

# Cultivate, Stimulate, and Recognize Opportunities

Lesson I: Conversational Evangelism

➤ = next PowerPoint Slide

- **Intro:** 3<sup>rd</sup> series on evangelism in a little over a year - congregation expressed interest when came here
- **- 1<sup>st</sup> series:**
  - #1 **Be a Good Neighbor:** paradigm of personal work and evangelism, love, good neighbor
  - - #2 **Don't Worry, Just Do It:** God equips Christians to work, trust Him and yourself, just go it
  - - #3 **What Works Today:** in busy urbanized society, make friends and bring them to church
  - 2 - **chart:** What's responsible for bring people to Christ and church
  - - #4 **Good Personal Workers are Good Stewards:** management of personal resources (time, \$, energy, possessions, health)
- **- 2<sup>nd</sup> series:**
  - #1 **A List of Prospects:** make a list of people you may be able to reach, help stay in priorities
    - **this series: cultivating, stimulating, and recognizing those who may be interested**
  - - #2 **Build Bridges:** build relations to have opportunities to communicate Christ and gospel
  - - #3 **Let the Traffic Flow, Share the Gospel:** communicate the message of Christ
    - **this series: how to communicate and teach in everyday conversation**
  - - #4 **A Lesson You Can Share:** the lesson I use to teach Christ
- 3<sup>rd</sup> series (this one): conversational evangelism
  - #1 **Cultivate, Stimulate, and Recognize Opportunities**
- **What is conversational evangelism?**
  - sharing God's word with people in **everyday conversation**, rather than in a formal class
    - normally, conversations lead to home study or attending church, leads to obedience to Christ
    - rarely, lead to obedience without home study and visiting at church
  - **illus.: Pam and friend met 2 boys at bowling alley**, came to church the next day, continued to come and visit at house, in a few weeks studied, one obeyed gospel that day and other a few weeks later
- **Pray about it**
  - pray, ask God:
    - to use you to bring people to Christ through the gospel
      - **illus.: hymn, Have Thine Own Way Lord #146**
    - to lead you to people who want to talk about God, gospel, salvation, church
    - help you be wise, gracious, bold, not afraid — have the right words, be effective worker, be a good friend
  - - **illus.: Paul — if Paul needed prayer, we do too**
    - **Col. 4:2-4** God open door and help speak
  - - **Eph. 6:19-20** speak, open mouth, boldly, as ought

- **Be the world's Bible — be faithful and strong - example of God's word, Christian life - living testimony**
  - **Matt. 5:14-16** light of the world
    - **illus.:** hymn, **The World's Bible** #460
  - **1 Pet. 3:15** answer other people's questions
    - **no pressure reputation:** have a reputation in your community (work, school, neighborhood, church) of no pressure
      - **illus.:** one of the greatest compliments - no pressure teacher
    - **share your faith with everyone you contact**, just talk about yourself and what you believe
      - **be an open book:** share spiritual failures and successes — **illus.:** Paul
      - **common mistake:** just share the good, make people think we are perfect, people not think we can relate to them and teach them and go elsewhere to learn about God
  
- **Recognize opportunities to talk about God, salvation, and church.**
  - **Eph. 5:16** make the best of your time
    - don't waste time, when someone send a cue that there interested in talking about spiritual things, jump on it
- **- if we recognize all the opportunities that come our way**, we'd spend a lot more time engaged in conversational evangelism — **many people want to talk about religion, sending cues, we don't pick up on**
  - **illus.:** **wasted opportunity** — how many times has someone asked you where you go to church, and you didn't follow-up
    - didn't ask where they go to church
    - didn't ask how they like where they go to church
    - didn't tell them about our congregation
    - didn't ask if they wanted to come to church with you
  
- **- tips:**
  - **tip #1: if someone says the word church**, followup and walk in the open door
    - ask about where they're going to church, volunteer info about our congregation, ask what they like and dislike
    - if they tell you about a bad experience with a church, ask questions and discuss, explain why we don;t have those problems (e.g., denominations)
  - **tip #2: if someone starts a conversation regarding a moral or religious issue**, reference the Bible (specific passages when possible) to substantiate your position
    - shows they you know the Bible and dedicated to it - gives you credibility
    - if they have a Bible question or want to discuss Bible, may come to you
  - **tip #3: you can use any conversation that last longer than a few minutes** to springboard to a conversation regarding God, church, salvation — religion has everything to do with every topic
    - **illus.:** **when talking about auto racing**, a often mention that I don't watch live because of the rampant immorality at the track and because Sunday races conflict with church
  - **tip #4: whenever talking about a religious topic, ask where they're going to church and about their church** - use this to talk about Christ's church and our congregation
    - **illus.:** **Are you going to church anywhere right now?** - explain why word this way, not offensive
    - **illus.:** **How are things at your church?** - if know they're going somewhere now - maybe not satisfied
    - **illus.:** **If you're ever looking for a church, I like to invite you to come with me.** - door open for future, chance to tell about positives of our congregation
  
- **- homework: go throughout day, try to recognize as many opportunities as possible, think about what could**

do to share gospel — soon, you will start doing it

➤ **Stimulate spiritual conversations**

- **illus.:** like fishing, throw out a line, see if someone bites

- **how:** send the cues to others that you're trying to pickup (above)

- **share your faith:** talk about yourself, beliefs, salvation, church — **be yourself, natural**

➤ - **tips:**

- **tip #1: use spiritual vocabulary: words like church, God, Jesus, salvation, etc.**

- sends out cues you are willing to talk about spiritual things

- if someone takes up the conversation, run with it (tips previous point)

➤ - **tip #2: talk about moral and religious issues, using the Bible to substantiate your position**

- shows they you know the Bible and dedicated to it - gives you credibility

- if someone takes up the conversation, run with it (tips previous point)

- **illus.:** Beth's discussion with Jeff, leading to his conversion and Shelly's conversion (attached)

➤ - **tip #3: talk about God in relation to as many topic as you can** to springboard to a conversation regarding God, church, salvation — religion has everything to do with every topic

- if someone takes up the conversation, run with it (tips previous point)

➤ - **tip #4: tell everyone you can about Jesus' church, our congregation, and invite them**

- if someone takes up the conversation, run with it (tips previous point)

➤ - **homework: be yourself, talk about spiritual things all the time, see how many people pick up the conversation - invite everyone you can to church**

➤ **Summary / Inv.**

- **summary:**

- make the best of your time

- be prayerful regarding evangelism and personal work

- talk about God and share the gospel in everyday life / everyday conversations

- pick up on signals people send when they're willing to talk about spiritual things

- send out signals that you are willing to talk about spiritual things, run with the conversation

- **inv.:**