

Practical Local Evangelism

Matthew 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

The following material is about methods used to fulfill this command. It was developed by the Northwest Church of Christ in Lawton, OK, in 1976 and first used in our campaign work that began the same year. Since 1976 the elders have revised this material, as experience was gained in its use. Since 1976 the Northwest Church of Christ, under the leadership of the elders, has conducted annual, one-week-long campaigns in communities in Oklahoma, Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Arkansas, and Missouri. From these experiences and from the reports of individuals like you, we know it works. We hope it will be helpful to you.

POINT OF CONTACT:

If you would like to know more or would be interested in a free one-day workshop at your congregation, please contact:

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I. Keeping the Saved Saved

When we start bringing in new Christians through the front door, we must do all we can to keep them from going right back out through the back door.

A. The Challenge of New Christians

New Christians are different from mature Christians.

- Knowledge
- Dress
- Behavior
- Friends

Do your new Christians...

- Sit in worship by themselves?
- Stand uncomfortably in the foyer while all the groups of friends visit with each other?
- Associate primarily with their non-Christian friends?
- Cling to denominational practices?

What do you do about it?

- Are you uncomfortable with them so you...
- Give them a dirty look when they sit in "your pew?"
- Say hi and keep walking by them?
- Ignore them while you ask your friends to lunch?
- Snicker when they say something "funny" in Bible class?

Just let them slowly fade away until they stop coming?

Would you stay with any group who treated you this way?
Does the Bible teach us to behave this way?

B. To remain faithful, a new Christian must do all the following:

- Make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.
- Make at least one very good friend within 6 months.
- Become active in the work of the church.
- Learn and grow in the word of God.

C. New Christian Class

Advantages

- Gives them a focal point and a reason for coming.
- Grounds them in the fundamentals.

Disadvantages

- Segregates them from the rest of the congregation.
- The only people they meet are other immature new Christians.

D. New Christian Program

Must be designed so that all these goals can be met:

- Make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.
- Make at least one very good friend within 6 months.
- Become active in the work of the church.
- Learn and grow in the word of God.

There are many systems. We have seen and tried a number of them. We have seen this one work the best.

The new Christian rotates through 14 different families

- One family per month,
- For 14 months.

Each month, the family:

- Ensures the new Christian is at every Bible class and worship.
- Provides transportation if it is needed.
- Calls him to remind him to come to class and worship.
- Calls him if he does not attend.
- Takes him to class.
- Ensures his children are in the proper classes.
- Sits with him during class and worship.
- Introduces him to their friends.
- Introduces him to the elders, deacons and ministers.
- Takes him to lunch and dinner after worship.
- Teaches him one of the 14 fundamental lessons (See "Resources" section.)
- Gives him a building tour.
- Ensures he fills out an activity sheet and begins working.
- Become friends.

Additionally,

At least 2 of the elders should visit him within the first week to introduce themselves, welcome him, give him a welcome packet, and tell him about the new Christian program.

Plus, the visitation teams should visit him for 5 to 8 weeks so he will also meet a number of other members.

Program must be well coordinated and overseen to work.

E. The Challenge of Mature Christians

Have you ever wondered..

"What ever happened to Johnny and Janie? I haven't seen them for a while."

Have you ever looked at a directory that is 2 or 3 or 4 years old and noticed how many names are just gone?

Mathew 18:12-13

¹²How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

¹³And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

Anchor Team Program

Let no one fall through the cracks.

When a person misses 2 consecutive weeks and no one knows why:

Send personalized card(s) by individual members who are their friends.

After missing 3 consecutive weeks:

Add them to the visitation team list and visit them twice.

After 5 consecutive weeks:

Give their name to the elders for their follow-up who will visit them.

How to keep track of this?

Most people always sit in the same section so...

The first level is for each of us to just look around and see who is missing.

The second level is to break the auditorium into sections or "Anchor Teams" with an Anchor Team Captain who checks to see who is not in his normal seat.

Check with the attendance cards to provide a third level.

Check with the class attendance rolls to provide a fourth level.

Then begin the card and visitation program.

The goal is to break the pattern of consecutive misses and restore faithfulness.

II. Local Evangelism Methods

A. Several Guiding Principles.

Each member is responsible for evangelism and each of us has unique talents so there must be an opportunity for every single one of us to make valuable contributions.

The Biblical method of evangelism is to "preach Christ and Him crucified."

75-90% of all members of the church initially studied because of a personal relationship with someone in the church, (Andrew brought Peter to Jesus) and we each have relationships with people outside the church.

It generally takes at least 7 contacts for a person to respond to a request. Most people quit asking after making 4 contacts.

When visitors at worship service are asked to study the Bible, depending upon how they are asked, a great many of them say yes.

To remain faithful, each new member must immediately and continually learn (second half of the Great Commission), become active, make a least one friend he can sit and visit with, and make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.

B. Implementing These Principles - Primary Focal Point - Quarterly “special events”

1. Members can use events to create excitement when asking people with whom they have a relationship to visit our services. Include a guest speaker, a Biblical topic of interest to the community, and a noon meal.
2. Ask each member to submit the names and addresses of the guests whom they would like to be invited.
3. Ask each member to personally invite each of their guests by giving them a brochure about the event and asking them to come.
4. The elders invite each of these guests by mailing them a brochure and a letter inviting them to the event.
5. Conduct a door-knocking by going to the home of each guest, giving them a brochure and inviting them to come.
6. Mail to each guest the publication “House to House, Heart to Heart.” (Keep copies in the tract rack.)
7. Repeat this process for each guest until they have been invited to at least 4 quarterly events, or they obey the Gospel, or they ask us to stop inviting them, whichever comes first.
8. When the guests arrive at the event, ensure the member who invited them sits with them, visits with them, eats the meal with them, and ensures they are asked to study the Bible.

People to Invite - My Guest List

People I know from work, school, civic clubs, arts organizations and sports teams.

People who help my children and grandchildren like their teachers, coaches and activity sponsors.

People who help me like my doctors, nurses, therapists, dentists, and their staffs.

People who help me like my insurance agent, lawyer, tax preparer, hair dresser or barber, plumber, electrician, and auto mechanic.

People who handle my lawn care and pest control.

People who live in each of the houses that border mine.

C. Implementing These Principles - Newsletter Evangelism

<http://newsletterevangelism.com/index.htm>

This involves passing out a series of about 25 different newsletters to homes in your area by church members who volunteer to have “paper-routes” of the size of their choosing, for about a 3 month period. After passing out the series of newsletters, members then go into the community and meet these people, which become enjoyable, warm, welcoming experiences.

By first distributing these newsletters over a short period of time, people get to know about the congregation through these newsletters and form a very favorable impression of the church. When someone finally shows up to their home, they will find that these neighbors have already welcomed your congregation into their homes many times over and have enjoyed your company while not yet having met one of your members.

The church is transformed from a group in the community that didn't have much of a favorable rating to a group that now has about a 90% favorable rating, thanks to the newsletters. When you then ask them to attend the worship services and study the Bible, it is done in a very enjoyable environment with a much better success rate. This makes personal evangelism a successful and fun experience.

D. Implementing These Principles - Door-knocking Campaign

Many people say this no longer works.

We have done this every year since 1976.

We have found that:

1 of 40 people will schedule a Bible study.

1 of 3 of these people will actually show up to study.

1 of 2 of the people who study will obey the Gospel.

30 is the average number of people who obey the Gospel on a week-long campaign.

The campaign is designed to give the residents of the town the opportunity to learn and obey the Gospel plan of salvation and to provide an opportunity for us fulfill the commands of the Great Commission. We knock thousands of doors and teach studies during the day and have a Gospel meeting and teach studies in the evening.

We knock the residential doors and ask the residents to attend the Gospel meeting and do a home Bible study. The campaigners are assigned to teams of about 15 people each. Each team is responsible for knocking its assigned area and has a Team Captain who drives the team van and leads his team in all that it does. Each campaigner stays with his team for the entire campaign. The campaigners knock doors in two's, assigned and closely monitored by the Team Captain. When studies are set, the campaigners fill in a contact card which is turned into the Office Staff. The Office Staff then assigns teachers to teach these studies. In the evening during the Gospel meeting, the campaigners will be assigned to sit with guests and attempt to set up studies. If you would like more information about how we do this, ask for the free CD.

III. Teaching the Gospel – The Safety Chain

There are many methods. We have had great success with the Safety Chain.

If you can do these three things, you can teach a study:

1. Read a Scripture (that you have underlined in your Bible.)
2. Ask a question (that you have written in the margin.)
3. Turn to the next page (whose number you have written in the margin.)

Church of Christ says :

Speak where the Bible speaks. Be silent where the Bible is silent.

So use just the Bible and a pad of paper. No tracts or brochures etc.

Just the Student and Teacher, and a Silent Partner to take notes for the student to keep.

The verses flow in orderly fashion and discuss:

- Authority of the Scriptures.
- Difference between Old and New Testaments.
- Necessity of Christ's blood.
- Gospel Plan of Salvation.
 - Believe
 - Confess
 - Repent
 - Baptize for remission of sins

In 1 to 2 hours, Baptism is discussed in natural sequence and demands a decision RIGHT THEN.

The scriptures then go on to teach:

- Organization of the church.
- Acts of worship.
- Faithful Christian living.

Teaching ability is of little importance.
 Scriptures teach and convict honest hearts.
 Simple, Short, Systematic, Scriptural.

If you would like more information on this teaching method, contact us for the free CD.

IV. Resources

Free CD

Northwest Church of Christ
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Practical book on evangelism

“Evangelizing Your Community”

Practical steps congregations and individuals can take to improve their evangelistic outreach.

By Dr. Stafford North

Practical book on keeping the saved saved.

“The Great Commission Part II: Becoming the Hands of Christ”

By Steve Cummings and Glenn Newton

Newsletter Evangelism

Glenn Davis

<http://newsletterevangelism.com/index.htm>

newsletterevangelism@yahoo.com

Book of 14 fundamental lessons

“The Love of Christ”

By Richard Rogers and Bill Yasko

Sunset International Bible Institute

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