The FAITH acrostic can be shared to clearly communicate the gospel.

Forgiveness Eph. 1:7

Available, but not Automatic John 3:16, Matt 7:21

Impossible Eph 2:8-9

Turn Luke 13:3, John 14:6

Heaven John 14:3, John 10:10

---

<sup>8</sup> Beougher, *Invitation to Evangelism*, 187.

## Session 6: Common Barriers in Personal Evangelism Listening Guide

-Our Command to share the gospel is found in Matthew 28:19-20.

-Success in evangelism quote: “Simply sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.” – *Bill Bright*, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ (Christ,

\*What may limit our faithfulness in evangelism? barriers

\*What are the two main types of barriers in evangelism? Internal and external.

Let’s consider a few internal barriers.

1. The number one internal barrier is fear. 1 John 4:18

Consider the different ways this barrier may appear in our lives.

Have a biblical view of evangelism success.

2. Another barrier is apathy.

Define this barrier.

Apathy plagues believers and hinders their evangelism efforts.

Matt. 9:36-38, Hebrews 9:27, James 4:14

3. A third barrier is relational distance.
4. Ignorance of the gospel message is another barrier. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
5. Hypocrisy is an internal barrier to witnessing.

Next, let’s consider a few external barriers to witnessing.

1. People have negative ideas about the gospel, and this presents a barrier.
2. Another barrier is when listeners have theological objections to the gospel.  
1 Peter 3:15, 2 Peter 3:9
3. Language differences can be an external barrier.
4. Distractions or diversions can take away from the effectiveness of sharing the gospel.
5. A final barrier is found in individuals with closed minds and cold hearts to the gospel. (closed, cold)  
Acts 18:11, Trust the Holy Spirit and believe in God’s sovereignty.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beougher, Timothy K. *Invitation to Evangelism: Sharing the Gospel with Compassion and Conviction*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Luke*. IVP New Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994.
- Cameron, Kirk, and Ray Comfort. *The School of Biblical Evangelism: 101 Lessons, How to Share Your Faith Simply, Effectively, Biblically . . . the Way Jesus Did*. Alachua, FL: Bridge Logos, 2004.
- Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993.
- Dawson Scott, ed. *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook: Expert Advice on Reaching Others for Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- Dever, Mark. *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007.
- Dreisbach, Bruce Roberts. *The Jesus Plan: Breaking Through Barriers to Introduce the People You Know to the God You Love*. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2002.
- Fay, William, and Linda Evans Shepherd. *Share Jesus without Fear*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999.
- Felton, Karlos Dierecko. "Training Young Adult Members of the Zion Number One Missionary Baptist Church in Barton, Alabama to Become Committed Disciples of Jesus Christ." DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021.
- Gilbert, Greg. *What Is the Gospel?* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.
- Goldingay, John, and David Payne. *Isaiah 40–55*. International Critical Commentary Series. New York: T & T Clark, 2006.
- Hastings, James. *Acts–Romans I–VIII*. Great Texts of the Bible. Grand Rapid: Baker, 1976.
- Hodge, Charles. *Romans. Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. 1947. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Romans: Righteousness from Heaven*. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991.
- Inserra, Dean. *The Unsaved Christian: Reaching Cultural Christianity with the Gospel*. Chicago: Moody, 2019.
- Keener, Craig. *Acts: Introduction and 1:1–2:47*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.



- MacArthur, John. *Acts 1–12. MacArthur New Testament Commentary*. Chicago: Moody, 1994.
- . *Ephesians. MacArthur New Testament Commentary*. Chicago: Moody, 1986.
- McRaney, Will, Jr. *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture*. Nashville: B & H, 2003.
- Metzger, Will. *Tell The Truth: The Whole Gospel to the Whole Person by Whole People*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002.
- Mohler, R. Albert, Jr. “Keeping the Evangel in Evangelism.” In *Essential Reading on Evangelism*, 1–5. Louisville: Southern Equip, 2019.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: InterVarsity, 1995.
- Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1983.
- Murray, John. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959.
- Nicoll, William Robertson. “Commentary on Romans 3.” Expositor’s Greek Testament. Accessed February 27, 2023. <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/ent/romans-3.html/>.
- Oden, Thomas C. *Acts*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Osborne, Grant R. *Romans*. IVP New Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Packer, J. I. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. 1961. Reprint, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008.
- Petersen, Jim. *Living Proof: Sharing The Gospel Naturally*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1989.
- Plummer, Alfred. *Luke*. International Critical Commentary Series. Reprint, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975.
- Pollard, Nick. *Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult: How to Interest People Who Aren’t Interested*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997.
- Queen, Matt. *Everyday Evangelism*. Fort Worth, TX: Seminary Hill, 2014.
- Smith, Gary V. *Isaiah 40–66*. New American Commentary, vol. 15B. Nashville: B & H, 2009.
- Stein, Robert H. *Luke*. New Testament American Commentary, vol. 24. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.
- Stevens, R. Paul. *Liberating the Laity: Equipping All the Saints for Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1985.

- Welch, Bobby, and Doug Williams. *Faith Evangelism: Discipling for Evangelism and Ministry*. Nashville: Lifeway, 2008.
- . *Faith Evangelism: Discipling for Evangelism and Ministry, Facilitator Guide 1*. Nashville: Lifeway, 2007.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Rich (Ephesians): Are You Losing the Things Money Can't Buy?* Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1976.
- Yount, William R. "The Pastor as Teacher." *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 38, no. 2 (1996): 15–23.
- Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Rev. ed. Chattanooga: AMG, 1993.

## ABSTRACT

### EQUIPPING THE DIACONATE OF MEXIA BAPTIST CHURCH IN FRISCO CITY, ALABAMA, IN THE PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELISM

John Randall Breedlove, DMin  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, December 2024  
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Timothy K. Beougher

The purpose of this project was to create an urgency for evangelism in the diaconate, which was accomplished through teaching the diaconate a six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism. Chapter 1 highlights the ministry context of Mexia Baptist Church in Frisco City, Alabama, as well as the goals description and project rationale.

Chapter 2 presents the biblical and theological framework for this project. Five passages are exegeted for biblical support: Romans 3:22–25, Luke 24:46–49, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 4:11–13, and Isaiah 55:9–10.

Chapter 3 gives historical patterns and practical models for personal evangelism. Common barriers for engaging in personal evangelism are shared as well as the common evangelism methods.

Chapter 4 outlines the details and description of the project. The six-session curriculum on the principles of personal evangelism is provided in this chapter.

Chapter 5 is the project evaluation. The project's purpose, goals, strengths, weaknesses, reflections, and conclusions are given.

## VITA

John Randall Breedlove

### EDUCATION

BS, The Florida State University, 1992

MDiv, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997

### MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT

Pastor to Students, First Baptist Church, Opp, Alabama, 1997–2003

Pastor to Students, Morningview Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama,  
2003–2010

Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Opp, Alabama, 2010–2019

Senior Pastor, Mexia Baptist Church, Frisco City, Alabama, 2019–