

EVANGELISM HEALTH CHECK & EQUIPPING TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

Script to Accompany PPT

Developed by Sherri Tabaka-Morrissey, Ph.D.

SLIDE 1

Evangelism Health Check & Equipping to Share the Gospel



Presented by Sherri Tabaka-Morrissey

Welcome to this brief training session: Evangelism Health Check & Equipping to Share the Gospel!

We have a few goals:

First - to invite reflection, assessment, and candid conversations among ourselves and within churches, regarding the ministry of evangelism;

Second - that we'll desire to become channels of God's grace to those who don't yet know the Lord: seeking to engage people in spiritual conversations, able to share our testimony and the gospel of Jesus Christ in ways that brings others to life-giving faith.

Third - that we'll begin to "spur one another on" ... promoting a culture of evangelism within our congregations - that we'll become disciples who make disciples, who make disciples!

[LET'S PRAY]

SLIDE 2

Our Mission:
The Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe.



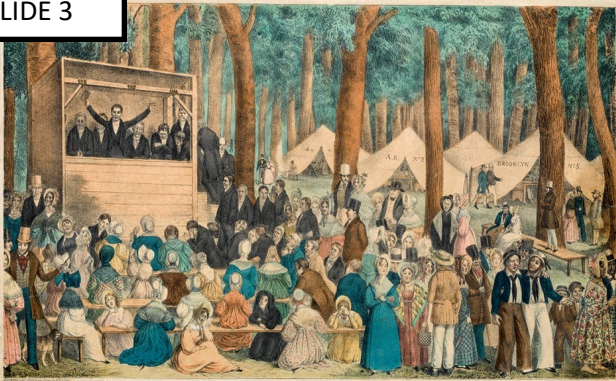
< < Let's review our Mission Statement... [S: Read]

If you've been to the GMC website you might recall parts of the vision statement too:

Our Vision: Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the Global Methodist Church envisions **multiplying disciples** of Jesus Christ throughout the earth who *flourish* in scriptural holiness as we worship passionately, love extravagantly, and **witness boldly**.

What we're saying is, a commitment to "evangelism" (*sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ*), is baked right into our identity!

SLIDE 3



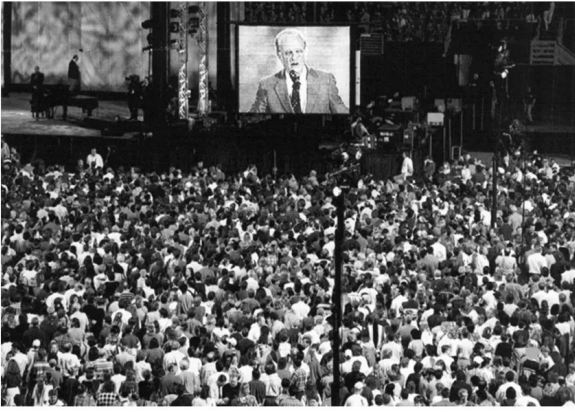
"METHODIST CAMP MEETING"

Artist/Lithographer Edward William, printed 1836
Clay https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/object/nmah_326094

< ? When you think of evangelism 'done well' - what images come to your mind?

Is it a county-wide evangelistic campaign, or Camp Meetings 'back in the day'?.....

SLIDE 4



Billy Graham Crusade – Minneapolis, June, 23, 1996.

There were 70,000 people in attendance.

(Buzz Magnuson / Pioneer Press)



< Memories of attending a Billy Graham Crusade?
Of people walking down to the front to 'pray the sinner's prayer'? (Are there some here who've had deep, spiritual experiences at one of the crusades?)

SLIDE 5



< Perhaps you've got a picture of a small group exploring the Scriptures or questions about life and faith - such as an Alpha group....?



SLIDE 6



< Perhaps you have memories of a key person in your life that opened God's Word to you and really helped you to understand who God is - and help you come to know Him.

All of these are significant channels for sharing the gospel and bringing people to faith in Christ!

Let's take a moment to consider some of the Scriptural foundations for the ministry of evangelism - **(these are found on p. 1 of your handout...)**

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

- 1 Peter 3:15 -

SLIDE 7

“Now, brothers and sisters, **I want to remind you of the gospel** I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **By this gospel you are saved**, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: **that Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, **that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day** according to the Scriptures...” (1 Cor. 15:1-4)



[S] “*We’re going to read these aloud*”

[Divide readers by sections, or men, women, all-together]

<< **Everyone: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.....**

SLIDE 8

“For God **so loved the world** that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall **not perish but have eternal life**. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but **to save the world through Him**.” (John 3:16-17)

“Therefore **go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)



<< **Men: John 3:16-17**

<< **Women: Matthew 28:19-20**

SLIDE 9

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?
And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?
And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?
And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?

As it is written:

‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”(Romans 10:14-15)

How beautiful are the feet who bring Good News!

<< **Everyone: Romans 10:14-15**



SLIDE 10

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”(Acts1:8)

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, **that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.**”(1 Peter 2:9)

<< Men: Acts 1:8

(on the same slide....)

<< Women: 1 Peter 2:9...

Powerful. Passages.!

Because of God’s love, Christ’s sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit’s power - we’ve received new life, a new identity, and new calling, and the capacity to be His witnesses. Not ‘hiding our light under a bushel’ - we are to **declare** His praises to the world!

SLIDE 11



Evangelism Health Check

Take a moment to answer the ‘Evangelism Health-Check’ questions on page one of your handout:

Evangelism Health-Check (For both pastors & members):

1. How many people have joined your congregation by profession of faith within the last year? _____
2. Does your church regularly provide ‘new member classes’? Y / N
3. Does your church regularly provide catechism/confirmation classes for children/youth? Y / N
4. Are there members of your church who are effective at discipling new believers? Y / N
5. Does your congregation host Alpha, or in other ways actively engage people who may be open to exploring Christianity? Y / N
6. How many people have you shared your testimony with during the past year? _____
7. How many people have you shared the gospel with during the past year? _____
8. When was the last time you had the joy of leading a person to faith in Jesus? _____

Do you (and your congregation) have eagerness and capability in evangelism that is demonstrated in:

- Leading people to faith in Christ?
- Are you regularly building relationships with non-believers?
- How regularly are you sharing the gospel with non-believers?
- Do you hold evangelism as a high personal value?
- Are you training and motivating others to evangelize?

<< Amazing...!

Now whenever we consider such incredible spiritual realities, it makes good sense for us to ask, “How are we applying these principles, these truths, these practices, in our daily lives, and in the life of our church?”

Let’s take a moment and answer the ‘Evangelism Health Check’ questions on page one of your handout. (There’s a picture of what you’re looking for here on the screen.) If you don’t know the answers to the first five questions & you’re sitting next to someone from your church, go ahead and talk together, or answer to the best of your ability.

SLIDE 12



Evangelism Health Check

Reflect upon the additional questions:

- What place does evangelism have in your local church and ministry?
- Are you promoting a culture of evangelism?
- Is there need for growth in this area?
- What is your plan?

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<< We’re going to take a few minutes here: (_____ minutes). After you’ve answered your questions, use the time to discuss with someone next to you any thoughts or observations that come to mind.

(After _____ minutes go by):

“Some of you may be totally thrilled after responding to the ‘Health Check’ questions. For example: Your church is ‘on fire’ - faithful and fruitful in sharing the gospel and making disciples, and you’re warmly recalling the joy of recently leading someone to faith in Christ.

Or, you might be thinking, ‘Hmmm...we need a tune-up... to stir up the gifts that are in us, get equipped and get sharing!’

Perhaps some might be feeling a hint of anxiety or dread: ‘Oh my goodness! - I’ve never shared the gospel...!’

SLIDE 13

THE GREAT DISCONNECT

From LifeWay Research Spring 2022



7 OUT OF 10

American Christians
Don't Know How To
Share Their Faith

<< “If you’re feeling at all uncomfortable at the thought of sharing your faith, you’re NOT alone.”
:)

Take a look at this statistic that was Lifeway Research posted in 2022:

“7 out of 10 American Christians Don’t Know How to Share Their Faith.”

It makes sense why a lot of believers would feel uncomfortable talking about faith, right??!

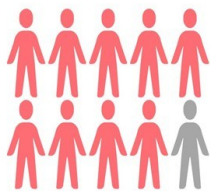
SLIDE 14

THE GREAT DISCONNECT

From LifeWay Research Spring 2022



7 OUT OF 10

American Christians
Don't Know How To
Share Their Faith

9 OUT OF 10

Americans Are At Least
Somewhat Open to Having a
Conversation with a Friend
About Jesus

<< “But now look at another interesting finding...”

“9 out of 10 Americans are at Least Somewhat Open to Having a Conversation with a Friend about Jesus.”

Did you imagine that?!

I’m taking this to mean that there are people you know or come across, that are ready **for you** to start the conversation!

NOW if you’re a member of a church, and not a pastor, you might be thinking, “Well that’s for pastors to do - they’re the ‘religious professionals,’” - Right? :) :)

SLIDE 15

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that *the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature*, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-13)



INVITE JORDAN ABEL - ONE OF OUR MIDSOUTH GMC PASTORS TO GIVE A BIT OF A TESTIMONY ABOUT THIS SUBJECT... (RE: Tommy Corbin)

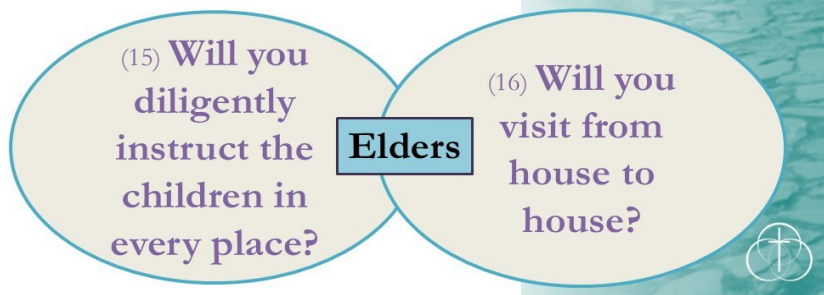
<< While not everyone has gifted to **“BE”** an evangelist, every believer needs to be equipped to share the gospel, and to share their testimony of salvation and God’s grace in their lives. And God has a plan for that! [READ Eph.4:11-13] The church needs everybody to be equipped - so that the church will be built up, and become mature!

How else will we live out our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ and spreading scriptural holiness across the globe? How else will we become a church that worships passionately, loves extravagantly, and **witnesses boldly**?

Historic Questions of “Traveling Preachers”

(2) Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God’s grace for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith?

Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?



“You have nothing to do but save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most.

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

– J. Wesley, *Minutes of Several Conversations*

<< As Methodists, we affirm the responsibility of pastors to be equippers, like described in Ephesians 4.

We also see the deep commitment to evangelism within the ministry of Methodist pastors:

(We see it in Wesley’s Historic Questions of Traveling Preachers... ‘Do they clearly understand salvation by faith - and do they communicate God’s truths well?

For Elders - Questions about diligently instructing children and visiting from house to house’ - these are part of our DNA! Communicating the need for Christ and how to receive forgiveness and new life in Jesus is **the core message** to be shared!

<< **S: “Pastors - let’s read one of Wesley’s classic instructions to preachers”:**

(After reading... “Pastors, if you’re hearing this and thinking, ‘But Wesley doesn’t understand all that I have to do each week, and everything my church expects...,” take heart! Let’s simplify this:

We need to be honest about what is “busy work”, what is “good and important to do”, and what is **ESSENTIAL** to our calling.

People facing eternity without Christ -- this is what should keep us up at night, not the other stuff!

Pastors / Churches Committed to Evangelism:

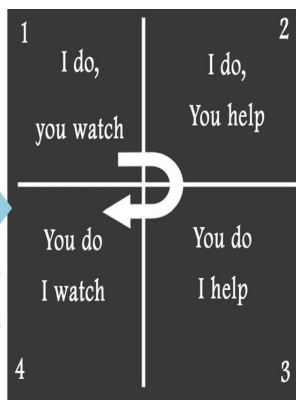
Regularly share the gospel - visitation with families, 1:1; new member classes);

Equip – model & mentor faith sharing;

Preach – the necessity of Christ for salvation;

Invite people to become disciples;

Ensure opportunities for exploration: Alpha...



<< **So let’s step back for a moment. What does it look like to be pastors & churches that are COMMITTED to Evangelism?**

(Creating a ‘culture of evangelism?’) (We can ‘look at the fruit’ to know if we are. What elements go into producing this beautiful fruit?)

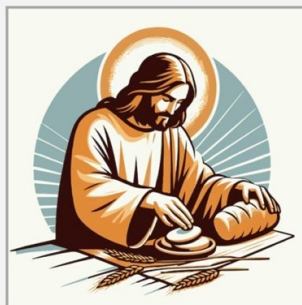
1 Regularly share the gospel - visitation with families; 1:1; new member classes;

2 Equipping is happening. (If you’re thinking, ‘Yes, we did evangelism training (Evangelism Explosion, or Contagious Christian) 5 years ago’ and haven’t since then, that’s too long ago - **It’s time for a refresh! This is an ongoing equipping need!** Pastors, evangelism team, class leaders, are you taking out individuals, mentoring in faith-sharing? Do you have a strategy for reaching your community with the gospel?

3. Preach the necessity of Christ for salvation; **4. Invite** people to become disciples (opp’ty to *respond*); **5. Providing opp’ties for exploring faith (EX: Alpha)?**

SLIDE 19

"Then Jesus declared, **"I am the bread of life.**
Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and
whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."
(John 6:35)



**"Evangelism is just one beggar
telling another beggar where to find bread."**
- D.T. Niles, Ceylon Methodist Conference

How beautiful are the feet who bring Good News!

<< When we're equipping members of the church for evangelism , building & promoting a '**culture** of evangelism' - we can be mindful of what D.T. Niles, a pastor and evangelist of the Ceylon ("Suh-laan", Indosia) Methodist Conference once said:

**"Evangelism is just one beggar
telling another beggar
where to find bread."**

Those who are humble, and who've been **equipped** to evangelize, can find incredible joy helping people find **JESUS**, the BREAD of **LIFE!**

SLIDE 20

God's Story: His Love for Humanity in Four Chapters

I. How everything started: GOOD

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen. 1:1)
"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:27)
"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good..." (Gen. 1:31)

(CREATION)

II. How everything broke: SIN

"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." (Gen. 3:6)
"As it is written: there is no one righteous, not even one." (Rom. 3:10)

(THE FALL)

III. How everything could be rescued: JESUS

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit." (1 Pet. 3:18)
"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)
"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

(REDEMPTION)

IV. God's work of re-creation, now and in heaven: BY HIS SPIRIT

"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18)
**"Behold, I am making all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

(RESTORATION)

(See page 2 in your handout)



<< Would you turn to page 2 in your handout?)

When we think of sharing the gospel, it's helpful to have a framework for thinking about life and our relationship with God "with a Big Picture" view.

What you see on the top of page 2 is what we often think of as **"God's Story: His Love for Humanity"** and we have it divided up into 4 "chapters."

If you're at all new to Christianity, or have ever felt overwhelmed by the Bible ("how does it all fit together?!) this provides a brief summary that ties things together. If somebody asks you, "What does Christianity teach?" this is a place you can start with to explain. We're just going to **touch** on each of these 'chapters':

SLIDE 21

God's Story: His Love for Humanity

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(RESTORATION)

<< The first chapter is **how everything started: With God, our Creator, making all things GOOD. :**

You can read some of the passages that support this, and how we as humans, made in the IMAGE of God, 'fit into the story.'

That first chapter of God's Story, is of course, CREATION.

God's Story: His Love for Humanity

II. How everything broke: SIN

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(RESTORATION)

<< Chapter 2: "**How everything broke**", when SIN entered into our human family.

And it didn't stop with Adam and Eve. It is part of OUR Nature. And it's in Every. One. of US!

SIN is not just a 'wrong deed' that makes us feel guilty afterwards. SIN is something that '**runs deep**' within us - it is a type of rebellion that has become, "Part of our Nature." - *(if you've ever seen a 2 year old react when they're told 'NO', you understand!)*

When SIN entered the family, the beautiful relationship with God broke too.

This Chapter, is identified as "The FALL."

God's Story: His Love for Humanity

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<< Left on our own, we're helpless! Sinners standing before Holy God, separated and without hope. Unable to please God, and powerless to do so if **wanted** to!

As we see in Scriptures - God's Word to us, the Bible - if we remain in this state, it has eternal consequences too.

As uncomfortable as it might make us feel, Jesus did teach & give warnings about **hell**, and the pain of **eternal** separation from God.

But in this 3d Chapter :, we see the extent of God's love & His plan for our rescue: deeply sacrificial, JESUS - giving His life on the cross, to take on the penalty of our sins - in our place, the Righteous for the Unrighteous. No matter where we've been or what we've done, **or**, no matter how good we've thought we are - God extends His grace and mercy to those who repent and trust Christ, who is both Savior and Lord. This is REDEMPTION; an essential part of Christian faith - foundational to becoming a 'disciple' of Jesus.

<< The final chapter is incredibly exciting! God's work of RE-CREATION - both **now** and in heaven.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of believers: SANCTIFICATION - Empowering us to become 'more and more like Jesus' - renewing our minds, changing our thoughts, feelings, speech, actions, will - our capacity to love God and love others....

THIS IS RESTORATION - The Broken Image of God within us being Made New!

God's Story: His Love for Humanity

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(REDEMPTION)

God's Story: His Love for Humanity in Four Chapters



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We see ourselves in this story too...

<< As we consider God's Story, if we take a moment to look back over our life, I'm pretty sure we **see ourselves** in this story too!

(Ideally, give folks a few minutes to think about their own stories, and how they see God at work in their lives.)

Our relationship with...	Created in God's Image (Gen. 1-2)	The Broken Image after the Fall (Gen. 3)
God (Spiritual)	Trust, fellowship, obedience...	Fear, Alienation, Guilt, Shame...
Ourselves (Psychological)	Confidence, security, purpose...	Egocentricity, Insecurity...
Nature (Physical)	Harmony, Stewardship...	Alienation, Exploitation
One Another (Social)	Openness, Trust, Delight...	Alienation, Domination

See *Follow the Healer* by Stephen Seaman



<< We won't linger at this time over this chart that is also on page 2 of your handout, but I encourage you to review it, and consider the relationships that are included, and the changes that come about as a result of the Fall. (We're **more than** familiar with these characteristics or qualities!)

As you reflect upon the nature of those relationships if lived out "As God Intended", you'll also be reminded of the changes in our relationships that can come about as God RESTORES us through His SANCTIFYING GRACE.

The Holy Spirit working in us enables us to move out of Genesis 3 living, to what God intended - Genesis 1 & 2 'made in the image of God' beautiful lives.



<< This really is at the heart of the "Wesleyan Way of Salvation."

You see, Evangelism isn't simply about "getting someone **converted**"...

Evangelism helps people understand there's an open door to **a life** of restorative, healing connection with God -

A life of '**belonging**' ...becoming a *Child of God* - with hope; peace that overcomes anxiety, and confidence to face the future, that can **only** come to those who are in Christ.

SLIDE 28

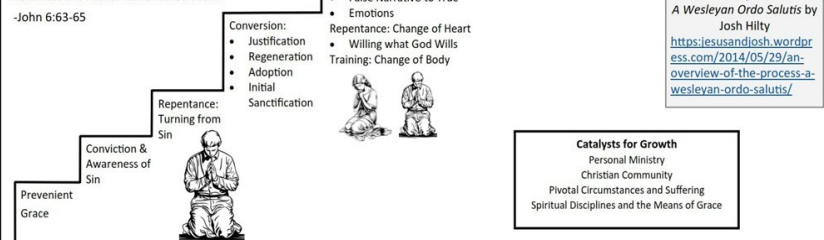
The Wesleyan Way of Salvation: God's Grace in Our Lives

Salvation is found only in Jesus:

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"
- John 14:6

The work of the Spirit in bringing new life through Jesus:

"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them."
- John 6:63-65



(See page 3 in your handout)



<< As you look at **page 3** in your handout, you'll see visual laying out the "Wesleyan Way of Salvation." The chart on the bottom provides Scriptures for you to explore and use for reference.

Today, because our time is short, we'll just touch on a couple of points along the salvation continuum that we recognize as Wesleyan Christians:

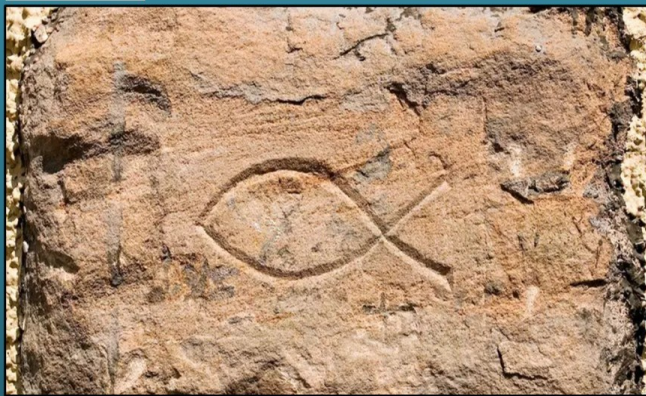
1st: The emphasis upon GRACE. From before we ever came to be followers of Jesus, God was pouring out grace upon us - helping us recognize our spiritual state and our need for forgiveness and salvation through Christ.

2nd: "Repentance" That initial repentance - between 'Conviction of Sin' & 'Conversion' is the repentance that "leads to salvation." *We're dependent upon God's grace to take this essential step into the life of faith. And it's God's grace that assists us in the sanctification process.*

When we talk about evangelism - the "end goal" is not mere 'conversion' or 'getting saved'. We're inviting people to become disciples - experiencing new life in Christ, being led, sanctified, so we will become people who reflect Jesus' heart, mind, and love in our thoughts, words & actions - bringing the light of Christ to the world.

SLIDE 29

ΙΧΘΥΣ ('Ichthus' ... "fish")



Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτὴρ
'Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior'



<< Now let's switch gears. You've probably seen the Christian 'fish' or "ICHTHUS" image before. You might even have a decal of it sticking to your car. In Greek, the letters spelling ICHTHUS represented the first letters of "Jesus, Christ, God's Son, Savior." **History has it** that this symbol was used by early Christians during an era of intense persecution. **When acknowledging one's faith could lead to death.**

A believer talking with a stranger would casually scrape a curved line in the dirt. If the other person drew a line that 'completed the fish' it was understood that **both** were believers.

Most of us from the west have never faced that level of risk or danger sharing about our faith in Jesus. (Although we know that in parts of the world, this level of danger is very real. And yet, our brothers and sisters **hold firm.**)

SLIDE 30

"Then He said to them all:

'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.



For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.'" (Luke 9:23-26)



<< **Let's stand and read LUKE 9:23-26 together.**

(Thank you; you can be seated.) Do you hear how these verses "go together"? Disciples...Deny self. (Self-interests; self-preservation). Taking up our cross - daily. Following Jesus - regardless of the risk of loss. **Not ashamed to be one of Jesus' or of His words.** (Willing to risk shame, humiliation, even the risk of death. Wow!)

SLIDE 31

Being Honest – What Holds Us Back from Sharing the Gospel?

Turn to page 4 in your handout.

Identify and ‘check’ ✓ reasons that hold you back from sharing the gospel with others.



If You Are Reluctant to Share Your Testimony or the Gospel with People You Know, What Holds You Back?

CHECK EACH REASON THAT KEEPS YOU FROM OBEDIENCE:

- ☒ I've never really thought about it.
- ☐ I live in a way that shows Jesus. Isn't that enough?
- ☐ I don't know what to say.
- ☐ I'm afraid of making mistakes, or not having answers.
- ☐ I'm so busy, it never crosses my mind.
- ☐ I'm serving in another area; isn't that enough?
- ☐ It's just not my gift... Someone else needs to do it!
- ☐ That's what we hire the pastor for, isn't it?
- ☐ I don't want my friends to think I'm weird.
- ☐ I don't want people to think I'm a religious fanatic.
- ☐ The world has changed so much. I don't think people want to hear it.
- ☐ Religion is a private issue. I don't feel comfortable asking about someone else's faith.
- ☐ I don't want my kids to stop talking to me.
- ☐ I don't want to ruin or bring strain to a relationship.
- ☐ Everyone has to choose what they think is right. My faith works for me... Who am I to suggest they change?
- ☐ People say religion causes wars. I don't want to be a factious person or sound like a Crusader.
- ☐ I don't talk about religion, politics, or money with people outside of my family; it just causes arguments.
- ☐ I'd have to make changes in my life to be credible, and I'm just not ready or interested in making changes.

Review your responses. Confess your fears, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. Talk with other believers who share your struggles, and commit to praying for one another so you may find new courage, resolve, and strength to share the gospel.

<< Let's turn to **page 4** in our handouts.

If you've ever found yourself feeling reluctant to share your testimony or the gospel, read through the 'check-list' on the left-hand side of the page. (There's a picture of what you're looking for, here on the screen.)

Take a moment to 'check' any of the reasons that have held you back.

[S: Provide a few minutes; if there is time: "Turn to your neighbor and share the reason that most impacts you - that has 'kept you silent.'"]

[S: Luke 6:22-23] Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.]

SLIDE 32

Being Honest – What Holds Us Back from Sharing the Gospel?



<< We're not taking a poll, but I'm guessing there may be a few reasons that 'show up' frequently on our lists.

Often, we're concerned about how others will perceive us. How they'll think of us. And perhaps, how that might impact our relationships in the future. Usually, this is rooted in fear.

Fear we'll be misunderstood, blamed, judged.

We need to remind ourselves, this fear is not of God.

[S: (2 Tim. 1:7)]

SLIDE 33



Responding to "Don't Judge Me"

The truth?

"For **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
(Romans 3:23)

"As it is written, **"There is no one righteous, not even one."** (Romans 3:10)
(Our own words will judge us - Matthew 12:36-37.)

Given this spiritual reality, we can gently communicate we're all in the same situation!



<< The enemy is very happy if we're paralyzed and silent! We need to be aware that people who are captive to Satan may be the first to repeat the meme, "Don't Judge me." If you're reluctant to speak about the Lord because you're afraid someone will think you're judgmental - remember the Truth:

- **"ALL** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- There is **no one** who is righteous; not even one!
- Given this spiritual reality - we can gently communicate - **we're all** in the same situation!>>>

REPENTANCE? (It's for all of us!)

"... **Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).

"Godly sorrow brings **repentance** that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." (2 Cor. 7:10).



"**Repent**, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord." (Acts 3:19)

<< ...and that **repentance** is for **all of us!**

If we're passing this truth along to others, we can let them know that the call to repentance was part of Jesus' first recorded message... :) (**His words, not ours....**) :)

We could say that our **repentance** (turning to God, confessing our sins, asking His forgiveness, seeking to follow His way and not our own) is **what God is waiting for...**

While we are slow to admit our sins and failings, God is like the father waiting for the prodigal son to return - so He can restore us!



The Lord desires to cleanse and renew us!



"After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, 'Lord, are you going to wash **my** feet?'" (John 13:5-6)



<< We don't need to be afraid of push-back if our heart-posture is right:

When we're sharing our testimony or God's story, we want to share from the place of **remembering what it means personally, to be the recipient of God's forgiveness; God's grace.**

Think about a time when you participated in a foot washing service. What is it like? Slightly uncomfortable? ("How many of you washed your feet first, before attending?") With our feet not too pretty and perhaps even smelly - yet another kneels before us to wash our feet and wipe them dry. Did it leave you feeling a bit humble? Yet a bit in awe; grateful?

This place of humility is the perfect heart-posture for sharing about the love of Christ. :) :)

What Motivates Us to Share the Gospel with Other People?

Turn to **page 5** in your handout.

Which reasons for sharing the gospel most deeply impact you? (Identify your "top 3".)

Consider Some of These Common Reasons for Sharing the Gospel... Which Most Deeply Impact Your Heart?

IDENTIFY AND NUMBER THE TOP 3 MOTIVATORS FOR YOU :

- ___ Love for Christ (He is so good and has changed my life...I'm so grateful, I have to tell people about Him!)
- ___ The love of Christ compels me! (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 John 4:20)
- ___ Like Jesus, we are moved with compassion on behalf of others (Matt. 9:36; Luke 15:20; Mark 1:41)
- ___ Promised rewards / rewards in heaven (Matt. 19:27-30)
- ___ Avoiding 'blood-guilt' (Ezekiel 33:6; Acts 20:26) (We don't want to face God and have to explain why we didn't share the gospel with family, friends & neighbors)
- ___ Obedience to Jesus: to be His witnesses & make disciples (Mk 1:17-18; 2:14; Mt. 28:19-20; John 14:15, 21)
- ___ To bear much fruit & bring glory to God (John 17:4; John 15:7-8; Psalm 96:8-13; Gal. 1:10; Ps. 9:1)
- ___ The desire to have our life count for eternal purposes (Matthew 16:26; 1 Peter 1:24-25)
- ___ So that people will be saved (John 3:16-18; Rom. 10:17)
- ___ I have family members and friends who don't know Jesus as their Lord and Savior (Luke 16:19-31)
- ___ Because of the reality of hell - eternal suffering and separation from God (We need to warn and help people avoid this!) (Mark 9:43-48; Mt. 13:49-50; Mt. 25:1-46)
- ___ I know people who struggle with anxiety, depression and are living without hope... (Prov. 18:24; Heb. 6:19; 1 Pet. 3:15; John 4:13-14)
- ___ The Holy Spirit empowers witnesses (how exciting!) and strengthens believers (Acts 1:8; Eph. 3:16; 1 Cor. 12:11)
- ___ God wants to work through us to accomplish His purposes (Eph. 2:8-10; I want to please Him (1 Thes. 2:4)
- ___ So others will know Jesus: the Way, Truth, & Life! (John 14:6)

<< Let's look now at **page 5** in our handout and consider 'What Motivates us to Share the Gospel with others?'

We're only going to be here a few minutes. If you use this resource with your church you can take longer and discuss it more as well.

The instructions say, "Identify and number your top 3 motivators". For now, just pick your top 1 or 2.

[S: If there is time, have them share their top motivators]

SLIDE 37

“Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and **loses one** of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and **go after the lost sheep until he finds it?** And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more **rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” (Luke 15:3-7)



<< (Luke 15:3-7) Let’s read together:

From God’s perspective, (Who is very aware of our situation when we’re separated from Him):

While we used to joke about stopping for directions before GPS was available, we know that being **lost** can be a real dilemma. Being spiritually **lost is also real, unsettling; and dangerous.**

To the extent that God Himself goes out looking for us!

Being **found is really great!**

To the extent that it **leads to celebrations and joy!**



SLIDE 38



Starting Spiritual Conversations

“When He saw the crowds, **He had compassion on them**, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.’” (Matthew 9:36-38)



What was Jesus’ motivation?

What is our motivation?



Think about today’s world. If you’re aware of recent events among young adults - (think ‘the most recent Asbury revival’, and the revivals that are taking place across many colleges/ universities)- you know that God is moving among young adults.

That **He is Doing a Work** of Binding Wounds, Healing Hearts, and Setting People Free.

<< **Let’s read Matthew 9:36-38.**

? **What was Jesus’ motivation?**

This same motivation can move us into starting spiritual conversations. (As a worker in the harvest, empowered by the Holy Spirit, **all of the MOTIVATORS are MUCH STRONGER than any** of the factors that in the *past* may have made us Reluctant to share the Good News!

SLIDE 39

Starting Spiritual Conversations



Before sharing the gospel with someone, **ask God for discernment, and to fill your heart with compassion** for those who don’t need Jesus. Keep the **love** of Christ prominent in your sharing.

Turn to **page 6** in your handout. Under ‘How to Make Spiritual Connections’, read aloud the words/statements in **‘bold print.’**



< If you’ve never had the joy of leading someone to Christ, the idea of Starting Spiritual Conversations might seem daunting. :)

But we don’t need to be a rocket scientist; we don’t need to be people who’ve memorized a bunch of scripts or talking points to “convince” people.

We do want to pray. To ask God to lead us; give us discernment, and fill us with compassion; love.

“Turn to page 6 in your handout. Look at the section ‘How to Make Spiritual Connections’; in pairs/or ‘3s’, read aloud the words/statements in Bold print.”

TESTIMONY: (DAVID CALHOUN): Would you come up and share a word of testimony about How God works to give us opportunities for starting spiritual conversations when we pray and ask Him to use us?

Training Video 1:

3-D GOSPEL: GUILT-INNOCENCE, HONOR-SHAME, AND FEAR-POWER WORLDVIEWS

Watch here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2XNoAFtqOw>



<< As David just shared, he had an opportunity to share about Jesus with someone who came from a very different culture and worldview than his own.

More and more, we're meeting people who see the world - and the concerns of their hearts - differently.

We're going to see a short video that describes 3 different 'world views'. Let's watch...

While still on page 6,
read through the ten
'Best Questions for
Meaningful Spiritual
Conversations.'

Let's try some out.



From: *What are the Best Questions for Meaningful Spiritual Conversations?* - Sean McDowell.org

Here are 10 questions you might find helpful to advance genuine spiritual conversations with those who do not share your worldview:

1. Do you have a background in religion? If so, what is it?
2. Was there ever a time you believed in God? If so, why did you think it changed?
3. How important is spirituality to your life now? Has this changed over time? If so, why?
4. In terms of religion, who has had the biggest influence on your life?
5. Who do you think Jesus was, and why?
6. Are there any features of the world that give you pause and make you think there might be a God?
7. Are there any things that attract you to religion in general or Christianity in particular? And are there any things that turn you away?
8. What experiences have most shaped your spiritual life?
9. If you were to breakdown the key reasons you don't believe into intellectual, emotional, personal or other factors, how would you rate them?
10. What might convince you to believe in God?

The good news for these kinds of conversations is that you don't have to have all the answers. That's right. *You don't have to be an expert! You just need to be bold enough to ask the questions and care enough to listen.* If you do, you might be amazed at the depth of conversation you can have with people who hold radically different views than your own.

<https://seanmcowell.org/blog/what-are-the-best-questions-for-meaningful-spiritual-conversations>

<< The reason we're sharing this video with you today, is so that when we're starting spiritual conversations with people, we want to be mindful that people have different "heart needs." While many of us in the west were raised in 'Guilt-Innocence' culture, Honor-Shame culture is growing, and there are others whose lives are driven by more by the needs of Fear-Power.

In reality, people probably are a mix - but lean more into one than another.

In the end, though, the gospel of Jesus - meets the needs of ALL people - everywhere! :)

If you still have page 6 open read through the "10 Best Questions for Meaningful Spiritual Conversations" (There are many other questions you can ask, I'm sharing these because I want you to see you can ask *deep questions and not be afraid. Let's try some out. In pairs - ask one another one (or more) of the questions, & take time to listen to each other's responses .*

Sharing Our Testimony



"Before I became a follower of Jesus..."

"I became a disciple..."(How)

"Now my life/Since knowing Jesus..."

<< Filling most of **page 7** you see a large box. Above it, in grey, are three statements that can help you to think about, write, and of course, *use to communicate your testimony, when you've asked, "May I share my story?"*

"Before I became a follower of Jesus...."

"I became a disciple.... (How)"

"Now my life... -or- Since knowing Jesus...." You've got space for writing - and because some parts of your story might need more space to give details, the box is left wide open for you to divide.

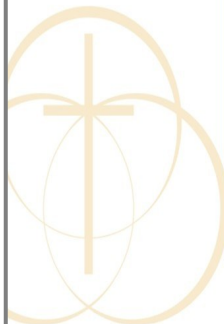
WHAT I'M ASKING EACH OF YOU TO DO THIS WEEK - is to take time, write out your testimony, and share it with at least one person. You can do this at church, in SS.

ASK if you can share your story - even TELL them you're practicing! See what God will do with it! :)

TESTIMONY: (Suzanne Whittacker): Would you come up and share your brief testimony?

SLIDE 43

Sharing Our Testimony (15 seconds)



"There was a time in my life
when I was _____ and
_____."

Then I was forgiven by Jesus
and chose to follow Him.

My life changed.

Now, I am _____ and
_____."

Best of all, I have a friendship
with God.

Do you have a story like that?"

<< There may be times when we won't want to take a lot of time in a conversation sharing deeply about our own story - we want to give a glimpse, a summary - because we're trying to discover whether the persons we're talking with knows Jesus...

Look at the bottom of page 7. "How to Share Your Testimony in 15 Seconds."

You see the 3 steps, and there's space below for you to 'fill in' your own responses.

- **"There was a time in my life when I was..."**
- **"Now, I am.... and...." (How your life is different).**
- **"Do you have a story like that?"**

Take a moment or two to fill this in, and share it with your partner.

(If you've "always been in church" (which is **great testimony!**) you might want to consider: has there ever been a time when the Lord 'brought you home',

-or- did He reveal something that needed to change in your life and you really needed His help?

-or- simply a time in your life when looking back, you know you couldn't have made it without Him.

You can adjust the sentences to communicate this.

The point is, communicate How Jesus impacts Your life. In your pairs/3s, share your 15-second testimony.

SLIDE 44

The Mission of Jesus is the Reason the Church Exists.

Helping people come to know God through Jesus Christ, making **disciples** (followers; those who obey His teachings) who love God and love others, incorporating them into the Church, and equipping them to join Jesus in **His mission** – so that God will be glorified among the nations – is at the very heart of what it means to be the CHURCH.



< When you're thinking about sharing your own testimony, and sharing the gospel of Jesus, keep in mind these are core /foundational activities for the people of God who are living out the Mission of Jesus.

<< READ SLIDE .

SLIDE 45

Training Video 2:

(One Simple Way
to Introduce God's Story...)

THE 3 CIRCLES

(#NoPlaceLeft Training)

Watch here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W8ynRMr59k>



<< We're going to see a short video that gives us a simple way to share the gospel - "God's Story".

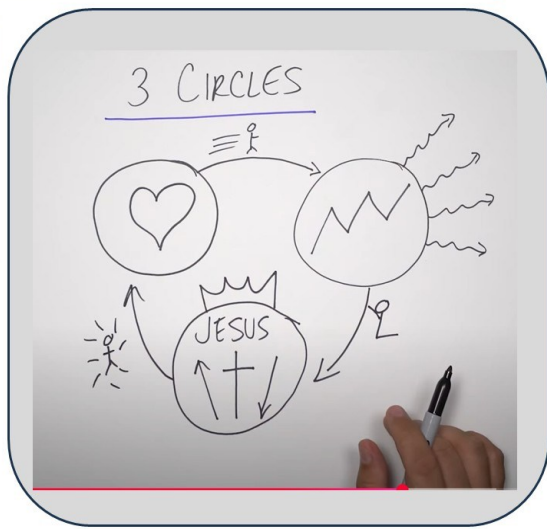
If you've seen it before, place close attention, because we're going to take time to practice re-telling the gospel story.

Let's watch...

SLIDE 46

Sharing God's Story – Practice Time

(Use page 8 in your handout; let's work together!)



<< “On the back of your handout, you’ve got space to practice sharing God’s story. Work together - help one another share the story.”

“You’ve got _____ minutes.”

[After time - S: “When you look at the section to the right of your practice box, you’ll see themes and Scripture references. GOD’S WORD HAS POWER. I want to encourage you to become familiar with these passages. Copy these! Mark them in your Bible, Put them in your phone so you can share from the Scriptures these Spiritual Truths.

JERRI WILLIAMS: I know it wasn’t a presentation of 3 Circles that brought you to the Lord, but could you come and share a word with us as to how you came to know Jesus?

SLIDE 47

The Importance of Prayer

- Prayer prepares us to see, listen, and love.
- Prayer brings the presence & power of the Holy Spirit into our conversations.
- Prayer prepares hearts to be responsive to the gospel.

“We must talk to God about people before we talk to people about God.” – D.L. Moody

<< **We’re coming to the end of our session.** While this may seem so obvious, we don’t want to **miss** the obvious.

As Acts 1:8 tells us, we aren’t called to be witnesses in our own strength. In fact, if we even attempt that, we’d be foolish.

The Holy Spirit within us gives us **power** to be Christ’s witnesses.

And so, we want to keep in mind -

The Importance of Prayer.....

[S: Read <<]

SLIDE 48

Praying with & for Others: Blessing Lives

Everyone has needs. Be intentional to bring people and their needs to God.

Body (health)
Labor (job & finances)
Emotional (morale & hope)
Social (relationships)
Spiritual (walk with God)



<< If you’ve ever thought to yourself, “I wouldn’t know what to pray for someone,” here’s a simple model:

<< **BLESS: S: READ]**

In our pairs/3s, let’s take a few moments praying with and for one another...

I’ll close our time in prayer.



To access the handout or PPT
used in this session:

<https://tinyurl.com/midsouthevangelism>



How beautiful are the feet who bring Good News!

<<

<<

<<