

## Defining Evangelism

### Introduction

What is evangelism? Why is this so important to us? What is relational evangelism? Why take time on Fridays to study relational evangelism? These are all great questions. I want to take time to answer some of these questions in this first session.

Before we get started on Session One, I want to share a couple of other thoughts. In Ephesians 4:11, God gave the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints in the work of service. Notice that evangelists are included in that list. The church needs to be equipped in the area of evangelism. Evangelists evangelize, but they are not the only ones that are called to evangelize. Their primary job is to equip the church in the area of evangelism. They not only equip with training times like these, but they also equip by modeling it.

(Eph 4:11-12) “And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;”

In church plants and in many local churches, there may not be an evangelist available. So, the foundations in churches are laid by apostles, and they flow in all the gifts. Timothy was an apostle, and in Paul’s second letter to him, he exhorted him to “do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill your ministry.” Part of establishing churches is to equip them in the area of evangelism. Like Timothy, I am not an evangelist, but I will be doing the work of an evangelist over the next few months as I equip our church in the area of evangelism.

(2 Tim 4:5) “But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

The second thing that I want to do before we get started is to give an overview of what we will be covering. Here is the list of things that I plan on covering on these Friday night sessions.

- Session 1: Evangelism and Relational Evangelism
- Session 2: The Process of Evangelism
- Session 3: Signs and Seasons (Making The Most Of The Opportunities)
- Session 4: The Response Pyramid
- Session 5: Testimonies
- Session 6: Gospel Message
- Session 7: Bridge Presentation
- Session 8: Apologetics

### 1. What Is Evangelism?

What is evangelism? Evangelism comes from the Latin word, *evangelium*, which comes from the Greek word *euangelion*. *Euangelion* comes from two different Greek words, *eu* + *aggelos*. *Eu* means well or good and *aggelos* means message. So, by looking at the root words, evangelism means good news. Another word that means the same thing is gospel. Evangelism is the spreading of good news, or the spreading of the gospel.

In Mark 16:15, Jesus commanded the apostles and disciples to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” The Greek word for gospel is euangelion, the root word of evangelism. So, Jesus commanded us to go evangelize or preach the gospel.

(Mark 16:15) “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

## 2. Why Is Evangelism Important?

Jesus did not command us to do something that He did not do Himself. He set the example for us. In Luke 4:18, Jesus went into the temple and read from Isaiah 61, saying, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor...” Then, He said, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus then began His earthly ministry and went about preaching the gospel in all the cities.

(Luke 4:18) “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED”

(Luke 4:21) “And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.””

At the end of Luke 4, after casting out demons and healing a number of people, they wanted Him to stay there, but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.” Jesus had a mission. His mission was to come preach the gospel. Isaiah had prophesied it, and Jesus fulfilled that prophecy.

(Luke 4:43) “But He said to them, ‘I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.’”

The apostles followed Jesus’ command and His example. They went about preaching the gospel. But, it was not just the apostles, it was all the disciples that preached the gospel. They recognized that everyone had been given the mandate to preach the gospel. In Acts 11, after the church scattered because of the persecution, some of the people preached the Lord Jesus to both Greeks and Jews. The hand of the Lord was with them and a large number of people believed and turned to the Lord. The Greek word in verse 20 for preaching is euaggelizo, which again, means to share the good news or the gospel. All believers are called to preach the gospel. There is another Greek word that is used for preaching, which is kerusso. Not everyone is called to kerusso, or preach to multitudes, but all of us are called to share the good news with others.

(Acts 11:19-21) “So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. {20} But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and *began* speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. {21} And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.”

Another reason that evangelism is so important is found in the message itself. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death, and all of us deserve to die because of our sins. Heaven and hell are real, and our souls are eternal. Because of our sins, we will be judged and spend an eternity with God in heaven or be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. God had a plan to redeem us. Out of love He sent Jesus to die for our sins, and to establish a new covenant with us. He took our sins and gave us His righteousness so that we would not have to be judged and we could spend eternity with Him. That is good news. Too many of us have no concern for eternity and where we or others will spend their eternity. We live for today, and are not concerned about where others who do not have Christ will go when they die. We need an eternal perspective, and a concern for the world. God loved the world so He sent His only begotten Son to die so that we would not perish. We need God's love and concern.

### **3. Why Is So Little Evangelism Being Done Today?**

If Jesus commanded all of us to share the gospel with others or to evangelize, why is it that so little evangelism is being done? Today, most church growth comes from transplants, people leaving one church and moving to another church. The church growth that the early church had was not from people switching churches; it was from people coming to Christ. Large numbers were hearing the good news, were believing the gospel, and turning to the Lord. Before we go on, let me ask a few questions.

- How many of you have led someone to the Lord this past year?
- How many of you have shared the gospel with someone this past year?
- How many of you have shared your testimony with someone this past year?

Most people in the church today have not shared the gospel with anyone. Statistically, 90% of Christians have never led someone else to the Lord. Most people feel inadequate and do not feel prepared or trained. Most people are frightened at the thought of sharing the gospel. Some are afraid of losing a friendship or alienating people. Most people do not feel that they have been specifically called to evangelize. They feel their gift is serving, teaching, or something other than evangelizing. They are content to let the “evangelists” preach the gospel. Larry Tomczak, an evangelist and apostle, who also happens to be a friend of mine, gave ten reasons why Christians do not share the gospel.

#### **Ten Reasons That Christians Do Not Evangelize (Larry Tomczak)**

1. Procrastination—that is, "putting off until tomorrow what one has already put off until today."
2. Discouragement from past evangelistic endeavors.
3. Spectator mentality.
4. Dull of hearing regarding evangelism.
5. Burnt out from past frenzied evangelistic activity.
6. Over-emphasizing personal care over evangelism.
7. Turned-off by gimmicks.
8. Wrong view about evangelism being "elementary."
9. Lack of Training.
10. Never experienced the baptism of the HS intended to empower them as witnesses.

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Let me give another reason that I think is overlooked. Before I share it with you, let me share a couple of stories with you. I bought a black Nissan truck last year. It is really nice, and after I bought it, I showed it to a lot of people. I was pretty excited about it. A few years ago the Lord told me to pray for Lee Griego, and I did. He was instantly healed of Stage 3 colon cancer, which was verified by the medical tests the following day. I was pretty excited about what God did, and I told lots of people. We talk about the things that we are excited about.

I believe that one reason that many people don't talk about Jesus to people is that they are just not that excited about God. I believe that we make it a religion instead of a relationship with Christ. I try to get people excited and passionate about their first love. In the book of Revelations, the Lord told the church of Ephesus that they had lost their first love, and that they needed to repent and do the things they did at first or God would remove their lampstand. By the way, your lampstand is the light that you give off to others. When you lose your first love, you lose the lampstand. You stop sharing the light with others. We need to encourage people to spend time with the Lord and to seek Him first. We need to encourage people to be intimate with the Lord and to return to their first love. We will see a revival in evangelism when the church gets excited about Jesus again.

(Rev 2:4-5) “But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. {5} Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.”

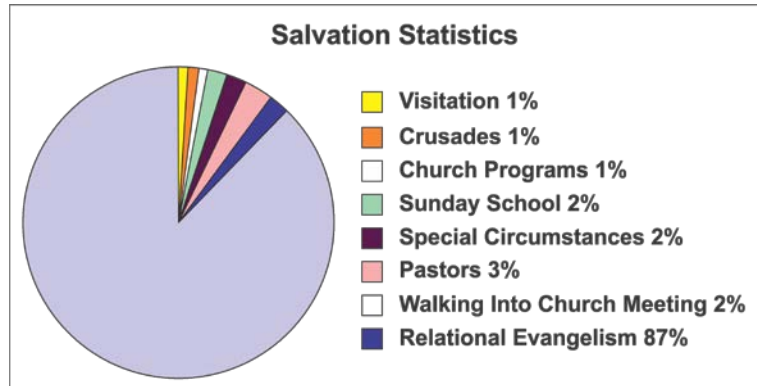
Another reason that people do not get involved in evangelism is that their view of evangelism is based one type or style of evangelism, and they don't see that they fit in. Others are aware of different styles of evangelism, but have not found one that they are comfortable with. Here are some of the various styles of evangelism.

- Confrontational Style – Acts 2:22. Peter confronted the people and several thousand people received the Lord.
- Intellectual Style – Acts 17:6. Paul tried to reason with the people and this worked. (Josh McDowell is an example of this. )
- Testimonial Style – John 9:1-41 (10-12). Looking for a reason to share what God has done in my own life.
- Invitational Style – John 4:28-29. The woman at the well invited the whole city to come see Jesus. She merely invites.
- Miraculous Style – Acts 8:4. Many miracles happened and this gave opportunity for Philip. Many received Jesus.
- Service Style – Acts 9:36-39. Dorcas used her serving to lead people to the Lord.
- Relational Style – Mark 5: 10-20. Go to your own people (oikos) and tell them about Jesus. (Karen)

We are going to be focusing our time on Friday nights on the relational style of evangelism. I believe that it offers everyone an opportunity to get involved. All of us have families, friends, and relationships in our lives, and this provides a way to reach out to all of these people.

#### 4. What Is Relational Evangelism?

What percent of people come to Christ through Billy Graham crusades or other similar crusades?  
What percent of people come to Christ through church outreaches?  
What percent of people come to Christ through Sunday School?  
Here are some statistics that have been put out on how people come to Christ.



- Visitation – only 1% get saved through visitation programs.
- Crusades – only 1% get saved through crusades like the Billy Graham Crusade.
- Church Programs – only 2% get saved through special church programs like Easter dramas or Christmas plays.
- Sunday School – only 2% of Christians got saved through a Sunday School program.
- Special Circumstances or Needs – only 2% get saved through special circumstances.
- Pastors – 3% of people get saved through a pastor.
- Walking into a church meeting – Only 2% get saved through walking into a church meeting.
- Relational Evangelism – 87% became Christians through a relative or friend. The greatest chance anyone has of getting saved is through a relationship with you or I. We are the salt of the earth. We are the lamp upon a lampstand. We are His ambassadors here on earth.

Some people like to differentiate regular evangelism with power evangelism. By power evangelism, we mean evangelism that takes place through signs and wonders. When the Lord used Peter to heal the lame man on his way to prayer, five thousand men believed (Acts 3:1-10, 4:4). That number does not include women or children so the total number may well have been over ten thousand. Jesus' life and ministry was full of power evangelism. He went about healing and casting out demons, and many people believed. However, most of these power encounters came through personal interactions. In Peter's case, he came across a lame man while going to the temple, and he prayed for him. Even though it is power evangelism, it is also relational evangelism. The lame man did not walk into a church meeting. He did not go to a crusade. He did not hear the pastor speak. He did not go to Sunday school. His life crossed paths with Peter, who prayed for him, and he got healed and then saved.

(Acts 4:4) "But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."

So, what is relational evangelism? Relational Evangelism is sharing the gospel message in a natural way with the people in our lives. Larry Tomczak, uses the term, Lifestyle Evangelism, and he gives the following definition. Lifestyle Evangelism is the process of living in such a way that non-Christians move one step closer to Jesus Christ as a result of my love and initiative in their life.

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Another term that is used alongside of Relational or Lifestyle Evangelism is Oikos Evangelism. Oikos is the Greek word for household. In the Graeco-Roman culture, oikos described not only the immediate family in the house but also included servants and their families, slaves and their families, friends, and business associates. Therefore, the oikos was one's sphere of influence. The NT is full of examples of the gospel being spread through oikos evangelism. Here are a few examples of oikos evangelism in the New Testament.

### A. Demoniac–Mark 5:18-20

In Mark 5, Jesus cast out demons from a man from Decapolis. The man immediately entreated Jesus about accompanying Him. But, Jesus told the man to go home to his own people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you. So, the man went home and began to proclaim the great things that Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

(Mark 5:18-20) "And as He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was entreating Him that he might accompany Him. {19} And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home (oikos) to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you." {20} And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone marveled."

### B. Levi – Luke 5:27-29

In Luke 5, Jesus came across a tax collector named Levi. Jesus invited him to follow Him, and Levi left everything behind and began to follow Jesus. Then, Levi threw a big reception for Jesus at his house and invited all his fellow tax collectors and friends. This was Levi's oikos. These were the people in his life. These were the relationships that he had in his life. He reached out to the people in his life and introduced them to Jesus. That is relational or oikos evangelism.

(Luke 5:27-29) "After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." {28} And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him. {29} And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other *people* who were reclining *at the table* with them."

### C. Jesus' disciples–John 1:41-44 (Philip and Peter were the oikos of Andrew).

In John 1:41-44, Andrew went to his brother, Simon, and said to him, "we have found the Messiah." And Andrew brought Simon Peter to Jesus. Peter was Andrew's brother, part of his household. Andrew was practicing oikos or relational evangelism. He was introducing his family and friends to the Messiah.

(John 1:41-44) "He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ). {42} He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter). {43} The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." {44} Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter."

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### D. Royal official–John 4:46, 51-53.

In John 4, a royal official had heard about Jesus, and he had a son who was sick, so he invited Jesus to come and heal him. When his son got healed at the hour that Jesus had prayed for him, he believed, and his whole household or oikos. The royal official introduced all his family members, servants, and members of his oikos to Jesus.

(John 4:46) "He came therefore again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain royal official, whose son was sick at Capernaum." (51-53) "And as he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living. {52} So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. They said therefore to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." {53} So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"; and he himself believed, and his whole household (oikos)."

The Bible is full of oikos evangelism. In Acts 10, Cornelius and his household (oikos) got saved. In Acts 16, Paul was in Philippi and he met a woman named Lydia. Paul shared the gospel with her and she and her household (oikos) all got saved and baptized. Later in that chapter, Paul and Silas were in prison. God caused an earthquake and the shackles all came off and the doors all opened. The jailer was about to take his life but Paul called out to him not to do that. The jailer said to them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They shared with him that he must believe in the Lord Jesus and he will be saved, he and his household. The jailer took them to his home, washed their wounds, and he and his household (oikos) all got baptized.

Relational evangelism is reaching out to the people in your life and sharing Jesus with them in a natural way. The people in your life include those in your family (in your house), those in your neighborhood, those at your workplace, and those in your play place. But, it would also include people that you meet and see at the grocery store or other places. We are to reach out to the people that God has brought into our lives.

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### **Small Group Break-Out**

**Sharing:** Share one thing that you learned tonight that stood out, or one thing that you can apply in your own life.

**Prayer:** Pray for one person in your family or in your "oikos" that is not a Christian. Pray for the CCA Relational Evangelism training to bear much fruit.

**Scripture Memory Assignment For Session 1:** Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 4:19