

We Go To Them

Taking the Gospel to Where the People Are

A Guide for Effective Field Evangelism

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

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Shad Williams

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?
and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?
and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

*And how shall they preach except they be sent: as it is written,
How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace,
and bring glad tidings of good things?” Romans 10:13-15*

“Our great object of glorifying God
is to be mainly achieved by the winning of souls.”

Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon 1889, p.358)

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the nameless,
faceless evangelists of the past, present, and future.

Those who, in obedience to the call of God
to the ministry of evangelism, have labored in obscurity,
receiving no human reward other than the knowledge
that they have been faithful to Christ,

It is written in honor of those who,
in the spirit of 2 Timothy 4:5,
have been watchful in all things,
have endured afflictions,
have done the work of an evangelist,
and have made full proof of their ministry.

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INTRODUCTION

Shad and Sheila Williams - A Brief Personal History

Shad and Sheila Williams were both saved in July, 1968. Rev. Don Milam, then pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, came to visit them three times in their home. He was a faithful witness for Christ and had spent ten years as an itinerant evangelist, seeing thousands of people saved. Finally, as a result of his faithful and persistent efforts, they both received Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Their lives were changed radically and forever.

At the time they were saved, Shad and Sheila had been married for fifteen months (April 2, 1967). He was twenty-one years old and she was twenty. For three years, Shad had been deeply involved in the music business as a guitar player and lead singer in a rock band. Sheila had abandoned her college career and joined Shad in that life. She had attended church while growing up but had never been saved. Shad had only gone to church for a short time when he was around twelve years old. In spite of their different backgrounds, they were both far away from God and, at that point in their lives, had no interest at all in spiritual things. But, that all changed drastically for them in that summer of 1968 after praying to receive Christ. Shad made the decision first on July 7, and then Sheila followed a few weeks later. But, once the decision was made, and the change came in their lives, they knew beyond any doubt that they were to spend the rest of their lives leading other people to Christ. The very instant that Jesus came into their hearts, an overwhelming drive to see other people saved came with it. They did not understand the inner compelling at first, and did not know exactly what to do with it, but it was there, and it was inescapable. They became intensely aware that their family and friends were, like they had been, separated from God.

Shad says, "We didn't know at first, of course, what an 'evangelist' was or the meaning of 'evangelism'. We didn't know how to preach the Gospel or even how to explain salvation. But, we knew what had happened to US, so we began by just telling our story to those who would listen. And, to our amazement, people listened and some accepted Christ!"

Shad and Sheila joined pastor Milam's church and were discipled by him and that fellowship for three years. Soon after receiving Christ, it became known around the city that the "rock music guy" and his wife had been saved, and God began opening doors of opportunity for them to share their testimony - mostly in church settings at first. But, it soon became very apparent to them that there were multitudes beyond those walls that were not saved and were not being reached. Even though they continued to minister in churches, their focus was soon turned to those who would never come to a church or any other kind of Christian event. It did not take long for them to become convinced that the "we go to them" approach was the best way to reach people for Jesus. It became clear to them that it was necessary to "take the Gospel to where the people are."

Five months after Shad was saved, he entered Bible College in Memphis, Tennessee, where he met a young preacher named Michael Pearl. Mike had a great zeal for evangelism and soul winning, especially reaching people on the streets and in public places. He was a gifted young evangelist, and Shad began to learn from him how to preach the simple Gospel. Shad and Sheila teamed up with Mike going to the streets, to parks, and to shopping centers, anywhere and everywhere they could find or create a crowd. They also went to high schools, college campuses, jails, and any other place that would let them in. They did not realize it at the time, but God had put them in the school of Field Evangelism, learning through the best way possible; on the job training. Over the first five years Shad and Sheila preached in hundreds of evangelistic events and saw thousands of people saved.

In June 1973, after graduating from Union University in Jackson, TN, Shad joined the staff of a small church in Memphis that was led by a young pastor (Dr. W. Wayne Allen) who also had a great heart for soul winning and evangelism. His attitude was to do anything and everything to bring people to Christ. Therefore, he was willing to give Shad and Sheila free reign to train the people, especially young people, in soul winning and then take them to the streets. So, there in that context, they continued taking the Gospel to where the people are. And, as a result, the church greatly benefited.

In June 1975, Dr. Allen accepted an invitation to take a group from the church to Tanzania and Kenya on a mission project. Shad says, “Sheila and I were invited to be part of that group. We had no idea how drastically the course of our life was about to change. One afternoon, standing on a hillside in Mbeya, Tanzania, I heard God speak into my heart, “Go home, resign the church, and go into international evangelism.” Two days later, Sheila confirmed she had heard the Lord say the same thing. So, it was settled. It was a transition and a process, but it had very definitely begun. The call was reconfirmed during early morning times with God in the summer of 1976, and on September 5, 1977, we launched into the ministry we are in today. Now, after more than 40 years of international evangelistic ministry, I can truly say it has been an amazing journey of taking the Gospel to where the people are.”

**Shad Williams Evangelistic Association
and Global Field Evangelism**

Origin of the Term “Field Evangelism”

After starting the ministry in September of 1977, the first project took place in Hong Kong in December. While flying back over the Pacific, the Holy Spirit confirmed to Shad’s heart that the next project would take place in Brazil, even though he had no contacts in that country. But, on January 8, 1978, an unexpected invitation came to do a campaign in Brazil. So, in March, project number two took place in South America, just as God said. The ministry was begun by faith, looking to God alone and making no appeals to men for provision. It grew slowly but steadily, allowing Shad and Sheila time and opportunity to learn to more fully trust God, by faith, and to prepare for a greater life work. Over the next five years, repeated campaigns were conducted in Brazil and Hong Kong, and others were added in Korea, Japan, Haiti, and central Africa. During those years, Shad and Sheila saw only 100,000 people pray to receive Christ, but a foundation was laid for far greater ministry in the days to come. It was at the end of that time (December 1982) that the ministry took on the name *Shad Williams Evangelistic Association*.

In January, 1984, Shad was conducting a campaign in the Philippines, preaching in open-air plazas, high schools, and evening film shows. He recalls, “Every day, we would load up the truck with sound equipment and local team members and head out to do meetings. One morning, as we were doing that, all of a sudden, God revealed His plan for the future of the ministry. I realized that teams all over the world could do that exact same thing every day. God would raise up a fellowship of people around the world, all doing the same type ministry, and preaching the exact same simple Gospel message. At that moment, the name, “Global Field Evangelism”, came into my mind. GLOBAL (world wide), FIELD (going to the people), EVANGELISM (preaching the simple Gospel message).”

Following that project, Shad began using the term *field evangelism* in the ministry newsletters and correspondence. At the same time, the ministry also took on the full name of SWEA/GFE. Within a year, other evangelistic ministries in the USA, as well as in other countries, had begun using the term *field evangelism*. It has now become widely used and is often applied to the ministry of taking the Gospel to where the people are. Along with the term *field evangelism*, SWEA also incorporated the slogan WE GO TO THEM, which is a US registered trademark.

At the time of this writing (2019), SWEA/GFE has conducted 190 international campaigns in the Orient, India, South America, Central America, the Caribbean, the Philippines, and Africa. Millions of miles have been traveled, tens of thousands of evangelistic events have been held, and over 20 million people have prayed to receive Christ.

Shad says, “God has given Sheila and me over fifty years of evangelistic ministry. We have spent more than forty of those years taking the Gospel to the harvest fields around the world. It has been a very fruitful journey, but it is far from over. There is still much to do! On July 20, 1976, while alone with God in the early morning hours, The Holy Spirit drove into my heart the same words spoken of Pharaoh in Romans 9:17, ‘*Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth.*’ Then in March 1980, while watch-

ing a sunset from the northwest shore of Haiti, God spoke the words of John 9:4 into my heart, *'I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; night cometh, when no man can work.'* Today, God's purpose is no less assured than it was forty years ago, the time is no less short, and the world is in no less need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. To this truth may our response always be, 'God, by Your grace, WE GO TO THEM.'

The Material in This Book

In 1986, and again in 2000, Shad and Sheila were invited by The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association to conduct a workshop at the International Conference For Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The workshop contents were printed in "The Calling of an Evangelist" (1986) and in "The Mission of an Evangelist" (2000) - (World Wide Publications). Following the second conference, Shad expanded the material into a manual for training field evangelists around the world. It has been used to train, equip, and encourage hundreds of pastors and evangelists in numerous countries. In 2019, the manual, which is still being used, was expanded into this book. It is the deep desire and fervent prayer of Shad and Sheila Williams that this book will be a blessing and a help to those men and women across the globe, who are endeavoring to do the ministry of front-line "field evangelism." Shad says, "We are grateful to 'Dr. Billy' for extending that invitation to us back there in 1986. Otherwise, the Field Evangelism Manual, and this book, would not exist, and thousands of men and women around the world would never have the opportunity to benefit from its contents."



Shad and Sheila 1994



Shad and Sheila 2019

WE GO TO THEM

TAKING THE GOSPEL TO WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE

A Guide for Effective Field Evangelism
By Shad Williams

A SPECIFIC MODE OF EVANGELISM

Two Ways to Reach People - One at a Time or in Groups

There are two ways to reach people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ: one at a time or by groups; that is, en masse. Every born-again Believer, all over the world, should be doing all he or she can to take advantage of every opportunity to tell lost people about Jesus one-on-one. We should LOOK for open doors of personal witness, and be on alert, be ever sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading for opportunities. We should also have a plan as to how we are going to share the Gospel when the opportunity arises. We know, however, that most Christians hardly ever share the Gospel. But even if they did, even if every Christian alive told an unsaved person about Jesus every day of their life, it would still not be enough to reach the entire world with the message of Christ. There are currently over 7.6 billion people on the planet and two thirds have never heard a clear, relevant presentation of the Gospel. Many have heard "about" Jesus as a historical and religious figure, but few have had a real opportunity to be saved. The United Nations predicts that by 2100, the population will be 11.2 billion. It increases by 10,000 every hour. So even if every child of God participated daily in the ministry of one-on-one personal evangelism, it would still be necessary to add the ministry of mass evangelism in order to reach the world for Christ while the present population is still alive. Even with the combination, it is a daunting task. According to the current global mortality rates, over 80% of the people alive today will be in eternity, with or without Jesus, in the next fifty years. Across the globe, over 150,000 people die every day. NOW is the time to preach the Gospel, because time is running out for those who need to hear the message of hope, as well as for those of us who are called to proclaim it. We must face the reality that without mass evangelism we will never reach the world for Christ.

Mass Evangelism - They Come or We Go?

Once we accept the necessity of mass evangelism, we need to see there are two ways to go about it. There are two philosophies and two methodologies for reaching people by groups. First, there is the kind where the **people come** to the preacher to hear the message, such as in a crusade, Christian concert, or church service. Second, is the kind where the **preacher goes** to the people, where they are already gathered. In this book we are going to compare both, but we're going to give most of our focus and attention to the second kind, which we call "**we go to them**" or "**field**" evangelism. We are going to look at how to go into the field to gather the harvest rather than asking the harvest to come to us. The "going to them" can be done along two lines - in public places, such as street meetings, open-air markets, and transportation centers; or in institutions, such as schools, colleges, prisons, and hospitals. It doesn't require any more anointing on the part of the evangelist to do field evangelism, but it will require a different type of evangelistic skill, an adjustment in his mentality, a different methodology, and a specially structured and very simple message. If the preacher is only accustomed to using the "they come to me" approach, then field evangelism will be a new experience for him. It will, however, be a rewarding one.

The Ministry of Evangelism and the Evangelist

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." 2 Timothy 4:5

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4: 18,19

The words "evangelist" and "evangelism", as used by the modern-day church, have become very broad and vague catch-all terms. They are often mistakenly applied to everyone and everything that falls within the scope of

itinerant, non-pastoral ministry. An evangelist is not a revivalist or conference speaker, he is a man who is specially gifted for, and called to, the specialized ministry of proclaiming the simple Gospel to the unsaved. Having a cloudy, confused idea of exactly what the evangelist is, and how his ministry operates within the body of Christ, prevents the church from being able to identify a real God-called evangelist and from utilizing his gift and ministry to the building of the church locally and worldwide. Many pastors view the ministry of the evangelist as threatening and competitive, or even irrelevant, because they do not understand the nature of the evangelist's position and ministry.

Misunderstanding and misapplication of terms becomes confusing to the church and undermines the cause of Christ, which is the building of God's kingdom in this earth. To understand exactly what an evangelist is, and what is his God-given ministry, it is helpful to observe that there are basically two categories of Christian ministry or two basic tasks to be performed by the church. First, there is the making of converts through **EVANGELISM**: winning the lost, bringing people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the work of **regeneration**. Secondly, there is the task and responsibility of **DISCIPLESHIP**: nurturing newborn babes in Christ into mature, reproducing believers who are integrated into the on-going ministry and fellowship of a local church, cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the work of **sanctification**. Anyone who has been a Christian, and served the Lord for even a short time, will quickly recognize that these categories of ministry are not totally segregated. They overlap a great deal in that every believer, every servant of God, will participate in both evangelism and discipleship to some degree. Yet, even though this is true, there are still clear lines drawn by God when it comes to a person's gift, calling, and motivation.

Dr. Stephen Olford had this to say about the evangelist, "The gift of the evangelist is a spiritual endowment. When Christ gave some to be evangelists; He was imparting a distinctive and dynamic gift. Without a clear understanding of this fact, much confusion and frustration can be engendered in people's minds and hearts. Evangelism is the harvesting gift. Only a small percentage of a local church possess this gift. It is bestowed by the Spirit at conversion.

The gift is revealed by the Spirit through inward conviction (Romans 8:14) and outward confirmation (Acts 13:1-4; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6,7).” (Douglas 1984, p.143,144)

The Nature of the Evangelist and His Relationship to the Church

“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.” 1 Corinthians 9:16

The word *evangelist* is used only three times in the New Testament. In Acts 21:8, Phillip is called “*the evangelist*”. In 2 Timothy 4:5, Paul instructs Timothy to “*do the work of an evangelist*”. In Ephesians 4:11 the evangelist is designated as a special class of minister. The Greek word for evangelist is *euangelistes*, meaning “one who brings good news”. It comes from three other words: *euangelizo* (to announce good news), *euangelion* (good news or gospel), and *angelos* (messenger). Any Christian can DO the work of an evangelist, in its broad sense, such as Pastor Timothy. But a person who IS an evangelist, in the Ephesians 4:11 sense, is one who is specially called of God, for the singular specific task of going from place to place announcing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to those who have not heard it. He is specially gifted and anointed by God for the carrying out of such ministry.

An evangelist is a man who has been, in the words of Paul, “*Set apart for the gospel*” Romans 1:1. In the words of Dr. Billy Graham, “An evangelist is a person with a special gift and special calling from the Holy Spirit to announce the good news of the gospel. It is a gift of God. It cannot be manufactured, organized, or manipulated. It is a calling from God.” (Douglas 1984, p.16)

The primary concern and motivation in the life and ministry of a truly God-called evangelist will always be to preach the Gospel message and to win the lost. As 1 Corinthians 9:16 puts it, he is driven by a “compulsion” from God. To him, evangelism will always be the most important aspect of ministry. It will be the driving force of his life. He is happiest and most comfortable preaching the simple Gospel to the unsaved. Reaching the lost and “drawing the net” gives him more fulfillment and gratification than anything else. He

may teach and may perform some pastoral duties, and he may do it well, but his first love and desire is evangelism. His ministry definitely belongs in category one of the two basic functions of the church. He may be concerned about both evangelism and discipleship, but he will ultimately find himself giving more thought, time, and energy to evangelism. He cannot help it; that is the way God made him.

My wife, Sheila, and I were having lunch with Dr. Stephen Olford one day, and I asked him a question that had been bothering me. I told him, “Brother Stephen, when I preach evangelism out there in Africa in a market, or off the back of a truck in Brazil, or even somewhere here in America, I’m relaxed and feel comfortable in what I’m doing. But, when I have to preach a message to Christians in a church, I feel nervous and out of place. Why do you think that is?” Dr. Olford started laughing. I said, “Why are you laughing, brother?” He said, “Because the answer is so simple; You’re an evangelist, brother.” He went on to say, “You’ll always be more at ease preaching the Gospel, because THAT is what God has called you to do.”

Sadly, the evangelist and his ministry are sometimes misunderstood, and even criticized, by those who do not possess his gift and calling. He may be accused of being “overly concerned about numbers” and “not concerned enough about discipleship and follow-up”. Some will say, “He is not really committed to this field, because he did not stay very long.” But the evangelist is not a missionary, in the sense that he localizes his ministry to one place. His ministry is itinerant. Dr. Graham wrote, “An evangelist is called in scripture: an ambassador, a proclaimer, an advocate, an announcer of the good news. One of the greatest needs today is for the church throughout the world to recognize and recover the legitimacy and importance of the gift and calling of the evangelist.” (Douglas 1984, p.16)

The calling of the evangelist is to the lost. He sees every person as a prospect for salvation and every crowd of people as a potential audience. The evangelist will always tend to judge his own ministry on the basis of quantity, whereas the pastor or teacher leans more toward concern for quality. But, if the evangelist is a spirit-filled man of God, then his focus with numbers of

people reached will not be born of ego or pride but from a sense of urgency created in him by an acute realization of vast need and limited time. The evangelist tends to view the world on a broader scope and feels more intensely the need to reach the lost. He tends to see the need of the masses. The pastor-teacher, on the other hand, tends to have a more localized vision, seeing people more individually and caring for their growth. They are concerned primarily with maturing people into strong believers who are integrated into the ongoing fellowship and ministry of a local worshipping assembly. Again, the nature of the evangelist's ministry is itinerant. He, by virtue of his calling, moves from place to place, sometimes making his work appear to be short-term. Because of this, the pastor, teacher, and permanently stationed missionary may question the evangelist's level of commitment. The evangelist, on the other hand, may question the pastor's zeal for souls, because he works in one place and does not place a higher emphasis on seeing people saved.

Who, then, has the correct ministry or the most important work? They both do. The Holy Spirit is equally concerned about evangelism and discipleship. He disperses that concern and ministry separately, however, through His selected ministers: some to "do the work of an evangelist" (II Timothy 4:5) and some to work as pastors and teachers in "the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12). God calls some to do one job and some to do another. But, they are both called by God, and neither should allow Satan to divide them into separate camps through envy, jealousy, and competition. They should work together as a team serving the one Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

In reality, the ministries (functions) of evangelism and discipleship cannot be separated, because in the process of becoming a disciple of Christ, conversion is the first step, and conversion cannot take place without evangelism. In Matthew 28:18, Jesus said to "Go ye therefore and , teach all nations..." The word "disciple" means a learner, a pupil, an imitator. A pupil cannot learn or imitate his teacher without being enrolled in school. Conversion, through evangelism, is the enrollment process. It does not take very long. Discipleship is the learning process, the maturing process, and it takes a lifetime. It doesn't

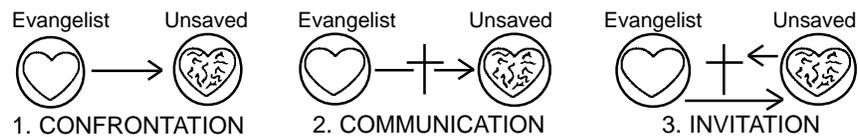
take long to be born, but it takes years to grow to adulthood, both physically and spiritually. The evangelist's job is to aid in the birthing process. The church's job is to help the baby to grow.

It has been said that the evangelist is like a stick of dynamite exploding in a mountain and scattering the individual stones. His job is to blow up the mountain. When he is finished, the pastor or teacher takes over. Their job is that of a builder. They take the individual stones and build them into the house, i.e. the local church. While they are building, the evangelist moves on to another mountain. The evangelist's ministry is not complete without the pastor and teacher, and their ministry will not grow without the evangelist. In God's scheme of things, they compliment and depend on each other. It would profit every pastor and local church to identify an evangelist, be supportive of him, and, from time to time, utilize his ministry through that local church to stimulate growth and add life to the church. Nothing creates more joy or excitement in a family than new birth. Also, it would profit the evangelist, and God's kingdom, to always work in conjunction with a pastor and local congregation, if at all possible. New-born babies must be parented and fed in order to grow and thrive. It is a wonderful and joyous occasion when a baby is born into a family, but rejoicing can turn to sorrow if that baby suffers from lack of care and nutrition. The evangelist needs to do everything in his power to make sure new babes in Christ become part of a church family where they can receive proper food and care. But, the church should do all it can to help him. The ultimate goal of the evangelist AND the pastor/teacher should be to produce mature disciples of Jesus. In order for this to happen, they MUST work TOGETHER. The pastor/teacher does not need the evangelist's help to feed the flock he already has, but he does need his help in adding to the flock. And, the evangelist doesn't need the pastor's help in birthing more babies, but he does need his help in feeding them and caring for their growth. The building of, and building up of, the kingdom of God is a TEAM effort, not a one man show, and that team has multiple players. They all have their own positions to play and their own individual functions to perform. In order for the team to compete and win, each player must do his job to the best of his ability. He

should not criticize his teammates or compete with them. Rather, he should compete with the opposing team. God's team is called "The Church." The opposing team is the devil and his host of demons. The evangelist, the pastor, the teacher, the missionary, the deacon, the elder, and the individual Christian are all members of God's church, God's family, God's team. If we unite together in love and harmony, in opposition against satan and his forces, then the gates of hell will not stand against us.

EVANGELISM IS A THREE-STEP PROCESS

1. CONFRONTATION 2. COMMUNICATION 3. INVITATION Preceded by Preparation - Followed by Preservation



In 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul told Timothy to *“do the work of an evangelist”*. But what IS the work of the evangelist? Furthermore, what is evangelism or evangelizing?

Evangelism is a three step process whereby a person, or a group of people, is brought to a definite point of decision by hearing a clear, understandable presentation of the Gospel, which calls for a verdict and gives an opportunity for the person to act upon what he has heard.

If the end result of the process is positive, the hearer will be left with a sure confidence that he is going to heaven and is united with God through Jesus Christ. On the other hand, if it is negative, he will be left with the sure knowledge that he is separated from God by sin and, by his own choosing, is destined for hell. In either case, he should know for sure what his eternal destiny is and why. He should be left with no confusion. **Evangelism does not mean conversion**. Many people have been evangelized that are not yet converted. To be “evangelized” means that a person has received the clear Gospel message, he has understood it well enough to make a rational decision one way or the

other, and he understands what his eternal destiny is, based upon his decision. If he chooses to receive salvation as a free gift through Jesus Christ, he is “converted.” If he doesn’t, he is not. The important thing is that they receive enough information with which to make a decision, one way or the other, and to be sure, based on the correct information. To repeat: evangelism is the process of presenting the simple Gospel to a target population of unsaved people. It is the activity of the evangelist, who is a messenger called by God, to deliver the good news to those who have not yet heard it. The evangelist is the “mailman.” His job is to simply deliver the mail, the good news of Jesus. It is not his job or responsibility to make the recipient respond. That is up to God. The evangelist’s job is not to save or convert someone; he does not have the power to do that. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. The evangelist can help a person come to a point of decision by means of clear instruction, but he cannot cause a person to be born again. *“No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”* (John 6:44) His ultimate hope and goal is to bring the hearer to a definite point of decision to receive Christ. In order for this to happen, however, three things must take place.

1. The person with the message must **make contact** with the person who does not yet have it.
2. The message must be presented **clearly and relevantly**, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in a manner that the hearer will understand.
3. The hearer must have an **opportunity to respond**, to make a decision one way or the other, based upon the information he has received.

He cannot make a decision based upon information he doesn’t have, and he will never have it unless some one takes it to him. *“How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”* (Romans 10:14) Evangelism is, therefore, a **process** which involves three consecutive steps or stages.

The first step is **CONFRONTATION**. The person with the message (the evangelist) must make contact with, he must *confront*, the person who has not yet heard it. Jesus told Peter that He would make him a “fisher of men”. Well,

how does a person catch a fish? Can you sit in your house with your fishing pole and bait and expect to catch a fish? You say, no that is ridiculous. Yes it is. But it is just as absurd to think that we can sit in our church and catch men. We cannot. We must go out to where they are. Just as the fisherman must go to the water, the evangelist must go into the highways and hedges of the world. Jesus said to Peter in Luke 5:4 to *“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.”* Peter could catch nothing just sitting in a boat occupying himself with washing nets. He had to do three things: 1. Go to the fish, 2. Put in the net, and 3. Expect results, by faith. He said in Luke 14:23 *“Go into the highways and the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”* But just going to the fish is not enough.

Then there is the second step of **COMMUNICATION**. In order to “catch” him we must *communicate* with him. How do you communicate with a fish? You must put something on the hook that appeals to him. There must be some bait, something that is attractive to the fish. We must get his attention. Then, after we have his attention, we must present the message, simply, clearly, briefly, compassionately, and relevantly. But that is not the end of the process.

There is one final step, the **INVITATION**, and it is here that so many preachers fall short. They make a good effort in getting in contact with the lost, and they even do a good job presenting the Gospel message. But that is where it ends, because they do not know how to give the invitation, how to actually pull on the line or draw the net. It is a delicate process and requires skill and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit’s leading. Once the person has heard the Gospel and has fully understood it, then he must have an opportunity to respond. The Gospel always demands a verdict, a response. Once the fish has taken the bait, and the hook is in his mouth, we must be very careful and pull on the line at just the right instant and in just the right way. The invitation is delicate and must be handled correctly or the fish will get away. In mass evangelism, the evangelist is confronting and communicating with many fish at one time, and he is pulling on many hooks at one time as well. He must learn to do it correctly.



School in India 2002



Dancing to draw a crowd



Audience at the Jesus Film



Sports Evangelism



Ferry Boat landing in Brazil 1984



School in the Philippines 1984



Haiti street meeting 1987



Set up and ready to preach



Drama team at a school in Brazil



School in S Korea 1988



School in Tanzania



School in central Kenya



Sheila drawing Clean Heart - Kenya, 1993



School in Tanzania



School in western Kenya



School in northwestern Tanzania



School in north central Tanzania



Bus station in Nairobi, Kenya



Village meeting in Malawi

There is No Substitute for the Preacher

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” 1 Corinthians 1:21

In our discussion on the confrontation stage of the evangelism process, let us begin by facing the fact right up front that there is **no substitute** for the Gospel preacher or for verbally preaching the Gospel. God clearly sets forth in His Word that He has only one way of reaching the lost. 1 Corinthians: 21b says *“that it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* The word *preaching* in this verse means *proclamation*, that is, “to herald as a public crier.” The word *preach* or *preaching* is used approximately 150 times in the New Testament, and every time it is used, it is in reference to proclaiming the message of salvation. In at least 50 instances, the words *preach* and *Gospel* are used in the same verse. And, in nearly every other instance, the word *preach* refers to the Gospel directly or to an aspect of it. God intends for the Gospel to be delivered by preaching. There is no other form of communicating the Gospel message, that is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, like the act of proclaiming the Gospel to people verbally, face to face.

Even with the advances in communication and technology, there are still hundreds of millions of people who will never hear the Gospel unless some one takes the initiative to go out to where they are and verbally tell them. All over the world there are millions of people who don't have a television, don't have access to the internet, and have never even seen a computer. In fact there are millions who do not even have a radio. There are still many people in the world who do not know how to read. The preacher, the proclaimer, the public crier, the evangelist, will **never** be unnecessary or outdated. The only question to be answered is, how should he go about performing his vital task?

Two Philosophies - Two Approaches

As we said, there are two basic philosophies or approaches in mass evangelism, two ways to arrange for the messenger to make contact with groups of

unsaved people. There is the “**they come to me**” approach, commonly referred to as **crusade** evangelism, and there is the “**we go to them**” approach, which we call **field** evangelism. Is one right and the other wrong? No, they are both right in their proper context. Often, they can and should be used together in order to produce a more complete work and make an even greater impact in a community. It should not be reduced to an either/or issue. In some cultures and situations, the “they come to me” approach is the only option available for mass evangelism, because the population cannot be accessed any other way. In some, such as the rural country side of central Africa, it is only possible to do field evangelism, because logistics make it impossible to get people to a crusade. And, in other places, it is possible to do both.

CRUSADE EVANGELISM – “THEY COME TO ME”

Before discussing field evangelism as a way of confronting the masses with the Gospel, we are going to look first at a method that has been used effectively for centuries in bringing multitudes to Christ: crusade evangelism.

The term *crusade* can be used to describe a variety of events, ranging in size from a city-wide event held in a stadium to a single church meeting held on the church grounds. But regardless of the size of the event, the message to the unsaved public is the same; you come here to my location, at an appointed time, and I will tell you the Good News. The problem with this approach is, there are hundreds of millions of people who, for various reasons (religious, cultural, logistical, psychological) *will not* or *cannot* attend organized Gospel events. For instance, the population of India is 85% Hindu and 11% Muslim. So, 96% of one billion people have already decided they are not coming, even before they are asked. In spite of this fact, however, the crusade model for mass evangelism is the most preferred, and most widely used, by the church world-wide. There are obvious reasons why. In a “they come to me” event, the preacher has an understanding with the audience which makes him more comfortable. By virtue of the fact that they have come, they have agreed to listen to the presentation for a pre-set period of time. Therefore, the evangelist is not under pressure to “hold” the audience, as he often is in a field evangelism event. He

also has established credibility resulting from media exposure and advertising. In short, it is easier. It's not easier in the sense of spiritual warfare in the battle for souls, but easier in the sense of order and audience attention. The positive advantages with the crusade model include the following:

1. Attention Easier to Gain

Once the crowd is assembled in the selected location, the preacher will be speaking to people who have voluntarily agreed to listen to the message. They have placed themselves in "his territory", so to speak. Therefore, keeping the attention of the audience is much easier than it is in field evangelism.

2. Prior Cultivation

It is likely that the listeners may have already been spiritually cultivated, to some degree, by contact with the person who brought them, through advertising for the crusade, etc.

3. Conducive Atmosphere

The atmosphere is more conducive to preaching the gospel, because the mood is set by music, prayer, and the presence of many believers. The environment is controlled. The preacher has an allotted amount of time to speak and can be reasonably sure that everyone will stay for the entire message and invitation.

4. More Comfortable Environment

Usually the audience is seated, thus making them more comfortable and more attentive. There are fewer distractions than there would be in an open, public space

5. Automatic Credibility

The event has credibility created by publicity and media exposure of the evangelist. This is helpful in attracting a broad section of the population

6. Banner of Christ

A large event lifts high the banner of the Christian message in the city and creates a reason, or an opportunity, from which conversations can take place about the Gospel.

7. More Local Church Involvement

A large crusade encourages and more easily elicits the involvement of local churches. It gives them a reason and opportunity to get started doing what they should be doing already. A large, unified event helps the individual local churches feel they are part of something meaningful for the cause of Christ

8. Follow-up of Converts is Easier

A “crusade” type event (festival, concert, etc.) also lends itself better to collecting information from new converts in an organized fashion, simply because the environment is more controlled.

But the crusade type event is also much more likely to require a great deal of planning, organization, personnel, equipment, and money, all of which makes doing such an event prohibitive for most evangelists. Unfortunately, so many of us have been so locked into the “they come to me” mentality for so long, we cannot envision doing it any other way. Added to that, the “we go to them” method is used so seldom, or so incorrectly, it is usually automatically assumed that it won’t work. So often, if we cannot do a successful “they come to me” event, then we just don’t do anything at all. How many evangelists, and churches, around the world are waiting until they have enough money, enough equipment, enough personnel, and enough preparation before attempting to reach out to the lost world around them?

I remember a pastor in Malawi who attended one of our field evangelism schools. He told me, “I have walked past a market place near my church every day for five years, and I have never one time thought of going out there to preach to the people. I have been waiting for them to come to my church. Now I see that I can go to them, and I am going.” On another occasion I took a pastor from Hyderabad, India out with me to preach in some villages. At the close of the day, after seeing hundreds of people come to Jesus, he said, “I have lived here for forty years and have never thought of going out to those villages, but now I am going to go.” Another pastor in the Philippines helped me organize open-air meetings in city plazas in his area of the island. Thousands came to Jesus and afterwards he said, “We, as a single church, never dreamed

we could do this ourselves.” Friends, we do not have to wait. There is another way and we can do it NOW. It is called **Field Evangelism**.

Now, I want to be clear. I am not suggesting that crusade evangelism should not be used. Far from it. There are some places in the world where it is the only method that can be used. What I am saying is that we should not limit ourselves to that one method. Wherever possible, we should go beyond the confines of the “they come to me” event, and reach out to those who cannot or will not attend, for whatever reason. I promise you, if you will ask God to show you how the “we go to them” approach can be applied where you are, He will do it.

Before talking about field evangelism, I want to mention a type of event that looks somewhat like a crusade, but is actually a “we go to them” event. It is a modern day variation of a crusade called a *festival*. A crusade event is structured somewhat like a church service and usually lasts only a couple of hours. A festival ranges in length from a few hours to all day. It may resemble an all day music concert. But, there may be all sorts of attractions that are used to draw people into the festival ground. In reality, the festival is just a large open-air meeting, but it involves a lot more planning and advertising. It is a cross between “they come” and “we go.” In our ministry we sometimes use a festival in order to reach people who cannot be reached with just small open air meetings or film shows. Here is an example.

Years ago, we used to conduct street meetings all over Mathare and other slums in Nairobi, Kenya. But, over time, Mathare slum (population 500,000) became so congested, there were no longer places to park a vehicle and mount a sound system. So, the idea came to us to get in an open field just outside the slum, put up a stage, and invite the slum dwellers to come. We did that by means of handbills, posters, and a sound truck. Yes they had to “come to us,” but it was a very short distance. They did not have to take a bus downtown to a stadium. We incorporated the help of a few well known musicians, and the result was huge. We still use this festival-type event, but only when there is no other way. The question we should always ask is, “What is the fastest, most effective, and least expensive way to reach the people in this area?” Festivals

and crusades are fun and exciting, but if a field evangelism event is possible, it is always the least expensive and easiest option.

FIELD EVANGELISM – “WE GO TO THEM”

Taking the Gospel to Where the People Are

“We ought actually to go out into the streets and lanes and highways, for there are people whom we shall never reach unless we pursue them into their own domains. The sportsman must not stop at home and wait for the birds to come and be shot at. Neither must fishermen throw their nets inside their boats and hope to take many fish. Traders go to the markets, they follow their customers and go out after business if it will not come to them; and so must we.”

Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon 1889, p.268)

“I believe I never was more accepting to my master than when I was standing to teach those hearers in the open fields. I now preach to ten times more people than I would had I been confined to the churches.”

George Whitfield (Whitfield 1998, p.216)

“Therefore disputed He in the synagogue with the Jews, and the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with Him.” Acts 17:17

*“Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named lest I should build upon another man’s foundation:
But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see:
and they that have not heard shall understand.” Romans 15:20,21*

The term *field evangelism* can be applied to any form of outreach to the unsaved masses that employs the “we go to them” approach. Crusade evangelism says to the public, “I am in my place and I am asking people to come here so I can preach to them”, which is fine if they will come. Field evangelism says, “You are in your place and I am coming there to preach to you.” It is going out to where the grass-roots population meets together in the course of their daily

life. It reaches those who are, for the most part, unreachable by means of traditional “they come to us” events. It goes to villages, beaches, barrios, public parks, slums, inner cities, sporting events and neighborhoods. It goes to prisons, high-rise apartment complexes, schools, hospitals, military camps, refugee camps, and leper colonies. It goes to where people work and play, study and relax, buy and sell. Field evangelism takes the Gospel to those who will not come to it. Field evangelism goes to those who have not heard, and will not hear, unless someone takes the initiative to go to them. Paul said in Romans 15:20-21, *“Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.”* Now let’s look at some of the advantages of this approach.

1. Less Preparation Required

Even though some research, planning, and organization is required, a field evangelism event demands far less preparation than a crusade type event.

2. Scheduling is Easier

Scheduling is very flexible, and the unforeseen need to reschedule does not usually present the evangelistic team with a major problem and loss of money.

3. Crowd Already Exists

Since the evangelist is going to a crowd that already exists, the attendance at the meeting does not depend on advertising, promotion, well-known personalities, or how successful individual believers are in bringing others to the meetings.

4. Higher Percentage of Unsaved

Since the event is not an organized religious gathering, the percentage of unsaved in the audience is likely to be much higher, thus providing the potential for much larger response.

5. Reaches the Unreachable

Field evangelism reaches masses who will never come to an organized religious event.

6. Minimum Finances Required

Field evangelism events require less money since there is no need for the rental of facilities, payment for promotion, advertising and publicity, and no need for transportation costs in getting people to the meeting.

7. Minimum Personnel Required

The event can be conducted by a very small number of people if need be, even just one evangelist.

8. Minimum Equipment Needed

It helps to have an adequate sound system in order to be heard by more people at one time, but it is not absolutely necessary. It can be done with a small loud speaker or no equipment at all.

9. Listeners Are Not Under Pressure

The listeners are not put on the defensive by religious surroundings. They are not threatened, pressured, or repelled by religious symbols.

10. No Pre-Determined Intentions

The event is not reflective or reminiscent of past experiences that the listener may consider negative, and in which he may have said “no” to Christ. He brings no past experience, no guilt, and no pre-determined intentions to the meeting.

11. Easily Repeated by Local Church

Field evangelism events can be easily repeated and duplicated by a single, local church.

12. Church Encouraged to Reach Out

The local church is encouraged to reach out beyond its walls and is usually reinforced for doing so by seeing results that individuals are directly involved in.

“It is no marvel that the devil does not love field preaching: Neither do I; I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, a handsome pulpit. But, where is my zeal if I do not trample all these under foot in order to save one more soul?” John Wesley (Carnock 1938, p.325)

As effective as Field evangelism is, and as many advantages as there are in using it, it should not be viewed as a replacement for any other model of reaching the masses. Rather, it should be seen as an extension of, or an alternative to, other methods. It is simply another very useful, but often overlooked, option to reaching the world for Jesus. I am not suggesting that anyone should stop doing anything. God forbid! We are not doing enough as it is. It would have been a tragedy for Dr. Billy Graham to discontinue his crusades in which so many thousands came to Jesus, or for Franklin Graham or Louis Palau to not have their festivals that reach so many. We also conduct festival type events in situations where it is helpful and necessary. What we need to realize, however, is that we are not going to reach the world by waiting for it to come to us. If they come, fine. But if they won't or can't, then we must go to them. Jesus told Peter to "launch out." (Luke 5:1-11)

Let me illustrate the need for "we go to them" field evangelism by using one city as an example: Lilongwe, Malawi. I have preached in that city and in that country for over twenty years, and I have observed that every year or so, an evangelist from somewhere in the world comes to hold a crusade in the main stadium. Posters and banners are put up everywhere and thousands of people attend. Everyone has a great time and there are a good number of people saved. But the truth is, 90 percent of the people who came had already been exposed to the Gospel, 95 percent of the city chose not to come, and the thousands of people living in villages only a few miles away could not come because they had no way to get there. We don't need to stop having crusades in Lilongwe, but there is an obvious need to extend the reach of the message beyond the stadium walls, to those in the city who WOULD not come and to those in the village who COULD not come. We have been doing this in Malawi and many other countries for over 40 years and the results have been phenomenal.

Now, how do we go about confronting people with the Gospel where they are?

- A. The field evangelist must learn to **plan** and **organize** the event from start to finish.

- B. He must learn how to **gain** and **hold** the attention of the audience.
- C. He must learn to **preach** a simple, clear, relevant message that calls for a verdict; one that demands and elicits an immediate decision.
- D. He must be able to give a clear methodical **invitation**.
- E. He should make every attempt to provide for the **counseling** of new converts.
- F. He should **guide** them into Bible teaching churches, if at all possible.

The effective field evangelist must have seven essential things:

1. Proper Mentality - Right Attitude
2. Positive Mindset - Right Assumption
3. Pure Motive - Right Agenda
4. Pleasing Manner - Right Appearance
5. Proven Method - Right Arrangements
6. Powerful Message - Right Announcement
7. Prayer Meeting - Right Ammunition

1. Confront Them With A Proper Mentality

You Must Go With the *Right Attitude*

*“For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord,
and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” 2 Corinthians 4:5*

As we have observed, there are many aspects of crusade evangelism that contribute to your comfort level, and you will not have them at the bus station, at the open-air market place, in a high school, or in a prison. Instead of the people coming to you and agreeing to sit and listen to you for a certain period of time, you are now going to them - stepping into their world uninvited with no agreement at all. You may sometimes even be viewed as an intruder. You are now asking permission to interrupt what they are doing so that you can give them a message they had no intention of hearing. You must remember that they are not obligated to listen to you. These people have not been cultivated spiritually, and they did not come to this venue to hear some-

thing spiritual. You must also keep in mind that you have no credibility, such as that which is created by advertising, and there is no reason why they should believe what you say. In a crusade the environment is made conducive for proclaiming the Gospel by the use of music, prayer, and the presence of many believers. It is very controlled. But not here. This is different.

When taking the Gospel to the people, you may very likely find an atmosphere of chaos, confusion, and competing noise and activity. In a crusade setting, you begin right away speaking to a group of people who are an audience by virtue of the fact that they are positioned quietly in front of you, in an orderly fashion, and are listening to you. In “we go to them” evangelism, this is not the case and you do not have a pre-determined amount of time to speak. As a field evangelist, your task is to attract the attention of a busy moving crowd, turn them into a stationary listening audience, hold their attention long enough to present the Gospel in its entirety, and then give an invitation. Remember a crowd is not an audience until they are standing still and listening to you. Standing on a street corner, waving your Bible, and screaming at a moving crowd accomplishes nothing. It only makes the Gospel look foolish. There is definitely a right way and wrong way to go about it.

You must never allow yourself to become frustrated or angry if the crowd will not stop or if they do not want to listen to you. You are going into their world, and they owe you nothing. Constantly keep in mind that this is **field** evangelism. And in order to do it, you have to venture outside the safe harbor of the fellowship of your church and your Christian friends. Remember these three important things: 1. This is field evangelism, 2. This is field evangelism, and finally 3, This is field evangelism.

Quite often, the potential difficulties connected to field evangelism create a fear that prevents us from even trying to take the Gospel to the people. It may be unfamiliar territory for you, something you have never tried before. You may feel inexperienced, unqualified, and inadequate. The best way to overcome that obstacle is to just admit you are inexperienced, unqualified, and inadequate - and then do it anyway. You may be afraid you will fail, or they won't listen to you. You may be afraid of being rejected or made to feel

foolish, so you are tempted to not even try. Let me share some things with you that will help you overcome the fear factor.

- A. Remember that fear is from satan and is to be rejected in the Name of Jesus through His shed blood. Satan is a liar, and everything he tells you about this situation is false.
- B. God says, “Fear not”, therefore fear is sin. Confess it, and move forward in faith.
- C. Become as informed and equipped as possible for the task. If possible, work with some one else for a while before venturing out on your own. Ask God to give you a mentor.
- D. Research the location where you intend to conduct the meeting. Learn as much about it as possible. Make careful plans concerning the set up. The more information you have the better you will feel.
- E. Learn your audience. Know as much as possible about them before you proclaim Christ to them. This will give you much greater confidence. It will also make them respond more favorably to you.
- F. Remember you are going in obedience to God, fulfilling the Great Commission. As soon as you open your mouth you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit for the task (Acts 1:8). It is not your job to be a success, just to obey the Father and leave the results to Him.
- G. Arrange for two or more Believers to hold the ropes in prayer during the meeting.
- H. Know your message. The audience is more likely to stay with you, and listen to you, if you can speak with boldness and authority.
- I. Look at the audience through the eyes of Jesus. Remember He died for them. One of the greatest cures for fear in an evangelistic event is a compassionate broken heart.
- J. Do not go alone if it is at all possible. Jesus sent the disciples out in two’s. Go as a group. If you do have to go by yourself, remember you are not alone. Even if you go into a situation with no one else to help you, God is there. You are indwelt by, and filled with, the Holy Spirit. You are encompassed by a “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1).

“The open-air speaker’s calling is as honorable as it is arduous,
as useful as it is laborious. God alone can sustain you in it,
but with Him at your side you will have nothing to fear.
If ten thousand rebels were before you, and a legion of devils
in every one of them, you need not tremble.
More is He that is for you than all they that be against you.”
Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon 1889, p.283)

*“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love,
and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony
of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions
of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us,
and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works,
but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us
in Christ Jesus before the world began” 2 Timothy 1:7-9*

2. Confront Them With A Positive Mindset

You Must Go With the *Right Assumption*

“Let us expect that God is going to use us. Let us have courage and go forward, looking to God to do great things.” DL Moody (Fitt 1901, p.115)

I could have actually included this point under “Proper Mentality”, but I think it is important enough to have its own space. Often, one of the biggest mistakes we make is going to the people with a totally negative mindset. We go with the assumption that they do NOT want to hear about Jesus. We begin our soul-winning effort or event from a position of unbelief, or rather believing the wrong thing. We firmly believe that the people do not want to hear about how to be saved, how to go to heaven, how to have a better life. We believe it, because satan has told us that lie, and we have embraced it as truth. Well, in some cases it is true. There are people who do not want to hear about Christ or anything else to do with God and spiritual things. But, that is not true for everyone. In fact, I have discovered over the years, it is not true for most people. Under point one we talked about overcoming fear. Nothing causes

more fear than making the wrong assumption about the people you are trying to reach. And, nothing helps more to alleviate fear than realizing there are people who DO welcome what you have to say.

What people do NOT want is to be condemned. They do not want to be criticized, berated, and told how bad they are. Remember the words of Jesus in John 3:17, *“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”* What people DO want to hear is a message of love and hope. They want to hear how their problems can be solved and their needs met. If you begin your message with that, you will disarm most of the audience. If you are going to talk about faults and failures, talk about your own and how you found the Solution. Interestingly, there are many people who do not want to be told how bad their sin is, but at the same time, they want to be free from it.

So then, how then do you broach the subject of sin? You do it by telling your audience that you have had many problems and failures in your life; that you have made many mistakes, and that it was because of a serious problem you were born with - a thing called sin, a dirty heart. Then you point out that ALL humans are born with the same condition. From there you can ask your audience the question, “Is it possible that the problems in your life are caused by the same big problem I was born with? If so, let me share with you the Solution.” Then you share the simple Gospel message, which is outlined later in the book.

In relation to developing the right mindset, listen to the words of Charles Spurgeon.

“Happy shall we be if we preach believingly, always expecting the Lord to bless his own word. If we ourselves doubt the power of the Gospel, how can we preach it with authority. Feel that you are a favored man in being allowed to proclaim the Good News, and rejoice that your mission is fraught with eternal benefit to those before you. Let the people see how glad and confident the Gospel has made you, and it will go far to make them long to partake in its blessed influences.” (Spurgeon 1889, p.365)

3. Confront Them With A Pure Motive

You Must Go With the *Right Agenda*

“What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.” 1 Corinthians 9:18

“For the love of Christ constraineth us...” 2 Corinthians 5:14

If you are going to do the ministry of field evangelism, you must accept that there are two things you will not receive from it: money and elevated ego. If you are motivated by anything other than simply building the Kingdom of God, you will be disappointed. This is especially important to understand if you intend to do the ministry of field evangelism and nothing else. If you need a guaranteed salary in order to be in the ministry, you will not be able to limit yourself to field evangelism. You must be prepared to trust God by faith.

Unlike pastors or church revivalists who preach to Christians, the field evangelist is preaching to the unsaved. Therefore, he must not take up offerings. To try to extract money from the unsaved only brings discredit to the Gospel and dishonors the Lord Jesus. Offering-taking brings into question the integrity of our message and the motives of our heart. Offering-taking in a crusade setting is acceptable, because it is Christians who are being asked to give, not lost people. But, if offerings can be avoided all together, it is better.

You must be prepared to look to God alone, by faith, for the supply of your personal needs as well as the needs of the ministry. I begin every meeting by telling the people that we do not want their money, and we are not asking them to join anything. That puts their mind at ease and opens the way for the Gospel. Your audience must be convinced that there is nothing in this for you, that you do not have a hidden agenda. They must believe that you are there for them, not to benefit yourself in some way.

Regarding our motive for doing evangelism (and I would say especially field evangelism), Dr. Billy Graham said this “Our primary motive, in my view, is the command of our Commander-in-Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ. We

engage in evangelism today not because we want to, or because we choose to, or because we like to, but because we have been told to. We are under orders. Our Lord has commanded us to go, to preach, to make disciples – and that should be enough for us. Evangelistic inactivity is disobedience.” (Douglas 1989, p.17)

Ministry Support - ALL BY FAITH

Now, is it possible to do the work of evangelism and not ask for money? Yes it is. I have been traveling the world preaching to the lost for forty years and have never asked money from anyone, saved or unsaved. If we look to God, He will meet our needs. The ministry of field evangelism must operate by faith - faith in God alone. If God calls a man to that ministry, He will raise up people to support him in that ministry. God’s ministry, and God’s ministers, are to be supported by God’s people as they are led by the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote to the Christians in Philippi and thanked them for supporting him (Philippians 4:15-19). In Luke 8:11-3, we see that Jesus and the disciples were helped financially by people who were “contributing to their support out of their private means.” Hudson Taylor (founder of the China Inland Mission) said, “God’s work, done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.”

A fundamental question to answer before entering into an evangelistic event, or even when organizing an evangelistic ministry is this: Is it God’s will, and is this God’s time? God has not promised to provide for any ministry that he did not initiate. If God has initiated it and confirmed it in your heart, then you can trust him by faith to supply. But, if what you are attempting is just your good idea, then you have no right to expect God to do anything. Are you doing this in response to the needs of the people, to your desire to preach, or to the will of God revealed in your heart. It is a crucial question.

In 1975, God called me and my wife into the ministry of international evangelism. Along with that calling came His clear instruction to not solicit money for the ministry. He said to make our needs known to Him, and He would move upon the hearts of His people to help. So, in obedience to God, we have made it a practice to simply share with God’s people our vision, activ-

ity, and results, and leave it to God to “raise money.” He has honored that program and proven Himself more faithful for over 40 years.

Not only will a field evangelist not “make money” from his ministry, but he may never be thought of as a great preacher either. Many evangelists secretly revel in seeing their picture on banners and posters, and they love to see their name in print and hear it on radio and television. They love looking important. If that is what you really want, deep down in your heart, then just be honest with God about it and pursue a ministry that will give you those things. **In field evangelism, the evangelist pays all the bills, receives nothing, has no credibility, and gives all the glory to God.** There is nothing in it for you other than the joy of knowing that you are obeying God and the added joy of seeing people saved. Field evangelism only works by faith. In field evangelism you are not “invited” to preach, you invite yourself and pay your own way. Now, is it a bad thing to have your picture on a poster? No. Is it unspiritual to receive a compliment from some one regarding your preaching? No. Is it wrong for people to contribute financially to your ministry because they see what you are doing and want to be part of it? No. But it IS wrong for you to have these things as the secret motive of your heart.

It is obvious from Philippians 4, that the Apostle Paul had people in his life who helped him financially with his ministry. But, note his attitude toward the givers and their gifts to him. *“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last your concern for me hath flourished again; wherein you were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate in my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account [emphasis mine].”* (Philippians

4:10-17) Paul was grateful for what people did for him, but he did not solicit it, he did not depend on it, he did not fret or complain when it was not available, and he did not make it a criteria for whether he continued his ministry or not. Whether in poverty or prosperity, he simply pushed forward, claiming by faith, *“I can do all thing through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* (Philippinans 4:13)

4. Confront Them With A Pleasing Manner

You Must Go With the *Right Appearance*

“As to style in preaching out of doors, it should certainly be different from much of that which prevails within, and perhaps if a speaker were to acquire a style fully adapted to a street audience, he would be wise to bring it indoors with him. A great deal of sermonizing may be defined as saying nothing at extreme length; but out of doors verbosity is not admired; you must say something and have done with it, and go on and say something more, or your hearers will let you know.” Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon 1889, p. 277)

“To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” 1 Corinthians 9:22

“Only let your conversion be as it becometh the gospel of Christ...”

Philippians 1:27

As you begin going out to the people, keep this in mind: if they were attracted to a church service or some other sort of religious gathering, they would have gone to one already. But, they aren't attracted to those things, so they remain unreached and unsaved. Therefore, we must be very careful to not repel them before we even have a chance to give them the message they so desperately need. **It is important that we go to the people, not as a preacher but as a friend.** We must go, not with condemnation but with compassion. Remember that Paul called himself a *“debtor”* (Romans 1:14). It was from that position and attitude that he said, *“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach*

the Gospel.” (Romans 1:15) Not all crowds are resistant to the Gospel, and not all will resent you for trying to give it to them. But, some will, and you should approach every situation attempting to avoid as much negative response as possible. Be “*wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.*” (Matthew 10:16)

It is worth noting that the newspapers of his day, commented on the great evangelist, D.L. Moody, this way, “Mr. Moody reaches the masses more surely and widely because he is one of them himself. His familiarity and conversational manner please them. They like his directness and his earnestness. He is driving a bargain with them and he talks sense. He is trying to comfort them when ‘From the world’s bitter wind they are seeking shelter,’ and he fills their souls with the assurance of a father’s love. Life becomes pleasanter to them; and the future assumes a hopeful aspect. Mr. Moody touches more chords than the ordinary preacher on Sunday; he comes nearer home; he nourishes them more. They like Mr. Moody.” (*Moody* p. 283)

In regard to field evangelism, Charles Spurgeon instructed his students, “If it be the Gospel which is spoken, and if the Spirit of the preacher be one of love and truth, the results cannot be doubted: The bread cast upon the waters must be found again after many days. The Gospel must, however, be preached in a manner worth the hearing, for mere noisemaking is an evil rather than a benefit.” (Spurgeon 1889, p.277)

A. Be Christian but Not Religious.

If the evangelist goes to the people as a “preacher”, as a paid professional, then he may be viewed as sharing the Gospel because it is a part of his job or out of duty, rather than out of love for the lost. Go to the people as an ordinary man, a person who has found hope and now desires for others to have it also. Use titles only if it is culturally beneficial or if it creates credibility and trust on the part of the hearers. Otherwise, do away with it. Do not go to the people as a pastor, go as a friend. Make them feel as if you are one of them.

B. Be Casual and Not Churchy.

Loosen up, take off your tie, roll up your sleeves, and relate to the people where they are. Drop the ministerial tone from your voice. Try

your best to NOT sound like a preacher. Do not scream at the people - talk to them lovingly as a friend. Do not sound condemning. No one wants to be screamed at or condemned. Be conversational, not “preachy.”

C. Be Authoritative but Friendly

Jesus spoke with authority, but when He spoke, His hearers knew they were loved. Relate to the people where they are. Speak with authority as the oracles of God, but be gentle, kind, understanding, loving, and comforting. Let the love of Christ show on your face, be heard in your voice, and seen in your gestures and mannerisms. Your sincere concern for the hearer should be demonstrated by your actions and interactions with the crowd. As the people listen to you, they should think, “This man knows what he is talking about; he is telling the truth, and he likes me.” If a person is repelled by the gospel message itself, then that is his problem. But, if the person is repelled by you, the messenger, then that is your problem and you need to change. Always talk with your audience, never down to them.

It was said of D.L. Moody that “He had a conversational style of speaking. People liked being talked with, not being talked to - and there was a world of difference. It was a welcome for people to join the family of faith, through a talk that was winsome and compelling” – (Belmonte 2014, p.131)

D. Be Aggressive but Humble

We are dealing with life and death, heaven and hell; therefore, we should have an intense urgency about what we are doing. It is all right, in fact helpful, for that urgency to come across as we approach the task of reaching the lost in the public place. It should translate into caring, concern, and love.. Be humble. Remember: you are just a beggar who has found bread, seeking to share it with those who have not yet found it. There is no room in a beggar, even a well-fed one, for ego or pride. Never say anything that would suggest that you are “paying a price” to be with them, that you are making a sacrifice. Rather, let

them know it is a privilege for you to be there, and you are grateful for their hospitality.

E. Be Polite, Courteous, and Keep a Cool Head.

Sometimes, there are those in the crowd who will speak out and attempt to harass the preacher. Do not respond unless it is completely unavoidable. If you must respond, be polite and courteous. Do not argue or respond in anger or arrogance. You do not want to do anything to diminish the effectiveness of the message or the listener's trust in you as a person and as a representative of the cross of Christ. If someone causes a disturbance, let a member of your team deal with it, not you.

F. Watch Your Appearance.

Be neat, clean, and unoffensive, and dress appropriately for the occasion. Remember, this is not a church service; you do not need a suit and tie. If it is helpful, wear it. If it does not help, and you can dress more casually, then do it. Above all, relate to the people in their context. You want to appear as dignified as necessary and yet relaxed. Let your clothing and appearance say, "This event and this audience is important to me", but do not let your appearance say, "I am better, or higher than you, or separate from you". Be careful to observe social and cultural guidelines, and never allow your clothing to identify you with sub-cultures, political groups, or isolated segments of society. Also wear clothes that make you as visible as possible. Light colors are good, especially at night. The clearer you are seen, the more apt you are to be heard. Do not wear sunglasses or anything that hides your eyes or face. If you must wear a hat for protection from the sun, then do so. But, if you can avoid it, it is better.

G. Show Compassion - Take a Good Look at Your Audience

Even if you make a mistake in the first six points in this list, if you get this one right, you will be miles ahead. If your audience is convinced that you genuinely care about them, you will come a lot closer to winning them. You must be able to stand before them with real

compassion. To help with this, before you begin speaking, take a good look into the faces of your audience. Imagine what they are going through, the problems they are facing, and the needs they have. Imagine the hurts they are experiencing and the desperation many feel as they stand before you.

To get a real picture or description of your audience, just look at Luke 4:18 and John 5:3. Luke 4:18 says, “*The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*” Then John 5:3 says, “*In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.*”

Look at that list, the description in those words. The word *poor* means crouching, frightened, and distressed. It is the picture of a dog that has been abused. *Brokenhearted* means to be crushed or shattered. To be a *captive* means to be imprisoned, enslaved. The word *blind* in these verses does not mean physical loss of sight, but rather to look through a cloud of smoke, knowing there is something there but not being able to reach it. To be *bruised* means to be crushed. To be *impotent* is to be weak, sick, feeble. *Halt* means to be crippled or lame. The word, *withered* means to be over-ripe, almost beyond help or hope. And, finally, the word *waiting* means to be desperately reaching out, but having to source from which to receive.

So, who do you see before you? You see people who are crouching in fear, suffering from anxiety, and afraid that life is going to hit them again like an abused dog. You see people who have been crushed by circumstances and who are enslaved by fear, addictions, and past failures. You see people who are looking through mental smoke in search of a better life. You see people who are weak under the load of guilt and sin. You see people who have gone so long and so far without God, they have almost reached a place of no return. And finally, you see people who are reaching out for something, anything, that can

provide peace and security in their life. That, my evangelist friend, is your audience. Remember who you are preaching to, and compassion will come easily. They are you, before you were saved. Dr. Graham reminds us also that there are five things we should keep in mind about every group of people we stand in front of.

First, “Life’s needs are not totally met by social improvement or material affluence.” People have needs that only Jesus can meet. The people in front of you have a lot of unmet needs. **Second**, he says, “There is an essential ‘emptiness’ in every life without Christ. The person with whom you are communicating has a ‘built-in’ receptivity to the cross, because Christ alone fills the void.” The **third** thing he says is, “We can assume in our hearers a loneliness. It is a loneliness that only God can fill.” **Fourth**, “We are speaking to people who have a sense of guilt. When we preach Christ, we are speaking directly to the nagging, depressing problem of guilt. And, that problem is always there. You don’t make people feel guilty, they already know it. Tell them what the guilt is. Tell them it is rebellion against God, and tell them the cross is the answer.” And **fifth**, “There is the universal fear of death. This subtle fear cannot be silenced. But there is the glorious news: Our Lord came to nullify death. In his own death and resurrection, he made three things inoperative: sin, death, and hell. That’s the message of the cross.” (Douglas 1984, p.96-97)

So to the list we made from Luke 4 and John 5, we can add that lost people feel the burden of needs they cannot meet: physical, emotional, psychological, relational, financial, and spiritual. They are empty, alone, guilty, and afraid of dying. The Jesus you are going to tell them about can change everything for them, just as He did for you. Take a good look at the audience and remember the condition they’re in. If you do, caring and compassion will not be a problem.

All of these things become extremely important in light of the fact that the evangelist has a life-giving message to give to his listeners. So, he must be careful not to allow his personality, general manner and attitude, or appear-

ance to speak a louder message than the one coming from his mouth. John the Baptist said it well, “*He must increase but I must decrease.*” John 3:30

5. Confront Them With A Proven Method

You Must Go With the Right Arrangements

Referring again to D.L. Moody, it was observed in a newspaper article, “Sanctified common sense is characteristic of the man everywhere, and quite as much in his management of the proceedings as in his own address. He understands how much depends on details, and great care is given to the veriest trifle. He remembers, too, that men have bodies as well as souls, and that these two act and react upon each other, and he does his utmost to guard against the discomfort and weariness which may so easily mar the effect of the best sermon. His one aim is to get into the hearts of the people, and if he sees anything which seems to hinder him in this, he spares no effort to get it out of the way.” (Moody 1900, p.305) It was written of evangelist Billy Sunday (1900’s), “A Sunday evangelistic campaign is a marvel of organization. It spells efficiency at every turn and is a lesson to the communities which do Christian work in a haphazard, hit or miss fashion. Work and faith are written large over every series of Sunday meetings. He understands the crowd mind. He goes beyond the church circles and makes his appeal to the popular taste. He frankly aims to strike the average of the common people. For he is after that host which too often the preacher knows nothing about. (Ellis 1914, p.61)

Even though these observations about Moody and Sunday pertain to “they come to me” events, they should, apply to “we go to them” events as well.

The Field Evangelist’s Methodology

“And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them. . .” Acts 17:2

Confrontation and communication are now being tied together in the evangelism process under the heading of methodology. We are heading toward the final stage—the invitation. But, it is a long road to that point. How do we get there? We must create an audience out of the crowd of people gathered in

the market, at the depot, on the beach, in the plaza, at the bus station, or on the campus. We must have a method of operation, an approach, a way to accomplish and complete the evangelism process. Methodology can be developed around the question of who, what, where, when, why, and how.

Purpose - *Why am I Doing This?*

Why am I having this meeting, planning this event? The sole purpose is evangelism, pure and simple. I am going to arrange this situation to the best of my ability, and preach to these people a clear message of salvation, with the intent of seeing people come to Christ. Whatever contributes to that, I will use. What does not, I will consider as non-essential and discard. My purpose is to make new converts to Christ through this event. That is my goal as well as my guide, and anything I do in this event must conform to that.

Place - *Where am I Going to Preach?*

I know what I want to do, why I am doing it, and what I expect, but where am I going to do it? As I think about my neighborhood, city, or town, where is the best place to hold a field evangelism event? Will it be indoors or outdoors? Where can I find people already gathered, or is there a place where I can easily attract a crowd? When considering a possible location for the meeting, some questions should be answered before the final selection is made.

A. Permission: Do I need a written permit from authorities or property owners? Will my permit be the only one given at the specified date and time?

B. People: Is there an existing crowd already present at this place, or is it possible to attract a crowd in a short time? Is the crowd moving or stationary? How large will the crowd be? The success of the meeting cannot be judged by the number of people present, but the size of the crowd does tell the evangelist what will be needed in the way of equipment, arrangements, personnel, and materials. Do they all come from the same place or from many different locations? What is their main purpose for being here? What is the general age range? Is there something common to all of them, a “shared life experience?” Do they all share a certain religion?

C. Physical Arrangements: Factors to consider

1. Visibility - Is there a place where the speaker can stand and be seen by the entire audience, such as a stage or a platform? If not, then arrange for a portable one. The preacher must be able, if at all possible, to make eye contact with the people. If the meeting is at night, there must be light on the preacher as well as the crowd.
2. Position of Audience - Remember, this event is all about the audience. Every attempt should be made to make them as comfortable as possible. Position yourself so the sun is in your eyes, not theirs. Don't make them stand any longer than necessary. If it is hot or cold or wet, tell them you are aware of their discomfort and inconvenience, and thank them for listening to you.
3. Light - If it is night, there must be light on you and the audience. People who stand in the light have a greater tendency to respond than those who are in the dark.
4. Space - Make sure there is enough space to contain the audience and enough space for them to respond.
5. Avoid Barriers - Avoid anything that will create separation between you and the audience; such as a fence, a muddy place, or a ditch. Do not stand on one side of the road and preach to a crowd on the other side. The slightest thing that separates you from the people can be a deterrent to keeping their attention.
6. Sound - Try to have a sound system that is clear and adequate to reach the whole crowd. If possible, have your own generator and do not depend on the local power supply, which may not be available or may not be reliable.
7. Timing - What time of day are the most people in this place? If it is likely to rain, when would that be, morning or afternoon? What time of day is there less competition for the people's attention? When are they most likely to listen?

D. Problems: Are there any problems to overcome? What about possible conflict or competition from other religious groups, political groups,

or street vendors nearby? What about noise, traffic, or weather conditions? If there are circumstances that cannot be overcome quickly and peacefully, then find another place and trust God to open this door at a later time. You should know about these hindrances before the meeting and not learn about them while you are attempting to do the meeting. That is a waste of time. Do not just ignore potential problems and hope they won't happen. If you do, you will regret it.

Planning - *What am I Going to Do and What am I Going to Need?*

You have surveyed the area and considered several possible locations for a field evangelism event. You may eventually want to go to all of them, but you have chosen the place that you feel is the best location and in which you feel most comfortable. Perhaps it is an open market, plaza, or bus station. You have secured permission, know there is a crowd of people there, are aware of physical arrangements, and you feel that you can adequately deal with any obvious problems connected to this place. Now what? You cannot just show up. You need a plan. You must organize, in detail, every step of the event. To be a truly effective field evangelist, one must be able to assess a situation and know how to turn it into an evangelistic event that will yield the most results.

A. Survey: You have surveyed the area and selected a place to hold the meeting. Now take time to carefully survey the place itself. Perhaps it is an open-air market, bus station, or slum area. Go there beforehand at different times of the day and various days of the week. Notice the population and surrounding conditions on each day and at certain times of the day. If the situation is best and the population is largest between 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM on Saturday afternoon, then that is when you need to be there. Also take very careful account of the physical layout of the place - the bus station, for example. Remember, you are in a spiritual warfare with satan for the souls of men, so this bus station will soon become a war zone. Therefore, you must strategize and plan your attack. How do you do that?

B. Answer the Following Questions: After surveying the location, answer some basic questions:

1. Is the crowd stationary, moving, or some of both?
2. Which way does the crowd flow as it moves?
3. Where can I be seen and heard by the most people at one time?
4. Where can I gather together a crowd and not disturb the activity of others?
5. What is the position of the sun at the selected time of day? I do not want it to be in the listener's eyes, thus making it difficult for them to focus attention on the speaker.
6. Do I need a sound system? Where should it be placed? Is it possible to position the stage so that the loud speakers point toward a building, or a "sound break" of some sort, thus creating a greater acoustical effect?
 *Note: When using loud speakers, elevate them above the heads of the listeners. This prevents hurting the ears of the listeners and also extends the range of the sound projection. The loud speakers must be placed out front and to the sides of the platform in order to prevent feedback (a squealing noise) in the speakers.
7. Is adequate lighting available in case the meeting is at night, or is it necessary to bring portable lights?
8. Where is the least amount of outside noise and distraction?
9. Is there room for people to come forward during the invitation, and is there some place where the respondents can be counseled individually?

C. Make a Check List: Don't leave anything to chance or to memory. Make a list of every possible item you will need. Check them off, individually, as they are put in the vehicle - from the largest item to the smallest. Don't assume the extension cord is in the bag. Look in the bag, hold the cord in your hand, put it back in the bag, and **then** check it off the list. Do that with **every single item**. There is no worse feeling than to get everything set up, speakers mounted, lights in place, sound system going, and the team ready to sing and attract the crowd - then realize you left the CD player back at the office.

Personnel - Who is Going to Do It?

“...he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him.” (Luke 8:1) The event can be done by one evangelist, but that is not the best way. A team effort is better. The following personnel should be involved, if at all possible:

- A. Local Church:** Any time the cooperation of a local church can be incorporated into an evangelistic event, that is a good thing, especially for the church. But the event should not promote the church, and it should not look like a church event.
- B. Evangelist:** Anyone who has a good understanding of the Gospel can give a salvation message, but if there is a God-called, gifted, anointed evangelist available to preach, then he should. He will have skill and sensitivity for field evangelism that the pastor may not have.
- C. Testimonies:** A layman, man or woman, who has a sincere and interesting story of conversion to tell, can be a powerful tool in the hands of God. Listeners want to hear something they can relate to personally. It is even good for the evangelist to begin by briefly giving his own story of conversion. A powerful testimony can provide a great springboard for the evangelist to lead into the message. But, make sure there is enough time. You don't want to lose the crowd.
- D. Music or Drama Team - or Both:** Music is a great tool with which to attract a crowd, IF it is the right kind in the right place. It should be of high quality and suited to the audience. If the crowd is made up mostly of young people, then use music **they** like. Do not use church music or hymns or “praise songs.” This is **not** a church service or a crusade. The music team should be lively and energetic. They should move and interact with the crowd. Combining singing with dancing is great visually and helps attract a crowd. The music team should look like they are having a good time. The music should be **loud** (to be heard), **lively** (to be seen), and **likable** (to be appealing). But, it should last only as **long** as necessary. Once the crowd has reached its peak in size, the music should stop and the preacher should take over.

Drama (or a skit) is also very good in attracting a crowd. Depending on the amount of time available, drama and music can be combined. Use what is needed but not MORE than is needed. Remember, you are there to proclaim the Gospel and reach people for Christ. The job of the music/drama team is to attract the crowd, turn them into a listening audience, and prepare them for the message.

Note: While the preacher is delivering the message, the music team should remain in place, focused on the preacher, giving the appearance that they are ready to sing again following the message.

E. Counseling New Believers: Those who respond should be counseled personally, if possible. Counselors should be well trained in dealing with respondents properly. Also, they should be instructed as to what to expect during the course of the event and during the invitation. However, in a fast paced evangelism campaign, involving 3-5 meetings per day, it will probably not be possible to have counselors for each meeting. In that event, the respondents should be encouraged to come forward and gather in a group in front of the platform. They should be prayed for as a group, and then someone should share with them the basic steps in beginning their walk with Christ. 1. Pray daily. 2. Read the Bible. 3. Go to a Bible-believing church and fellowship with other believers. 4. Share Jesus with their family and friends.

F. Others: People are needed to pray, to help maintain order and control, to distribute literature, and to set up equipment and prepare the site. It helps to have a good crowd of believers on hand, because a crowd attracts a crowd. Everyone must be instructed, though, to be careful to not give the event away as a religious event before the bird is caught.

Program- *How to Go About It?*

Structuring a program for field evangelism is much different from a church service. In church we can use piano music, hymns, choirs in robes, long introductions, and eloquent messages. But in field work, all of that becomes a hindrance, not a help. We must adjust our methods to suit the *we go to them* approach. As we design the program, let's remember that the goal is to attract

a crowd, create an audience out of the crowd, then present a clear message of salvation followed by an invitation to respond. But, how do I attract a crowd? How do I get them to listen? How do I get them to stay until I am finished?

A. Know Your Audience: Before preparing your program and message, learn as much as you can about the people you are trying to reach. What is their age and socio-economic group? Where do most of them live? What do they do for a living? What is their religion? What are their interests, and why are they in this place? Do they have areas of life in common; work, religion, school, sports, where they live? What do they watch on television or listen to on the radio? The more you know about those you are trying to reach, the more successful you are likely to be in gaining and holding their attention. Adequate knowledge about your audience makes it possible to form a good frame of reference from which to work while structuring your program.

B. Put it on Paper: Write it out in detail. After you have written the program out, then study it, pray over it, change it if necessary, and re-write it. Then give a copy of it to every person involved in the event. Do not leave anything to chance, and do not make assumptions. Make sure everyone knows everything. Answer all the questions.

1. When is the event? What date? Time?
2. Where is it? At the bus station? Where at the bus station?
3. Will there be a prayer meeting for the event? Where?
4. What time does the actual meeting begin?
5. When should the team arrive on the site?
6. How are they getting there? By car? Whose cars?
7. Who is driving? Does he know the way? Have a map.
8. Who is bringing and setting up the equipment? When?
9. How does the actual program begin - music, drama, what?
10. Who is going to sing and/or give a testimony? When?
11. Who is going to preach? How long? When does he start?
12. Who are the counselors? Do they know where to stand?
13. Who is in charge of materials? Does he have them?

There are many questions to consider, and **you** must know the answers. Do not assume that anyone else knows or will take care of all the details but you. After you have done many field evangelism events, you will develop a routine that applies to every meeting. You will begin to do things automatically. But it is still good, every once in a while, to go over the list and refresh yourself. Never assume that you have learned everything, and never allow yourself to become lazy.

C. Give the Holy Spirit Freedom: After your program is written, allow God to make changes on the spot if He chooses. Someone is scheduled to sing but the crowd is becoming restless, and you may lose them if you do not hurry up and preach. Cancel the singer and hope he or she has enough spiritual maturity to not have their feelings hurt. We must be organized, but we must also be flexible in God's hands and spiritually sensitive to the situation as it moves along.

D. From Arrival to Message Time: Plans are made, the program is written, instructions are given, and everyone is ready. The day has arrived, prayer meetings have been held, and it is time for the harvest.

1. Arrival on Site: As the team arrives, they should leave their Bibles in the car and appear casual, not pastoral. Be friendly to onlookers. Create excitement and expectancy, as if something great is about to happen - because it is!

2. Avoid Symbols - Visual and Verbal: Do not frighten the fish away before the program ever begins. Do not use religious placards. Do not erect a cross. Do not wear t-shirts that say "Jesus Saves" or put up a big sign that says "Crusade Today". It is not that we are ashamed of Jesus or the cause of Christ. We are going to lift up His Name, we are going to make Him very visible to these people, and we are going to give loud praise to Him - but **later**. Do not begin the meeting by taking the microphone and shouting "Praise the Lord, Hallelujah!" Do not define this as a religious event from the very outset. One of the first things I learned about fishing as a boy was, when you're fishing from a boat, be quiet! You don't

bang on the side of the boat and frighten the fish. When you enter a field evangelism setting with religious signs and symbols, and shouts of “Praise the Lord” and “Hallelujah”, you are banging on the boat.

We were conducting an open-air meeting in a town near Rio, Brazil. A local church was helping, and the pastor was enthusiastic for souls. When the people found out they were going out to the plaza, they spent the day before making signs that said “Jesus Saves”, “Praise the Lord”, etc. They also had tracts to hand out. When we arrived at the plaza, I saw the signs, tracts, and Bibles. I had the unpleasant job of telling them they could not use those things and explaining why. If we had been seen raising up signs and passing out tracts, we would have scared away two kinds of people: Roman Catholics and the totally nonreligious.

Brazil is a predominantly Catholic country and most of the people in the plaza would be Catholic. They would have quickly identified the sign holder as protestant (non-Catholic) and would not have listened. The nonreligious would have seen the sign holders as “religious people” and would have been repelled. But, without anything visible to indicate who we were, then in their eyes we were just people playing music in the plaza. They ALL love music. By the time they became aware of our identity and agenda, we had made friends and they stayed to listen. After the meeting was concluded, we raised the signs, passed out the tracts, shouted “praise the Lord”, and the new converts joined in. It’s perfectly fine to bang on the boat - after the fish have been caught!

3. Attract the Crowd: As the program begins, you will need something to attract the crowd, an “attention-getting device” of some kind. What you use will be determined by the crowd itself; age, interests, setting, etc. Attracting and holding the crowd in an urban area is usually more difficult than in a rural setting, but it depends entirely upon the situation.

In villages in central Africa, all that is necessary is to set up a sound system and begin to speak. The crowd will gather and listen. In the plazas of Brazil a little more is required. Music is very attractive to the people, and usually if a good music group begins to play, a large crowd will gather. In the Philippines, people love movies. So, a sure way to get a crowd there is to go to a city plaza at night, put up a screen, and show a movie. Show the first half, pause it, preach, give the invitation, and then show the remainder of it. In many places, drama teams or puppet teams are successful in attracting a crowd. An evangelist friend of mine uses one guy who does tricks on a bicycle and another who does feats of strength (breaking wooden bats and bending steel bars). There is one group that uses “chalk talks.” They draw pictures depicting the Gospel and people gather to see what it is. I worked with an evangelist in Kenya who used his little three year-old daughter to draw a crowd. The team would sing a couple of songs and the crowd would begin to gather. Then he would put his daughter on the platform, give her a mic, and she would sing. The crowd couldn't resist her and would gather to watch.

Another great tool in attracting a crowd, is a crowd. This is why it is helpful to join with a local church. The great evangelist of the early 1900s, R.A. Torrey, wrote in his book *How to Work for Christ*, “Get as large a number of reliable Christian men and women to go with you as you possibly can. Crowds draw crowds. There is a great power in numbers.” I have used this method, myself, in open-air meetings. We would take 30-40 young people with us, and they would stand in front of the portable stage as part of the people who had been attracted by the music. Having them there always helped to draw others in. It also provided a way for them to engage with people individually.

Different people have different interests. So we must identify that interest and appeal to it for the sake of the Gospel. It will

require flexibility on our part. If you are trying to reach teenagers, you may need to play very lively, fast, contemporary music. You may not like that particular kind of music, but what appeals to you is not the issue. The question is, what appeals to your target population? I do not like worms, but fish do. I would rather eat a hamburger, but fish do not like hamburgers. So when I go fishing I put worms on the hook, not hamburgers. Now, it is never appropriate to compromise Christian standards, regardless of the reason, but you must consider that you are going to them, uninvited. You have no credibility, and they are not obligated to listen. Remember: the crowd only becomes an audience when they begin to listen. So, the burden falls upon you to arouse curiosity, create interest, and gain their attention.

E. Announce Your Purpose: At some point you must reveal to the audience what is really going on. It is important for you to tell them before they tell you. In other words, you do not want them to feel tricked or deceived or manipulated. Whatever is used to attract the crowd, a musical presentation for example, should last just long enough to accomplish its task. Then it is no longer needed. When the crowd has reached its peak in size, then stop the music and tell the people what you are doing. But, do not say, “I am here to preach to you.” Rather, say something like, “We are going from place to place, sharing some good news, and we have come here today to share it with you. We want to give you an opportunity you may have never had before.” You are preparing them to receive a message, but before that can happen, a transition must be made.

Before you can win the audience to Christ, you may have to win them to yourself. The attention-getting device helps. As the crowd watches you and listens to your opening remarks, they need to say in their minds, “I like that; I agree with that; I would like to hear more of that.” If they do, then they are a little more likely to approve of you and be a little more willing to agree with what you have to say. As

your attention-getter stops (music, drama, bicycle tricks, etc.), tell the crowd that in a few minutes there will be more to come. Also, do not have an introduction of the speaker. As the music stops, the speaker should be mounting the platform with no break, no dead time, and dive right into the program. The attention getting team should remain in place, as if they are ready to continue right away. As you make this crucial delicate transition, the first words spoken to the crowd are very important. They should be something like this:

“Good afternoon, and thank you so much for stopping to listen to our program. We’re so excited to be with you! Thank you for your hospitality!” (Shows gratitude and humility.)

“I know that you are busy, and many of you are tired from working all day. So, I thank you for allowing us to enter into your world for a few moments.” (Shows care, understanding, and concern.)

“Isn’t it a beautiful day at the bus station today! It’s a great day to be alive, isn’t it?” (Stimulates agreement between crowd and speaker.)

“Before we go on with the program, I want to take a moment and explain what the group is singing about and why we are here today.” (Creates anticipation and curiosity.)

“You may wonder what these crazy people are doing.” (Makes light of self and helps to disarm critics.)

“We are not here to receive anything from you or to get you to join anything. We’re here to give you something.” (Answers some of their questions about your motives.)

“We are here for only one reason - to share with you some really good news. Because we have found the answer to hap-

piness in life, peace in our minds, and joy in our hearts.“

(States the purpose for event, and arouses curiosity and questions that will be answered later in the message.)

F. Advance Toward Message: You have attracted the crowd, they are listening, and they seem to be willing to stay for a while. After the final song, a testimony may be in order. It must be brief, about five minutes or less; or, it may be better to go right to the message. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading about that. Don't have a testimony just because it is on the program. Introductions, opening prayers, etc. are not necessary. They only break the flow of the meeting. The attention of the crowd hangs by a thread, and it can snap very easily. There must be no pause or confusion in the flow of the program. This is not the time to adjust the sound system, move equipment, or hand out literature. All eyes and ears should be focused on the speaker, including all the participants in the program and all the counselors.

When the evangelist takes the stage, everyone should do his best to keep disturbance to a minimum. Pray, bind the devil, and keep alert. There should be no movement or talking behind the preacher - nothing that would distract the audience away from the message.

6. Confront Them With A *Powerful Message*

You Must Go With the Right Announcement

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,
for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeeth,
to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16*

The word *evangelist* means “one who announces good news”. Our message is not about creeds, church labels, denominations, or doctrine. It is not about specific sins, politics, or social issues. It is about **Jesus** Himself. It is about the forgiveness of **sin** by the One Who paid for it, in full, on the cross. It is not about law but the **love** of Jesus. It is not about qualifying for God by

some means. It is about total **acceptance** by the Lord Jesus through His own shed blood. Our message is not one of condemnation but of **compassion**. The evangelist's message is the Gospel, the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. It is based upon His death, burial, and resurrection. It is about a **Problem**, a **Solution**, and a **Choice**. It is a simple, uncomplicated message of hope, peace, love, forgiveness, a new heredity, power over sin and satan, oneness with Jesus, an inheritance of all that belongs to Jesus, and life eternal.

The Gospel message is the message of the cross. It is the cross and the resurrection that makes it good news; our sin has been paid for and the door of salvation has been opened wide to all who will come. Oswald Chambers wrote, "If we get away from brooding on the tragedy of God upon the cross in our preaching, it produces nothing. It does not convey the energy of God to man; it may be interesting but it has no power. But preach the cross, and the energy of God is let loose. *It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* We preach Christ crucified." (Chambers 1927, p.330)

The Gospel is the message of salvation: not healing, not deliverance, not being filled with the Holy Spirit. A clear message leads to a clear invitation, which, in turn, leads to a clear decision for Christ. And the best part about the Good News that we bring, is that it is for EVERYONE who will receive it. The message, the content, and the presentation of the message will be discussed in more detail under the next section: "Communication - Cast the Net."

"Other men can preach the Gospel better than I, but no man can preach a better gospel." (Attributed to George Whitfield)

7. Confront Them With A Prayer Meeting

You Must Go With the Right Ammunition

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance . . ." 1 Thessalonians 1:5

I did not put this at the end of the list because it is the least important but because it is the most important. Everything we have said so far means nothing without the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, before

going to the people, we must go to God in prayer. We must get instruction from Him. In Luke 5, Peter launched out, he went to the fish, but not before receiving instruction and direction from Jesus.

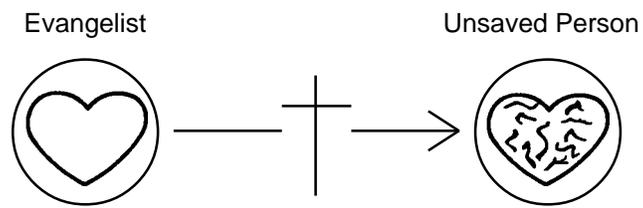
The most important tool in the evangelist's tool box is not his methodology or his message. It is his personal relationship with God, and that can only be maintained by prayer. The time to get spiritually prepared for an evangelistic event is in private, alone with God. The evangelist must receive empowerment from God before he is equipped to deliver the Gospel to the people.

The word *closet* in the Bible, means an inner chamber, a storehouse, or a dispensary. It is a place from which to receive supplies and instruction. Jesus told his disciples to enter into the closet, the inner chamber, and pray. We must prepare to do evangelism by first entering into the holy of holies. We must go before God and ask Him to instruct us - to dispense to us His filling, His empowerment, and the knowledge of His will. We must meet with God in our spirit and see Him before we see the people. We already have the message, the Gospel, but we need God's power ON the message. That only comes from meeting with Him in private in the secret room, the prayer closet.

Dr. Billy Graham wrote, "Spend more time in study and prayer. That is the secret to successful evangelism." He also said, "Preaching in the power of the Spirit means we must be living in the power of the Spirit. We must be men and women who are pure vessels for God's message. The most important preparation for our preaching is the preparation of our lives." (Douglas 1989, p.134) Dr. Stephen Olford wrote, "Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the best evangelistic talents and techniques are worthless. We may manipulate results, but we will never reap spiritual harvests." (Douglas 1984, p.144)

Regarding the need for prayer, Charles Spurgeon told his students, "Prayer may not make you eloquent after the human mode, but it will make you truly so, for you will speak out of the heart; and is not that the meaning of the word eloquence? It will bring fire from heaven upon your sacrifice, and thus prove it to be accepted of the Lord." (Spurgeon 1889, p.46)

II. COMMUNICATION CAST THE NET



Shad preaching the Three Simple Steps

In Amsterdam, 1986, Dr. Graham shared this about the Gospel:

First, we communicate the gospel with **authority**. Preach the Gospel with conviction and assurance, knowing that, 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' (Romans 10:17) Preach with the certainty that the Gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth'.

Second, preach with **simplicity**. We must communicate so people understand. I'm sure that was one of the secrets of the ministry of our Lord. The Bible says, 'the common people heard him gladly' (Mark 12:37), because they understood Him. He spoke their language. Part of preaching with simplicity means to preach with illustrations people can understand.

Third, preach with **urgency** and preach for **decision**. You may be speaking to some who will never hear the Gospel again. And you do not know if you will ever have another chance to preach the Gospel again.

Fourth, preach with **love** and **compassion**. Even when your message includes the fact of judgment and hell, your hearers should realize that both God and His messenger speak from a broken heart.

Finally, we are to communicate the Gospel in the **power of the spirit**. We are totally dependent on the spirit of God to bring conviction in the hearts of people as we preach." (Douglas 1989 p.132-134)

Billy Sunday said, "I never preach a sermon but that I think it may be the last one that some fellow will hear or the last I shall ever be privileged to preach." (Ellis 1914, p.140) It was also said of D.L. Moody, by his friend, British evangelist, Henry Moorehouse, "He preaches as if there never was to be another meeting, and as if sinners might never hear the Gospel sound again; these appeals to decide now are most impressive." (Moody 1900, p.168)

COMMUNICATE WITH THE RIGHT LANGUAGE IN THE RIGHT WAY

“Let eloquence be flung to the dogs rather than souls be lost.

What we want is to win souls. They are not won by flowery speeches.” Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon 1895, p.222)

Now that the messenger has made contact with the target group, there must be clear, simple, relevant, and easily understood communication of the Gospel that calls for a verdict. The evangelist must remember that communication is two-way; speaking and hearing, transmitting and receiving. **It is not just a question of what you say but also of what they hear.** It is extremely important to speak in a language they understand. By this, I am not referring to their native language. What I mean is, don't talk to them in spiritual jargon that means something to you but nothing to them. For instance, you may tell them they need to “be born again”, or “come to Jesus”, or “receive salvation”. That is all true, but your audience will probably not understand what those phrases really mean. There is no use in using words like *repentance* or *atonement* or *regeneration*, because many people will not relate to them.

We must train ourselves, as field evangelists, to communicate the Gospel in non-religious, non-theological terms. The goal in your presentation is not for you to sound intelligent and clever or to impress other Christians with your ability to preach a “good message.” The goal is to be clearly understood by every person in the audience, even the children. The highest compliment someone can give you after preaching is, “I understood you.” Oswald Chambers said it in this way, “If in preaching the gospel you substitute your clear knowledge of the way of salvation for confidence in the power of the gospel, you hinder people in getting to reality. You have to see that while you proclaim your knowledge of the way of salvation, you yourself are rooted and grounded in faith in God. Never rely on the clearness of your exposition, but as you give your exposition, see that you are relying on the Holy Spirit. Rely on the certainty of God's redemptive power, and He will create His own life in souls.” (Chambers 1927, p.338)

Again, quoting Chambers, “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words...’ (1 Corinthians 2: 1-5). Paul was a scholar and an orator of the first rank; He is not speaking out of abject humility but saying that he would veil the power of God if, when he preached the Gospel, he impressed people with his ‘excellency of speech.’ Belief in Jesus is a miracle produced only by the efficacy of redemption, not by impressiveness of speech, not by wooing and winning, but by the sheer unaided power of God. The creative power of redemption comes through the preaching of the Gospel, but never because of the personality of the preacher. The preacher is there as the representative of God - ‘As though God did beseech you by us.’ He is there to present the Gospel of God, not human ideals. If it is only because of my preaching that people desire to be better, they will never get anywhere near Jesus Christ.” (Chambers 1927, p.199)

One of the speakers at the Billy Graham conference in Amsterdam in 1983, was Rev. Tom Houston. He had some interesting observations concerning communication with our audience. He said the same thing I have said many times, “It’s not what you say, but what they hear. There is as much emphasis in the Bible on hearing as on speaking.” Rev. Houston pointed out, “It’s not how you end, but where you start. New knowledge must be linked to existing knowledge.” The point he was making is that our audience may not have prior knowledge of what we are talking about. So, we must begin with something they do know about. That is why Jesus used parables. He drew upon family, weddings, funerals, marketplace, and fishing - things they understood. Rev. Houston also said, “We need to know as much as we can about our audience. . . Jesus was quick at ‘observational audience research,’ or just noticing what made the world go around in people’s lives. Knowledge of your audience, and the skill to build on what they already know in a way that arouses their curiosity, is essential in getting their attention. . . The evangelist can deliver the message. Only the hearer can give it meaning, and that meaning depends on how he can fit the message into all that he knows already. . . It is the value put on a message that determines whether you are going to retain it or act upon it. That value has to come from the needs that a person wants

satisfied. We need to speak to what people are hungry for as we present Jesus. We need to know the needs that the people themselves feel.” (Douglas 1984, p.89-93) I believe, after fifty years of evangelistic preaching, that this man is absolutely correct. Simply put, we need to know our audience and present the Gospel to them in a way that makes sense to them and in a way that lets them know that Jesus will meet every need of their life. When they perceive that you actually know what some of their needs are, they will be quick to listen.

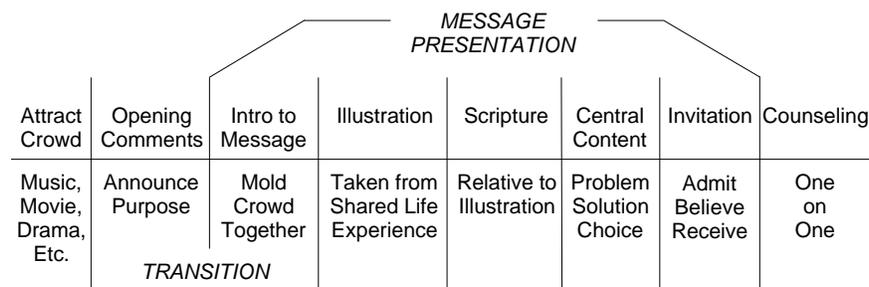
“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:17-18

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

THE MESSAGE IN OUTLINE



1. Opening comments, brief casual dialogue with audience:

Transition from attention-getting device to the message

2. Introduction: Time of molding the audience together as if speaking to one person

3. **Illustration:** Taken from a “shared life experience”, something common to all present
4. **Scripture:** Quote from memory, relevant to illustration
5. **Central content:** Problem, Solution, Choice
6. **Invitation:** Admit, Believe, Call

Buying Time - As you begin the message, keep in mind, you do not have a predetermined amount of time to speak, and you may have to “bargain” for time as you go along. You can do this by repeatedly mentioning time segments. I usually begin by saying, “I have just three simple things to share with you today, and it will only take about nine minutes.” Then after speaking for a few minutes, I will say, “Thank you all so much for listening so far. Now I have about six minutes left”, and so on. Very rarely does anyone actually keep up with the time, but at least they know that I am aware of it, and that encourages them to stay and listen. You may also want to tell the audience there will be more music, or another drama, at the end. The musicians or drama people should remain in position and look as if they are ready to begin at any moment. But, they must be still, not talk, and must focus on the preacher.

THE MESSAGE IN DETAIL

1. **Opening Comments** - This brief dialogue with the audience should be caring, casual, light, and maybe even humorous. It should form a bridge from the attention-getting device to the message. These comments should be non-spiritual and reflect a genuine interest in the audience. You will want your opening comments to:
 - A. *Express Gratitude and Humility* - “Good afternoon everyone, and thank you all so much for taking time out of your day to be a part of our program. It is very kind of you and we appreciate it.”
 - B. *Show Caring and Concern* - “I know you are all busy and tired from working all day and are anxious to get home.”
 - C. *Establish Points of Agreement Between You and the Audience* “It’s always good to get home isn’t it? No matter where I go , I’m glad to get home to my family. I am sure you feel the same.”

- D. *Create Anticipation and Curiosity* - “Well, today I’m not with my family, because I have chosen to be here with you. You may be wondering why that is. Let me share with you why we are here and what we are singing about.”
- E. *Make Light of Self and Disarm Critics* - “I know that to some of you we might look like a bunch of crazy people standing out here on the side of the road singing ...”
- F. *Answer Some Questions* - “The reason we are doing this is because we have a lot of joy in our hearts, and we want to share it with you. Our program is free. We are not here for money or to ask you to join anything. We just want to share with you the same good news we have been giving to so many in this area.”

2. Introduction

- A. *Mold the Audience Together as One Person* - “As we travel around your city, we find that people everywhere want two things. They want to have a good life on earth, and they want to go to heaven when they die. I have some good news for you this afternoon. God wants the same things for you. Every one of us here is alike in many ways. We all need food to eat, water to drink, air to breathe, clothes to wear, and a place to live. We were all born, and we all die. In between those two points, we want to have a full life on earth and a sure home in heaven. God has provided a way for us to have both, and all it takes is three simple steps.”
- B. *Changing Focus* - Now the entire audience agrees with me, and we have moved our focus from earth to heaven, from totally physical to spiritual. By saying “God has provided a way”, we have alluded to where we are headed. But before we go further, we are going to bring in an illustration, a “**shared life experience**” to support the central content of the message. Since we have already talked about the home, we will just continue with that.

- 3. **Illustration** - Use a “**Shared Life Experience**” - Paul said in Acts:17:23, “*For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this*

inscription, 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD'. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Paul used the altar and its inscription as a reference point, because he knew that every person in the crowd was familiar with it. Charles Spurgeon called illustrations, "windows through which light is shed upon the message." He said, "Often when didactic speech fails to enlighten our hearers we may make them see our meaning by opening a window and letting in the pleasant light of analogy." (Spurgeon 1889, p.377) Jesus used many things, that were common knowledge and experience among his hearers, in order to convey the Gospel; such things as bread, water, farming, marriage, fishing, building, loss of money, sickness, roadways, family issues, and so on. He opened windows of light, to illuminate spiritual truth, by using things that were common to everyone as illustrations - "shared life experiences."

- A. *Relate to Everyone* - Whatever I use as an illustration, it is something that is known to, and experienced by, the entire audience. I want every person in the audience to feel as if I am talking to them individually. I am turning the audience into one person. In this case, the illustration is about "home", something everyone can relate to. I would continue my comments with something like this: "My friends, every one of you has a home here in this city, and you are going to go there tonight. I always love going home, because it is the one place where I feel like I really belong. But, did you know that you have another home? Yes, it is a very beautiful one, and it is being prepared for you, right now, by God Himself. It is your home in heaven. Right now it is the end of this day, and it is time to go home. But some day we will all reach the end of this day we call life, and it will be time to go to our eternal home. Now, how do we get there?"
- B. *Involve the Audience* - "Suppose you invited me to come to your home here in the city tonight. Of course I would want to come, but I could not unless you gave me directions, specific directions.

You see, I could not go to just any house. No, I must go to your particular house, and to do that, I must go a particular way. The same is true with our home in heaven. We must go a particular way, and God has provided that way. I must tell you truthfully, however, that even though we all want to go to that home, there is a problem which has to be solved first.”

C. *Apply Personally* - “When I was a small boy, I used to love to play outdoors, especially in the mud when it rained. I would get that mud all over me, and then at suppertime I would go home. Now, my mother kept a very clean house. She swept the floors every day. So, when I came home with that mud on me, she would meet me at the door and say, ‘You cannot come into this clean house with that mud all over you.’ And I would ask, ‘But, Mom, don’t you love me?’ Then she would answer, ‘Yes, I love you, but I don’t love that mud, and it is not coming into this house. You get clean, then you can come in.’ Friends, God keeps a clean house, and you and I are born with a certain type of dirt that God will not allow in His house. It is called sin. But there is a solution to the problem, and we are going to talk about it right now. All we have to do is take three simple steps. All we have to do is go a particular way, and God has provided that way for us”.

4. Scripture Reference

A. *From Memory* - In a field evangelism event, I will likely not be holding a Bible in my hand, so I will use a passage from memory. In this case, John 14:1–6. “You know, friends, there was a time when Jesus, the Son of God, was talking to His disciples and this issue of the heavenly home came up. What Jesus said was this, ‘*In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you*’. Then the disciples said, ‘*Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?*’ Then Jesus told them, ‘*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father, but by Me.*’ You see, the particular

way we must go to get to our home in heaven is through Jesus Christ, God's Son. And all it takes is three simple steps."

B. *Personal Word of Testimony* - Before going on to the central content of the message, you may want to briefly share a little of your own personal testimony. "There was a time in my life when I knew nothing of my home in heaven. I had one, but I didn't know it. I was separated from it by sin, by my own dirty heart. I struggled to be happy, but I had no peace and there was no joy in my heart or in my home on earth. Then, one day a man came to me and shared with me how I could take three simple steps and have a new heart, a happy home on earth, and an eternal home in heaven. It changed my life and I want to share it with you so you, too, can have this joy and peace."

5. Central Content: Three Simple Steps

THE GOAL OF THE MESSAGE - As we enter the central content part of the Gospel presentation, we are aiming at clarity in the message and a change in the hearer's life. The message must be communicated well to them and clearly understood. There must be no confusion in their minds as to what they heard. When the meeting is over, every person should have a clear understanding and a solid assurance of their eternal destiny, whether it is positive or negative. When the message is concluded, every person should know for sure they are going to heaven because they have definitely turned to God and received Christ in their heart, or they should know for sure they are NOT going to heaven because they have rejected Him. In either case, there should be no confusion in the mind of the hearer. There should be no question unanswered. If the message is presented clearly, relevantly, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, there won't be.

Once a person has received the Gospel, understood it, and made a decision (one way or the other) based upon what he understands, you can say he has been evangelized, even though he may not yet be converted. It is not our job to convert; only the Holy Spirit can do

that. But, it is our job to communicate the truth clearly. Our hope, prayer, and ultimate goal, of course, is that every person believe the Gospel and be truly born again.

We should preach for change. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (2 Corinthians 5:17). So, a word of caution; make sure you are preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, not in the power of human persuasion or good salesmanship. Do not manipulate your audience through emotions or scare tactics. If a person responds to that kind of appeal, it can do irreparable damage in their life.

When you present your message, make sure you do so in the power of the Holy Spirit. Make sure you give the true Gospel, that you preach the cross. Make sure you are inviting people to respond to Jesus, not to you. Preach for real God-sent supernatural change in the person’s life. The goal of our message is changed lives and real fruit for the glory of God.

A. *Keep it Simple* - The Gospel is powerful and profound, but it is not complicated. In its simplest form, it reduces down to this: 1. Every person is separated from God by sin, inherited and personal, and there is nothing any person can do to solve the problem, 2. God provided the solution for this sin problem by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and pay for the sin of the entire human race, and 3. Every person must make a personal choice to receive or reject salvation through Christ.

B. *Keep it Short* - When presenting the Gospel message, the speaker should add only enough other material to these points to insure that the hearer clearly understands and can make a rational decision, based upon the information he has received. The presentation of the central content should take only a few minutes. Many times a preacher feels compelled to go on and on and use many illustrations. That is usually be-

cause he is proud of his preaching ability, or he doesn't have confidence in the message. But the Gospel needs no help. In Romans 1:16, Paul refers to the Gospel as "*the power of God unto salvation*". The word *power* comes from the Greek word *dunamis*, from which the English word *dynamite* is derived. You don't have to help dynamite. All you have to do is light it, get out of the way, and let it work. The same is true for the Gospel. It will work all by itself, if we just put it out there. Our "words of wisdom", flowery speech, sad stories, and lengthy illustrations only make the presentation too long and runs the risk of losing the audience. Don't force the audience to search through high weeds to find the treasure.

C. *Keep It Sweet* - Let me say again, preach with compassion, and do not condemn. Remember you are not a judge; you are a messenger. You are one beggar telling another where to find bread. You are not an authority on holiness and righteousness, you are a depraved sinner saved by the blood of Jesus. You are not superior to your audience, you are their debtor. (Romans 1:14), Everything you have, you received from God (1 Corinthians 4:7). When you look out on your audience, look into their eyes and consider the struggles they are going through, and the hell they are going to, without Christ. Look to Jesus on the cross, and see Him shedding His blood for them. See how He loves them. Look at them individually, and consider that each one was, at one time, a little child with so much potential and so much hope. So many have lost all hope and live under the weight of despair, loneliness, and fear. Ask the Holy Spirit to break your heart for these people. They may not be impressed by your preaching, but they will be drawn to your compassion. If you don't love these people before you preach to them, you should by the time you finish. If you don't, you should probably not be

doing this type of ministry. Jesus said in John 3:17, “*For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.*”

THREE SIMPLE STEPS

The “Three Simple Steps” (Problem - Solution - Choice) will easily fit into the context of any message or illustration. Since we have begun this message with the theme of the home, we will continue with that.

Step One - We Must Face the Truth About Ourselves:

We are born with a dirty heart

- A. *All are Sinners* - “In order for us to have a good life, a happy home, and be assured of an eternal home in heaven, there are three things we must do, three steps we must all take. They are not the kind you take with your feet but the kind you take with your heart. First, we must face the truth about ourselves. The truth about every one of us here today is that we are all born with a big problem, a condition, a thing called sin. We are born with the wrong kind of heart. Now we all know what sin is. It’s when we do or say or even think something, and then in our heart we know it is wrong. We feel guilty, or ashamed, or we are afraid we will be found out. For instance, if you tell a lie, that is a sin. Or if you steal, or get angry and speak unkind words, or commit immorality, or get drunk on alcohol, or even have bad feelings toward some one, all these things are sin. How do you know? Because there is something inside you that tells you. You always know when you break the laws of God. There is not any one of us here today that has never told a lie or gotten angry. God says we have all sinned, and we all know we have.”
- B. *What Sin Does* - “My friends, sin does two things. First, it destroys our lives on this earth. If you see a person whose life is ruined, it is because of sin. It is a powerful, destructive

force working in every one of us. Second, it separates us from God in heaven. Heaven is a perfect place. There is no sin in heaven, and God will not allow us to take it there. He keeps a clean house. So we can see that sin is a huge problem, and every one of us has it. But where did the problem come from?"

C. *Where Did Sin Come From?* - "It started a long time ago. When God first made this world, there was no sin. He made it perfect in every way. Then He created Adam and Eve and gave them a beautiful home called Eden. You may know the story already. God gave them a clean heart, and they walked and talked with God every day. But something went wrong. Satan, the enemy of God and the enemy of you and me, came to Adam and Eve and lied to them. In essence he told them, 'I can give you a better life, I can do more for you than God can. He doesn't really love you. Why don't you follow me?' Of course it was a lie, but he was very persuasive. So, they yielded to the temptation, turned away from God, and followed the devil. Instantly, their clean hearts became dirty, filled with sin, and they became guilty. God had to put them away from the Garden, because sin cannot dwell in the presence of Holy God. He still loved them, but He could no longer be with them. They lost their beautiful home and their relationship with God. It is a sad story, but it doesn't end there. No, it continues on to you and me."

D. *Continuation of Sin* - "You see, Adam and Eve had children. But instead of being born with a clean heart, they were born with a dirty sinful heart. and out of their heart they sinned against God. So sin passed from generation to generation, all the way down to you and me. Thousands of years later I was born in America with a dirty heart, and out of my heart, I sinned against God. You were born in your country with a dirty sinful heart, and just like me, you have sinned against

God. We might look different on the outside, but inside we are all the same. We all share the same problem, and we must all answer the same question. How can a person with a dirty sinful heart, go to a heaven where there is no sin? He can't; it is impossible. So, what can we do? Is there a solution for the problem? Yes, and God provided the solution Himself.

Step Two - We Must Face the Truth About God's Solution:

The Solution is His Son, Jesus Christ

“God said that the only solution for our sin is that it must be paid for by the shedding of innocent blood. But, whose blood? The one who dies for our sin must be sinless himself ; he must have a clean heart. Who could that be? Where on this earth could a perfect, sinless man be found? Nowhere. There is no such man, because all men come from Adam and Eve, and all men are sinners. So who will it be? God provided the man Himself - His own Son, Jesus. God sent His Son from heaven to earth, to shed His innocent blood and pay for our sin. Jesus became a human being. He was born through the Virgin Mary. He had an earthly mother, but His Father was God Himself. Jesus was born with a clean heart, the Son of God, God in human flesh, and in all of His life He never sinned.

Then at God's appointed time, He allowed His perfect Son to be nailed to a cross. He did no wrong; He committed no crime; He had no sin. And yet, there He was, hanging on a cross like a common criminal, shedding His blood and paying for the sin of the world. As Jesus hung upon the cross, He took upon Himself all the sin of the world. And the blood that fell to the ground that day, innocent blood, that blood paid for our sin. When Jesus hung His head and died, God the Father said to the whole world, ‘Now you can come. Now you can have a clean heart, a new life, forgiveness of sin, and a home in heaven.’ All you have to do is just take three simple steps.”

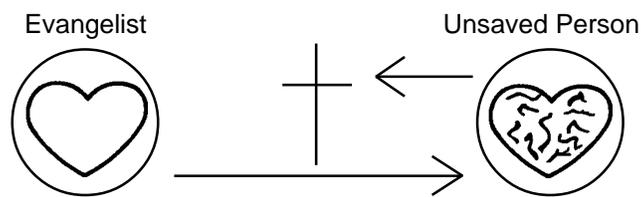
Step Three - We Must Face the Truth About Eternity

There are Two Choices, Heaven or Hell

“Friends, we must face the truth about eternity. There are two places we can go when we die, heaven or hell. God loves us and wants us to be in heaven with Him forever, and you can be if you are willing to **admit** to God that you are a sinner. No excuses, no denial, just admit it to God. Then you must choose to **believe** on Jesus, that He is the Son of God who came from heaven and died on the cross to pay for your sin. He is the only way to heaven. Then **call** upon Him; ask Him to come into your heart. If I came to your home tonight and knocked on your door, you would see that it is me, and you would make a decision to either let me come in or to send me away. If you said come, I would come. But if you said go, then I would go. I would only come by invitation. So it is with Jesus. He wants to come into your heart, but He is not an intruder. He will only come if you ask Him. Friends, the only way for you to have a home in heaven is for Him to have a home in your heart.

When Jesus died, they took Him from the cross and buried Him in a tomb. Three days later He arose from the dead, victorious over sin and death, and walked on this earth. Then He ascended into heaven and is there right now, waiting for you and me. He is preparing a home for us, but we cannot go with a dirty heart. We must have a clean heart. How can we do that? By taking three simple steps: **Admit** you are a sinner, **Believe** on Jesus, and **Call** upon Him to come into your heart. But, how do you do that? You do it through a simple prayer and I want to help you do it, right now.”

III. INVITATION DRAW THE NET



The Invitation is a High Pressure Moment

In Amsterdam in 1986, Dr. Billy Graham related his own experience pertaining to giving the invitation. He said, “Every time I give an invitation, I am in an attitude of prayer inwardly, because I know I am totally dependent on God. Incidentally, this is the moment I feel emotionally, physically, and spiritually drained. This is the part of the evangelistic service that often exhausts me physically. I think one of the reasons may be the terrible spiritual battle going on in the hearts of so many people. With me, it becomes a spiritual battle of such proportions that sometimes I feel almost faint. There is an inward groaning in prayer that I cannot possibly put into words. I am sure every true evangelist senses this.” (Douglas 1989, p.173)

I can personally identify with what Dr. Graham said. I always feel more “pressure” during the invitation than at any other point in the message. During the message I feel urgency, but during the invitation I feel an intense pressure, like a struggle, because it is a struggle with the powers of darkness. There are times when the pressure and the struggle is so intense that it becomes exhausting, and afterward I feel depleted. I have had occasions, after the invitation was finished, I would be so emotionally drained that for twenty or thirty minutes I could not talk without breaking into tears. Sometimes, after the invitation is over, you will feel as though you have been in hand to hand combat. That’s because you have been. You will sometimes feel totally emptied because of the literal power of God having flowed through you during that time. The invitation is hard work.

The invitation is a faith issue. It should be given with an attitude of believing that God is going to work. It was said of evangelist D.L. Moody, “He expects when he goes to preach, that souls will be saved, and the result is that God honors his faith.” (Moody 1900, p.168)

In Luke 5:4, Jesus instructed a discouraged Peter, “*Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.*” Jesus could have ended his instruction with “let down your nets.” But, he added, “for a catch.” He was saying, “Do what I tell you, expecting results.” He told Peter to cast the net by faith.

At first, Peter objected in unbelief, but he rebounded and said, “at thy word, I will.” Our invitation to people to be saved is not based upon how great our message is, but on the word of God.

THE INVITATION IS BASED ON THE GOSPEL ALONE

Not Emotion, Sensation, or Manipulation

The goal of the evangelist should be to see people genuinely converted as a result of the Holy Spirit doing the real work of conviction, a work that only He can do. In order for this to happen, the **real** Gospel must be preached. People need to fully understand that they are separated from God by sin, that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the only solution to that problem, and there is a choice that must be made. It is the preaching of the cross and the shed blood of Jesus that the Holy Spirit uses to convict and convert - nothing else. If the invitation is given on any other basis, it cannot be regarded as legitimate, and may very likely result in confusion and false “decisions”.

A person making a decision for Christ should do so because he has heard the Gospel and is convicted and convinced by the Holy Spirit that he should respond to it. The appeal to do so should not be based on emotion. It is common and acceptable for a person to experience emotion (joy, gratitude, tears) as a result of truly receiving Christ, but emotion should never be the **motivation** for his decision. Some preachers try to frighten people into making a decision for Christ, but that is the wrong approach. The Spirit of God does not do that. Others try to persuade people with promises of health, prosperity, and freedom from pain and problems in life. The Holy Spirit does not do that, either. He uses only the truth of the Gospel message.

John 6:44 says, “*No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*” The word *draw* in this verse means to *draw by inward power, by Divine impulse*. The basis of a person’s decision for Jesus should be an internal motivation, not external. His response should be to the drawing of the Holy Spirit, not to emotional appeal, sensational stories, and/or psychological manipulation. The Scripture goes on to say in verse 45b, “*Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the*

Father, cometh unto Me.” The word *heard* here means *to understand*. The word *learned* also means to understand, but it goes further to indicate an understanding that results in change. The question is this: through your presentation of the Gospel, did your hearers *learn of the Father* in such a way that the Holy Spirit could use the message to bring real conviction in their heart?

Let me illustrate how easy it is to use an emotional appeal in your message with this true story. One day, I heard an evangelist speak to a group of students in the high school that was operated by the church where I was on staff. He gave his testimony, including many emotionally charged stories about his childhood. His stories had many students in tears. Then he gave an invitation to “come forward to accept Christ”. Many students came, and I had the job of counseling some of them. In doing so, I discovered that not a single one of those kids had any idea as to why they had come forward and responded. They had been moved emotionally, but not spiritually. They had not “learned of the Father”, and they had not been drawn by the Holy Spirit. Thankfully, many did accept Christ through the personal witness of the counselors, but it had nothing to do with the message of the evangelist. Sadly, he left there that day thinking he had done a good job and had been used of God.

In his book, “Love Them In”, Stanley Gundry stated that in D.L. Moody’s invitations, “Emotions were to be subdued. Feelings would not substitute for belief. A person was to be brought to Christ, in Moody’s words, ‘coolly, calmly, and intelligently.’” It was Moody’s desire that they not be subjected to high pressure during that time. Moody said, “I never would get a man to take a position beyond the leading of the Spirit, or beyond his own conviction.” According to Gundry, Moody cautioned against people being led by “enthusiastic mood, rather than the Spirit of God.” He rejected gimmicks and scare tactics as a means of conversion. He said, “We cannot scare people into repentance, they must be born in, not scared in. . . The only work that is going to stand for eternity is the work of the Holy Ghost, and not by any one of us. If He does not do it, they won’t be converted.” (Gundry 1976, p.81)

If you have ever seen the invitation during a Billy Graham crusade, you will notice that Dr. Graham tells the people, from the very beginning, that he

is going to ask them to make a decision. Then, when the time comes, he moves from the message into the invitation by simply asking them to respond to the Gospel. He is very calm. His tone is conversational. He does not yell and plead. He simply sets forth the call, bows his head to pray, and waits for the people to come. What is Dr. Graham doing in that moment? He is giving room and time for the Holy Spirit to work. At that moment, he has done all he can do and all he SHOULD do. Now, it is up to God.

In regard to the invitation, Dr. Graham said, “Without the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit there would be no such thing as conversion. It is the Holy Spirit Who brings conviction of sin. He applies the truth of the Gospel. It is the Holy Spirit Who brings new birth and new life. Jesus told Nicodemus that unless a man is born from above, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:5). This great truth should make us more and more dependent on God in our evangelism, knowing that ultimately it is God Who changes lives, and that we are helpless apart from Him.” (Douglas 1984, p.172).

In my life I have had two good teachers regarding the art of manipulation. The first came before I was saved. I was the leader of a Rock band. During those days, I learned a lot about manipulating an audience. We used to plan our shows in such a way as to be able to predict, very closely, what the mood and reaction of the crowd would be at a given time. It was all part of putting on a successful performance. Then, after I was saved and after I went to Bible College, I attended a university. There, I majored in behavioral psychology. During those days I learned even more about how you can manipulate people to gain a desired response. So, the combination of those two learning experiences taught me a lot about how to manipulate a crowd. But, they also taught me how to NOT do it as well. I’m thankful to have had those experiences, because it put in me a keen sensitivity against doing anything that might distract from the work of the Holy Spirit in a Gospel meeting.

I have seen all sorts of tactics used by evangelists to elicit a response from people during the invitation. They may do it out of a need to feel successful, or to elevate their ego. It may be for financial reasons. But, whatever the reason, it is wrong. Romans 1:16 says that the Gospel is “*the power of God unto*

salvation”, not our power of persuasion or salesmanship. A Gospel invitation is a call to be saved, to be born again, not to be delivered or filled with the Spirit, or to be healed, or to have a better life. As evangelists, our job is to preach the pure Gospel message, to give a pure Gospel invitation, and to depend upon the Holy Spirit to do the work of salvation in the hearts of the people. Our job is to “deliver the mail.” After that, the rest is up to God.

The work of salvation, of conversion, happens on the inside, in the heart. It happens when a person’s spirit is brought to life by the entrance of the Holy Spirit. It has nothing to do with outward action or performance. But, even though this is true, Jesus always called upon people to come, to give outward expression to the inward transaction of turning to God through faith in Christ. When we give an invitation, we are giving a person the opportunity to transact with God by responding to the Holy Spirit, through prayer, and then to give outward expression to that transaction. The following points deal with how to take the hearers of the message through that process.

1. A Delicate Process and a Critical Moment - Now, before we get into the actual wording of the invitation, let me say a word about it. I prefer the word *invitation* rather than *altar call*. We are not calling people to an altar; we are calling them to a decision. We are not asking them to come or to do. We are asking them to choose. That choosing is done in the heart, where they are. We will ask them to come, but only after they have chosen to ask Jesus into their heart.

People do not need to confuse receiving Christ with a physical action, such as “coming forward to be saved.” Many evangelists use this approach, but I prefer to let people pray to receive Jesus where they are, seated or standing, then invite them to come forward in public profession of the decision they just made. In many settings, it is not possible to have people come forward, because there are too many of them and there is no space for them to stand. It is not necessary for a person to commit a physical act (such as coming forward) in order to be saved, but it is necessary for them to make a transaction in their heart. However, this being said, it is helpful to the person

responding to the Gospel to **do** something in addition to praying the prayer in his heart. Some kind of action, in connection with the prayer, helps the person “nail down” his decision and remember. It may be just a lifting of the hand, or standing up, or actually coming to stand in front of the platform. I often have students write the date they received Christ in their notebooks. It should be made clear, however, that it is not the action that saves, but the transaction in the heart.

The invitation is the most delicate part of the entire presentation. This is the most likely place for satan to interrupt. If there is going to be a disturbance in the meeting, it will most likely be during the invitation. The preacher should even expect it. This is where the battle is won or lost. It requires more skill and sensitivity to give the invitation than it does to preach the message.

Very often, when I am teaching some one how to preach an evangelistic message, I will let them do everything right up to the invitation, then I will step in and do it myself. The reason is, they will learn how to give the message before they will learn how to give the invitation. The most critical moments of flying an airplane are the take off and the landing, especially the landing. The same is true in preaching the Gospel. One important point to remember is that if you have not done an adequate job in presenting the message, you cannot make up for it in the invitation. You cannot re-preach the message here. So, do it right in the first place. Make sure you have given the audience enough information to justify giving the invitation at all. And make sure you have done it in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Like Driving a Car - Preaching the message is like driving a car. When you begin, you start the engine (*Opening Comments and Introduction*). Then you accelerate to your driving speed (*Illustration and Scripture*). Then in the *Central Content* you cruise along at a comfortable speed until you come to the *Invitation*. The invitation is like pulling the car into its parking place, and in order to do that, you have to slow down. Now is the time to slow down and possibly lower your

voice. It is a time for intense focus and reliance upon the Holy Spirit. It is a time for deliberate concentration. Handle this moment with extreme care. The whole meeting stands or falls right here.

Usually, as I move into the invitation, I breathe a prayer to God, “Lord, help me do this.” I become very focused. I realize I am in a battle, and in my spirit, I assume total authority over the powers of darkness in the Name of Jesus. I become very methodical. I’m on the alert for disturbance and prepared to deal with it if necessary.

3. **Crossing Over** - You have told your listeners what they must do, but now you must help them do it, step by careful step. They cannot do it alone. Now it is time to call for a verdict and step out of hell into heaven. Picture in your mind a raging river, and across the river are small, slippery stepping stones. It is your task to take the audience by the hand and gently, carefully help them across. As you enter the invitation time, you are stepping away from the riverbank onto the slippery stones. Do not get distracted. Maintain concentration. Satan will do all he can to disrupt this process, so be careful.
4. **Bowing Heads to Pray** - Now, picking up from where we left off, the invitation part of the message should go something like this. “I want to help you take those three steps, but first I want to pray for you. So I am going to ask every one listening to bow your heads and join me for a moment of prayer. Wherever you are standing or sitting, just bow your head. Thank you very much. (*Heads are bowed*) ‘Dear God, I thank You for these wonderful people, and I ask You to help them to open their hearts to You.’ (**Do not say amen.**) Now with our heads bowed, we are going to take the three steps together. Right now, Jesus is going to come into your heart and give you a clean heart and a home in heaven. All you have to do is **Admit** you are a sinner, **Believe** on Jesus, and **Call** upon Him. We’re going to do that right now. If you want Jesus to come into your heart, you just repeat this prayer **silently** after me, not out loud, just in your heart, just between you and God. The person next to you will not hear you, but Jesus will.”

5. **The Prayer** - “Are you ready? Here’s the prayer, repeat silently after me.

Now, lets begin, ‘Dear God, (*allow time after each phrase for people to repeat*) I am a sinner. I have a dirty heart. Jesus, I want to go to heaven when I die. I believe you died on the cross and paid for my sin. Lord, I ask You to come into my heart. I receive You, and thank You for coming into my heart and taking away my sin. Now, I know I have a home in heaven and I belong to You’.” (**Do Not Say Amen**).

6. **Lifting Hands** - “Now, with everyone’s head still bowed, I want to have a closing prayer of thanksgiving. I want to thank Jesus for coming into your heart. But I need your help, because I don’t know who prayed the prayer and who did not. So, I am going to ask you to do something for me right now. If you just repeated that prayer after me, and you meant it with all your heart, I am going to ask you to let me know by just lifting up your hand. Yes, that’s right, if you prayed the prayer, just hold it up real high. Yes, thank you. Just lift it up and keep it raised while I pray and thank Jesus for coming into your heart. ‘Lord, I thank You for these uplifted hands and changed lives. Thank You for coming into their hearts. Now, Lord, help them live for You. Bless them Lord and help them to grow. In Jesus` Name, Amen’.”

7. **Coming Forward** - “Now, for those of you who just said ‘yes’ to Jesus, I want to congratulate you. That is the most important decision you will ever make. And now I want to ask you to do something. You see, you just became a child of God, our new brother or sister in Christ. Now we are in the same family and we want to have a family gathering, right here. I want to have a special dedication prayer for those of you who just asked Jesus into your heart. So, I am going to ask those of you who prayed the prayer to come from where you are, and join me right here. Yes, just come, and when we are all here, I am going to lead us in a prayer of dedication, and then you will be on your way home.” (*Everyone is gathered in front now.*)

“Thank you all so much for coming. Now, let’s pray, ‘Lord, thank You for these who have said yes to You. We dedicate their new life to

You and commit them to Your care. Help them to grow in Your Word and find a good church. Help them to tell others about You. Lord, bless their homes and families. Meet their needs and solve their problems as only You can. Lord, fill them with Your Spirit and teach them to live by faith. In Jesus' Name, Amen'."

- 8. Conclusion** - The meeting should be concluded by sharing growth steps with the respondents as a group. Then, if counselors are available, they should deal with respondents individually or at least in smaller groups. If literature is available, now is the time to distribute it. If there are local churches nearby and the pastors are available, introduce them to the group. The counseling/follow-up process will vary widely depending on the type, size, and location of the meeting. The goal, however, should be to do all in our power to insure that each person who prays to receive Jesus has opportunity to continue to learn and grow in his new found faith.

VARIOUS WAYS TO GIVE THE INVITATION

There are many different ways to handle the invitation, and over the years, I have used all of them. There is not a right way or a wrong way. The important thing is that you choose a way that is appropriate to the situation you are in. Every Gospel message should be presented in a way that calls for a verdict, a choice or a "stepping over the line," and a way to indicate openly that a decision to receive Christ is being made. To stop short of giving an invitation following a presentation of the Gospel is equivalent to spiritual abortion. It is leading people out on the bridge over the river, and then cutting the bridge out from under them. The evangelist must take them all the way across, or his job is not finished. Dr. Graham points out, "The call for decision - the invitation - is not something just added to the end of an evangelistic sermon as an after thought. Instead, the whole sermon leads toward it. It is not only valid to issue an invitation, it is essential. It may take many forms, but if people hear our message and go away without having been confronted with the clear-cut call, '*What think ye of Christ,*' (Matthew 22:42), then we have failed in our

proclamation of the Gospel. May God help us to make that call to decision clearly, effectively, and boldly.” (Douglas 1984, p.173)

Raising Hands and Coming Forward: This is the method I use most in the kinds of open-air meetings we have talked about in this material; in a market place, bus station, or street corner. It often takes time, skill, and effort to turn the crowd into a stationary, orderly, listening audience that is focused on the preacher. I have found that asking people initially to step away from where they are and come to the platform, has the great potential of disrupting their concentration and breaking the flow and intensity of the invitation. Also, in a market, there will be vendors who cannot leave their stalls. I have mentioned several times during the message that I am going to ask them to make a decision. Now, that time has come. I ask them to bow their heads where they are, and let me pray for them. Then I tell them, “with our heads bowed, I’m going to lead you in a prayer to take the three simple steps, to receive Jesus in your heart.” Then I have them repeat the prayer (short and methodical) silently after me. I ask people to pray silently because I want them to make a private transaction between them and God. And, in the case of young people, I do not want them to pray a prayer just because they hear their neighbor doing so. I don’t want them to feel pressured to conform to what’s going on around them. As I stated on the previous pages, I ask them to let me know they have prayed the prayer by lifting their hands. Then I ask those who prayed the prayer, to come and stand with me in front of the platform so that I can pray a prayer of dedication with them. After they come, I have a prayer for them, and then have someone share with them how to grow in Christ.

Raising Hands Only: There are many situations in which praying the prayer where they are and raising their hand, is all they CAN do because of limited space or other restrictions. I have preached in large schools where as many as four or five thousand students would pray to receive Christ, and it was impossible for them to come forward. In a prison setting, the authorities will not allow inmates to move from where they are. In some cases, people are not ABLE to move, such as a hospital. Again, each is situation different, and we must be flexible.

Raising Hand Followed by Standing Up: There are occasions, however, in which I ask the people to not only raise their hand, but to go a step further and stand to their feet in public profession of the decision they just made - such as in a school. It sometimes helps people to DO something physical in declaring their decision. It helps them to publicly confirm their decision.

Just Look Up at Me: I have been in some settings where the restrictions were so tight, all I could do was have the people bow their heads in prayer and then ask them to just lift their eyes and look at me if they prayed. In some cases, such as a predominantly Muslim school, you can't even go that far. I just lead them in the prayer while they are looking at me and do nothing else. I leave it with God. What I know, though, is that IF they really accepted Christ, in time they WILL make it known, possibly at great cost.

Remain Behind: Sometimes, I just ask people to pray the prayer, and do nothing else until the meeting is over. Then I ask those who prayed to remain behind as everyone is dismissed. I have used this method in schools in the US, as well as Hong Kong, where there is a great sensitivity to public display.

Filling Out Cards: In some instances I have just passed out cards to be filled out at the end of the event, such as a dinner or banquet.

All or Part of the Above - Sometimes these methods can be combined. We must assess each situation and determine the best approach. The question is: what is the best way, in this event, to bring people to a point of decision and to solidify that decision in their heart? What is the best method to give them a solid assurance that they have received Christ and now belong to Him?

Remember, whatever method you use, be **clear** and **decisive**. The people should understand exactly what you are asking them to do. There should be no confusion. Do not make it complicated. Be **patient**. Give the Holy Spirit time to do His work. Don't rush it. Be **authoritative**. The invitation should not have the tone of an option to be considered, but more of a command to be obeyed. But, the command is coming from God, not you. Be **methodical** and **focused**. Remember to think of it as leading the people over a narrow bridge across a raging river, or think of it as delivering a baby. Be deliberate and careful. It is a delicate process, and satan wants to disrupt it.

As I said before, if the meeting is going to be disturbed, it will most likely be at the time of the invitation. The drunk guy who has stood quietly and listened the whole time, will now, at the beginning of the invitation, choose to start making a spectacle of himself. There has been a big truck parked nearby during this street meeting, and it has not moved. But, now, just as the invitation begins, the driver will decide to start it up and drive right through the crowd. The teachers in the school have sat quietly during the entire presentation to the students. But, now, just as you are about to have them pray, a teacher will get up, come up beside you, and say she needs to make an announcement! YES, I have actually had all these things happen, and many more! There is no end to what satan will do to stop the invitation. It is during the invitation that the battle really heats up, and we must be prepared for it. But, when these things happen, do not get rattled or upset. Do not lose your focus or your determination to see it through. Just remain calm and, when you can, continue. If you don't get rattled, the audience won't either.

We all love to quote Romans 10:13, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* That is true, but there is also another truth; in order to call, they must have an opportunity to call. That's why Paul continues, *“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and, how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and, how shall they hear without a preacher?”* Our job, our calling as evangelists, is to preach the Gospel to the lost and then give them an opportunity to respond to it.

There was only one time in the ministry of evangelist D. L. Moody, that he did not give an invitation after he preached. It was in his church on Sunday night, October 8, 1871. Later that night, the Great Chicago Fire began. Many people died and went into eternity without having had an opportunity to respond to his message. It was the last time he preached without giving an invitation. Will the next time you preach the Gospel be the LAST time those listening have an opportunity to respond?

Preach the Gospel, and Invite People to Come to Christ!



Music to draw the crowd



School in Nigeria



Preaching the Gospel in a slum in Nairobi, Kenya



Street meeting in Congo (DRC)



Street meeting invitation in Kenya



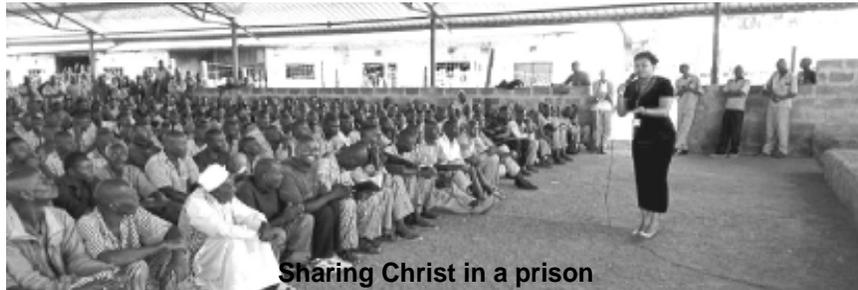
Preaching for a verdict in Kenya



Preaching at a refugee camp

IV. Application - Do the Work

- 1. Public Place and Institutional Evangelism**
- 2. One-on-One Personal Evangelism**
- 3. Mobilizing Your Church for Evangelism**



Sharing Christ in a prison



Personal Evangelism



Teaching the church to share one-on-one

1. PUBLIC PLACE AND INSTITUTIONAL EVANGELISM

OPEN-AIR FILM SHOW

The Film

There are several films available, but the one we prefer and consider the best to use is the “Jesus Film” produced by Campus Crusade for Christ. It is available in multiple languages through the Jesus Film Project

The Venue

The great thing about using a movie for evangelism is that it can be shown indoors (day or night) or outdoors in the evening after dark. If it is indoors, the audience will likely be seated and more comfortable, but an outdoor venue is usually more effective in reaching the unsaved. That is what we will focus on here. If the venue is indoors, then prior advertising will likely be necessary. But, if it is in the open air, (more of a *we go to them* setting) it can be done with or without prior announcement. The need for prior announcement will be determined by whether the spot selected is in a more isolated place, such as a residential neighborhood, or where there is a lot of pedestrian traffic flow. If it is in an isolated place, then prior announcement throughout the neighborhood will help increase attendance. It is better to find an area where there are not competing televisions in every house. An ideal evening venue is a rural village where there are no televisions and little outdoor light. In a more urban setting, an ideal venue is along a roadside where there is a lot of late afternoon pedestrian traffic flow - people walking home from work, etc.

Set Up

THE SCREEN should be placed in a spot where it can easily be seen from the road but far enough back to allow space for a crowd to gather and stand. It should be high enough, and large enough, to be seen by the entire crowd. The larger the screen, the better. I have seen some situations where the crowd would be so large that they would stand on both sides of the screen, but it is better for them to all be on one side if possible. Setting the screen facing the road will

normally prevent people from standing behind it. It must also be in a place where it is dark enough to be seen. Take careful note of lighting before you set up. Also, take note of competing activity and noise.

SOUND SYSTEM and PROJECTOR - You must have them and preferably good ones. There are all kinds of makes and models of sound systems and video projectors that can be used. But at the risk of stating the obvious, for the best results, it is better to use a bright, high lumens projector with a loud clear sound system. The quality of the entire presentation should be as high as possible. The speakers should be mounted on either side of the screen and high enough to project the sound over the heads of the audience, which will most likely be standing. The speakers can be placed on top of a tall vehicle if you have it, or they can be mounted on stands. But, get them as high off the ground as possible.

LIGHTS are necessary for the preaching time. They can be hand-held or mounted on stands, but they must be movable and as bright as possible. They will be needed to shine on the preacher while he is speaking, as well as on the audience - especially during the invitation. The audience must be able to see the preacher. Also, the audience is much more likely to listen to the preacher and respond if they are not standing in the dark. If half the audience is in the light and half in the dark, there will always be a greater response from those in the light - always! So, make sure the entire audience is in the light. If people can hide in the dark (spiritually and physically), they will tend to do so.

PROCEDURE - The actual film should be shown after dark, of course, but preparation should begin before dark. The spot should be selected, the team assembled, the screen put up, sound and lights in place and tested. In many instances it is helpful to turn on the sound system an hour or two before dark and play music and announce the film time. Quite often, people will go home and eat and then come back for the film.

The film should begin at dark. The crowd will continue to gather as the movie is playing; that is unavoidable. Then, at some point, the crowd will become as large as it is going to be. When that happens, the film should be stopped for the preaching of the message. If the timing works out, a very good

place to stop the film is at the beginning of the crucifixion scene. Pause the film with the scene of Jesus on the cross still on the screen. Leave it there while the message is being presented. That visual image is powerful! The lights should come on at the exact instant that the film is paused. There must be no gap, no dead time, between stopping the film and the preacher speaking. An announcement should be made immediately that the film will resume in just a few minutes. Lights should be turned on the instant the movie stops and should be on the speaker and the audience. As soon as the light comes on, the preacher should say something like this to the crowd, *“Thank you all for coming to watch the film. I hope you are enjoying it. It will start again in about five minutes. Please stay – the best is yet to come! But, before we continue, I want to tell you why you see Jesus on the cross, and I want to share with you quickly how you can take three simple steps to have Him in your heart.”*

At this point, you share the “three simple steps” - quickly and to the point. You don't have a lot of time. After you have shared the Gospel message, you give the invitation the same way you do in any other kind of meeting. Ask them to bow their heads, pray for them (do not say amen), lead them in a silent prayer to receive Christ (do not say amen), then ask them with heads bowed to raise their hands if they prayed the prayer. With hands raised, thank Jesus for coming into their heart. Ask them to raise their heads and welcome them to the family of God. Then tell them, *“This Jesus that you see on the screen is now living in your heart, and you will be with him in heaven. Now we are going to continue with the movie.”* At this point, you might also want to give some brief instruction on how to begin the Christian life. If there is a pastor on hand or a good church near by, you may want to refer them to that church. You may also tell them that when the movie is over, they are welcomed to stay and talk to a team member about their relationship to God.

SCHOOL EVANGELISM

School meetings come in all shapes and sizes, ranging from small rural village schools in east Africa with a hundred students to huge city schools in India with thousands of students. There are no two exactly alike. Each one has

its own “personality” (shaped largely by the administration) and its own needs and challenges. Some would be classified as poor and some affluent. Some are public and some are private. Some are made up of predominately one religion and some are mixed. There are all girl schools, all male schools, and some co-ed. There are boarding schools and day schools. In some countries they have military schools. The level of discipline and control varies from one to the other, ranging from very strict in India and Korea, to very little in Brazil. One thing that is constant from one to the other, however, is that each school is inhabited by a group of young human beings who need salvation through Jesus Christ. In every school, the students are concerned about three things related to the present; their appearance, their performance, and their status: APS. They are concerned about how they look to their fellow classmates. They are concerned about how they perform in the classroom but equally concerned about social events and the sports field. And then, there is the issue of status - how they measure up, socially and economically, in relation to other students. This is especially true among high school students, more so than younger grades. They are also concerned about their future, about the kind of life they hope to have someday. However, they are generally not very concerned about eternity. It is often necessary for the evangelist to initiate that concern through his message. Remembering these things about your audience will help in presenting the Gospel to them.

There are basically two ways to conduct school meetings: either in assemblies where the whole student body comes together at one time or by going from classroom to classroom. I personally prefer assemblies, because it enables the evangelist to reach more people in a shorter amount of time. It is also psychologically beneficial to the students, in that they are generally more comfortable being part of a larger group than a small one.

Permission and Preparation

From country to country, and from school to school, there are varying degrees of receptivity by the administration to the idea of presenting the Gospel to the students. In some countries, it is absolutely forbidden. In others it is

permissible, but conditionally. In some countries the government public schools will not allow it, but the private schools will. Many schools will allow a team to come on the basis of providing entertainment (usually music) for the students, followed by a brief Gospel presentation. Others require a secular program of “guidance and counseling”, dealing with issues such as drugs, alcoholism, immorality, etc., which can then be followed by a Gospel presentation. We have gained access to hundreds of schools around the world by explaining that our organization “works with parents and educators by presenting a program to the students which helps them establish a ‘foundation for a successful life’.”

In arranging a school evangelism event, it will be necessary to visit the school and meet with the Principal, face to face, or with someone who has the authority to grant permission. There should be a clear understanding as to what you intend to do. You need to have it clear on the front end that you have permission to mention the name of Christ in your presentation. You should establish a set date and time and, if possible, obtain a phone number with which you can follow up before the day arrives to be sure they remember you are coming. You should be sure that all the administration is aware of the meeting. You do not want to arrive to find your contact person absent, and no one else has been told to expect you. Also, establish a time frame; how much time do you have from start to finish? If you can get your permission in writing, that is even better.

Try to learn as much about the students as you can before the event. Ask the administration to tell you about their kids. It will not only help you to become familiar with the students, but it will let the administrator know you have a genuine interest in their students. In other words, this is not just another meeting to you. Find out where they live. What is the predominant religion among the student body? What sports activities are they involved in? Has anyone been to this school before sharing the Gospel? How much do they already know about Jesus and the Bible? Is there a “shared life experience” among them that you can play off of in presenting the Gospel? The more you know, the better you will be able to relate to them.

Know about the physical arrangements before you go. Will the meeting be indoors in an auditorium or outdoors? Who makes that decision? Will they be seated or standing? Will they be in the sun or in the shade? Will you need a sound system? Do you need a generator? You need to go prepared to adjust to changes in the schedule and in the arrangements, because they often occur. You thought you were going to get the whole school, but you arrive and discover that they are only releasing grade nine and ten and not eleven and twelve. You are disappointed and frustrated, but don't let it show. Just roll with it. The time agreed upon was 1:00 pm, but they changed the lunch hour from 12:00 to 1:00, and now you have to wait an hour. Roll with it. Use the hour to pray before the meeting starts. You arrived to find that they changed exam day to TODAY, meaning your program has been cancelled. But, they have offered to reschedule for another day. Graciously accept it, and roll with it. None of these things can occur without God's permission. But, on a practical note, you possibly could have avoided this wasted time by making a phone call earlier in the day to confirm your date and time.

The Presentation

When the assembly begins, a staff person will likely introduce you. Thank them, and get right to it. Be as lively and as energetic as you can be. Remember the APS and play to it. *“WOW! What a great looking bunch of kids you guys are! I love your uniforms! I want you to know we are excited to be with you today! I've heard that you guys are really smart, and that you excel in everything! I tell you it is a privilege for us to be with you today! I've got something to share with you today that I know you will really like, but first, we're going to sing a song.”* From there, you just move into your presentation.

Be aware that you could possibly be interrupted during your message, and things can occur to hinder the meeting. Be prepared for it. I remember one morning in India, we were beginning our presentation in a boy's school. Just as I was about to take the microphone, a teacher got up and called a boy in the front row forward. He was a young boy and small. The teacher, for no apparent reason, hit the boy and knocked him to the ground! It was awful, and it

was all I could do to not hit that teacher and knock **him** to the ground. But, God gave me the grace to just continue and present Jesus to the boys. Most of them accepted Jesus that day. On more than one occasion I have had a teacher interrupt me, right in the middle of my message, to dismiss part of the audience for some reason. On one occasion the students were standing in the hot sun. So was I. But, as I neared the invitation, a boy fainted and had to be carried out, temporarily disrupting the meeting. One night in Brazil, I was preaching to a group of students. A girl in the front row let out a scream, became as rigid as a board, and fell over. She was demon possessed. Some people carried her out, prayed for her, and she revived. She rejoined the meeting, heard the Gospel, and was saved. We finished the meeting, but it was quite a disruption that none of us expected. When they happen, you just make whatever adjustments are necessary. But, you DO NOT quit.

In your message, use an illustration that they can all relate to, a shared life experience. One of my favorites is the exam. *“How many of you ever take exams? Raise your hands.”* Of course, all hands will raise. *“Well, I know you are all really smart, and you all study hard, and you do great on your exams, right? Well, today, I want to talk to you about taking an exam. But, it will not be given by a teacher, and it will not be given to see what’s in your head. No, it is a special kind of exam, a heart exam, and it will be given by God - not to see what’s in your head, but to see what’s in your heart. You see, in order to have a good life on this earth and to go to heaven, you must be able to pass God’s heart exam. So, let me share with you how to prepare for that exam.”* Then you present the three simple steps. There are other examples that we will look at later in the book, such as “Being on the winning team”, “Three steps to success”, “Two birthdays”, and, “What is your name?”

As you are presenting your message, try to get as close to the students as possible. If you are in an auditorium, step off the stage, if possible, and stand close to the front row of students. If you do have to stand back from them, then move around and be animated. Don’t just stand glued to one spot. Move from side to side, and make eye contact with one section, then another, then another. Just because the kids are sitting in front of you, doesn’t necessarily

mean they are actually listening to you. Just as in any field evangelism event, you must gain their attention and hold it long enough to present the Gospel. Make the message as brief as possible, and as you present it, make sure you “draw a line in the sand.” Bring them to a definite point of decision, and let them know they are making the decision for **their** sake, not yours. Everything we have said before about the invitation applies here. It is essential in a school, however, that they are led to pray a **silent** prayer. You do not want the students to make a decision or pray the prayer just because their neighbor does. There is a strong desire among young people to “fit in” and not be left out. You do not want this desire to enter in to their choice. Tell them, “I promise you, no one is looking around except me. This is between you and God alone.” Then after you lead them in the prayer to receive Christ (short and to the point), **do not say amen** but have them remain with their heads bowed. Then say, “Those of you who just prayed that prayer, Jesus is in your heart. You are now a child of God, and I want to thank Jesus for coming into your heart. But, I need your help. I do not know who prayed and who did not. So, I’m going to ask you, if you repeated that prayer after me, would you just lift up your hand? No one is looking except me.” Then as they raise their hands, pray a simple prayer and thank Jesus. Now, you can finally say amen, and ask them to look up at you. At this point you decide if you want to take it a step further, and if so, how do you want to do it? Be very sensitive to the Holy Spirit here.

You may want to say, “For those of you who raised your hands, I just want to praise the Lord for your decision. And, I would like to ask you to do something for me, please. If you now know for sure that you can pass God’s heart test, would you please just stand up. And, as they stand, you affirm them, “Wow! That is so great! God bless you guys for receiving Jesus and for taking that stand!” Then, lead them in a prayer of dedication. If this doesn’t seem appropriate for this school, then maybe you can use one of the other approaches listed in *Various Ways to Give the Invitation*. God will guide you.

At this point, if there is time, it would be good to have another team member come and share with the students how to grow in Christ. And then, following that, invite a member of the staff to come and close the meeting.

EVANGELISM IN PRISONS

The principles and guidelines that apply to field evangelism in general, also apply to conducting evangelistic meetings in prisons. The dynamics are pretty much the same. But, in addition to what we have already discussed, I would add a couple of things. First, do not approach the meeting with the mindset that these are really bad people, and they will not have any interest in the Gospel. These people are no worse than many of the people you encounter on the street. Some of the people on the street are just as guilty as the ones in prison. The difference is, they have not committed a crime - or perhaps they have but have not been caught and convicted. Those guys sitting in front of you in the prison uniforms are just people, people that Jesus died for. They are sinners with a dirty heart, a heart that led them to commit the crime they are now paying for. Many are in prison because they made a momentary bad decision. Regardless of why they are there, or what they have done, they need Jesus and are not beyond His reach. No one is. It may surprise you as to just how open these guys are to hear about Jesus. They KNOW their life has taken a wrong turn, and they are in need of help. Yes, some of them have very hard hearts and are hard to penetrate, but they are not beyond the reach of God. Some of them are never going to be released, but that doesn't mean they can't have a changed life and live out the remainder of their life glorifying God.

What these men (and women) need is the simple message of hope. Counseling and rehabilitation will not fix their problem; they need Christ and regeneration. They don't need another church service, or a preacher bringing another sermon on how to do better or be a better person. They simply need to hear how to be born again. They need an opportunity to be saved! They don't need for anyone to tell them how bad or guilty they are; they already know that. They need to be shown how loving Jesus is, what He did to provide forgiveness, and how willing He is to give it to them. They need an opportunity to "step over the line" and receive Christ in their heart.

Restrictions vary from country to country and from prison to prison. In some countries it is forbidden to preach in the prisons. In others it is difficult but not impossible. But, don't just assume it can't be done without at least

asking. Sometimes God will put just the right person in place to open a door. In some prisons, it is possible to gain access by providing things for the prisoners, such as toiletry items. If that works, then go to the expense and do it. Recently, in a men's prison in Kenya, we gained entrance by asking permission to come and offering to provide items for the men. Permission was granted, and the Gospel was presented. A large number of the prison population received Christ. Afterwards, several of the men said to our team, "Finally, someone came here and just told us how to be saved! This is the message we have needed. Preachers come every week and bring sermons, but they don't tell us how to be saved. Thank you for finally telling us what we need to hear!"

In a prison setting, it is very helpful to provide follow up materials and Bibles if at all possible. These men have a lot of time on their hands. What better way to spend it than in pursuit of gaining more knowledge of God and becoming a strong Believer. There are those among them who someday WILL be released. If they can re-enter society as a maturing Christian, they will have a much better chance of not returning to prison again. When they return to their families, just think how different it will be for wives and children to have a husband and father who is walking with God!

2. ONE-ON-ONE PERSONAL EVANGELISM

As we have already discussed, there are two ways to reach people with the Gospel: en masse or one at a time. You can think of mass evangelism as fishing with a net and personal evangelism as fishing with a pole. The point was made that mass evangelism (net fishing) is necessary, because reaching the rapidly-growing unsaved population throughout the world using only the one-on-one approach is too slow. While that is true, it does not change the fact that every Believer on earth has the God-given responsibility of sharing the Gospel. It is clear from Scripture that God did not intend for any person to receive Christ and then be quiet about it. It is also clear that those who did receive Christ in the Bible were **not** quiet about it. In fact, they were very vocal. I want us to see that every person, born of the Spirit of God, not only **should** be a proclaimer of the Gospel but also **can** be. Jesus' command to go into all the world and

preach the Gospel was not given to a select few “professional proclaimers”, but to the whole body of Christ - to you and me. Every member of every local church throughout the world, should be taught how to effectively present the Gospel and should be led by their pastor to do so.

But, what exactly are we to proclaim? In this book, the three-step evangelism process (confrontation, communication, invitation) has been discussed sufficiently to understand exactly what evangelism is. However, I’m going to say this again anyway; evangelism is the act of telling an unsaved person how to be saved. It is not just “witnessing”, that is, telling what Christ has done for you. It is not just “sharing a testimony”, that is, telling how you were saved. It is not just inviting a person to church or to some Christian event. Sharing your personal testimony in a casual conversational manner can be a very good way to **begin** your interaction with an unsaved person. But if it does not lead to giving that person the information he needs to choose, one way or the other, about his relationship to Jesus, then evangelism did not take place. It is a good thing to invite people to church, but that in itself is not evangelism; that’s just an invitation to attend church. Until a person hears the real Gospel message, and has an opportunity to respond to it, he has not been evangelized. That is why our goal, in every encounter, should be to provide the hearer with sufficient information; information the Holy Spirit will use to enlighten him, bring him to faith in Christ, and thus be born again.

Now, let me say this, saying *anything* to a person about Jesus is a good thing. We should take, and make, every opportunity we can to speak a word about our Savior. We should be quick to share with anyone who will listen what Jesus has done for us, what He means to us, and how we came to know Him. Oftentimes, just the mention of His Name, or the telling of our story, will lead to further conversation about Him. The point I’m making is that our ultimate goal should be to not stop short of the evangelism process, if at all possible. I’m pressing this point, because it is the Gospel message itself that tends to put pressure on the hearer to make a choice, not just hearing what Christ has done for me. And because we know that, there is sometimes a tendency in us to stop short of it. It is sharing the Gospel message itself, that

takes us out of our comfort zone - especially in one-on-one encounters. But, for the sake of the person we are talking to, we must, by God's grace, push beyond our own story and share with him the things he needs to know in order to be saved. He must be told about the problem, the solution, and the choice. And, he must be given an opportunity to choose.

So, again, in order for personal evangelism to take place, three things must happen. 1. There must be an encounter between the person with the Gospel and the unsaved person without it. There are a million different scenarios in which this can happen. There are some opportunities that we **take** as they arise during the course of our daily life. We should always be on the alert for them. Then there are opportunities we **make** by being deliberately intentional and creative. 2. The Gospel message itself must be communicated. 3. The hearer must be called upon to make a choice. And, all three steps should take place under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There are three things required for effective personal evangelism; **motivation**, **message**, and **method**. I do not have the power or ability to motivate another Christian to share the Gospel. That has to come from above and from within. But, I can provide the message, and suggest a comfortable, easy-to-use method of sharing the Gospel one-on-one that has been used successfully by thousands of Christians throughout the world. It is called "The Clean Heart."

The word *heart* appears in the Bible almost 900 times. David asked God in Psalm 51:10, "*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*" In this Psalm, David is asking God for forgiveness of sin, for cleansing, for renewal, and restoration. He is expressing the need for change, not just outwardly but inwardly. He expresses it as a change that needs to take place in his heart (his inner being or conscience) in that faculty that distinguishes right from wrong, godly from ungodly, sinfulness from righteousness. David is asking God for a transformation on the inside. In the New Testament, this transformation is called the new birth. It takes place when a person's spirit is brought to life by the incoming of the Spirit of God, which creates a change in the life. It is interesting that in every culture throughout the world, even without reading the Bible, people commonly express the need of a "change

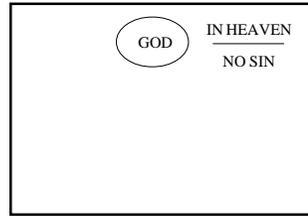
of heart.” It is as if the human race somehow understands that it is the condition of the *heart* of man that is the key issue in his standing before God. It is also interesting that it is not necessary to explain that by the word *heart* we are not talking about the physical organ. Somehow, when we talk about the need of a clean heart, people just understand. Therefore, the “clean heart” message capitalizes upon that understanding in presenting the Gospel, whether speaking to a crowd of people or just one at a time.

There have been many tools developed over the years for use in personal evangelism, and they are all good. Any tool that proclaims the Gospel is a good tool. However, I personally prefer the “clean heart - dirty heart” illustration, because it communicates so well cross-culturally and is so easy to use. I also like the fact that it so clearly draws a line in the sand and brings a person to a definite point of decision. It provides a clear picture of the problem, the solution, and the choice. The message can be shared verbally only (just speaking with someone), or it can be shared with the use of a diagram, which can be drawn and explained on a chalkboard, a scrap piece of paper, a napkin, or with a stick in the dirt. As long as you have the diagram memorized in your mind, you’re ready to go. The diagram is presented in eight progressive stages, illustrated below, along with what to say with each stage. You will see that each drawing builds upon the previous one, each time adding a new element, until the diagram and explanation is complete and the entire Gospel message has been presented, both in word and picture.

It may look a little complicated at first glance, but it becomes very simple and natural after you have gone through it a few times. The best way to become comfortable and confident in using this approach, is to get with a fellow Believer and practice a few times with each other. You may say, “But, I’m not good at drawing.” You don’t have to be. In fact, it’s probably better if you aren’t. Your presentation needs to appear natural, casual, and unrehearsed. It is better if the person you are sharing with does not get the idea that you are giving them a memorized speech. The more conversational you are, the better. As we look at these progressive stages of our presentation, I’m going to write the dialog as if I was actually sharing with someone. We’ll call him John.

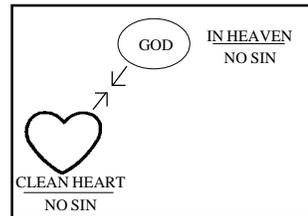
1. GOD IN HEAVEN - NO SIN

Ok, John, rather than just telling you how to know Christ, I'm going to use my pen and this piece of paper to show you. (*Write the words as you talk.*) So, first, we know that God is in heaven where there is no sin; no lying, or stealing, or anger, or pride, or immorality, and there never will be. God will not allow sin into heaven.



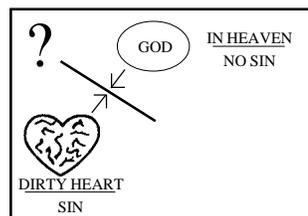
2. GOD CREATED MAN WITH A CLEAN HEART

That's why, in the beginning, God created man (Adam and Eve) with a clean heart, free of sin. (*Draw heart, the words below it, and the connecting arrows that represent man's unhindered relationship with God.*) They walked and talked with God and had a wonderful life. In fact, they were going to live forever. God's plan was for them to fill the world with people to love Him. But, something went wrong.



3. MAN SEPARATED FROM GOD

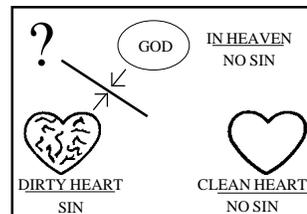
Satan, the enemy of God, tempted Adam and Eve and persuaded them to rebel against God and follow him. And when they did, their hearts became dirty and filled with sin. (*Draw in lines that represent "dirt" or sin in the heart, change the word "clean" to "dirty", cross out the word "no" to leave only the word "sin", and draw a line between the arrows, indicating separation between God and man as a result of sin.*) They became separated from God and lost everything; their home, their relationship with God, and even their life. Because of sin, they began to die. But, they had children, and those children were born with a dirty heart. They inherited it from their mother and father. Then sin passed down from one generation to the other - all the way



down to you and me. You and I, and every other person born on this earth, are born with a dirty, sinful heart. We inherited it, just like Adam and Eve's children. That's why we make wrong decisions and sin against God. And now, John, the big question is this (*Draw question mark.*): How can you and I, with a dirty, sinful heart, go into a heaven where there is no sin and never will be? Do you see the problem? The problem is that there is no sin in heaven, but there is sin in me. So, what can we do?

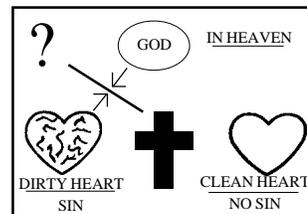
4. A CLEAN HEART

The answer is simple. We must have a clean heart. (*Draw the clean heart and write the words shown.*) But, how do we get it? Point to the two hearts and ask, how do we get from the dirty heart to the clean one?



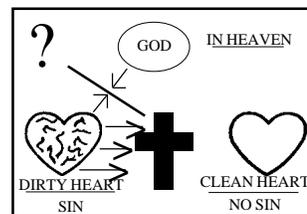
5. THE CROSS

Well, John, the good news is that God provided a way (*Draw the cross between the two hearts.*) through His Son, Jesus Christ. But, why is it through Jesus? Because God said that sin must be paid for by someone who has never sinned, someone with a clean heart. Our hearts must be washed clean by innocent blood, and the only One Who could do that was Jesus. God sent Jesus to this earth to die for our sin on the cross. His mother was Mary, but His Father was God, so He was born with a clean heart.



6. JESUS BORE OUR SIN

He lived a perfect, sinless life and then hung on the cross and bore our sin (*Draw arrows from the dirty heart to the cross.*). After He died, He was buried in a tomb and three days later He rose from the dead.

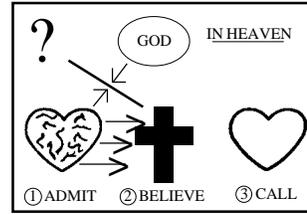


7. ADMIT - BELIEVE- CALL

Now, John, in order for you and me to have a clean heart, we must receive what Jesus did for us on the cross. In order to receive what Jesus did for us, there are three things we must do.

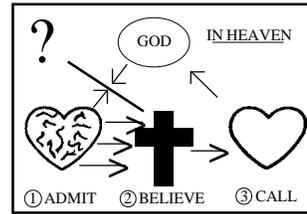
(Write the words ADMIT - BELIEVE - CALL

under the dirty heart, the cross, and the clean heart). First, we must admit to God that we have a dirty heart, that we are a sinner. Second, we must believe on Jesus. We must believe that He came from heaven, that He died on the cross to pay for our sins, that He rose from the dead, and now lives in heaven. Third, we must ask Him to come into our heart, forgive us of our sins, and be the Lord of our lives.



8. RECEIVE A CLEAN HEART

But, how do we do this? We do it through prayer. And, once we ask Jesus into our heart, we have a clean heart (*Draw arrow from the cross to the clean heart*), and we are united with God (*draw arrow from the clean heart to God*). Now,



here is a big question, John. Which side of the cross do you want to be on: the dirty heart side or the clean heart side? Right now, you can receive a clean heart and a home in heaven. If you would like to do that, then I will help you. You and I can pray together and ask Jesus to come into your heart. Would you like to do that, John? Ok, I'll pray a prayer out loud, and you just repeat after me. "Dear God, I admit I am a sinner. (*allow time for John to repeat*) I have a dirty heart. But, Lord, I believe that You are God's Son and You died for me on the cross. Now Lord Jesus, I ask You to come into my heart. I receive You right now. Thank You for coming into my heart today. Amen.

If the Person is Not Ready to Pray the Prayer

Sometimes a person will listen to your entire presentation, and even agree with everything you say, but will hesitate in praying the prayer. If they do,

don't force them. That is a mistake. Sometimes, with just a little encouragement, a person will go on and make the decision. But, if it becomes clear that they are just not going to do it right then, then let God take His time with them. Sometimes a person will hesitate, not because they do not want to accept Christ, but simply because they are shy about praying a prayer. Be sensitive and try to determine which it is. If they are shy about praying out loud, then let them repeat silently after you. But, again, if you see that they are just not ready to cross the line, then just leave the drawing with them and write down a simple ABC prayer that they can pray at a later time - "Lord, I ADMIT I am a sinner, but I BELIEVE in You. COME into my heart, Lord Jesus." Give them your phone number or some way to contact you if they have further questions or just want to talk more.

Also, be sure to let the person know that you are not personally disappointed in them because of their reluctance to respond. Let them know that you are their friend and that you welcome hearing from them again. Over the years, either out of excessive zeal or legitimate concern, I have made the mistake of pushing a person too hard. The result was a prayer prayed but not a heart changed. Pushing a person too hard can result in pushing them into a false decision. We must make sure the person is responding to persuasion from the Holy Spirit, not pressure from us. On occasion, I have shared the Gospel with a person, and then have them come to me the next day, a month later, or even a year and tell me they prayed the prayer. The key is to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in each case.

In connection with his crusades, the renowned nineteenth century evangelist, D. L. Moody used the "inquiry room" for counseling people who responded to his messages. He did not invite people to accept Christ in the meeting, but to come to the inquiry room to be talked to individually. So, Moody's crusades arranged for thousands of people to be talked to one-on-one. It was said of Moody that "It was his desire that they not be subjected to high pressure during that time." Moody said, "The only work that is going to stand for eternity is the work done by the Holy Ghost, and not by any one of us. If He does not do it, they won't be converted." (Gundry 1976, p.84)

How Do You Get Started?

Often, the most difficult part of a personal evangelism encounter is getting started in the conversation. If you are going out door to door from your church, you can just tell a person that and ask them to participate in a “survey” that your church is taking by answering some questions. It might go something like this:

“Hello, sir, my name is John Smith, and I’m a member of the Methodist church down the street. We are taking a survey of people in our area today so we can determine how we can best serve our community. Would you mind helping me by answering a few questions? Oh, great, thank you.

1. What is your name, please?
2. Are you married or single?
3. How many children do you have?
4. Are they in school?
5. About how long have you lived in this area?
6. Are you from this city originally?
7. Do you work near by?
8. Does your family attend church anywhere?
9. May I ask what is your religion?
10. Have you ever considered the Christian faith?

“If you have a couple of minutes, may I share with you how to become a Christian?”

What you do next will be determined by the response you get. If they say no, then thank them for their time, and tell them that if their family ever needs any kind of assistance to please contact your church. Leave printed contact information if you have it. If they say yes, then just go through the clean heart presentation - casually, conversationally, and let the Holy Spirit do what He is going to do.

Maybe you are trying to get started with a person you sit next to on the bus or that you meet in the grocery store. The best thing to do is to ask a

question that gets them started talking about them selves. Then, listen for a clue as to where they are spiritually. At some point, you may want to share some of your life and how it changed when Christ came into your heart. Tell some of that story. Then, at some point, you may ask them, “Have you ever had that happen to you?” If they say yes, then ask for their story. If they say no, then ask if they will allow you to share with them how to be saved. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. If He seems to be opening a door, then continue. If not, then just let it go.

Is God going to lead you to share with every person you meet? No, but, He WILL lead you to share with some. Your job is to be alert and obedient. That is all you can do and should do. Just take, and make, as many opportunities as you can under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If you will do that, then God will do the rest, and you will see people saved through your efforts.

Psalm 126:5,6 gives us a wonderful promise, *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”* God tells us that if we will go to the people with a broken heart for them, and faithfully plant the seeds of salvation, we will without doubt experience rejoicing over people who are saved.

Be Prepared

Begin your day with prayer for an open door to talk to someone about Jesus. Ask God to arrange an encounter, somewhere throughout the course of your day, that will result in an opportunity to share with someone how to be saved. Be on the alert, and be ready. Read back over the diagram so it will be fresh in your mind. When you leave your house, make sure you have a pen and paper with you. Do not have a passive attitude. In other words, don't just wait for people to come to you. Be proactive. Take the initiative, whenever you can, to start a conversation with someone. If it turns into an encounter in which you can share Christ, then great. If it doesn't, then you have lost nothing, and neither have they. But, if you get serious about taking opportunities to share the Gospel, it is for certain that God will create them for you.

3. MOBILIZING YOUR CHURCH FOR EVANGELISM

A local church that is on fire for God and motivated for aggressive evangelism can be a powerful tool for the Kingdom of God. A church that is active in reaching out beyond its walls to extend the love of God to the unsaved, will be a greatly appreciated blessing to the surrounding community. It will also establish a testimony to the power and faithfulness of God. I know, because I have been a part of such a local church and seen it first hand.

In 1970, I was attending a Bible college in Memphis, Tennessee. My wife and I were also participating in an aggressive evangelistic ministry, using music and preaching to reach people in city parks, on the streets, in high schools, on college campuses, and in prisons. We were seeing hundreds of people come to Christ every month. In the spring of that year, a young 31-year-old preacher and his wife moved to Memphis, and he became the pastor of a small Baptist church. The congregation had dwindled down to just a few people under the former pastor, who had no fire and no vision. The deacons had decided to close the church down and sell the property unless God did something to revive it. That something came in the form of someONE - that young pastor, W. Wayne Allen. Wayne had no degrees, no titles by his name, and very little pastoral experience. But, he DID have a passion for growing the body of Christ and was willing to take bold steps to do it. He told the few remaining members that he would come under one condition: they would have to allow him to do whatever he chose. Since they apparently had nothing to lose, they agreed.

Pastor Allen was a gifted preacher and Bible teacher, but he was not an evangelist, and he knew it. But, he WAS evangelistically motivated and cared very much about reaching the unsaved in the city of Memphis. He also recognized that if the church was to ever be revived, it would be through aggressive evangelistic outreach. It would not be through personalities and programs, because Pastor Allen was completely unknown, and the church didn't have enough members left to have a "program." Ironically, the church was located at one of the busiest intersections in the city. Just across the street was a huge new shopping center where thousands of people went every week. But the

little Baptist church across the street from the shopping center sat unnoticed and was dying. Why? It was because it made no effort to reach beyond its walls. Pastor Allen was committed to changing that.

He determined to change the focus of the church from **inward** to **outward**. Right after he arrived, in the spring of 1970, he called me and said, “Shad, I understand that you have a Jesus band, and that you do evangelism on the streets and places like that.” I told him I did. He said, “Well, I want you to help me put on a Jesus Festival on our church property.” Just the previous year, a huge music festival was held in Woodstock, New York. Wayne said he wanted to have a Christian Woodstock on the grounds of the church. I loved the idea and agreed to help. Soon we set about making plans. When the time came, we erected a huge stage and set up a sound system that could be heard as far as two miles away. We advertised on radio and TV, and young people came, at first by the hundreds, and then by the thousands. On the closing night there were 5000 people sitting all over the lawn of that little church. Most of the other churches in the city criticized the event, and they criticized Pastor Allen for having it. But, God blessed it, and the little church was no longer unnoticed. It was revived and began to grow. Pastor Allen began combining the four elements that must be present to grow a strong spiritually healthy church: 1. solid Bible teaching, 2. prayer, 3. faith, and 4. aggressive evangelistic outreach.

The Jesus Festival was just the beginning. After that event Wayne continued to use every means available to reach people outside the walls of the church, including a weekly evangelistic outreach to all the fire stations, jails, and prisons in the city. Ideas for outreach did not all originate with the pastor and staff. Wayne introduced a program called “Operation Anything”. Under that program, the people were encouraged to think of anything and everything they could as a means to get the Gospel out and then take charge of implementing it. As far as Wayne was concerned, there was nothing too radical or unusual to be considered. His goal was to have every member involved in reaching souls in one way or another. One time he was asked by a newspaper reporter, “When would you think that your church is a success?” He replied,

“When I get here on Sunday morning and the church is empty because all the members are out reaching souls for Christ.”

In June of 1973, following graduation from college, Sheila and I joined the staff of Pastor Allen’s church. My title was “Minister to Youth”, but my function was evangelism. Our “ministry program” was simply to train all the young people (and adults) in personal evangelism and then take them to the streets to do it. Every Friday and Saturday night, and Sunday afternoon, we took scores of people out in the city sharing Jesus. As a result, many people were saved. Many times on Sunday, we would take them directly from the street into the church for the evening service. No one cared how they looked, how they were dressed, or how they smelled. They were just glad they came. Pastor Allen taught the church to have an open heart, open arms, and open doors. In a short time, the church was overflowing with new converts. Near the close of every service, the people seated on the front row would get up and move to the sides of the auditorium, because everyone knew that people would be coming; for salvation, for baptism, for membership, or for counseling. It was exciting, and God was glorified. And, it all came about because God used a man with a vision, to lead a church that had nothing to lose.

Mobilizing a local church for evangelism begins with the pastor and leadership. If he does not have a heart for reaching souls, then he will not lead the people in that direction. He may not be an evangelist himself (likely will not be), but he can let God identify an evangelist in the church. Or he can enlist the help of one from outside - a man who can train the people in evangelism and then lead them out to do it. Oftentimes, however, a pastor will feel threatened by such a man, and therefore will not enlist his help. Pastor Allen did not have that problem. He was comfortable and secure in his calling and in his ministry.

In order for a church to become a soul-winning church, an **atmosphere** for evangelism must be created. I say “created”, because it normally does not happen without effort. When Christians gather together in groups, the tendency is to become comfortable and pull inward into the security of fellowship with other Believers - not to willfully reach outward beyond that fellow-

ship to the world outside. Mobilizing the local church for evangelism is not complicated. You just have to decide you want to do it. Let me suggest six steps.

1. **Make a Decision** - Decide that you are not going to live in defeat; and you are not going to settle for less than God wants to give. You are going to trust God, by faith, to grow your church through evangelism. You are not going to be deterred by the fact that you, yourself, are not an evangelist or even a good soul winner. You are not going to allow a lack of past experience to deter you from future action. You are not going to make excuses or focus on all the reasons why “it won’t work” in your church. You are not going to be discouraged by all that you don’t have. Rather, you are going to trust God for His enabling and press forward, by faith, in obedience to the Word of God.
2. **Preach** - In order to create an atmosphere for evangelism, the pastor may need to preach a series of messages on the importance and validity of reaching the lost for Christ. Establish the focus and function of the church as reaching the unsaved then nurturing them in the faith.
3. **Pray** - Pray for God’s enabling, power, boldness, wisdom, and strategy. Special prayer meetings can be arranged for praying for lost people to be saved. Ask God to guide your steps and to send you the person, or persons, you need to help you and your people begin reaching out to the unsaved.
4. **Train the People** - Teach your people how to do personal evangelism, or enlist someone to teach them. You can conduct special classes on evangelism, or you can use the worship hour as a training session, or you can do both. There are many methods to share the Gospel, but the one we prefer is the “clean heart - dirty heart” approach. This is discussed at length under the section on *Personal Evangelism*. Everything about the church, through sight and sound, should send the message that reaching people for Jesus is who we are and what we do.
5. **Lead the People Out** - Develop a plan, a strategy for outreach, and then lead the people out to do the work of sharing the Gospel. In

terms of developing a “church program”, you may want to divide your neighborhood into sections and assign certain streets to certain groups. You may have a park, a market, or a recreational area near your church where you can find people to talk to. You may go to a shopping center or even just to the streets. You may want to go to an apartment building. There are many possibilities. But, beyond the organized church program, people need to be encouraged to simply share Jesus with people they come in contact throughout the course of daily life.

6. **Allow People to Share Their Experiences** - People should be given an opportunity to share their experiences in evangelism with the church body. And, new converts should be given an opportunity to share their testimony with the church also.

Then, when new converts come into the church fellowship, begin teaching them the Bible, and help them to become reproducers as soon as possible. Nothing helps a person grow in Christ as fast as trying to tell others how to be saved. As you continue this process, the church will grow and become a powerful asset to the Kingdom of God. A good question to ask yourself at the close of each week is this: After all our services this week, after all our committee meetings, after all our preaching and teaching and singing, did the Kingdom of God get any bigger? If it didn't, then it is time for a change.

Now, is the work of evangelism the only ministry a church should be involved in? Of course not! Believers must be taught the Word of God and they must be provided with the spiritual tools with which to live their daily life. That is the role of the pastor/teacher. Evangelism should never be the entire program of the church, but it should, at least, be a **part** of it. There is only one way for a family to grow, and that is by children being born into it. As already stated, it is new birth that brings joy, excitement, and life.

Pastor Wayne Allen was a man of faith and focus. He believed that if the Gospel went OUT, the people would be saved and come IN. He was right, because he was following the Scriptural model. He was committed to evangelism, and he was willing to trust the ministry of the evangelist to operate within

the context of the local church. As I said, he was comfortable and secure in his own calling and was not threatened by the ministry of others. As a result, people were saved, the church grew, the body was blessed, and God was glorified. I encourage you to follow Pastor Allen's example in leading your church to build the Kingdom of God through "we go to them" evangelism.

V. Sample Message Illustrations

MESSAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

Your message needs to be **simple**. Your listeners need to know three things, 1. They have a problem they cannot solve. 2. God has the Solution. 3. There is a choice that must be made. The message must be **short**. Most people's attention span is short, especially in a field evangelism setting. The message should be **clear**. They need concise information and instruction that is easily understood. It must be **relevant**. The way to make the message relate to the hearers is to draw upon their own experiences. That's why we use illustrations (shared life experiences). The message must **call for decision**. You should begin every message by telling the audience you are going to ask them to make a decision. You should call for each person to choose one side or the other. The illustration will help do that.

We normally call the message the *Three Simple Steps*:

1. Face the truth about yourself - you have a Problem.
2. Face the truth about Jesus - He is the Solution.
3. Face the truth about eternity - you must make a Choice.

Those three steps make up the **central content** of the message. It IS possible to just jump right to those three points if time is restricted and you don't have a choice. But, it is much better if you can find an illustration to build on, something that will relate to the whole audience. The idea is to turn the whole group into one person. (For all these message illustrations, the "shared life experience" will be abbreviated, SLE, and the "central content" will be CC.)

1. The Heart Exam

(for school audience)

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew
a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10*

(SLE) - Being with you guys here today reminds me of when I went to school. Now, there were some things about school that I liked, such as being

with my friends, lunch hour, and playing games. But, there was one thing I did not like - studying. And, that was a problem, because my parents were sending me to school to learn, not just to play. Now, I'm sure none of you have that problem, right? I know you are all good students, you work hard, and you are always prepared for your exams. Well, I hated exam day, because I was never prepared. While the teacher was teaching, I would be drawing pictures or looking out the window daydreaming. Then when the exam came, I would fail. Why? Because I was not prepared. Now, whose fault was it that I failed? Was it the teacher's fault? No! It was my fault. Well, someday you and I are going to take a very special exam - not to see what is in our head, but what is in our heart. We are going to take a "heart exam". It will not be given by your teacher but by God Himself. Someday, when we stand before God, He is going to look into our heart. What He finds there will determine where we spend eternity. I want to take just a few minutes and share with you how to be prepared for God's heart exam.

(CC) - You see, when God created the first man and woman, He gave them a clean heart. They walked and talked with God freely, and were going to live forever. They had no problem passing a heart exam. But one day, satan, the enemy of God, tempted them and persuaded them to turn from God. Their clean heart became dirty and contaminated with sin. They became separated from God and could no longer pass the heart exam. They could no longer live in the presence of God. Then they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart. They could not pass the heart exam either. Since then, every person born is born with a dirty heart, and because of it, they cannot enter God's perfect heaven. We must have a clean heart, and we can by taking three simple steps:

1. Face the truth about ourselves: we are born with a Problem - sin, a dirty heart.
2. Face the truth about Jesus: He is the Solution
3. Face the truth about eternity: two places we can go; we must Choose.

Invitation – Receive a clean heart so you can pass the heart exam. How?
Admit, Believe, Call.

2. The Winning Team

(for school audience or sports team)

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.” 1 Corinthians 9:24

(SLE) - I've heard that you guys have some really good athletes in this school. How many of you like to play sports? Let me see your hands (hands raised). Well, how many of you like to lose? (no hands). Oh, come on now, there must be some good losers in this crowd! No? Well, ok then, how many of you like to win? (hands raised) Well, today, I want to talk to you about being on the winning team. When I was in school, we use to divide up the student body in teams. One was the blue team, and the other was the red team. I really didn't care which color team I was on, just so long as mine was the **winning** team.

Now, in my right hand I have a blue flashlight (torch), and later on tonight, I will need it. But, it won't help me. Do you know why? It looks good, but there is something missing. It has no batteries (cells), so therefore it has no power and produces no light. It cannot do what it was created to do. Now, in my left hand I have a red one. It is exactly like the blue one, but it has batteries in it, and therefore it has power. It can do what it was created to do - give light. Now, if these lights represented your team, which one would you rather be on: the blue team or the red team? (everyone shouts, red team!) When we leave this room in a short while, there will be two groups that walk out these doors, the blue team with no power (the losing team) and the red team with power (the winning team). The question is, which team will you be on? I'm going to ask you to choose.

So, how do you get on the winning team? You can do it by taking three simple steps, and I'm going to share them with you now. There was a time in my life that I was on the blue team, the losing team. I had no power, but one day all that changed. I changed sides, and I'm going to share with you how you can do the same thing. All it takes is three simple steps: Face the truth about yourself, Jesus, and eternity.

(CC) - The first man and woman were on the winning team – God’s team. God created them with a clean heart, and they had all the qualifications for a successful life and a home in heaven. But, satan tempted them and persuaded them to turn away from God and join his team - the losing team. Since that day, every person born has been born on the losing team, including you and me. But, that can change by taking three simple steps: Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – Choose the winning team, the Jesus team, the clean heart team. How? Admit, Believe, Call.

NOTE: You do not have to use the flashlights. In fact, if you are outdoors, it won’t work. But, you can still use the illustration without the flashlights.

3. Two Birthdays

“Jesus answered and said to him, Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” John 3:3-7

(SLE) - Hello everyone, my name is Shad, and I’m here today to wish you a happy birthday! How many of you have a birthday today? Let me see your hands. (maybe one or two) What about his week? (another one or two) What about this month? (more) What about this year? (all hands raised). Ok, how many of you will have **two** birthdays this year? No one? Well I’m glad to say that I will have two this year: one on September 30 and one on July 7. I was born into one family on the first date and into another family on the second. Did you know that the reason a lot of people are unhappy is because they don’t have enough birthdays? Well, its true.

In fact, there was a guy in the Bible like that. His name was Nicodemus. We’ll call him Nick. Now, Nick was a really good man, a very religious man who believed in and served God. He was a teacher, well liked, and wealthy. But, he was very unhappy. Then one afternoon he heard Jesus teaching and saw Him perform many miracles. And, when the crowd had dispersed, just about dark, he came to Jesus and said to Him, “Master, we know you must be from God, because otherwise, You could not do these things.” Jesus did not

say “Thank you.” Rather he said to Nick, “You must be born again.” He was telling Nick that his problem was, he did not have enough birthdays. Now, Nick was very confused, and asked, “But, how can I get back into my mother and be born a second time?” Then Jesus explained that he must be born a second time, from above, by the Spirit of God. Otherwise, he was never going to be happy. The same is true for you and me.

I’m glad I have two birthdays, because I discovered that the only way to have a truly happy successful life is to be a member of two families. And, even more, the only way to go to heaven is to have two birthdays and belong to two families. How many of you want to have a happy successful life? How many want to go to heaven someday? If you want to go, you must have two birthdays. But, how in the world can a person have two in one year? I’m going to tell you how, and in a few minutes, I’m going to ask you all to have a birthday today - to join another family. Then we are all going to celebrate together. We’re going to sing “happy birthday” to each other. But, to join in the celebration, to join in the song, you must take three simple steps - Face the truth about yourself, Jesus, and eternity.

(CC) - The first man and woman were the only two human beings that were not born. They were created by God as part of His family. God intended for them to live forever and to populate the world with people that would love and worship Him. But, the plan was interrupted when satan tempted and persuaded them to turn from God and follow him. Their clean heart became dirty, they lost everything, and they were separated from God. But, they had children. Their children were born but only into one family - their earthly family. From that moment forward, in order for a person to enter heaven, it would be necessary to be born twice: first, physically into the family of their parents, and then spiritually into the family of God. It takes three steps - Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – Let Jesus come into your heart and be born into His family today. How? Admit, Believe, Call.

(After the invitation, have each person write down today’s date in their notebook as a reminder of the day they were born into the family of God.)

4. Three Steps to Success

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give an expected end.” Jeremiah 29:11

(SLE) - “Hey, we’re excited to be with you guys today! What a great looking group! Thank you so much for allowing us to come and spend some time with you. Now, my name is Shad, and I’ve got something I want to talk to you about. But, first, I want to ask a question that might sound odd to you. But, here it is. How many of you are planning to be a failure in life? Would you raise your hands?” (no hands) “Do you mean to tell me that every one of you are planning to be a success? Wow, that’s great! Well, here is another question. What is your action plan to get there? Do you have a strategy? Well, I’m glad that none of you are planning to be a failure, because that would make God very unhappy. You see, God created you for success. But, you need an action plan, a strategy. The truth is, if you do not have a plan for success, then you’re already on the road to failure. Why? Because success is not accidental; it comes to those who plan for it. Actually, there is a plan already laid out for you, a strategy already in place, and it was created by God long before you were born. So, what you really need to do is enter into the plan that has already been established. But, how do you do that? Well, I am going to give you a three step process that will put you in touch with God’s plan for you and put you on the road to success, not only in this life but in the world to come.

“But, before I give you the strategy, let me ask one more question. Do you know why human beings fail? It’s because they are born with the wrong kind of heart - a heart that is constantly pulling them down and pulling them away from God’s plan for their life. They are born with a dirty heart. But, let me share with you how to overcome that. Here is the strategy: three simple steps - Face the truth about yourself, Jesus, and eternity.

(CC) - The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were not concerned about success, or happiness, or health, or pain, or dying. There was no such thing as failure, or sadness, or sickness, or suffering, or death. And if they had obeyed God, there never would have been. All of those things came into the

human race through one wrong, deadly decision. Adam and Eve were created with a clean heart and were going to live forever, but they lost everything when they yielded to satan's persuasion to turn from God. Their heart became dirty, and they were separated from God. From that time on, every person born into the world suffers and struggles because of sin. But, that struggle can be overcome by taking three simple steps - Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation - Get on the road to success, in this life and the one to come. How? Admit, Believe, Call.

5. Choices

*“What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach
in the way that he shall choose.” Psalm 25:12*

“ . . .choose you this day whom ye will serve. . . ” Joshua 24:15

(SLE) - I know this might sound like a silly question, but I'm going to ask it anyway. How many of you have ever had to make a choice about something? Raise your hand. Of course, you have. How many of you have made a choice about something today? Yes, we all have. In fact, the choices we've made today have led us to this moment. Here's another question. What is the most critical choice you have ever made? That takes a little thought, doesn't it? One more question. What do you think is the biggest choice you will EVER make? Well, I can answer that for you. It's not who to marry, or where to live, or what job to seek. It is how to spend the rest of your life and where to spend eternity. In order to make that choice, we must take three simple steps. We must face the truth about ourselves, the truth about Jesus, and the truth about eternity. (*You may want to share a personal story of making a bad choice and the consequences.*)

(CC) - When God made the first man and woman, their life was very simple, and it was perfect and secure. They didn't have to make hundreds of choices every day or worry about the consequences. All they had to do was just obey God. God gave them one simple instruction: don't eat of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge of good and evil. Simple, right? Yes, until satan came and lied to them and persuaded them to choose against God. He presented them

with an option to the will of God, and they took it. He still does the same thing to you and me. When they made that one bad choice, everything changed. They lost everything. Their heart became dirty and sinful. They suffered the consequences of that choice. Then they had children and they were born with a dirty heart. One generation followed the other, down to you and me. Now, every person born into the world is born with a dirty heart and is faced with a choice: live with a dirty heart separated from God, or live with a clean heart connected to God. Today, you can make a choice to have a clean heart. All it takes is three simple steps – Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – Make the right choice to receive Jesus and a clean heart and a home in heaven. Avoid the consequences of living and dying with a dirty heart. How? Admit, Believe, and Call.

6. Going Home

*“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so,
I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”
“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” John 14: 2,6*

School: I want to talk to you guys today about something you all look forward to, going home. I remember when I was in school, I always looked forward to going home in the afternoon and relaxing.

Open-air: Hello everyone! My name is _____, and my home is in _____. But, I am so glad to be with you today, and I thank you for making me feel so at home right here.

(SLE) - And, speaking of home, I want to talk to you for a few minutes about going home. I love being here with you, but I’m also looking forward to going home in a few days. Why? Because that’s where I belong. That’s where my family is. It’s familiar to me, and I’m comfortable there. I know you feel the same way. But, did you know you actually have TWO homes? You have one here and you can have another in heaven. Jesus said He is preparing it for

you. Today, you'll go to your earthly home, but someday you will leave this life and go to your heavenly home - **IF** you are in the right condition. When I was a boy, I use to love to play outside, and I would get very dirty. Then I would go home, and my mother would stop me at the door. She kept a very clean house and would not let me in with dirt on me. I would say, but Mom, don't you love me? She would say, yes, but I don't love that dirt, and it is not coming into my clean house. I had to get clean before she would let me in. Well, God keeps a clean house, and He will not let us in with dirt either. Now, that is a problem, because we are all born with a condition, a problem, called a dirty sinful heart. In order to enter our heavenly home, we must have a clean heart. But, how do we get a clean heart? We get it by taking three simple steps - Face the truth about yourself, Jesus, and eternity.

(CC) - When God created the first man and woman, He created them with a clean heart and they lived in a perfect, clean home. There was no sin. Then one day satan invaded their home. He tempted them and persuaded them to turn away from God. Their heart became dirty and filled with sin, and they could no longer live in the presence of God in His clean house. Then they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart. They inherited it. Sin passed from one generation to the other, all the way to you and me. Now, every person born has a dirty heart and is disqualified for heaven because of it. So, what can we do? We must have a clean heart. But, how do we get it? Take three simple steps - Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – Today, I'm going to ask you to receive a clean heart and a home in heaven. If I wanted to come to your home today, I would have to go a certain way, and I would need directions from you as to how to get there. To go to your home in heaven, you must also go a certain way. Jesus is the Way. If I came to your house and knocked on your door, you would see it was me, and you would make a decision. If you decided for me to come in, I would come. If you said go away, I would go. Well, right now, Jesus is knocking on your door, but you must choose to let Him in. I'm asking you to open the door to your heart and your life, and to receive Jesus. How do you do that? Admit, Believe, Call.

7. A Great Inheritance

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again
unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
To obtain an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled
and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1: 3,4*

(SLE) - Ok, I have a question for you guys? How many of you like money? Raise your hands. How many of you would like to have a LOT of money? Let me see your hands. Well, I want you to imagine something. You have a relative that you did not know about, but they knew about you and they died. Then you learn they were very wealthy, and they left all their money to you - an enormous inheritance. Would you be excited? Of course you would. You also learn that the inheritance would never get smaller, no matter how much you spend, and that nothing could ever destroy it. But, then you learn that in order to get it, you must do something. You have to walk 500 miles to _____, and you will be given the money upon arrival. Would you make that trip? Of course you would. So would I. Well, I have some exciting news for you today. You have been left a great inheritance just like I described, and it is worth far more than anything on earth. And, you do not have to walk 500 miles to get it. All you have to do is take three steps. The inheritance I'm talking about is a life of peace and joy on this earth and then a home in heaven - something that no amount of money can buy. Even if you inherited a billion dollars, you can only enjoy it till you die. But, you can enjoy the inheritance of heaven for eternity. You don't have to walk 500 miles, but you do have to take three simple steps - not with your feet, but with your heart. What are those three steps? We must face the truth about ourselves, the truth about Jesus, and the truth about eternity.

(CC) - When God created Adam and Eve, it was not possible for them to receive an inheritance, because they already owned it all! The whole earth and everything in it belonged to them. But, they made a bad decision and forfeited everything by turning away from God and following the devil. He told them

he could give them more than God could, and they believed it. As a result, they lost everything; their home, their relationship with God, and even their life. Why? Because sin entered their heart. It became dirty and filled with sin, and they became separated from God. Now, they wandered alone on the earth in total poverty. They had children, and they, too, were born with a dirty heart. That was their inheritance. But, it didn't end there. Sin passed from one generation to the other, all the way down to you and me. Then, you and I were born with an inheritance, a sinful dirty heart. But, God has another inheritance He wants to give us in place of our dirty heart. He wants to give us a new life and a home in heaven. And, all it takes is three simple steps. Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation - I'm going to ask you to give up your old inheritance of sin, of a dirty heart, and receive the great inheritance of eternal life in heaven. God wants to give it to you freely. All you have to do is receive it. How? Admit, believe, call.

8. The Thief

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:

I am come that they might have life, and that they might

have it more abundantly". John 10:10

(SLE) - Hello everyone. My name is _____. I want to thank you for enjoying the program, and for your hospitality. I know you're enjoying the music, but we need to interrupt for just a few minutes to make a shocking announcement, actually to give you a warning! You see, there is a thief in this crowd here today. He doesn't want to be exposed, but he's going to be. He is here to steal from you if he can, so you need to be careful. He is actually going all over stealing from people. And, the problem with this thief is that he is invisible. You can't see him, but he is real, and he is deadly! But, I can give you three simple steps that you can take to protect yourself. You see, this thief is satan, the devil, and he is trying to steal from you everything that God intended you to have. But, if you will give me a few minutes, I'll give you these

three steps so you will be surrounded by God's protection. We must face the truth about ourselves, about Jesus, and about eternity. (*You may want to share a personal experience of having something stolen from you*)

(CC) – This thief started working and stealing a long time ago. It began in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. God created them with a clean heart and gave them the entire world as their own possession. They had everything. Then one day, satan, the thief disguised as a beautiful serpent, came to them, lied to them, and persuaded them to turn away from God. And, they did. Through that deception, he stole everything they had: their relationship with God, their home, their clean heart, and even their life. From that time onward, every person born into the world has been born as a victim of that thief. You and I were born with a dirty sinful heart. But, God provided a way for us to recover what has been stolen. We can get back a clean heart, a life with God, and a home in heaven. All it takes is three simple steps - Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – I'm going to ask you to take back what satan has stolen from you. Take back your relationship with God. Take back a clean heart. Take back your home in heaven. Take back the life that God has for you on this earth. How? Admit, Believe, Call.

9. Fuel for Your Heart

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18

". . .out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. " Matthew 12:34

(SLE) - **School:** I know you are wondering what I'm going to talk to you about, today. Well, it may surprise you, but I want to talk to you for a minute about vehicles. How many of you are driving yet? Well, I'm sure you're looking forward to driving and hopefully, someday, having your own vehicle. Some of you you already thinking about what kind you want. Now, how many of you know what it is that makes the vehicle move? No matter what kind of vehicle

you get, it will have to have one. What is it? Right, it's the engine, the motor. Ok, what do you put in the engine to make it run? Right - gas or petrol. So, we know two things, so far: 1. in order for your car to move, it must have an engine, and 2. in order for that engine to run, it must have petrol. Now, what happens if you put anything else in the motor other than gasoline? It won't run. Water is a good thing, and so are Cokes and Fantas, but if you put any of them in the engine, it will ruin it. The engine won't run, and the vehicle will not move.

(SLE) - **Open-air:** Hello everyone! My name is _____, and I want to ask you a question. We see a lot of vehicles around here today; cars, trucks, busses. They all look different, but they all have one thing in common. They all have to have an engine, the thing that makes them move. Now, let me ask you, what do you put in the engine? Right - petrol. I see signs around here advertising all kinds of things to drink; Coke, Fanta, beer. Some of you like Cokes and some like beer, but what would happen if you put those things in the gas tank of one of these vehicles? Right, it won't run. In fact, it would ruin it. It is made to run on one thing only, petrol.

Both Settings: Did you know that a human being is just like one of these vehicles? Well, there is a thing in you that powers your life, your heart. Your heart is the engine of your life, not just physically but spiritually also. It is the thing that keeps you moving. There is only one thing that keeps it working, blood. If anything else goes in your heart, it stops, and so do you. Well, I want to talk to you about another kind of heart - that thing in you that makes you who you are. You see, today, you and I have a heart problem, an engine problem, a fuel problem. To fix that problem we must face the truth about ourselves, about Jesus, and about eternity.

(CC) - When God created the first man and woman, He gave them a perfect engine to drive their life, a pure clean heart. It was filled with the right fuel, the love and power of God. But, satan tempted them and persuaded them to turn from God. When they did, their heart became contaminated with all the wrong things, things called sin. At that moment their life began to shut down. They could no longer move as they were designed to do, because

their engine was contaminated. But, that is not the end of the story, because they had children, and they were born with a defective heart - a dirty heart. They too sinned against God. Every person born since, has been born with the same problem - a dirty heart. Now, the question is this: how can a person with a dirty heart go to a heaven where sin cannot go? He cannot; he must have a clean heart. He must have a heart that runs on the right fuel, the love and power of God. But, how do we get a clean heart? We must take three simple steps - Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation - I am going to ask you today to receive a new clean heart, fueled by the love of God. I'm going to ask you to receive Jesus into your heart and receive what He did for you on the cross. How do you do that? Admit, Believe, Call.

10. Blackouts

*“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God,
neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations;
and their foolish hearts were darkened.” Romans 1:21*

(SLE) - Let me ask you a question: Have any of you ever been in a situation at night when the lights went out, and it was so dark you couldn't see anything at all? I mean a time when there was no light from anywhere; stars, moon, nothing! It can be a disturbing event, especially if you are not expecting it. *(If you have a personal experience, then share it)*. I remember one night in the country of Haiti. I was doing a campaign on the north coast. Our hotel was right on the beach. I was standing outside with some friends near the beach, and all of a sudden all the lights went out. There was no moon, no stars, no light from anywhere. I asked my friend, “Can you see anything?” He said, “No, nothing!” I said, “Where is the hotel?” He said, “I don't know, and even if I did, I couldn't find my room.” So, we just stood there, helpless, until the lights came back on. It was a very strange feeling. There is nothing like being in total darkness to make you feel suddenly alone and vulnerable. Well, I want to tell you about three blackouts, two in the past and one in the future.

(CC) - The first occurred long ago when God created the first two people. When God created Adam and Eve, He created them to walk in light. They had the sun by day and the lights of the sky by night. But, even more, they had the light of God in their hearts. Then one day, satan, the “prince of darkness”, came and lied to them about the love of God, and he persuaded them to turn from God and follow him. When they did, the first blackout occurred. The light of God disappeared from their hearts. God had created them with a clean heart, full of His light and love, but now their hearts were contaminated with the dirt and darkness of sin. They were separated from God to wander alone on earth, in the darkness of sin. And because of sin, they began to die. But they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart, in darkness. Then one generation followed the other, all the way down to you and me. One day I was born in America with a dirty heart, born in the darkness of sin. Why? Because I inherited it, just like you. You were born in _____ with the same problem as me, a dirty heart. Now, here is the question: There is no sin or darkness in heaven, so how can a person with a dirty sinful heart go to a place where there is no sin or darkness at all? We cannot. We must have a clean heart. But how do we get it? There is only one way, through Jesus Christ, God’s Son, the Light of the world. God said that sin must be paid for by the shedding of innocent blood, and, the one who dies must be perfect in every way. That someone is Jesus.

That brings us to the second blackout. God sent His Son Jesus to this earth to do what no one else could do - to die on the cross and pay for our sin. God allowed His perfect Son to be nailed to a cross, and there on the cross, Jesus bore our sin, our shame, and our guilt. The Bible says that when Jesus died, the earth was suddenly covered in total darkness. The light of the sun disappeared as Jesus, the Light of the World, died. Jesus was taken from the cross, placed in a tomb, and three days later rose from the dead; victorious over death, the grave, and the darkness of sin. He died and rose again so that the Light of God can come into your heart. All you have to do is receive Him.

And, that brings us to the third blackout. There is a day coming, sooner or later, none of us know, when the darkness of death will come to you. Someday,

the light will disappear from your eyes, and you will pass from this life into eternity. Where will you go? The Bible calls hell the place of outer darkness. Will you pass into the light of heaven or the darkness of hell? It all depends on whether you die with a dirty heart or a clean heart.

Invitation - That is what I'm asking you to decide right now. I'm asking you to receive Jesus, the Light of the world. How? Three simple steps: 1. Face the truth about yourself; you were born with a dirty heart. 2. Face the truth about Jesus; He died to pay for your sin, and He is the only way. 3. Face the truth about eternity; there are two places to go, Light or dark. You can receive Jesus through a simple prayer. Admit, Believe, Call.

11. The Law of Gravity

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."

Romans 7:21

(SLE) - Hello. My name is _____, and I have something important to share with you. But, before I do, I want to ask you to do something - a little exercise. I'm going to ask you to raise your hand above your head and hold it there. (hands raised) Ok now, with your hands raised, let me ask you, how long do you think you can keep your hand raised? Five minutes? Ten minutes? An hour? What if I tell you I will give you a thousand dollars if you can hold it up for ten hours. Can you do it? No, you can't. You may want to, and you may try very hard, but you can't do it. Why? Because there is a law working against you. There was a guy in the Bible that had the same problem, Moses. God told him that as long as he kept his hands raised, his people would win in the battle, and sure enough, they did. But, his arms grew tired and sank, and his army began to lose. So, he had to have help keeping his arms up. His army was fighting a battle with a human army, and he was fighting a battle with a law - the law of gravity. He could not overcome that law without help, and neither can you. Ok, you can put your hands down. That's a relief, isn't it?

You see, each one of us wants to be a success in this life, and we all want to go to heaven. But, there is a law pulling us down - the law of sin and death.

And, we cannot overcome that law without help. The Good News is that God provides help. But, there are three things you must do. 1. Face the truth about yourself, 2. Face the truth about Jesus, 3. Face the truth about eternity.

(CC) – When God created the first man and woman, they did not have the law of sin to deal with, and there was no death. They had a clean heart and constant fellowship with God. But, that all changed when satan entered the garden and tempted them to turn from God. They made a terrible decision. They rebelled against God, and their clean heart became dirty and filled with sin. Now a new law was introduced to them, the law of sin and death. They were separated from God and began to die. But, they had children, and those children were born under that same law, a law that constantly pulled them down into sin and failure. Then, when you and I were born, we were born in that same condition. We inherited it. But, God has provided a way for us to rise above that law, a way to overcome it. The law of gravity can be overcome by another law, the law of aerodynamics - like an airplane. And the law of sin and death can be overcome by another law, the law of faith. Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation – Remove yourself from under the law of sin and death and place yourself under the law of faith in God. How do you do that? Admit, Believe, Call.

12. Food That Satisfies

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” John 6:35

(SLE) - Let me ask you a question, how many of you like to eat? Yes, I know, that's a dumb question. We ALL like to eat. I know I do! In fact, we all HAVE to eat, otherwise we will die. When a baby is born, the first thing it wants to do is eat. Let me ask you, what do you like to eat the most? What is your favorite food? (*allow a couple of people answer*) Well, my favorite food is hamburgers. I could eat them every day. Well, what if I told you that there is a food you can eat, and after you do, you are never hungry again?

Sheila and I had a friend who was very wealthy, and he decided to take us out to a very special restaurant. Everything on the menu was very expensive, and the final bill for four of us was over \$300! I couldn't believe it! I thought, with a meal that expensive, I shouldn't be hungry for days. But, do you know what happened? I woke up the next morning just as hungry as always.

Today I want to give you a food that will never leave you hungry again, and it is absolutely free! But, it's not the kind of food that you put in your stomach, it's the kind you put in your heart. It's not the kind that just sustains your physical life, but it provides fuel, power, and nourishment for everything about your life, even the one to come.

(CC) - It is amazing how much time and money we have to spend just on eating. But, in the beginning it was not that way. When God created the first man and woman, they had no concern at all about food. They had all they could eat, and they did not have to do anything to get it. But, the biggest problem that human beings will ever have to face began with the issue of food. God told Adam and Eve that they could have the fruit of every tree in the garden, except one. And, He denied them that one fruit, because He knew it would poison them with the poison of sin. But, satan entered the picture, convinced them that God was withholding something good from them, and persuaded them to turn from God in rebellion. At that moment, their heart became dirty and filled with sin. They became separated from God and lost everything, and then they began to die.

Because of their decision, you and I are born into this world with a dirty heart. We inherited it. We are born, not only with an empty stomach that needs the food of our mother but also with an empty heart that needs the food of God. But, how do we get this food? We must take three steps: 1. Face the truth about ourselves: we are born with a Problem - a dirty empty heart. 2. Face the truth about Jesus: He is the Bread of Life, He is the Solution. 3. Face the truth about eternity: we must make a Choice: die with a dirty hungry heart or with a clean heart filled with the love of God.

Invitation - Open your heart to Jesus, the Bread of Life. Admit, Believe, Call.

13. Living Water

“Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John 4:13,14

(SLE) - I want to thank you for the opportunity to be with you today, because I have something to talk to you about. But first, let me ask you a question. Do you every get thirsty? Sure you do. We ALL do. Let me tell you something that might surprise you. Did you know that about 65% of your body is water? The blood in your body is about 80% water, your brain is 70% water, and your eyes are 80% water. What does that mean? It means you cannot live without water. I guess that’s why we are told we need to drink at least eight glasses of water a day. The average human can live only from 2 to 5 days without water. Even a lion can only live about four days with no water. So, what does this tell us? It tells us that a simple thing like water is a very important item in our life. One of the most dangerous medical conditions you can have is simple dehydration. Most of us don’t think much about it because we normally have plenty of water. But, there are places in the world where people do not have access to clean water. You see, you not only need water, but you need the right kind of water. You need pure clean water. There are many things we can drink; milk, fruit juice, wine, beer, Coke, all sorts of things. But, none of those things take the place of pure, clean water. Well, what if I told you there is a special type of water you can drink that will prevent you from ever being thirsty again - not in your body, but in your heart and in your life.

(CC) - You see, in the beginning, when God created the first man and woman, they had no concern about clean water. They were amply supplied. They were never thirsty. But, they also had the water of God’s love in their hearts. They were never thirsty that way, either. But, one day satan entered the garden and offered them the contaminated water of sin. He persuaded them to turn away from the ever fresh springs of God’s love and follow him. When

they did, their clean heart became contaminated, and they were separated from God. The water of life was gone, and they began to die. But, they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart. They came into the world thirsty for what the devil and the world cannot give. Then sin passed from generation to generation, all the way down to you and me. Then one day I was born in America - a little boy with a dirty heart, a thirsty heart. And, friends, just like me, you too were born with a dirty, thirsty heart. I tried for many years to quench the thirst of my heart with a lot of different things, but nothing satisfied. Why do people strive so hard for success, for money, and for fame? Why do they turn to drugs, sex, and alcohol? Why do we seek so diligently for popularity and recognition? Because we have the mistaken idea that these things can satisfy the thirst of our heart. But, they can't. The world does not have the water that satisfies.

So, how can we quench that thirst? How can we get a clean heart? We must take three steps. We must 1. Face the truth about ourselves; we are born with the Problem of a dirty heart. 2. We must face the truth about Jesus; He is the Living Water, the Solution to our problem. 3. We must face the truth about eternity; Choose to believe on Christ and receive Him in our heart. How do we do that?

Invitation – I'm asking you now to receive Jesus in your heart. You are thirsty for love, hope, peace, joy, and security. Let Jesus quench your thirst. You do it through prayer - Admit, Believe, Call.

14. The Right Name

*“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,
and loving favor rather than silver and gold” Proverbs 22:1*

*“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son,
and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is,
God with us.” Matthew 1:23*

*“Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name
under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12*

(SLE) - I want to talk to you for a few minutes about a thing we all have that's very important, but we don't normally think much about it. It is your name. Everyone here has a name, and your name has meaning. Is there anyone here named John? Well, your name means, "God is gracious". Is there a Mary? Your name means, "beloved". Is there a Rachel? Your name means "little lamb". What about Michael? Your name means, "who is like God". Actually, we all have three types of names. The ones I just mentioned have to do with designa-tion. They were given to us at birth by our parents. Your given name gives you identity. It tells who you are and what family you belong to. But, there are two others. The second has to do with description. When you drive through Nairobi, Kenya you notice that all the matatus (public busses) have names written across the back. I have seen names like *hopeless, mercy, loveable, superstar, and winner*. If someone wrote a name, a description, across your life today, what would it be? What name would you use to describe your life? What name would you LIKE to have? Your third name has to do with destiny. That is the most important one, and I want to talk to you about it.

(CC) - When God created the first man and woman, He gave them names. He called the man Adam, which simply means "man or person". He called the woman Eve, which means "giver of life." He then gave them two jobs: give everything on earth a name, and fill the earth with people that love and worship Him. But, before they could even get started good, satan came and tempted them and persuaded them to turn away from God. The name written across their life was no longer *love and peace*, but now it had become *lost, afraid and separated*. God had created them with a clean heart, but now it was dirty and filled with sin. Their destiny name was changed from life to death. Because of sin they began to die. But, they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart. They inherited it. Then sin passed from one generation to the other, all the way to you and me. When I was born into this world, my parents gave me the name Shad, but written across my life was the name *separated*. You and I have different birth names, but we are all born with the same descriptive name, *separated*. But, the good news is this, we can all have a name change. Our descriptive name can be changed to *connected*, connected to God. And our

destiny name can be changed to *child of God*. So, how can we change our name? By changing our heart. We must do three things: 1. Face the truth about who we are; we have a Problem we were born with. 2. Face the truth about Jesus; He is the Solution, and He is the only name whereby we can be saved. 3. Face the truth about eternity; we must Choose to let God change our name by receiving Jesus in our heart.

Invitation - I'm asking you all to receive a new name today, the name of *God's child*. You were born into your earthly family with a name. Now you can be born into God's family with a new name. How? Admit, Believe. Call.

15. How Far to Heaven?

(for school audience)

(SLE) - I was told that the students in this school are very smart. Is that right? Ok, well, I want to see how much you know about the subject of astronomy. So, let me ask you a couple of questions. What is at the center of our solar system? Right, the sun. How many planets are there? Right, nine. At least, that's how many there were when I went to school! Now, how many miles is it to the moon? It's 240,000 miles. Ok, here is a mathematical question. If you could drive a car to the moon at 60 miles per hour, how long would it take to get there? It would take 166 days, or five and a half months. Now, how many of you know the name of the planet that we call the evening star? Right, Venus. How far is it to Venus? It is 26 million miles. Now, suppose you drove to Venus at 60 miles per hour, how long would it take? It would take 50 years. Now here is a really tough question. How far is it to heaven? A million miles? A hundred million? And, how long does it take to get there? Well, it is closer than you think, because it only takes three steps, and you can reach it today.

None of us will ever be able to go to the moon, or to Venus, but every person in this audience CAN go to heaven, and will, if we take three simple steps. They are not the kind you take with your feet, but with your heart. And, I want to share them with you, because I know that every person here wants

two things: you want a good life on this planet we call earth, and you want someday to go to heaven.

(CC) - In the beginning God created the entire universe: the sun, stars, moon, and all the lights of heaven. He also created the first man and woman, and he put within them a clean heart. They walked with God and had a perfect life. But, satan came one day and tempted them and persuaded them to turn away from God. Their clean heart became dirty and contaminated with sin, and they were separated from God. They lost everything and, because of sin, began to die. But, they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart. Then one generation followed the other, down to you and me, and we, too, were born separated from God with a dirty heart. The question is, how can we, with dirty hearts, go into God's heaven where sin cannot go? We cannot. We must have a clean heart, and we can have one by taking three simple steps. We can become citizens of heaven today. We must 1. Face the truth about ourselves; we have a Problem that separates us from God. 2. Face the truth about Jesus; He is the Solution, and He can connect us to God. 3. Face the truth about eternity; we must Choose between heaven and hell.

Invitation – Let Jesus come into your heart. Let Him make you a citizen of heaven today. How? Admit, Believe, and Call.

16. The Right Bus

(or, train, subway, etc., any form of public transportation)

(SLE) - Hello everyone, we're glad to be here with you today at the bus station. Thank you for enjoying the music. As I look around here today, I notice that every one of you guys are either just arriving or getting ready to leave. To those of you who just arrived we say welcome! To those of you who are leaving we say, have a safe trip. Now, let me ask those who just arrived, how did you get here. You say, on a bus. Yes, but it was not just any bus was it? No, it was a certain bus. And, to those of you who are leaving, how do you know you will get to the place you want to go? You, too, will get on a certain bus - one that has the name of your destination written on it. Ok, now, what do you have to do in order to take that bus to your city? You have to pay the fare, step

on to the bus and sit down, and then trust the driver to take you where you want to go. Well, I want to talk to you for a few moments about another destination, one that we all want to go to some day - a place called heaven.

Now, of course, there is no bus to heaven, but there is a certain way to get there. The good news is that there is plenty of room for everyone who wants to go, and your fare has already been paid. When you make a trip on one of these busses, you do three things: 1. You realize you are not where you want to be. You are separated from the place you want to go, and you have a Problem you cannot solve without help. 2. You realize that a certain bus is the Solution to your problem, and you are willing to take it. 3. You get on that bus and make a Choice to put your faith in the driver. You know you can't take your self there, but you believe he can, so you trust him to do it.

Friends, I don't know your names or anything about you, but I do know there are two places that we are all trying to go to - one today and the other some day. Today, we all want to go to a place called *happy life*, and some day we want to go to a place called heaven. Well, I want to tell you about a bus that will take you to both, and I want to tell you how to get on it.

(CC) - In the beginning God created two people. They had a happy life and heaven too, so they didn't need a bus to get there. They were already there. They had a clean heart, a great relationship with God, and they were going to live forever. But, something went wrong. Satan came and tempted them, and he persuaded them to turn away from God and follow him - to get on his bus, so to speak. But that bus would only take them to death and destruction. At that moment their heart became dirty and filled with sin, and God had to put them away from His presence. Then they had children, and they too were born with a dirty heart. They inherited it. You might say they were born as passengers on the wrong bus - just like every person ever born into this world since then.

We are all descendants of Adam and Eve, and we are all born with the same problem, a dirty sinful heart that separates us from God. So, what can we do? How can we get off of satan's bus to hell and get on God's bus to heaven? There are three things we must do - three simple steps.

Invitation: Let Jesus come into your heart. Let Him take you off of the devil's bus, and put you on the bus to heaven. How? Admit, Believe, Call.

17. The Newspaper

(Good for open-air meeting)

(SLE) - Quite often in an open-air setting there will be people holding a newspaper. In anticipation of using it as an illustration, I usually make sure there is one in the vehicle when we leave. After the music has stopped and the crowd is gathered, I will take the mic, with a newspaper in hand, and ask the crowd, "Has anyone read the paper today?" A couple of hands may go up. "Well, what did you find in that paper? Any good news? Most of the time, all I find is bad news." I hold up the paper and say, "Oh, look, here's an article about some crooked politicians. No surprise there. Here's one about a robbery. Here's one about a murder. Here's one about a bad accident. All bad news. Well, let me ask you, did you pay for that paper? Wow, so, you paid good money to read bad news! Well, I have some news for you today, and it is all good news - and it is free."

(CC) - Back when God created the first man and woman, there were no newspapers, but if there had been, it would have been filled with nothing but good news. There may have been an article on the goodness of God. There may have been one on the eternal love of God. The headline might have read, "Man Lives Forever - No Sin Found in The Human Race!" It was all good news. There would have been no need for an obituary page, because no one died. But, all that changed when satan entered the garden and persuaded Adam and Eve to turn against God. God had created them with a clean heart, but now sin entered their heart and it became dirty. They were now separated from God, and God had to put them away because of sin. They lost everything; their home, their relationship with God, and their life. Because of sin, they began to die.

But they had children, and they were born with a dirty heart, separated from God. Then sin passed from one generation to the next - all the way to

you and me. We were all born with a dirty heart that produces sin. Now the headlines are no longer good. Now they read, "Man loses everything - all hope lost!" But, the question is, can that headline change for you and me? Yes, it can. It can read, "Hope regained - lives saved!" But, how? It can change for you by taking three simple steps: Face the truth about yourself. Face the truth about Jesus. Face the truth about eternity. As I look in the obit section of this paper today, I see your picture is not there. But, someday, it will be. At that time, it will be too late for you to respond. But, today there is still time. Problem, Solution, Choice.

Invitation: I'm asking you to change the headlines about your life. I'm asking you to turn your life into a constant stream of good news. How? By taking three simple steps - Admit, Believe, Call.

*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world,
and preach the gospel to every creature."*

Mark 16:15

*"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day:
the night cometh, when no man can work."*

John 9:4

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