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INTEGRATING PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL  
OUTREACH TRAINING AT MT. PLEASANT BAPTIST  
CHURCH IN HERNDON, VIRGINIA

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A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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by  
Nathaniel T. Brooks  
December 2012

**APPROVAL SHEET**

INTEGRATING PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL  
OUTREACH TRAINING AT MT. PLEASANT BAPTIST  
CHURCH IN HERNDON, VIRGINIA

Nathaniel T. Brooks

Read and Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
T. Vaughn Walker (Faculty Supervisor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Timothy K. Beougher

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To Mary Lee Dorsey,  
whose unfaltering love  
and encouragement  
made me the person I am today

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## PREFACE

Foremost, I thank the Lord Jesus Christ for allowing me the opportunity to conduct this project. I count it a privilege to have accomplished my D.Min. studies at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. From the minute I stepped on campus, I met some of the greatest cohort members to matriculate alongside. I am indebted to Dr. T. Vaughn Walker for patiently encouraging me throughout the process and making sure I stayed focused on my end goal.

I am equally thankful to my pastor, Rev. Dr. James L. Graham Jr., and my church family for their constant support, fervent prayers, and endless encouragement. A special thank you belongs to the advisors and leaders of the children and youth ministry of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, who participated in the project, and to the other advisors who worked diligently to help free up my time and to allow me to finish this auspicious degree. I say this with all my heart. I am blessed to have one the greatest ministries and some the greatest ministry leaders to work alongside.

Most of all, I thank the Lord for giving me my precious fiancé and soon-to-be wife, Tocarra Fenner, whom I am blessed to share my life and this journey. I never thought that God would send someone so beautiful alongside me and one with such a great heart for ministry and the Lord's children—"He who findeth a wife findeth a good thing" (Prov 18:22).

Lastly, I thank my grandmother, Mary Lee Dorsey, who is smiling down on me from heaven. Because of her unselfish love for me and my siblings, unyielding discipline, and



constant prayers, I am who I am. My humble prayer is that God continues to bless me so that I can be a blessing to others (Ps 41:11).

Nathaniel Brooks

Gainesville, Virginia

December 2012

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip the leaders of the children and youth at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia, to be more efficient in social outreach by integrating personal evangelism training with social outreach training.

#### **Goals**

This project attempted to accomplish five goals. These five goals served as the criteria by which the effectiveness of this project was evaluated. The first goal was a knowledge goal: to increase the knowledge and confidence of the leaders of children and youth in the area of personal evangelism and social outreach. During the implementation of the project the twelve leaders were surveyed on their knowledge and confidence levels concerning social outreach and personal evangelism. Initially, many of the leaders were hesitant to answer basic questions because of embarrassment and fear of not knowing. Participants were constantly reminded of trusting each other with answers, questions, and the importance of growth. During the training, the leaders studied biblical and theological principles of personal evangelism and social outreach demonstrated by Jesus (Matt 28:19-29; John 3:1-22; John 4:1-42; Luke 19:1-10; 1 Pet 3:15-16). By examining Jesus' models of personal evangelism and social outreach, the children and youth leaders increased their biblical and theological knowledge and confidence in both areas.

The second goal was a skills goal: to equip the leaders of children and youth by teaching them the basics of personal evangelism and social outreach in order that they

may be able to affably present the Gospel and share their faith when doing social outreach. During this process, the leaders committed themselves to learning and memorizing core Scriptures verses and studying basic tools, methods, and principles of personal evangelism. All evangelistic tools, principles, methods used in this project had direct application to the leader's ministry context and would be helpful in future personal evangelism trainings and initiatives.

The third goal was a knowledge goal: to engage lost people with a biblical and affable presentation of the gospel. Once the leaders were equipped with sound biblical and theological knowledge of personal evangelism and their confidence had improved, the leaders engaged in a two-hour personal evangelism initiative within the neighborhood of Mt. Pleasant Baptist church. The personal evangelism initiative afforded the leaders an opportunity to evangelize to the un-churched and non-believers by handing out tracts and telling people about the gospel of Christ.

The fourth goal was a skills goal: to equip our leaders with viable social outreach and personal evangelism techniques so that they can train our youth in social outreach and personal evangelism. It is a priority of this project that our leaders will use the techniques learned to train our youth within the ministry. During the training our leaders had a chance to engage twelve of our youth on their fears of evangelism and social outreach. This session allowed both the leaders and youth to ask questions, gather information, and gain an awareness of barriers and fears that youth face when evangelizing.

The fifth and final goal of this project was for me to become more effective at personal evangelism and social outreach. As the Director of Children and Youth, it is a priority of mine to strengthen my skills and abilities as I seek to meet the needs of the leaders and youth of our ministry. In order to accomplish this goal, after each training, I engaged the participants in personal dialog about the effectiveness of this training. I

received multiple follow-up emails from class participants about their personal growth as a result of this training.

### **Ministry Context**

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church is located in Herndon, Virginia, which is a part of Fairfax, County. Herndon, Virginia, once a rural area, is now a growing, multicultural, affluent urban community. Herndon is an excellent harvest area for personal evangelism and outreach initiatives. Within a five-mile radius, there are various ethnicities that include: White, Black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Hispanic.<sup>1</sup> Of these ethnicities, 62.6 percent are White, 8.3 percent are Black, 17.1 percent are Pacific Islander, and 17.1 percent are Hispanic Origin.<sup>2</sup> Mt. Pleasant is a predominantly African American church and appeals mostly to African American families with little effort given to engaging other races and ethnic groups within its community.

Mt. Pleasant's congregation has the potential to do personal evangelism as it relates to specific age groups in the Herndon community. Mt. Pleasant's age group breakdown closely resembles those age group percentages of its surrounding community. For example, in a five-mile radius, the largest age groups are 25-34 and 35-44. Together, they both make up 36 percent of the total population.<sup>3</sup> These two age groups at Mt. Pleasant make up at least 60 percent of our congregation. The medium age group for Mt. Pleasant's congregation is 40.

The largest segment of the population is the 35-44 age groups, in which 19.2 percent of the population resides inside a five-mile radius of the church property. In

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<sup>1</sup>North American Mission Board Center for Missional Research, *Herndon Demographic Information* (Alpharetta, GA: NAMB, 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

2010, there were 70,529 households with the medium household income being 109,536.<sup>4</sup> By 2015, according to the North American Mission Board Center for Missional Research, there will be 74,080 households with the medium household income being \$125, 473.<sup>5</sup> Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church is located in a very affluent area and its congregation closely resembles the age group population and medium household income.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church was organized in 1866 in the Old Floris School that was located on Frying Pan Road. In April 1995, after several pastors had served the church diligently, the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church body elected Rev. James Graham as their sixteenth pastor. Under his leadership, the church grew rapidly and realized that expansion was necessary and more space was needed for worship and to support the needs of its growing congregation. In March 1996, a new building site was sought for development and Mt. Pleasant temporarily moved their worship services to the Herndon Middle School. For three years, Herndon Middle School met the needs of the church until their newly constructed site was finished. In May of 1999, Mt. Pleasant entered their present location on Squirrel Hill Road, in Herndon, Virginia.

Throughout its 145 years of history, Mt. Pleasant has grown from fifteen members to more than 3700 members. Mt. Pleasant started as a small rural church and is now a regional church with members commuting from both Maryland and the District of Columbia. Many members are commuting in average of 15-20 minutes to attend bible study and Sunday morning worship services. In 2005, to accommodate its increased membership and commuting members, Mt. Pleasant decided to add a third worship service. Since 2005, between the three worship services, Mt. Pleasant has an average of 800 persons attending services every Sunday morning.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

Membership has grown as quickly as its attendance. In 2010, Mt. Pleasant had 145 people join the church. Of the 145 who joined, 80 joined through transfer or Christian experience, of which 65 were new believers. Mt. Pleasant reaches both non-believers and the unchurched. However, the unchurched are mostly through transfer and are unchurched Christians. Although, of the 145 that joined, only 25 came forward for baptism. Mt. Pleasant's baptismal numbers are low for the size of its congregation, but it has shown a slight improvement over the past five years. It is evident that Mt. Pleasant is reaching the unchurched, but improvement is needed for following up on new members who desire baptism and conversion membership.

Mt. Pleasant sits on over three acres of land. For the past ten years, Mt. Pleasant has taken a quality interest in reaching the needs of its congregation specifically its seniors and youth. In 2001, as an extension of the church mission's ministry, Mt. Pleasant opened an elementary Christian Academy that employs ten faculty and staff, with a student enrollment that averages between forty and fifty students annually. Throughout the workweek and day time hours, the Christian academy occupies the lower level of the building.

Mt. Pleasant also has an active senior's ministry that operates out of a renovated house located on the property adjacent to the church building. The senior's ministry operates weekly on Tuesday and Thursday and has about one hundred active seniors from within the church and community that commutes to this location.

Mt. Pleasant has sought to model after Acts 1:8 and has placed a primary focus on missions and evangelism in foreign countries. Since 1996, it has taken missionaries to Kenya, Russia, Benin, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Haiti, U.S. Virgin Islands, South Africa, and Liberia. Over 18 percent of Mt. Pleasant's budget goes to missions and evangelism. More emphasis is often placed on international missions and evangelism rather than evangelizing its local community.

The missions and evangelism ministry at Mt. Pleasant has tried evangelizing its local community with traditional outreach and event evangelistic methods such as door-to-door evangelism, handing out tracts, visiting community senior citizens homes, caring for the less fortunate, and participating in community and county events.

Mt. Pleasant has tried mainstream evangelistic programs such as *Evangelism Explosion*. *Evangelism Explosion* is a thirteen week course which demonstrates and teaches a clear outline of the gospel message which can be explained in a two minute summary or a two hour discussion. *Evangelism explosion* lasted several years in the church and stopped due to the lack of interest, participation, commitment, and structure.

Evangelism in Mt. Pleasant's community is somewhat challenging because it has several contextual factors that affect the church evangelism methods. One factor is due to Mt. Pleasant's lack of knowledge on how to reach and communicate with the different cultures within its community. Other factors include trying to evangelize in an affluent neighborhood and competing with "fast paced" environment whereas people simply seem too busy to hear about religion. Thom Rainer suggests in his book *The Unchurched Next Door* that if a church's primary contacts are among the wealthier of society or if a church is located in a more affluent area, the likelihood exists that the church will find greater resistance to the gospel.<sup>6</sup>

In 2001, Mt. Pleasant saw an increase of youth that joined the church and saw the need for a full time youth minister. Through much prayer in May of 2001, Mt. Pleasant hired a youth minister to further grow the children and youth ministries. Under the leadership of the new youth pastor, the children and youth ministry developed a complete ministry strategic plan to support the mission and vision of the church. Since then, the children and youth ministry added ten new ministries, which included a children's Sunday morning worship service, children and youth bible study, logistics and

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<sup>6</sup>Thom Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 82.

communication ministry, social outreach and evangelism ministry, preteen and teen ministries, and a nursery ministry. Mt. Pleasant's children and youth ministry has grown from over fifty youth to more than three hundred youth along with over forty active volunteers and leaders that undergird the ministry. The children, youth, and its ministry leaders support almost every aspect of ministry at Mt. Pleasant.

As the children and youth ministry continued to grow, the church voted to hire a full time children's pastor to help undergird the youth pastor and the many activities of the children and youth ministry. As the children's pastor, my primary responsibility is to provide pastoral oversight to children twelve and under. Other responsibilities include supporting the youth pastor and other duties assigned by the senior pastor.

Each year, as an evangelism and social outreach initiative, the children and youth ministry has an annual youth crusade. The crusade attracts various youth ministries from around the Virginia and Washington DC metropolitan area. One major weakness that continues to happen is that although the youth crusade does well in attendance and keeping the youth's attention, little to no personal evangelism takes place. If Mt. Pleasant's children and youth leaders are trained in personal evangelism, I believe the youth leaders will be more effective at witnessing to the lost and unchurched youth that attend the youth crusade and other youth events.

If Mt. Pleasant's children and youth ministry is to be more effective at doing personal evangelism and social outreach, then more strategic training is needed. Doing social outreach is a great need but spreading the gospel and reaching people for Christ, for the purpose of conversion, is an even greater need. Learning to reach people on a personal level and engaging them with the gospel should be a part of the training. Teaching the children and youth leaders how to personally evangelize will give them more confidence in witnessing while doing social outreach.



Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church is consistently evaluating its ministry practices in the light of the fast paced, technological, and social centered nature of the community. Mt. Pleasant desires to reach the multi-ethnic youth and young adult generation that is inhabiting the community. Mt. Pleasant's strengths vary, including their ability to reach unchurched families, support international missions, and its multipurpose facility. Other strengths include their weekly Bible study rotation, as well as, three energetic worship services on Sunday mornings. Mt. Pleasant has many ministry events throughout the year, however, one weakness is not having enough confident people that are willing to personally evangelize our unchurched visitors, particularly our youth and young adults, and explain the Gospel message. This remains an issue that deserves follow up and resolution.

### **Rationale**

While the masses rejected Jesus and “many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him” (John 6:66), Jesus did his greatest work on a personal level. It is clear that personal evangelism is more restricted than evangelism in general because it is one kind of evangelism. Personal evangelism is directed towards a certain individual or individuals as opposed to varieties such as media, street, or mass campaigns directed toward many.<sup>7</sup>

Personal evangelism requires a deeper commitment and effort from individuals. Mainly, when evangelism groups are sent out, it is easier for some members of the group to depend on the main leader, a pastor, or a partner to interact with the “lost persons” or to deliver the message of the Gospel. Group evangelism requires little to no commitment from the individual. Although Jesus selected his twelve disciples to follow him, and at times had large multitudes of crowds following him, he continued to model

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<sup>7</sup>G. William Schweer, *Personal Evangelism for Today* (Nashville: Broadman, 1984), 12.

reaching those on a personal level. Three illustrations where Jesus' commitment to personally evangelize and to save the lost were demonstrated in his interactions with Nicodemus (John 3:1-22), the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-42), and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).

In all three examples, Jesus does not depend on a group of individuals or one main leader to interact with them first. Instead, he confidently encounters and interacts with them on a personal level. Our social outreach trainings teach our members to stay with a group and use one another for support. Group directed social outreach training is often done for safety reasons and for training new persons for social outreach. However, when this is the only training that is given, it hinders the confidence level of an individual to work on their own and be more personal and interactive with those that are lost. It also teaches persons that evangelism should be done with a group or with a partner and it limits the person from evangelizing outside that group or away from that partner. Personal evangelism eliminates the dependency on groups and partners and leaves the work of conveying the gospel message, for the purpose of conversion, solely on the individual.

When Jesus interacted with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman at the well, and Zacchaeus, it was for the purpose of spiritual conversation and conversion. If people ask Christians about their faith and their beliefs, Christians should be able to respond to them confidently and compassionately, regardless of that person's place in life and resistance to the Gospel.

Most of our leaders of children and youth are not fully confident about engaging lost people away from groups or with partners when doing social outreach. Our leaders are content with doing social outreach initiatives and not conveying the Gospel message. All social outreach initiatives should have an opportunity where individuals can engage the lost on a personal level, for the purpose of conversion. The moral climate

of the world is changing and people, particularly youth, are becoming increasingly intimidated and untrusting of organized religious groups. The change in the perspective of culture has the church at a critical time in history. Many of the previous evangelistic and social outreach methods used beforehand are now outdated, non-relevant to the community, and archaic. If Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church is to reach the lost and the unchurched, its leaders must be trained and equipped at reaching people cross culturally, especially its youth, personally and building relationships for the purpose of conversion. The foundation of personal evangelism and discipleship is not merely in the method, but the centrality of the unchanging gospel.

Personal evangelism forms an indispensable part of social outreach ministry. Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church desires to become an evangelistic force in the Herndon community and the world. Mt. Pleasant has more than twenty social outreach initiatives, which include feeding the homeless, international and local missions, angel tree, clothing drives, and prison ministry. Mt. Pleasant's social outreach initiatives could become even stronger if they were to weave more of a personal evangelistic purpose into every social outreach initiative.

The method pursued in this project was to provide a training environment focused on personal evangelism and showing how it relates to social outreach. The training taught the participants personal evangelism skills and how to ingrate those skills with their social outreach initiatives. The training will also focus on how to engage the lost and the unchurched compassionately with the gospel message and understanding common barriers that can hinder personal evangelism. Finally, participants had a chance to do some personal evangelism while engaging in a social outreach initiative with the community.

## Definitions

The purpose of this project was to integrate personal evangelism training with social outreach training to produce more efficient witnesses for Christ. Jesus did some of his greatest work on a personal level. G. William Schweer defines personal evangelism as “the Spirit-led, person-to-person communication of the gospel of the Kingdom by one or more Christians in such a way or ways that the individual recipient has a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and become a responsible member of his church.”<sup>8</sup>

Outreach generally connotes simply a general “reaching out” beyond normal boundaries. For the purpose of this project, the words “social outreach” is defined as “the act or effort to build connections from one person or social group to another by offering resources and materials in ways that advance the public good and mission of that organization.” Any organization, whether Christian based or secular, can do social outreach. Ideally, what should separate a Christian social outreach initiative from a secular outreach initiative is that Christian based social outreach initiatives main aim should be to help move an individual to conversion and discipleship.

It is often observed that many churches are committed to serving the “least of these” and advocating for justice in Christ’s name, but without making an explicit effort to bring those they serve to a relationship with Christ, which is conversion. Believers need to understand the personal responsibility to share the gospel with the non-believer in a way that is effective and genuine. The message of the gospel motivates and shapes their social outreach initiatives but the focus is meeting social (physical) needs, and not spiritual conversion. Personal evangelism and social outreach are distinguishable but must be inseparable. Hence, Christian based social outreach becomes a vehicle in which

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 15.

personal evangelism takes place for the purpose of conversion and discipleship (Matt 28:19-20).

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

Due to the range of the project, there was only one limitation to keep the project focused and convenient. First the project was limited to fifteen weeks, two weeks on recruiting of the participants for the project and surveying their knowledge of personal evangelism and social outreach, six weeks on training and integrating personal evangelism and social outreach, two weeks on engaging lost people in personal evangelism, learning and evaluating the barriers they faced during their personal evangelism initiatives, three weeks on how to train children and youth within the ministry for personal evangelism and social outreach, one week of follow-up and discussion of the last thirteen weeks, and the last two weeks were spent on evaluation and summation of the entire project.

The delimitations dealt with the participants in the class. First, the project was heavily dependent upon the willingness of the individual leaders participating to desire to grow in their views and perspectives on personal evangelism and social outreach. Each participant had to commit to coming to class each week, studying the materials given, and have an openness to change and growth. Second, the number of participants were limited between 10 and 12 individuals. Third, this training was open only to the leaders of children and youth. The children and youth leaders who participated had basic knowledge and previous experiences with personal evangelism and social outreach.

### **Research Methodology**

The first goal was to increase the knowledge and confidence of the leaders of children and youth in the area of personal evangelism and social outreach. New Testament passages concerning Jesus and his interaction with various individuals were

studied in order to accomplish this goal. First, Jesus' Great Commission statement in Matthew 28:19-20 was examined. Second, Jesus' interaction with a Pharisee named Nicodemus in John 3:1-22 was considered. Third, Jesus' interaction with the adulteress Samaritan women in John 4:1-42 was examined. Fourth, Jesus' interaction with chief tax collector named Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10 was examined. Finally, Simon Peter's words concerning apologetics in 1 Peter 3:15-16 was examined. Each participant gleaned various perspectives and conclusions surrounding the New Testament Scriptures. Insights and understanding of Jesus' relationship with "the lost" challenged participants to change their views toward personal evangelism and social outreach.

The second goal was to equip the leaders of children and youth by teaching them the basics of personal evangelism and social outreach in order that they may be able to affably present the Gospel and share their faith when doing social outreach. Two core books were used to help accomplish this goal. *Personal Evangelism for Today* by G. William Schweer and *Share Jesus without Fear*, by William Fay and Ralph Hodge were used to equip them with the basic of personal evangelism. The leaders were given weekly Scripture verses and committed themselves to memorizing core verses pertaining to evangelism and studying basic tools, methods, and principles of personal evangelism found within each book of the Bible.

The third goal was to engage lost people with a biblical and affable presentation of the gospel. First, the participants were sent into the residential neighborhood surrounding our church and were given tracts and informational cards about our church to place on neighbors' doors and to interact with people that came in contact with. Secondly, each participant was charged to go into their own neighborhood, jobs, market places and witness to at least one person. Through the implementation of both of these projects, it is my hope that each individual showed confidence in witnessing

and displayed evidence that they had grown through their fears and hesitancy of evangelizing.

The fourth goal was to equip our leaders with viable social outreach and personal evangelism techniques so that they can train our youth in social outreach and personal evangelism. During two weeks of the class the participants were presented with several post-modern viewpoints and popular cultures understanding of the Christian church and Jesus Christ. The participants were able to grasp a general understanding of how youth view the class. During the training the participants were taught basic technique of how to teach our youth about evangelism and how to engage unchurched youth. After learning several techniques of how to evangelize youth the participants came up with several viable techniques to put into application for reaching unchurched and lost youth. In addition, during one of the classes, I invited some of our ministry youth to come into the class and engaged the leaders with their own thoughts, questions, and concern regarding personal evangelism and social outreach. The participants listened and took notes for future follow-up and engagement.

The final goal for the project was to become more knowledgeable of my leaders given my charge and effective at personal evangelism and social outreach. I started to have regular conversations both verbally and through email with each leader solely for the purpose of encouragement, understanding, and accountability. Each participant provided me with a great insight from each training session and also ways to improve certain aspects of the class.

## CHAPTER 2

### A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR INTEGRATING PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL OUTREACH TRAINING

This chapter establishes the biblical and theological foundation for integrating personal evangelism and social outreach training by examining in detail Jesus' acts of personal evangelism. First, four separate texts from God's Word are discussed in order to demonstrate the biblical necessity to personally evangelize. Matthew 28:19-20 is examined as the universal mission of the church for evangelism and discipleship. John 3:1-22 is examined to demonstrate the importance of personal evangelism and how to affably defend one's faith in the midst of opposition. John 4:1-42 is analyzed to demonstrate Jesus' zeal to reach out and personally evangelize to those that are cast aside and shamed by society. Luke 19:1-10 is analyzed to demonstrate how believers must not be ashamed to encounter, visit the homes and places of sinners to evangelize and share one's faith. Finally, some general theological, ethical, and practical reasons why personal evangelism is vital when doing social outreach are examined.

#### **Biblical and Theological Foundation for Personal Evangelism**

The New Testament has a variety of evangelistic passages that speak to the importance of personal evangelism and one's responsibilities with respect to those who are outside of Christ. Evangelism is sharing the gospel (good news) message of Jesus Christ with those who do not believe, calling them to repent of their sins and become followers of Jesus (conversion). However, personal evangelism demands a more intimate and personal approach to engaging non-believers. G. William Schweer defines personal



evangelism as “the Spirit led person-to-person communication of the gospel of the Kingdom by one or more Christians in such a way or ways that the individual recipient has a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and become a responsible member of his church.”<sup>1</sup>

Biblical based witnessing to individuals is the task of every Christian.<sup>2</sup> However, Evangelism in this modern age is an intimidating word. Most believers can recall times when they have tried to bear witness about Christ, but stumbled on their words and failed miserably. Yet the role one plays in leading someone else to Jesus is enormous. Evangelism is the single most important act of a Christian. The New Testament, especially the Gospels, illustrates, through the personal acts of Jesus, the importance of personal evangelism. Although Jesus selected his twelve disciples to follow him, and at times traveled with large multitudes of crowds following him, he continued to model reaching those on a more personal level. Schweer writes, “The most powerful biblical impetus to personal evangelism is Jesus’ own model. As a personal evangelist, he has no peer. He is the supreme teacher and example. His model is the pattern and design every Christian must strive to imitate. He was not simple ‘a’ model, he is ‘the’ model.”<sup>3</sup> Jesus spent his entire early life seeking out sinners and doing social outreach to those in need. Though no one was excluded, his desire was for sinners and the disinherited. He constantly issued invitations, such as “come and see” (John 1:39); “follow me” (Matt 8:22); “come unto me” (Matt 11:28). Jesus’ ministry was clear and spiritually synchronized, “to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10). Jesus’ sayings and doings in personal evangelism gives one a vital look of the importance of

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<sup>1</sup>William G. Schweer, *Personal Evangelism for Today* (Nashville: Broadman, 1984), 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 73.

reaching people on all levels within society and is vital for our perspective and worth examining.

### **Matthew 28:19-20**

George Hunsberger asserts, “It has become all too common, when attempting to ground evangelism in the New Testament, to resort to what we have called the “Great Commission.”<sup>4</sup> The “Great Commission” is the commissioning words of Jesus, reported at the end of Matthew’s Gospel. These words are taken to be straightforward instructions sufficient in their clarity to provide a rationale for evangelizing no matter what the circumstances may be.<sup>5</sup> Paul Hertig describes the Great Commission as “the major turning point of the Bible in which the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile is dismantled and the mission of Jesus expands explicitly for all people. Suddenly it is clear that the reason Jesus confined his ministry to a small band of Jewish disciples was to ‘prepare a base for worldwide missions.’”<sup>6</sup>

Kenner notes that “this commission is not an afterthought to Matthew’s Gospel; rather it summarizes much of the heart of the message and gives a critical command of duty upon which every Christian must act.”<sup>7</sup> According to John Stott,

It is not enough therefore to fulfill your obligation in Christian worship if you neglect your duties in Christian witness. The universal commission to “go and make disciples” which the Lord Jesus gave before his ascension (Matt. 28:19) is binding upon every member of the whole Church. This is not of course to say that every Christian is called to be a minister or a missionary. But every Christian is called to be a witness to Christ in the particular environment in which God has placed him. Further, although the public ministry of the word is a high office,

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<sup>4</sup>George Hunsberger, “Is There Biblical Warrant for Evangelism?” *Interpretation* 48 (1994): 131.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Paul Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited: The Role of God’s Reign in Disciple Making,” *Missiology* 29 (2001): 343.

<sup>7</sup>Craig Keener, “Matthew’s Missiology: Making Disciples of the nations (Matthew 28:19-20),” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12 (2009): 3.

private witness or personal evangelism has a value, which in some respects, surpasses even that of preaching, since the message can then be adapted more personally to the particular person to whom one is speaking.<sup>8</sup>

Stott reinforces that Christians must not be caught up in the comforts of worship and abandon their duties to bear witness of Christ to nonbelievers. Christians find themselves stuck in a rut of worship and not wanting to go outside of the walls of the church to witness. Thinking like this becomes contradistinctive to Jesus' command and act of sending out disciples, to make other disciples, to replicate themselves (Matt 28:19). In order for one to make disciples believers must engage another person (personally) and witness to them about the wondrous acts of Jesus. Personal evangelism is the fabric upon which making a disciple is permeated.

One now comes to the heart of the Jesus' mission and evangelism mandate—to “go and make disciples” (Matt 28:19). The target of the commission is to go and make disciples of nations and meaning all the Gentiles. While Jewish converts are by no means excluded, the focus of the church's evangelistic mission, Matthew seems to suggest in going forward, be the Gentile world. Kenner asserts that “Jesus followers are to make disciples of the ‘nations’ so ‘going’ demands crossings cultural barriers to reach the Gentiles.”<sup>9</sup> Matthew's words are not mishaps, but they are words carefully taken from the resurrected Jesus. Jesus links his universal authority with the command to make disciples of all nations through the connecting word “therefore.”<sup>10</sup> Jesus' connecting statement insists that making disciples is the focal point of his command. Discipleship or the “making of disciples” is a personal act upon which Christians must willingly seek after, engage, preach too, talk, and pray with non-believers. Discipleship cannot take place if Christians do not go into the world with the purpose of reaching souls for

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<sup>8</sup>John R. W. Stott, *Personal Evangelism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1964), 3.

<sup>9</sup>Keener, “Matthew's Missiology,” 4.

<sup>10</sup>Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited,” 346.

Christ—conversion. Leighton Ford states that “biblical evangelism must also keep in mind the restoration of authentic humanity. Conversion restores broken relationships. The sheep is back in the fold. The coin is back in the purse. The son is back in his father’s house, having come ‘to himself.’ Lost from God, man is lost from himself. Found by God, man finds himself.”<sup>11</sup>

In Romans 10:14, Paul asks how the lost can come to know Christ without someone being sent to preach to them. Making disciples is not something that Jesus just commanded, but it is something that he modeled. While Jesus’ earthly ministry was relatively brief, the majority of it was spent building, talking, and praying with the disciples that he selected. He ate with them (Matt 9:9-13), he taught them (Matt 5-7), he trained and sent them out for ministry (Matt 10:5-42), and he made them a part of his most personal moments (Matt 26:33-46). Making disciples comes with spending, taking time, and grooming individuals. Jesus’ words to “go and make disciples” were also a command to personally evangelize to people on all levels within society.

One must not overlook that the words of the “Great Commission” were spoken words from the risen Jesus. The resurrection has enormous significance to Jesus’ Great Commission mandate and to the present Christian existence. Donald Hagner writes,

It is the risen Jesus, to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given, who here commissions his disciples and in effect the church of every period of history. They are to go everywhere with the message of good news in the name and authority of Jesus. Theirs is indeed an awesome responsibility: to go, make disciples of all nations, baptize, and teach. If left alone to their own devices and strength, the task would be overwhelming. Yet they are not left alone in this assignment. The risen, enthroned Jesus promises to be with them in their fulfillment of it, not intermittently but always.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Leighton Ford, “Personal Evangelism Conversion and Social change,” *The Ecumenical Review* 20 (1968): 124.

<sup>12</sup>Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, World Biblical Commentary, vol. 33 (Dallas: Word, 1995), 889.

The resurrection is critical to the evangelistic mandate of the Great Commission because as the Christian goes into the world he is not going under his own authority but under the authority of the risen Savior. Personal evangelism is done under the authority of Jesus and the Christian is never acting alone.

Jesus evangelistic instructions to “go and make disciples” also came with clear instructions. In Matthew 28: 19-10, Jesus told his disciples to baptize individuals in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to teach them obey everything that he commanded. The disciples have a duty not only to personally evangelize, but also to utilize what they have been taught as a means to construct disciples. Keener further explains that “what the church calls “missions” is not about evangelism, but also about training disciples who can partner in the task of evangelism. It must involve *multiplying* the work by trusting the Holy Spirit and Christ’s teaching to multiply equally committed laborers for the harvest.”<sup>13</sup>

Once a person is discipled and is baptized, he is separated from the “world” and entered into a new community and has confessed an identity with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup> Ford asserts further that

evangelism is a call to identification. Separation must not be confused with isolation. This is the constant temptation to us who are evangelicals. Separation is not meant to make Christians into some kind of sanctified “spook.” Separation is meant to equip the Christian to get into the world with Christ. Conversion is neither a call to isolation from the world, not imitation of the world. It is a call to identification with Jesus Christ in penetrating the world.<sup>15</sup>

Christian identity is only found in Christ Jesus and through his teachings—a teaching that evokes a new way of living, thinking, and acting. Hertig refers to this as

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<sup>13</sup>Keener, “Matthew’s Missiology,” 15.

<sup>14</sup>Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited,” 347.

<sup>15</sup>Ford, “Personal Evangelism Conversion,” 126.

coming under new management, being brought into a new fellowship of worshippers of God. Baptism, then, is an important way in which the disciple proclaims to the world he or she has been brought into the possession and under the authority of the triune God. Baptism, therefore, is an act of transfer into a state of belonging. The disciple is now a servant of God under the authority of God, a child in God's own family.<sup>16</sup>

Being under new management, through Christ Jesus, challenges non-Christians to make decisions for Christ. Christians must reflect and act upon a healthy balance of outreach and "in-reach." Jesus calls all Christians to be both witnesses and disciples.

### **John 3:1-22**

Roy Fish writes, "The Gospel of John presents Jesus as one for whom winning people to a new life was a dominant passion."<sup>17</sup> Jesus seemingly avoided crowds but purposely was zealous about meeting individuals where they were in life. Jesus is not hindered by a person's physical condition, material wealth, or social status. He modeled compassion and the importance of personal evangelism. A person's physical condition, social status, or personal beliefs should never be a determining factor upon which a Christian decides whether to confront them and share the gospel.

In John 3:1-22, the writer witnesses Jesus being visited at an awkward time of the day and conversing in a fascinating evangelistic dialog with a Jewish official named Nicodemus. Jesus' encounter and conversation with Nicodemus shows how a radical renewal can take place in the life of non-believer and a person with opposing views and beliefs. Malcolm Tolbert describes this personal encounter as "the most highly developed dialog in all the Gospels between Jesus and a named individual."<sup>18</sup> Tolbert further explains,

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<sup>16</sup>Hertig, "The Great Commission Revisited," 347.

<sup>17</sup>Roy J. Fish, "Evangelism in the Gospel of John," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 31 (1988): 37.

<sup>18</sup>Malcolm O. Tolbert, *Luke*, in vol. 9 of *Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. Clifton J. Allen (Nashville: Broadman, 1970), 238.

Because Nicodemus is so clearly identified, it is possible to form a reasonably clear picture of his personality and of his purpose for his visit. As a man of the Pharisees, he belongs to the most deeply religious brotherhood in all of Judaism. As a ruler of the Jews, he sat on the supreme judicial body permitted by the Romans, the Sanhedrin, entrusted with the spiritual and moral leadership of the nation. As a teacher of Israel, he was a trained theologian concerned with the true understanding and teaching of the revelation given of God. Since this account gives such prominence to the official groups in which Nicodemus held membership, the view is taken here that he came to visit Jesus not just as a private individual but as a representative of the Jewish religious establishment.<sup>19</sup>

From the opening of this encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus, it shows how Christians are called to encounter individuals on various levels of life, who may have different political positions and different theological positions. Jesus, interaction with Nicodemus, demonstrates how the Gospel applies to individual's personal situation and the needs of the one of whom he is dealing. Nicodemus sought out and came to Jesus in the night, almost suggesting hesitancy, and a curiosity outside of what he believed. Jesus does not turn down or shun Nicodemus' for his awkward hour of visitation. Jesus knew Nicodemus' opposing religious position, his background, and his thoughts before he approached. Frank Scott writes,

Jesus did not refuse to receive this man in those hours devoted to rest and refreshments. It was ever His meat to do His Father's will. And the Saviour received him willingly. Besides, as we are told Jesus "knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man," etc. He saw behind the wrappings of Pharisaic formalism and prejudice of birth and training into the inner being of Nicodemus, (as of Nathanael), and recognized there good soil where the good seed might bring forth manifold increase.<sup>20</sup>

One deduces from Jesus' openness and discernment that God can make the best of any difficult and opposing situation. Faith in Christ and openness to engage individuals, despite what one believes and knows about them can be the turning point toward conversion of that individual.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 239.

<sup>20</sup>Frank W. Scott, *St. John*, in vol. 24 of *The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*, ed. Joseph S. Exell (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1980), 89.

Don Williard writes, “The Evangelist, presents Nicodemus as a sincere inquirer who approaches Jesus with an assessment of his ministry that is unexpected from the recognized religious establishment.”<sup>21</sup> Jesus immediately upon Nicodemus’ visit is faced with a figure that represents opposing views. Being able to stand calmly and confidently against opposition and defend the faith accurately is critical to personal evangelism. The best defense is to know what one believes and why, and be able to articulate it when confronted by individuals of opposing viewpoints and people with curiosity. Margaret Hess writes, “When someone becomes curious about his own life, he opens the door to transformation and healing. Curiosity is the first step in seeing things through the eyes and can lead to redemptive revision of the story of one’s life.”<sup>22</sup> An individual’s curiosity and confusing questions are not threats against one’s faith and should be treated as a threat; but such responses are an “open door” in which the witness can bring a person into understanding the truth of the Gospel. The opposition endured by the early Christians and their faithfulness to Christ and his church in the face of that opposition, are very informative to present Christians, missionaries, and evangelists. Using God’s word and the strategies of earlier Christians can help as one personally evangelizes nonbelievers and makes disciples.

Nicodemus’ opening comments seem to revere Jesus as “Rabbi” and “One sent from God” (John 3:2). Despite Nicodemus’ opening and revering remarks to Jesus, it is evident that Jesus saw through it and stayed firmly to his mission and purpose of redemption. Don Williford suggests,

Nicodemus’ greeting to Jesus is both a polite affirmation and an initial step of faith. His understanding of the signs of Jesus have not plumbed the depths of Jesus’ identity, but they have at least led him, and other anonymous individuals with whom

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<sup>21</sup>Don Williford, “John 3:1-15—*gennethenal anothen*: A Radical Departure, A New Beginning,” *Review & Expositor* 96 (1999): 453.

<sup>22</sup>Margaret Hess, “A Curious Man,” *Christian Century* 16 (1997): 475.



he associates himself, to affirm that Jesus is a teacher who come from God. Compared to the assessment of other Pharisees in the Synoptic tradition, this is a significant concession on Nicodemus' part.<sup>23</sup>

Nicodemus may have come with alternative motives, which is no different from individuals one often encounters during social outreach, mission, and evangelistic events. However, through discernment, as believers recognize ulterior motives, one must be careful not to give into them or give "life" to their motives. Jesus handled Nicodemus well and did not fall into Nicodemus' savvy compliments but countered his motives with the truth of the gospel. Christians are faced with being mature in their faith, handling the word of God, and handling individuals with care and truth when evangelizing and doing social outreach. Jesus knew Nicodemus' heart and discerned his questions before he could devise it. Without any uncertainty Jesus comes to the heart of the issue at hand and states that, "no man can experience the Kingdom without having being "born again."

Williford writes,

But as soon as Nicodemus had paid his compliments to this unprofessional Rabbi, Jesus cuts away from under his feet all around for self-satisfaction. No-one, Jesus told him, can experience the reign of God, no matter what his race or his degree of piety may be, apart from the experience of new birth; for neither racial privilege nor the punctilious observance of religious practices can efface the sin that is inherent in every child of Adam.<sup>24</sup>

It was critical for Jesus to cut to the point and not acknowledge Nicodemus' compliments, but more importantly to correct his thinking in matters of salvation. Jesus proposes to Nicodemus the idea of "rebirth" a concept that contrasted with Nicodemus' ideas and perplexed Nicodemus. Being "born again" or "reborn" were remote ideas that challenged Nicodemus archaic beliefs. Frank Scott asserts that

our Lord at once reverses the current Jewish ideas concerning Messiah and His Kingdom; He her lays the foundation of his teaching as to His kingdom—its spiritual nature and heavenly origin are plainly asserted. Men do not become subjects of it by right of birth, office, position. They must be new born into it, with

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<sup>23</sup>Williford, "John 3:1-15," 453.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

a new spirit not subject to evil, but inspired to overcome it. Those who are “born again” (or from above) are those who become what they were not before, in whom an entirely new spiritual life has been implanted, and in whom this change has been brought about, not by the fulfillment of certain ritual or devotional duties, not even by repentance alone, but by the impartation of spiritual power from above.<sup>25</sup>

If a person is confused, misled, and wrong on the doctrine of salvation, specifically, the prerequisites for salvation, he misses the very heart of the gospel. When evangelizing, Christians cannot afford to miss a moment to spread the truth of salvation and must always radically redirect individual back to the authentic truth.

Nicodemus immediately became bewildered by Jesus’ words, however, Nicodemus’ bewilderment paved the way for Jesus to further explain and lead him to the truth of the gospel. Nicodemus’ response, which showed basic human emotion, is also critical to personal evangelism. Often when Christians confront people with the truth, especially those truths that oppose or seem obscure to them, human emotion arises and can be uncomfortable. When faced with such discomfort Christians must continue to reiterate the truth with compassion and stay focused on spreading the word of God. Another assessment of this dialog between Jesus and Nicodemus is Jesus willingness to get to the root of Nicodemus’ confusion and bring about conversion. Nicodemus further questions Jesus statement of being “born again” and without hesitation Jesus further explains in a series of analogies about the soon coming Kingdom and new establishment that will take place through himself. Nicodemus’ questions allowed Jesus to demonstrate to his desire for discipleship and personal evangelism. By conversing calmly with those who oppose you and being affixed to the truth wins people to the Kingdom. Sandra Schneider’s writes,

Nicodemus is the very type of the truly religious person who is, on one hand, utterly sincere and, on the other, complacent about his or her knowledge of God and God’s will. Such people are basically closed to divine revelation. Like Nicodemus, they “know” who Jesus is, what his message means. And like Nicodemus, it is only after they have been reduced to the futility of their own ignorance that they can begin the

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<sup>25</sup>Scott, *St. John*, 89.

process of coming to the light not by argument or reasoning but by doing the truth, a process which gradually opens them to the true meaning of the Scriptures.<sup>26</sup>

Personal evangelism allows the Christian to help bring, on a personal level, the non-believer, the unchurched, and those that have opposing views into the saving light of Christ. Nicodemus came to Jesus with a hierarchy way of thinking and formulized position of kingdom of God; but he exits knowing the truth of the Scriptures and with a new relationship with Christ. This relationship would not have been established if he had not come to Jesus and wanting to know the truth. Often, people come to Christians obscurely and if one is knowledgeable and grounded in the Scriptures, one can use their interaction to share the light of the gospel. Don Williford acknowledges,

John's message in Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus in John 3:1-15 is just as vital for people standing at the threshold of the twenty-first century as it was for those standing at the threshold of the gospel era. Jesus emphasizes the necessity of a radical departure from any previous basis of confidence for participation in the kingdom of God. Only a radical transformation in our basic nature can accomplish such a change in realms of existence. When we see the changes in brings in the life of one who truly believes in the sense of committing his/her life to the Lordship of Christ. Though we may not be able to explain how the Spirit makes its changes, we more clearly understand the means of experiencing it cleansing and regeneration.<sup>27</sup>

Jesus' personal interaction with Nicodemus proved to be life changing and fruitful beyond the closing dialog and witnessing Nicodemus fade away into the darkness in which he came. Mark Whitters writes,

The fate of Nicodemus is not necessarily unhappy, however. In chapter 7, the gospel portrays Nicodemus as a defender of Jesus' right to a fair trial (7:50-51); in chapter 19, Nicodemus helps to bury Jesus with honor. Is this a hint that Nicodemus has taken Jesus' words to heart? Perhaps his nocturnal discussion with Jesus was the last hour before the dawn of hope.<sup>28</sup>

In following after Jesus, one must take chances and the necessary steps to reach people even if it is during awkward hours of the night. Jesus' personal encounter and dialog

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<sup>26</sup>Sandra M. Schneiders, "Born Anew," *Theology Today* 2 (1987): 191.

<sup>27</sup>Williford, "A Radical Departure," 459.

<sup>28</sup>Mark F. Whitters, "Discipleship in John: Four Profiles," *Word and World* 18 (1998): 424.

with Nicodemus gives one vital insight into the necessity to stand firm, personally evangelize, and affably defend one's faith to all persons regardless of opposing views, political status, and religious differences.

#### **John 4:1-42**

Undoubtedly, Jesus Christ is the master teacher and evangelist. While he frequently spoke to the multitudes, he also spent considerable time in one-on-one situations with individuals that were cast aside and shamed by society. He gave benevolent attention to the individual and their situation. John's Gospel account reveals one such incident. The record of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, as contained in John 4:1-42, is a rich conversation worthy of careful attention of any Christian evangelist. Peter Scaer writes, "Jesus' encounter with the women at the well is one of the most beloved stories in the Gospels. Many have turned to this well-crafted narrative as a prime example of evangelism and outreach."<sup>29</sup> John's narrative between Jesus and the Samaritan woman falls into three major segments: First, the Lord breaks ethnic and cultural barriers by passing through Samaritan territory, a land that contrasted Jewish customs and beliefs (vv. 1-4). Second, he interacts personally with the Samaritan woman, who lived a strange and deplorable life (vv. 5-26). Finally, Jesus' personal interaction affects a change within the Samaritan women that causes her to be a witness of the Gospel (vv. 27-42). Considering each of the segments in some detail gives reason why personal evangelism is vital to all Christians.

At the opening of this narrative, John illustrates that Jesus had go through Samaria, a land that was off limits to Jews and a place that held contrasting customs and standards that were not accepted by Jews. Peter Scaer writes,

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<sup>29</sup>Peter J. Scaer, "Jesus and the Woman at the Well: Where Mission Meets Worship," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 67 (2003): 4.

The One who breaks down the barriers between God and man through His incarnation now begins to bridge the gap that separates fallen humanity. Missiologists commonly observe that in this story Jesus crosses over a number of cultural bridges: the holy, Jewish man reaches out to a sinful, Samaritan woman. Along the way, He breaks down barriers of holiness, ethnicity, gender, and religion. Move over, by offering the gift of salvation to the fallen Samaritan women, the Lord shows that there is hope for all of us.<sup>30</sup>

Jesus' travels were not haphazard or unplanned. They were carefully orchestrated to enhance the greatest advantage for the success the coming kingdom that he came to pronounce. Jesus, going through Samaria, demonstrates that the Gospel is for everyone, even those of ill repute and cast aside. Cultural, ethnic, religious boundaries, does not stop Christians from evangelizing and making disciples of all nations. Malcolm Tolbert writes,

The Pharisees suffered from a sense of religious superiority, which built barriers to keep others out. The Samaritans suffered from a sense of religious inferiority, which built defenses to shut themselves in. But none of these man-made boundaries belonged in the new age of the Spirit. Neither Jews nor Samaritans could confine God in their religious structure.<sup>31</sup>

Modern day Christian evangelists can learn from what Jesus did by crossing into Samaria and personally engaging one of their own and one who have been cast aside. Boundaries set by man often discouraged Christians from crossing and often not allowing unreached people from hearing the gospel. Steven M. Sheeley writes,

Geographically, Samaria should have been part of the Jewish homeland; that it was not—and never again could be—made the division between Jews and Samaritans that much more distinct. Modern society draws such social distinctions with as much precision as national boundaries are marked. Though less physically obvious, lines are carefully drawn in our communities. They guide and circumscribe our social interaction. They limit our religious and political interaction. Foreigners live in our midst, and they live within our borders drawn by economic, racial, moral, and social realities. Perhaps a closer examination of Jesus' words in John 4:35b, and their narrative context, will inform our discipleship.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Scaer, "Jesus and the Women at the Well," 4.

<sup>31</sup>Tolbert, *Luke*, 250.

<sup>32</sup>Steven M. Sheeley, "'Lift Up Your Eyes': John 4:4-42," *Review & Expositor* 92 (1995): 81.

Undoubtedly, more than ever before, different nationalities and cultures have entered one's communities, schools, and neighborhoods. Many of these cultures and nationalities are unreached and unchurched and are looking for new way of living. Christians must not ignore the mandate, found in Matthew 28:18-20, to cross boundaries, borders, reach out to all people, and show them the love of Christ. The world has placed economic, classist, racist, and social boundaries to try to separate and limit Christians from spreading the gospel. Unfortunately, such boundaries, has caused some Christians to neglect the mandate of the Great Commission to go and reach people for Christ. Personal evangelism, and the presence of the Holy Spirit, allows believers to cross these boundaries and reach different races and people of different economic stratus. The Gospel of Christ is not limited to upper or lower class, rich or poor, European or Asian, it is meant for all people both local and foreign. Sheeley writes,

While the clarion call to foreign mission and evangelistic activity is undeniably present in Jesus' command to his disciples, limiting the import of Jesus' words to foreign activity is too narrow an approach. Jesus was, in fact, calling his disciples to recognize the potential for ministry wherever they found themselves, even when they found themselves in a place they had no desire be.<sup>33</sup>

Christians are not called to just go abroad, but are called to one's local communities, cities, schools, neighborhoods, and jobs.

Secondly, not only did Jesus cross into Samaria, a prohibited land by the Jews, but also he also willingly encountered and engaged a desolate and fallen woman in a public place. Jesus' zeal to personally evangelize allows him to stop at midday and talk with a Samaritan women, who has a troubled past and perhaps been cast aside. It is remarkable that Jesus demonstrates how welcoming he is to those that have been cast out and who have troubles that one often cannot fathom. Like Jesus, spirit-led evangelism will draw one into areas that are uncomfortable and challenging. This is another essential

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

glimpse into how important personal evangelism is to all Christians. Frank F. Scott writes,

In this conversation of our Lord with the Samaritan women, we find the Saviour employing quite another method than that followed in the case of Nicodemus. Jesus did not use any stereotyped plan in dealing with men and women regarding spiritual things. Each individual case was treated with reference to its own special circumstances. In this conversation, our Lord gives an example of faithful and wise dealing with a sinful soul.<sup>34</sup>

In an ethical and devoted way, as Christians evangelize one on one, it is of very important to deal with individuals with a fresh mind and according to their individual circumstance. Jesus, in this personal encounter with the Samaritan women, realized her needs and constructed a well-developed encounter to help her see her need for “living water.”

Lastly, Jesus’ encounter was personal and intentional. His interaction with this woman was for the purpose of conversion. Personal evangelism calls Christians to encounter individuals, present the gospel, and to allow the person a chance to make a decision to live for Christ. Jesus, in this interaction, despite the women’s discomfort with him being a Jew and she being a Samaritan, he offers her “living water,”—salvation. Like, most people she becomes even more confused and questions the essence of the “living water” Jesus offers. When evangelizing, people who do not understand religious terminology will often retreat and become leery of engaging other Christians. Sheeley writes, “The failure to understand the words of Jesus is a trait shared by many of John’s characters. It is a deadly trait, as well, for those who fail to understand will be unable to come to true faith in Jesus. The Samaritan woman fails to comprehend the full meaning of Jesus’ words about “living water.”<sup>35</sup>

Despite the Samaritan woman being confused about whether Jesus was talking about ordinary water, Jesus did not hesitate, but kept to his purpose and engage the

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<sup>34</sup>Scott, *St John*, 118.

<sup>35</sup>Sheeley, “Lift Up Your Eyes,” 83.

woman even further in who he was. Jesus affirms that the water he provides is (1) a living water (John 4:10); with the results that (2) whoever drinks is will never thirst again (John 4:13); and within them will be (3) “a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”<sup>36</sup> Another critical aspect of personal evangelism is not to be deterred by the individual asking questions or being less knowledgeable on subjects of religions. When questions arise, it can be the perfect opportunity for the Christian to explain in further detail and bring the person into enlightenment about the truth. Allowing a person to ask questions about confusing theological differences and allowing them to become more knowledgeable about Jesus brings about knowledge and conviction. Once an individual hears about Jesus, receives the truth, becomes convicted, they are more likely to go and witness about their transformation they received. Humphrey Waweru writes,

Jesus convinced the Samaritan woman about the true water of life. Conviction that Jesus could give her water led immediately to her believing in Jesus the Messiah. Just like Peter and other fishermen who after the call left their fishing boats, she left her water jar and went to the village to give witness to this great revelation. For a woman to leave her water pot and go to call others to come and witness this revelation is no less a call than that of other disciples, which involved leaving fishing boats and tax booths. Many responded when they heard Jesus’ message and also believed in him.<sup>37</sup>

The Samaritan woman is the perfect example of the positive effects of personal evangelism. After encountering Jesus, the Samaritan woman is convicted, and takes a bold step and goes into her village and witness to others about her encounter. If Christians convey the gospel to nonbelievers and it is received, it should spark something within the person to want to see others changed. Humphrey Waweru further writes,

The Samaritan becomes a model for evangelistic and apostolic activity. He Samaritans believed because of her witness (dia ton logon) (v. 39). The Samaritan woman’s ministry tells us that when we drink Jesus as the living water we will not

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<sup>36</sup>Scaer, “Jesus and the Women at the Well,” 13.

<sup>37</sup>Humphrey Mwangi Waweru, “Jesus and Ordinary Women in the Gospel of John: An African Perspective,” *Svensk Missionstidskrift* 96 (2008):144.



only satisfy our deepest thirst, be it will then flow from us to reveal him to others. So through our word (dia tou logou) many will come to Christ.<sup>38</sup>

Some people may never pick up a Bible, wander into a church, or attend a crusade, but their only hope maybe through hearing the gospel from a personal encounter with a Christian friend, neighbor, or stranger. Christians are mandated to take the gospel to wherever one foot is planted. One must not mistake a person who has been cast aside as eternally lost, or places that are less fortunate or considered “dens of iniquity” as a place of being eternally hopeless. The most immoral people and decrepit places can often lead to being the place where the gospel is readily received and people are changed. Sheeley writes,

They were hurrying through Samaria [disciples], having made the assumption that the foreigners in their midst were not suitable or receptive field for the gospel. To their surprise Jesus not only stopped, but stayed; he made a dwelling place with them for two days or more. Even more surprising, was the fact that Samaria turned out to be the most receptive place for planting the gospel and for ministry so far. The command to live lives of service to God in the perpetual “now” calls modern disciples to the same kind of alert observation. The American church has made a practice of rushing headlong to answer the call to missionary activity in foreign fields. With some reluctance, many religious organizations have given attention to the less glamorous mission field closer to home. Countless “foreigners” live in our midst, and the church tends to ignore the needs just as easily as the disciples ignored the Samaritans. We drive and walk past people who need ministry—“living water” is more than an evangelistic witness—each day; they live in our communities, but they are separated from us by invisible barriers every bit as real as those which separated the Samaritans from the Jews. The call demands that we look up and observe as we make our through the fields which are ready to be harvested, even if such alert observance forces us to stop and remain for a while.<sup>39</sup>

Local community fields are ripe and are ready to be harvested by Christians that are not afraid of the gospel of Christ. Jesus advanced the gospel by modeling personal evangelism to those cast aside and shamed by society and Christians are charged to do the same.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>39</sup>Sheeley, “Lift Up Your Eyes,” 85.

## Luke 19:1-10

Jesus taught the significance of personal evangelism but he also taught the priority of personal evangelism. He taught that salvation was the greatest thing for a non-believer. Jesus traveled with his disciples and sent them out to do the work of the kingdom, but he also intentionally sought after uncommon individuals and sinners and met them where they were. Jesus thought highly of personal evangelism and understood it correctly. C. E. Autrey writes, “Personal evangelism is in the center of the gospel preaching of Christ.”<sup>40</sup> Such in the case in Jesus’ encounter with Zacchaeus, a wealthy tax collector.

Luke’s narrative between Jesus’ personal encounter with Zacchaeus is broken into three critical segments worthy of our attention (1) Zacchaeus’ zeal to see Jesus and Jesus’ personal encounter with Zacchaeus (vv. 1-5), (2) Jesus’ announcement to be entertained at Zacchaeus’ home (vv. 6-8), and (3) Jesus’ declaration concerning Zacchaeus and the lost (vv. 9-10). Consider the above segments as it pertains to the importance of personal evangelism.

At the opening of this narrative, Jesus is passing through Jericho, a wealthy area, often thought of as a place where wealthy sinners hung amongst each other. William Hendriksen writes,

The Trade in this commodity—and in other commodities abounding in the Jericho region—yielded high taxes for the Roman government. Besides, Jericho was at the heart and center of a vast trade route network. An important man, there, this Zacchaeus! However, the Jews regarded “publicans” (certainly including chief publicans) as traitors and crooks.<sup>41</sup>

Jesus willingly goes into an area that most individuals would avoid. Robert Karris writes, “By his presence, the Lord graced the city, through his presence he condescended to

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<sup>40</sup>C. E. Autrey, *New Testament Evangelism* (Philadelphia: Hudson, 1946), 30.

<sup>41</sup>William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), 855.

sinner and even drew them to himself. For mercy attracts the unfortunate.”<sup>42</sup> Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to make ransom for the sins of humanity, but chose Jericho to leave an impressionable mark on the life on an individual and to spread the gospel. J. Wilcock writes, “It was but a few days before Calvary, and near approach of the end, as well as the tension of concentrated purpose which marked our Lord in these last days, make the delay and effort to win Zacchaeus the more striking.”<sup>43</sup> Jericho represented a place that held many deceitful sinners. It is here that Luke invites one into Jesus’ encounter with Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus is presented as an individual and one is told his name, economic status (wealthy), one of his physical characteristics (he is short), and an unusual action is narrated (he climbs into a sycamore tree), even though none of this information is strictly necessary for Jesus’ final pronouncement.<sup>44</sup> Often, one can believe that certain human qualities prevent or hinder them from encountering Jesus. One’s money and different human characteristics should not hinder one from encountering Jesus. Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was passing though Jericho. In his eagerness he wanted to see who Jesus was so he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see him (Luke 19:4). Wilcock writes,

The fame of Jesus as the friend of publicans had probably reached Zacchaeus and touched him. His determination may set us an example. He makes up his mind and sees Jesus as his will. In all walks of life difficulties are sown thick, and perhaps thickest on the road to Christ. But they can be overcome, and nothing need keep the sight of Jesus from a heart that is in earnest in wishing it. Zacchaeus had been long accustomed to ridicule, and did not mind a jeer or two as he climbed the sycamore. We have often to drop dignity if we want to get high enough above the mob to see the Lord; and man afraid of being laughed at will stand a poor chance.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Bonaventure, *Gospel of Luke*, in vol. 8 of *St. Bonaventure’s Commentary*, ed. Robert J. Karris (St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University Press, 2004), 1791.

<sup>43</sup>J. Wilcock, *St. Luke*, in vol. 23 of *The Preacher’s Homiletic Commentary* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1980), 503-06.

<sup>44</sup>Robert C. Tannehill, “The Story of Zacchaeus as Rhetoric: Luke 19:1-10,” *Semeia* 64 (1993): 201.

Zacchaeus did not care about ridicule and the risk of looking crazy, but something inside of him wanted him to see Jesus. Obstacles do not hinder people that want to know and see Jesus. In fact, the obstacle can become the catalyst for more of a desire. Robert Karris writes, “Zacchaeus’ eagerness is commendable from three angles: it attracts and draws; it casts aside obstacles; it arrives at its goal. For it is the nature of genuine eagerness, which draws the soul to Christ, that even if obstacles are thrown in its way, its desire is not broken, but is more enkindled.”<sup>46</sup> Personal evangelism allows one to see the heart and earnest desire of individuals that desire to know more about Christ. Often the world will laugh and take up judgments toward people that may look different and they may even do desperate things to get attention. If they desire to know Christ, one has to look beyond these disguising characteristics and see the earnest effort of the individual. Jesus was so wedded to his mission that he saw beyond Zacchaeus’ status as chief tax collector and wanted to reach him where he was. Christians, like Jesus, must have an unquenchable thirst to reach people. Personal evangelism allows Christians to seek people one on one, see beyond their predicament, and reach them at their level.

Secondly, Jesus knew that his interaction was going to be life changing and it was his purposeful duty to encounter Zacchaeus for the purpose of the gospel. William Hendrickson, writes, “It is especially significant to note that although Zacchaeus was certainly very eager to see Jesus, it was Jesus, not the chief tax-collector, who took the initiative in arranging a personal contact between the two.”<sup>47</sup> Jesus began his conversation with Zacchaeus by calling him by name (Luke 19:5). J. Wilcock asserts,

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<sup>45</sup>Wilcock, *St. Luke*, 503.

<sup>46</sup>Karris, *Gospel of Luke*, 1790.

<sup>47</sup>Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*, 855.

“Our Lord is not accustomed to name people without having some deep significance in doing so. There is always an emphasis of love, or warning, or authority, in his use of men’s name. Here he would probably let Zacchaeus feel that he was completely known, and certainly asserts mastership and demands a disciple’s allegiance.”<sup>48</sup> Personal evangelism allows the Christian to make the encounter more personal and relevant and it gives the person a sense of being loved and feeling important. Kingdom building and discipleship is birthed out of personally reaching individuals and making them feel important to the kingdom. Jesus always sought a creative method in preaching the gospel personally to individuals. Malcolm Tolbert writes, “In the circumstances Jesus’ acceptance of and identification with the despised Zaccheus constitutes a bold, public act.”<sup>49</sup> Not only does Jesus call him by name and orders him out of the tree, but he declares that he must stay at this despised man’s home (Luke 19:5). Jesus avails himself by personally reaching out to him in the tree, but now desires an even more intimate encounter. Wilcock writes, “The offer of visiting Zacchaeus expresses Christ’s kindly feelings and declares that he has no share in the common aversion. That voluntary association with the outcast is a symbol of Christ’s whole work.”<sup>50</sup> Jesus’ example of associating with sinners and making himself available to reach them is the example that one must model when evangelizing. Associating with sinners and being in their company can often cause Christians to be ridiculed and seen as outcasts. Despite the ridicule, one must make the personal encounter with the non-Christian meaningful and unconditional. Tolbert further asserts, “Jesus’ acceptance of Zacchaeus was unconditional. Under the impact of unconditional acceptance by Jesus, a transformation is worked in the life of

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<sup>48</sup>Wilcock, *St. Luke*, 503.

<sup>49</sup>Tolbert, *Luke*, 147.

<sup>50</sup>Wilcock, *St. Luke*, 503.

Zacchaeus. The sign of that transformation is a radical change in his attitude toward wealth. It is no longer his god.”<sup>51</sup> Personal evangelism allows one to see a person’s change. When a non-Christian sees the zeal, diligence, and genuine nature of a Christian, he will desire to change as well.

Lastly, Jesus’ personal encounter with Zacchaeus was not just for naught. The purpose of this encounter was also salvific. Jesus always sought a creative method of reaching individuals for the gospel. No one would come to talk with Zacchaeus, but Jesus penetrated this barrier and knocked on the doors of this man’s heart with compassion and authority. Zacchaeus told Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor, and if he had cheated anybody, he would pay back four times the amount (Luke 19:8). J. Wilcock writes,

The experience of Christ’s love convinces of sin far more thoroughly than threats. The sight of Jesus reveals our unlikeness and makes us long after some faint resemblance to him. So Zacchaeus did not need Christ to bid him to make restitution, nor show him the blackness of his life; but he sees all the past in a new light, and is aware that there is something sweeter than ill-gotten gains.<sup>52</sup>

This shows his thorough repentance after he met Jesus in person. People despised and slandered him, but Jesus was different. He did not blame him for his sin. Rather, Jesus showed his kindness, humility, and love as the Son of God. He made Zacchaeus feel accepted and cared for and led him to repent and confess his sin with his whole heart. It shows the purpose of Jesus’ visit to Jericho that “for the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10). Robert Karris writes, “It is to be understood, that Christ’s entrance into the house of Zacchaeus, a chief publican, is understood as his entrance into the Church of the Gentiles, which gladly welcomed him.”<sup>53</sup> Like Jesus, one must model personal evangelism to everyone and everywhere,

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<sup>51</sup>Tolbert, *Luke*, 147.

<sup>52</sup>Wilcock, *St. Luke*, 504.

<sup>53</sup>Karris, *Gospel of Luke*, 1801.

even to the homes of sinners. Jesus knows his sheep because he is the good shepherd (John 10:14). He went to Jericho to meet Zacchaeus, one of his lost sheep, and Zacchaeus was saved after he encountered Jesus personally.

### **Necessity of Personal Evangelism and Social Outreach**

The Bible is clear on the importance of personal evangelism and sharing one's faith for the purpose of conversion. Personal evangelism is not optional within Christianity. Each believer has received a direct command to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). Some Christians attempt to meet this obligation through either monetary support, kind acts of compassion, charity, or the support of local mission participating in gospel centered efforts---social outreach. These compassionate endeavors often lead to mental and physical nourishment, but it does not replace or excuse the need of personal involvement by proclaiming the gospel to a lost individual. Christians must be comfortable to share their faith beyond their ministries, the walls of the church, and beyond social Christian functions. There are theological, ethical, and practical reasons why personal evangelism is vital when doing social outreach.

Foremost, theologically, personal evangelism training is vital because the Scriptures represent Christ to be the only God given means of salvation (John 14:6).<sup>54</sup> Jesus represented an individual's relationship to him be a matter of life or death (John 3:18), and he was concerned not just that people might die without him but also that they might live without him.<sup>55</sup> Often, personal evangelism focuses on the eternal ramifications but Christians must be clear that Jesus desires a relationship with the individual presently. Doing social outreach initiatives, Christians are often more

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<sup>54</sup>Schweer, *Personal Evangelism for Today*, 23.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 24.

concerned about a person's physical nourishments, mental state, and material needs. However, though the physical concerns are critical, living in Christ Jesus and having a relationship with Christ is important, even amidst challenging physical conditions. Jesus is the way, the truth, and life that individuals need in order for them to bare challenges and weather any situation (John 14:6). Evangelism is critical because it is the human activity God uses to bring about the transforming experience from which all else that is Christian flows.<sup>56</sup> Conversion must be the main goal of Christian based social outreach because it is the single most important function of the Christian church. Evangelism and conversion is the task of the church. It is called to be his for the purpose of proclaiming the good news (1 Pet 2:9).<sup>57</sup> All social outreach ministries begin with personal conversion experiences (John 4:29).

Secondly, ethically personal evangelism doing social outreach is urgent because, for the people of faith, it is simply the right thing to do. Schweer writes, "If the gospel is all that the bible claims it is, then those who believe it know that this is true. Something of such value, that we received as a free gift, must not be selfishly grasped but shared as widely as possible (Matt 4: 39-40).<sup>58</sup> Also, sharing the good news of the gospel during social outreach is not done simply because it is right, it is the ethical response of the transforming love of Christ in the light of overwhelming needs.<sup>59</sup> Christians are ethically mandated to spread the love of Christ and give opportunities to non-believers to change their lives and live anew in Christ (2 Cor 5:17).

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 58.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.



Lastly, practically, personal evangelism is critical because a transformed person represent the best hope of a just society (Eph 2:14-18).<sup>60</sup> Spirit-led and spirit-blessed social outreach and evangelism initiatives produce a new humanity and community (Acts 1:8, 2:42-47). Personal evangelism during social outreach helps create not only a physically nourished individual, but also a spirit-nourished individual.

Schweer asserts,

Personal evangelism is the essential success of most other types of evangelism and social outreach. Few Christian realize the crucial role that personal evangelism plays in evangelistic efforts called by other names. It is without reason that well planned, city-wide campaigns are preceded by large efforts in lay-witness training, personal prayer lists, and organized opportunities for visitation.<sup>61</sup>

It is clear that personal, one-on-one contact, with non-believers and unchurched individuals will play a divisive role for the majority of Christian converts.<sup>62</sup>

### **Conclusion**

When one examines the totality of personal evangelism during social outreach initiatives and the effect that it has on making converts, the biblical necessity is clear and is evident in the life of the new-believer. Jesus modeled for believers the urgent need to personally witness to individuals and meet them where they are (John 4: 16-26). Jesus demonstrated his personal love and compassion to sinners (John 3:1-22), feeding the hungry (Luke 9:10-17), and helping the helpless (2 Cor 5:21). Effective personal evangelism during social outreach must be built upon the theology revealed in Scripture.

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

### CHAPTER 3

#### EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN URBAN MINISTRY

As explored in the previous chapter, Jesus modeled the importance of personal evangelism to the unchurched, the lost, and the nonbeliever. The twenty-first century has brought many changes both positive and negative to the church. Evangelical churches, including Baptists, have advanced on the socioeconomic scale. Many are wondering has prosperity dimmed the vision and mission of the church. If so, the commitment to compassionate ministry to urban environments has suffered. Manuel Ortiz writes, “In this century, there must be a greater engagement between the church and city. In the early twentieth century, the concerns and mission of the church were distant from the concerns of the city. Churches appear to be in the city but not really of it.”<sup>1</sup>

Having a presence within the community and monetary resources to extend social outreach ministry to an urban community is not enough. Resources with the lack of compassion, grace, and mercy effects the personalities of those the church seeks to help. Jack Denison writes, “We need a fundamental restructuring of what we call ‘church,’ both in its mission outlook and its state of health. The church of the twenty first century must shift its focus from an institutional orientation to a community orientation.”<sup>2</sup> The personalities and demographics of cities are continually changing and too often, these changes are not for the better. The problems for which those living in urban areas

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<sup>1</sup>Manuel Ortiz, “The Church and the City,” in *The Urban Face of Mission: Ministering the Gospel in a Diverse and Changing World*, ed. Manuel Ortiz and Susan S. Baker (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 44.

<sup>2</sup>Jack Dennison, *City Reaching: On the Road to Community Transformation* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 42.

must compete are alarming. If God does not continue to extend a great burden on the hearts of Christian evangelists and disciples to work with the poor and disinherited and reach out to the unchurched, nonbelievers, and the lost, who else would be willing to face the problems found in many urban environments?

Urban environments are becoming diverse in race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion, and spirituality. How can people be convinced of Jesus' birth, death, resurrection, and teachings when so many deceptively attractive alternatives exist for people to experiment? Manuel Ortiz writes,

Urban growth is more than a sociological reality, it is the fulfillment of God's intentions since the beginning of time. The cultural mandate given to Adam and Eve in the garden to fill, rule, and subdue the earth (Gen 1:28) was nothing more than a mandate to build a city. The missiological side of this coin is that the nations are coming to our cities to become new citizens and not just temporary residents.<sup>3</sup>

As urban communities grow in diversity, those communities are introduced to a variety of social woes and culturally specific elements that become viral and hazardous to the community. Hence, one of the downsides of having so many cultures inhibits one area. Ray Bakke writes,

When I began to look seriously at the problems of cities, I realized that the lord is doing something very unusual in this generation. He seems to be shaking up the world. "Go and make disciples of all nations." We know where all the nations are—in the big cities. God has brought all the nations here—to wherever your big city is.<sup>4</sup>

No longer can Christians ignore the constantly growing diverse populations and social evils that inhabit its communities, neighborhoods, schools, and churches. It is clear that Jesus evangelized first to the Jews of his day (Matt 15:24) and he went far beyond any one ethnic, religious, or social group. Post resurrection, the apostles and other disciples took the Gospel to the Greeks (Acts 11:20), the Romans (Rom 1:1-14), the Africans (Acts

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<sup>3</sup>Ortiz, "The Church and the City," 43.

<sup>4</sup>Ray Bakke, *The Urban Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987), 28.

8:26-40), the Asians (Acts 16:7-8), high authorities (Acts 25-26) and individuals bound by slavery (Phlm 1:10). While the apostles had success in evangelizing to various classes of people, these communities too had issues of unfaithfulness, internal strife, and non-belief such as many urban communities face today.

Evangelism and social outreach will continue to be a significant challenge in diverse urban areas until people began to trust and live according to the word of God. Robert Linthicum summarized this perspective by saying,

The sins of the city's people include self-indulgence, economic injustice, exploitation, and the oppression of those less powerful than the oppressor (we see it even in the class bully in an elementary school). But all social sins, the prophets declare, are the inevitable manifestation of people who have given themselves over to the service of other gods (money, power, prestige, or commitment to their own group) rather than centering their city's life in the worship of the Lord God.<sup>5</sup>

For the sake of effectiveness the urban church and believers must use all the tools at one's disposal to proclaim the Gospel: social services, social outreach initiatives, substance programs, cultural programs, and gain a critical understanding of the economic and social conditions so necessary for undergirding a person to repent, confess, and believe in Jesus the Christ—conversion.

### **The Urban Church**

As Christ's ambassador, the urban church undertakes a unique ministry and assumes a strategic responsibility. The urban church, unlike many rural and affluent suburban churches, faces many hardships that are brought on by a flawed economy, depression, cultural issues, and social upheaval. The people in the city, especially those that inhabit impoverished and at-risk areas, are quite different and often carry a heap full of physical and mental baggage to undertake. Who are the people of the city? Some are the alienated and depressed, victims of systematic racism, classism, physical neglect, and abuse, and many are victims of generational poverty. The city is frequently the home of

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<sup>5</sup>Robert Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 42.

the disinherited and the distorted. The city's hungry and homeless are often mentally ill and are not considered dangerous enough to be locked away in an institution, but are not well enough to live without the emotional and physical support which few churches and social outreach programs seem capable of offering them. The urban homeless, hungry, and depressed are the kind of people most affluent suburban and rural churches would possibly never come in contact with. The urban church serves as a restoration center for those that cannot find hope anywhere else. Mark Gornik writes,

While there is no uniform way that churches engage the inner city, there are common reasons why they can be key actors in the process of holistic change. The church is the community where women, men, and children can come together and find healing. Joining a concern for the whole person and a concern for the whole community together into social economic and spiritual models of ministries, churches, and their affiliated ministries have initiated a wide range of efforts that give practical expression to God's love and justice. The work of the church in the inner city is incredibly diverse and differentiated, covering everything from community development and or organizing, to social support to prayer and worship. It is one thing to give recognition and assign value to particular churches and faith-based efforts, but another to consider if the church can impact the fabric of entire cities.<sup>6</sup>

The very presence of the church in the inner city is its most effective message. The power of the church does not lie so much in what its members say or do, but perhaps who they are to the people they serve. The gospel is proclaimed not only through well-planned programs alone, but also through effective symbols: praying, worship services, bible study, discipleship, social outreach, personal evangelism, social justice initiatives, and substance abuse initiatives. The inner city reflects a wide variety of human experience as it pertains to the various cultures, ethnicities, and lifestyles. Building a cohesive community out of that diversity is a primary need, in which the urban church helps to meet, simply by being there. Mark Gornick explains,

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<sup>6</sup>Mark R. Gornick, *To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 12.

Urban hope is based not on any notion of human progress but on the Lamb that was slain, the one who in self-giving life and death redeemed the world. Because the condition of the city is so brutal—what the seer understood to be the realities of unholy Babylon—the very end of the biblical witness is a prayer and cry of hope. For this reason, the hopes and cries in the face of urban oppression are hopes and cries for Christ, the coming of God who will make all things urban all new.<sup>7</sup>

The church defines itself in the universal terms of the gospel, announcing that this Christian community is for all people (Matt 21:13). Life for people in urban cities may be broken, distorted, or even hopeless, but it must go on. No matter how hidden or how dim, the church and believers must still have presence in the inner city and be responsible agents to spiritual restoration. Mark Gornick asserts

Annunciating the kingdom will mean that instead of accepting the inner city as it is and offering words of future consolation, Christians will work to reverse the misery, suffering, and injustice that too often grip it. Such kingdom-focused work includes establishing alternative institutions, advancing holistic initiatives, and advancing the cause of urban reform.<sup>8</sup>

Some people tend to denigrate and devalue urban church's social outreach initiatives and evangelism efforts by calling it a "Band-Aid" ministry. "Band-Aid" ministry suggest that urban church is only worried about temporarily given people help and not given them enough help to restore their entire condition. Randy White asserts,

We must teach that the city is part of God's design, not just a sociological phenomenon or evolution of humankind, and that a sovereign God is in the midst of the processes of urbanization which we see sweeping the world. We are participating in his plan as we minister in the city. We need to understand the city as not inherently evil in itself. It is an environment that provides greater opportunities for human sinfulness to manifest itself—and therefore greater opportunities for the gospel to show it empowering and healing relevance.<sup>9</sup>

Many of the social issues that urban churches deal with are symptoms rather than causes of the urban plight. However, the urban church cannot overlook or turn a stiff neck when

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>8</sup>Gornick, *To Live in Peace*, 29.

<sup>9</sup>Randy White, *Journey to the Center of the City: Making a Difference in an Urban Neighborhood* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 46.

people are hurting and bleeding. Temporary effective initiatives are better than not offering or having any initiatives. Giving help and hope to people is better than no help or hope at all. Despite what one may believe is the task of the urban church, the urban church's task is not to totally alleviate poverty, mental illness, hunger, and homelessness; but to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the helpless (Luke 4:18) and be a light to a dying world (John 8:12). Robert Linthicum writes,

The task of the church, Paul declares is to make known “the manifold wisdom of God” both to the principalities and powers and to the rules and authorities of the system they inhabit. It is the duty of the church to confront the powers and the systems with the biblical call to justice and redemption. The church is to seek through Christ the transformation of the powers' inner spirituality, just as it seeks the salvation of individuals and the liberation of the systems.<sup>10</sup>

The basic religious debate in city culture centers on the uniqueness of Christ and his claim to be the only way to salvation (John 14:6). When dialoguing with the unchurched and non-believers, to help them ascertain and appropriate truth, the urban church must examine their approach carefully. For non-believers the common forms of gospel communication and evangelism may be extremely unfamiliar. Evangelism initiatives must be thoroughly formulated and the church must be familiar with the demographics and characteristics of the neighborhood.

### **Urban Evangelism**

The growing number of people residing in the world's cities—both impoverished and affluent city areas—signify a clarion call for urban evangelism. The Gospel evangelist, the carrier and speaker of the “good news,” is an invaluable instrument in the greatest method of change to the world. Mark Gornick writes,

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<sup>10</sup>Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan*, 72.

Spreading the news of the kingdom as invitation, welcome, challenge, and summons will draw on the expressive life of the church in Christ—its life as a body of believers, its witness in proclamation, and its healing of broken hearts and bodies—that invites and welcomes other’s to join in God’s reign, a feast to which all are invited. If Christianity is to have a vibrant witness in the inner city, then it will need to recover and enact the centrality of the kingdom.<sup>11</sup>

As the world changes and communities within urban areas experience a demographic and cultural shift, the evangelist of the Gospel must be enthusiastic to ascertain the best and most effective ways by which to reach the non-believer and uphold the Lord and his kingdom. While some evangelists seem to ignore the basic differences between the people who reside in urban areas and those who reside in the suburban sections, it is critical for the urban evangelist to become careful students of learning urban problems, neighborhoods, and communities. In addition, seek the most adequate methods of Gospel proclamation for each type of situation. Timothy Monsma asserts,

No one method is best for evangelizing any city. You must vary your approach according to the needs of each city and each group you want to reach. But how do you know which method is best for each group? Only intimate knowledge of the group will reveal a method appropriate to it. Studying a cities culture may reveal whether cell groups or some other tactic will stimulate growth in the church. Cultural study may reveal the best time for the church meetings, preferability of a central house of worship or worship centers scattered throughout the city, people physical and emotional needs, and a host of other helpful information.<sup>12</sup>

Studying the demographics, the various cultures, the life cycles of the neighborhood, and the socio-economic make-up is critical to urban evangelist in developing better approaches and strategies to reach non-believers and the unchurched. The more knowledgeable the evangelist is on the city area the more effective one will be in reaching its prospect. Trying to reach the prospect without doing one’s homework is hasty and somewhat dangerous, especially when trying to reach individuals and have them make a decision for Christ. One method is never the right approach to handling any

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<sup>11</sup>Gornick, *To Live in Peace*, 91.

<sup>12</sup>Timothy M. Monsma, “Research: Matching Goals and Methods to Advance the Gospel,” in *Discipling The City*, ed. Roger S. Greenway (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 65.



situation. Deciphering and interpreting a neighborhood must come with a careful strategy and with people who understand the scope to help guide and tweak the right the evangelistic approach. Ray Bakke writes,

How do you interpret a neighborhood? First, let me ask a parallel question. How do you interpret Scripture? Urban neighborhoods are not unrelated bits of geography that happen by chance. Some neighborhoods—like some biblical some biblical text—seem to make sense at the first glance, but there is usually much more to them that meets the eye. The functions of cities affect neighborhoods and confront congregations with opportunities and restraints. Because urban neighborhoods are turbulent, programs which worked well before may no longer be effective. Your strategy needs to include two approaches—the informal and academic one, and the informal one which I call networking. This knowledge should added to and deepened throughout your entire ministry.<sup>13</sup>

Evangelizing an urban neighborhood is a knowledge-based process. Gaining knowledge and networking within the city's infrastructure will allow one to meticulously develop an effective evangelistic approach that may be different from other "canned" approaches. By knowing one's restraints and opportunities in reaching the non-believers and the unchurched gives the evangelist and church leaders an awareness of its boundaries within the community.

One boundary that some churches rarely teach or discuss when forming evangelistic teams to go into an urban area and engage the disinherited is the difference between authentic evangelism and proselytism. Proselytism is vastly different from evangelism and one must never intertwine the two as one seeks to evangelize and disciple the non-believer. Too many people are slow to enter a ministry of evangelism because it has been reduced to a technique of phrases, manipulations, and pressures that show little to no respect for the non-Christian.<sup>14</sup> Ray Bakke further explains,

To proselytize is to try to get people to change from one religious belief system, ideology, or political party to another, usually through the offer of psychological, social, cultural, political, or economic incentives and through the application of

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<sup>13</sup>Bakke, *The Urban Christian*, 109.

<sup>14</sup>John M. Perkins, *Beyond Charity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 84.

pressure. In contrast, to evangelize is to share with others lovingly and respectfully the joyful news and liberating grace of the gospel, to extend its invitation to faith in Christ and participation in His fellowship, and commit the person or community's response to the Holy Spirit. Authentic evangelization refuses to be coercive and is always respectful of human dignity and freedom because it is an act of love. It is therefore, against proselytism.<sup>15</sup>

Evangelism must be pure, respectful, and insightful. The heart of its effort must be to offer the non-believer a chance to make a genuine decision to live with Christ—conversion. Conversion becomes the reason for evangelism and it must be the focus of any evangelistic effort. By giving the non-believer a chance to make an authentic decision for eternity, it builds the kingdom one person at a time. Once a person has repented, asks for forgiveness, and has accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, one then has the responsibility to evangelize and go make disciples of all nations. A conversion experience is the birthplace of discipleship. John Perkins asserts,

Conversion is not an option for the pastoral work of the church. It is the only possible answer to the dramatic disclosure of God's passionate love. To proclaim the Kingdom is always an invitation to join the forces of Kingdom and to enter into the Kingdom. Repentance is the first act of response. Sins are confessed, allegiances changed and attitudes transformed. If the Kingdom is God's plan in action, and if what the Christians experience is the anticipation of that Kingdom that is coming into the actual life of today, then we move in a world of wonder and excitement, a world of final decisions. No other word than conversion would serve her.<sup>16</sup>

Urban evangelism is critical to discipling the people of the city. Urban evangelism must be carefully developed and woven into the hearts of the people of that it is serving and trying to reach and disciple.

### **Urban Discipleship**

As the world's population continues to grow, the urban city has become an overpopulated “hodgepodge” of cultures and different races. With more people living in urban cities, than in suburban communities, the city seems to be one of the least

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<sup>15</sup>Bakke, *The Urban Christian*, 84.

<sup>16</sup>Perkins, *Beyond Charity*, 85.

evangelized and disciplined areas of the world. With today's cultures, especially youth culture, being post-modern in its orientation and worldview perspective, it would be critical for them to see Christians who know God in context to their urban struggles, value systems, and beliefs. Ray Bakke writes,

The way to reach the city is not through programs but by being biblical people. The urban minister must first be able to interpret scripture, and then must have the tools to interpret the city, so that he can let the word of God speak to the situation. Theology is God in dialog with his people in all their thousands of different environments. Developing a theology of the city is one of the ways to survive in urban ministry. The most important is the development of worldview—an understanding big enough to see what God is doing in the urbanization of his world and the internationalizing of his cities.<sup>17</sup>

Developing a theological understanding of a city allows one to see the conditions and perspectives of the non-believer and allows the Christian to reach and disciple them in becoming co-laborers of the gospel.

One may ask what does “urban discipleship” mean? When one actually defines discipleship in biblical terms (Matt 28), one can no longer compartmentalize it based on one’s own perspectives. It must be defined in context to going out, teaching, and reaching the world for Christ. Biblically, to make disciples is to influence someone to grow in God’s word, grow in ministry to others, and grow in relationship with Christ. In order to make disciples among various ethnic groups, it is critical that Christians have a clear understanding of what discipleship looks like. Craig W. Ellison states, “Discipling is the process by which a person is changed at the deepest level of his being so that both his inner and his outer life reflect the redemptive (saving and sanctifying) impact of Jesus Christ.”<sup>18</sup> The word discipleship is often an overused term, and varies depending on who

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<sup>17</sup>Bakke, *The Urban Christian*, 109.

<sup>18</sup>Craig W. Ellison, “Counseling and Discipleship for the City,” in *Discipling The City*, ed. Roger S. Greenway (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 100.

is using it. Christians tend to believe that anything one does to influences another for Jesus is active discipleship. While this can be true in a broad sense, it fails to provide a clear metric for honoring Christ through the Great Commission and gives no alignment for personal accountability. To effectively disciple someone in Christ Jesus, the disciple must build a shared conviction about what Christ has commanded and know where they are being taken. Craig W. Ellison asserts,

Discipleship involves remaking a person's basic life commitment, restructuring his underlying value system, revising his motivational core. Discipleship paradoxically moves people to reflect the qualities of Christ likeness while accepting differences in personality. The twelve disciples were very different individuals. Paul and Barnabas were so different that they clashed with each other regarding Mark (Acts 15:36-41), Jesus' methods of discipling varied as well. When Jesus called Peter, James, and John, he referred to their profession of fishing (Luke 5:1-11); they were the only disciples allowed to see Christ's transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36). Jesus' incarnational discipling was unavoidably contextualized as he adopted customs, lifestyles, and communication patterns that were particularized to a specific geocultural setting.<sup>19</sup>

Discipleship calls for the Christian disciple to spend some time, effort, and fellowship with the new believer in order to develop an ongoing and lasting relationship with the individual. In the urban context, discipleship calls for the Christian disciple to be relational, corresponding, confident, and interactive. When doing discipleship in the urban context, one must be knowledgeable and be ready to respond to various critical circumstances that arise. Discipleship making calls one to enter the world of the person and examine the person's most intimate and vulnerable side. Authentic urban discipleship allows individuals to connect genuinely despite cultural differences. Craig Ellison further states,

Urban discipleship must also address the diversity and differences inherent in major urban contexts. Most current models of discipleship assume sameness. We need to be sure that we are properly contextualizing discipleship methods and goals rather

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

than imposing culturally captivated forms that provide a sense of security for some while coming across alien to others. Diversity demands flexibility and creativity, not standardization and conformity.<sup>20</sup>

Being able to disciple despite of cultural differences and diversity opens the door for the gospel to reach immigrants and indigenous workers that exist in many urban areas. As doors open for the disciple to reach cross-culturally to immigrants and indigenous workers, it helps make discipleship easier and it builds trust. Ray Bakke and Jon Sharpe states, “Building holistic ministry in the city requires building meaning relationships with those from diverse cultural backgrounds and being willing to be uncomfortable when others don’t understand your culture or make assumptions about your journey.”<sup>21</sup> Urban discipleship is holistically about building relationships and advancing the gospel cross-culturally.

Another aspect that is rarely addressed when discussing urban discipleship is being able to disciple with a knowledgeable strategy. Entering an urban area without knowledge of the people that exist in the area and ignoring political, social, and cultural barriers, can prove to be disadvantageous to any discipleship endeavor. Disadvantages often come when the urban church’s evangelism and discipleship strategy is disconnected from the realities of the people. The church must not create a discipleship strategy solely based on its own intuition. Robert Linthicum writes,

When most churches decide to minister to the people of their community, the members take it upon themselves to study that community and determine its primary issue needs. Then, based on their findings, the church selects and determines the project and program needed to solve that problem or address that need. Once the church has decided what the solution needs to be, it goes ahead and implements, operates, and maintain that program. Such an approach to community ministry is destined to fail! In this scheme, the ownership of the problem, the solution, and the program to implement that solution lies in the church—not the people.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 107.

<sup>21</sup>Ray Bakke and Jon Sharpe, *Street Signs* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 2006), 153.

<sup>22</sup>Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan*, 203.

Church correlated discipleship and evangelism strategies often fail because the vision for the people it is targeting has no genuine direction or input from its community. It is important that the church come up with an entrance discipleship strategy for reaching the people to avoid such failure. Robert Linthicum asserts, “If the church is going to deal with the people in dealing with their issues, it is necessary to have the real leaders of the community involved; otherwise such effort lacks acceptance and credibility in the neighborhood’s eyes.<sup>23</sup> Hence, an effective discipleship strategy must involve the people and the church must network to establish a viable relationship with its community. Networking allows the church to converse with people in the community and get an honest perspective of what the people need and what resources would help. Linthicum states,

Networking in the Christian context, is the intentional and systematic visiting of people in an urban community by pastor and church workers in order to enable that community or church to address more effectively that neighborhoods most substantive problems. Through networking the church builds bridges throughout the community, bridges by which the gospel and its implications for all of life can be carried to corners otherwise would be in accessible.<sup>24</sup>

Networking breaks barriers that others have placed and is often a vehicle in which people can visually see caring aspects of the gospel communicated. It is a key strategy in finding the movers and shakers of a particular community. Enlightenment of politics, behaviors, cultural significance is a result of networking. If city discipleship is going to occur, the church must invest in a networking strategy that allows the church to build viable and sustainable relationships. Although networking is a good discipleship strategy, there are some resistances a church can have with those internal city forces that have been trying to disciple beforehand. Ray Bakke states,

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 201.

<sup>24</sup>Robert C. Linthicum, “Authentic Strategies for Urban Ministry,” in *Discipling The City*, ed. Roger S. Greenway (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 112.

Developing networks is much like entering a war zone. You have to understand the existing networks and their domain. Much like the internet, where everyone is concerned with the domain, networks have territory and personalities. Multiple networkers inhabit cities and see their work as key to the life of their constituents. When you enter, they expect you to enter through their door, only with permission. Most often, the gatekeeper for a particular area of ministry wants to be your guide. There are prayer-focused gatekeepers, racially focused gatekeepers, reconciliation gatekeepers, neighborhood gatekeepers, youth gatekeepers, urban ministry gatekeepers, political gatekeepers, marketplace ministry gatekeepers, business gatekeepers and on and on without end.<sup>25</sup>

Interacting with the gatekeepers can be contentious and often hinders a church's discipleship strategy. However, the interaction builds a wealth of knowledge of what the city is facing and the people that are involved. Having a relationship with key people in leadership within the city means the church is with them when they fail to understand. It also means the church is with them when understanding breakthroughs.<sup>26</sup> Learning to serve, involve, and communicate with those who have already given their lives to the city is vital for any new church or new discipleship effort.<sup>27</sup> Networking the city is only one strategy for effective discipleship. Christians must network, build relationships, and explore various strategies to fit the context of its city by putting into practice the strategies that prove effective. A community devoid of the influence of the church will surely suffer from the lack of spiritual vitality.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, a church alienated from the people who live around it can hardly bear faithful witness to its creed.<sup>29</sup> Christian discipleship in an urban context has its rewards and its challenges, but the reward of seeing the gospel transform individuals, communities and neighborhoods is worth the effort.

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<sup>25</sup>Bakke and Sharpe, *Street Signs*, 176.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 205.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Lupton, *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2007), 64.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

## Urban Social Issues

American urban areas are characterized by social problems that are expanding and intensifying. Diverse groups of people with different social needs and interests typically occupy urban areas. Urban areas are characterized by immigrants and minorities that make up an ever-larger proportion of urban America's population—urbanization. Urbanization is the process by which an increasing proportion of a population lives in cities rather than in suburban and rural areas. Urban social outreach projects from the government and city politicians tend to involve a greater number of stakeholders with overlap for competing interests. Oblique competitiveness often leaves the key issues, such as poverty, education, and social justice, with less support and unfavorable resources. If the church is to design effective and sustainable urban social outreach ministry projects it is critical for the church to understand the social dynamics of an urban area as well as existing conflicts among different local governments, communities, and private sectors. A church's social outreach ministry needs to take into account the interconnected and multidimensional social issues that affect its urban social outreach endeavors. By critical thinking through the key social issues of a particular city helps the church engage key social issues with a knowledge base. Frank Tillapaugh writes,

The church, of course, is more than a set of long-standing programs, but a company of believers who reach out to the world. If the church is to succeed in reaching out, we must invigorate our habitual activities, our "event orientation," with strategic thinking. More particularly, the kind of thinking I encourage is provoked by two questions: "Who are we trying to reach" and "What does it take to reach them?"<sup>30</sup>

The church's strategy and planning is critical in engaging social issues within an urban environment.

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<sup>30</sup>Calvin Ratz, Frank Tillapaugh, and Myron Augsburger, *Mastering Outreach and Evangelism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1990), 100.



## The Urban Poor

Poverty is perhaps one of the greatest challenges facing the inner city and the urban church. Concern for the poor is a fundamental staple of urban Christian identity and is a constant and repetitive theme throughout the Old and New Testaments (Deut 15:4; Prov 14:31; Gal 2:10; Jas 2:2-6). A definitive mark of the urban church throughout history is its members caring for the poor in their midst. Today, thanks to economic globalization and the Internet, those who want to care for the poor enjoy a plethora of attractive options: sponsoring a child, online-giving, making a small donation to larger outreach ministry, supporting long-term missionaries, sending care packages, and installing a well in an impoverished village, and host of other ways. Despite the vast ways economic globalization has increased patronage of the poor in developing countries, the poor that sit at urban churches door steps is constantly growing. Through the constant struggles and successes of many urban churches that target poverty its rates still seems to multiply and its effects are damaging to the human spirit. Targeting poverty and having compassion for the poor is not just a focal point for the urban church but it a command given from God. Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert write,

If you are a North American Christian, the reality of our society's vast wealth represents you with an enormous responsibility, for throughout the scriptures God's people are commanded to show compassion to the poor. In fact, doing so is simply part of our job description as followers of Jesus Christ (Matt 25: 31-46). While the biblical call to care for the poor transcends time and place, passages such as 1 John 3:17 should weigh particularly heavy on the minds and hearts of North American Christians.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, to be effective in reaching, serving, and empowering the poor, the urban church much hold fast and be convicted by what Scripture teaches and commands.

Living in urban poverty affects all aspects of life—mentally, spiritually, and physically. Despite the opportunities offered by government assisted programs such as,

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<sup>31</sup>Steven Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself* (Chicago: Moody, 2009), 13.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Temporary Assistants for Needy Families (TANF), Housing Choice Voucher Programs (Section 8), poverty in urban areas has grown hand-in-hand with the continuous population growth in most city areas. Various dimensions of exclusion often cause the gap between perceived and actual opportunities for the poor in urban areas. Mark Gornick writes,

Not all people who are poor and live in the city live in neighborhoods of concentrated and persistent poverty, and not all people who live in the inner city have incomes below the poverty line. Yet, inner-city neighborhoods are a focal point of urban suffering and exclusion, and everyone who lives in the inner city knows firsthand the struggle of survival.<sup>32</sup>

With little to no opportunities for the poor to participate in the decision making that affect their socioeconomic context often leaves the poor with programs that “band aid” their issues and not alleviate the issues. Poverty must be defined beyond its obvious surface level symptoms and causes in order to help alleviate its continuous effects. Corbett and Fickert assert that

defining poverty is not simply an academic exercise, for the way we define poverty—either implicitly or explicitly—plays a major role in determining the solutions we use in our attempts to alleviate poverty. When a sick person goes to the doctor, the doctor could make two crucial mistakes: (1) Treating symptoms instead of the underlying illness; (2) Misdiagnosing the underlying illness and prescribing the wrong medicine. Either one of these mistakes will result in the patient not getting better and possibly getting worse. The same is true when we work with the poor people. If we treat only the symptoms or if we diagnose the underlying problem we will not improve our situation.<sup>33</sup>

As a result, Christian social outreach projects directed toward the poor must consider the interconnected, multidimensional nature of the challenges faced by poor urban populations. One key strategy for such an approach is for the urban church to adopt a multi-sectorial approach to address the social, economic, and spiritual issues affecting poor populations at the inception of project.

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<sup>32</sup>Gornick, *To Live in Peace*, 3.

<sup>33</sup>Corbett and Fickert, *When Helping Hurts*, 54.

Poverty alleviation initiatives often come with a variety of indiscriminate truths. One truth is that Christian based poverty initiatives can often hurt the targeted group. When the poor and needy is relying on weekly and daily resources to feed their hunger and clothes their bodies, they become dependent on the effort with little to no wherewithal to want to help oneself. Thus, the effort for alleviation becomes a monotonous ritual for the recipient. Instead of seeing oneself as being created in the image of God, one begins to see themselves as inferior. This can paralyze the poor from taking initiatives and from seizing opportunities to improve their situation, thereby locking them into a material poverty.<sup>34</sup> Research has shown that shame—a “poverty of being”—is a major part of the brokenness that poor people experience in their relationship with themselves.<sup>35</sup> Inadvertently, if the social outreach effort is not compassionate, often the giver (the church) begins to see itself as hierarchy (superior) and the recipients interpret themselves as less than (inferior). Robert Lupton writes,

The transaction, no matter how compassionate, seems to go sour in the gut of both giver and recipient. A subtle, unintentional message slips through: “You have nothing of worth that I desire in return.” The giver remains protected by his one-up-status while the recipient is exposed and vulnerable. Little wonder that negative attitudes surface. It becomes hard to be a cheerful giver and even harder to be a cheerful recipient.<sup>36</sup>

Such results can easily take place if the church is not constantly evaluating and involving the thoughts and concerns from the recipients into their decisions. Christian outreach initiatives must somehow offer the recipients a chance to better themselves so that the initiative will not turn monotonous.

When impoverished people and their communities suffer from years of neglect, when rental properties have deteriorated and trash has piled up in alleys, when the city no

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 64.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Lupton, *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life*, 26.

longer fixes damaged street lights or repairs abandoned and condemned homes, almost any positive activity is welcomed.<sup>37</sup> In decrepit and dilapidated urban neighborhoods, there is no shortage of need. Because of the need, churches become compassionate and often offer “betterment” services such as food pantries, soup kitchens, discounted summer camps, and sanitary services. Betterment services help ease the burden on individuals but it does not help develop the people to be self-sustaining. Robert Lupton states, “Betterment activates offer relief from difficult situations and improves the existing condition. Better does for others; development enables others to do for themselves. Betterment improves conditions, development strengthens capacity. Betterment gives a man a fish; development teaches a man how to fish.”<sup>38</sup>

Urban poverty is not an easy fix and it should be kept to the forefront of every urban area. The urban church is commanded to reach out and serve those in need. The challenges of not having adequate resources should not stop the urban church from finding viable ways to give services to those in need. Betterment programs must continue to exist because in many cases, it is the only hope that some individuals have in making it from day to day. Linthicum writes,

True and effective urban ministry exist only when the city churches work together with the poor to identify their needs and determine the actions the poor and the churches need to take together. Only out of such an atmosphere will ministry by the poor occur for their own development. That is the approach that empowers people—that enables them to deal effectively with their own problems.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, the Christian church has a task to pray and find effective ways in turning its “betterment” services into “development” services in order to help grow the impoverished people they serve into productive self-sufficient individuals.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 39.

<sup>39</sup>Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan*, 204.

## Urban Social Justice

Social justice in urban environments has largely been framed around lower, middle, and upper class divides, assumptions about individualism, economic progress, racism, intercultural issues, cultural injustices, and exploited school systems. In impoverished urban areas, one can argue that its people have long been academically, economically, socially, and politically left behind. The primary work of the established church is not to solely promote social justice but to warn society of a higher justice. There are many urban churches striving to ignite flames of hope that have been snuffed by the obvious inequities in the communities. The “left behind” in many cities are struggling to wrestle free from the grips of injustice, poverty, illiteracy, joblessness, and hunger. One must ask has this nation honestly lived up to its words—one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty, and justice for all. John Perkins writes,

To this day, our nation has not lived up to its goal of justice for all. Would anyone claim that a child trapped in the ghetto has equal access to quality education as his suburban counterpart? Would anyone claim that the teenage girl in the ghetto has the same chance for getting a summer job as the girl from an affluent family? Or that the ethnic young adult, deprived of good education and job experience, has an equal chance of making it in the American job market? Poverty is much more than lack of money, poverty is the lack of options. For millions in our land this is not justice.<sup>40</sup> For them equal opportunity is at best an elusive dream, at worst a cruel taunt.

Although one may believe that this nation has failed such individuals, one must believe that justice for all is still a reality. Local governments and civil organizations cannot do it alone. The voices of marginalized populations are often absent from the “mainstream” discourse, and the issues that are most important are frequently ignored. Giving “voice” to one who has been silenced by inequalities and injustices is one of the crucial components of urban social justice initiatives. The ultimate goal of social justice initiatives is to combat oppression by enabling all groups to have an equitable portion of

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<sup>40</sup>John Perkins, *With Justice for All* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1982), 11.

society's resources and, with these resources, be able to participate fully in a just society. In the U.S. where there is unprecedented affluence, people's needs—food, health care, heat, and housing—go unmet.<sup>41</sup> Obviously, one's problem is not a lack of resources, it is unequal distribution.<sup>42</sup> John Perkins states, "Justice is our management of God's resources and our working is to make these resources open and available to all of God's creatures."<sup>43</sup>

The promise that the United States of America's laws alone have been powerless to fulfill can only be fulfilled through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>44</sup> A central part of the Christian mission in representing a just God is to work for justice.<sup>45</sup> Hence, social justice mandates and emphasis are interwoven throughout the gospel. On the contrary, some Christians believe that the gospel and social justice should be separated. Clinton Stockwell writes, "Justice is part of the gospel. For many evangelicals and other religious traditions, there have been attempts to separate the mandates of the gospel proclamation from the practice of "doing justice" in the world. Yet, the biblical witness interconnects the proclamation of the gospel with the practice of justice and peacemaking."<sup>46</sup>

The gospel becomes the reason for social justice and the urban church must use biblical mandated compassion and generosity to bridge the connection. If one is trying to live a life in accordance with the Bible, the concept and call to social justice are

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 160.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>John Perkins, *Beyond Charity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 127.

<sup>44</sup>Perkins, *With Justice for All*, 11.

<sup>45</sup>Perkins, *Beyond Charity*, 127.

<sup>46</sup>Clinton E. Stockwell, "The Church and Justice in Crisis," in *The Urban Face of Mission: Ministering the Gospel in a Diverse and Changing World*, ed. Manuel Ortiz and Susan S. Baker (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 159.

inescapable.<sup>47</sup> Doing social justice includes not only the righting of wrongs, but generosity and social concern, especially toward the poor and vulnerable.<sup>48</sup>

One grave challenge that Christians must not do is replace evangelism with social justice. As Christians do social justice, they must face the important practical issue of how justice relates to their other duties as believers.<sup>49</sup> In particular, Christians must decipher the relationship between the call to help the needy (social justice) and the biblical command to evangelize.<sup>50</sup> Evangelism must be the priority of every Christian. Jesus commands evangelism and Christians must not stand on the gate when it comes to inviting someone to make a confession for Christ. Timothy Keller further states,

There are many who insist that doing justice is spreading the gospel, it is evangelism they say. Doing justice can indeed lead people to give the message of gospel grace a hearing, but to consider deeds of mercy to be identical to gospel proclamation is fatal confusion. I propose a different way to understand evangelism and social justice. They should exist in an asymmetrical, inseparable relationship. Evangelism is the most basic and radical ministry possible to a human being. This is true not because the spiritual is more important than the physical, but because the eternal is more important than the temporal.<sup>51</sup>

The proclamation of the gospel is not only critical but it helps non-believers see the presence and practice of the church. The urban church must not only have a presence in social justice issues, but those helped must see Christians practicing scriptural principles, upholding the teachings of Christ. When non-believers can witness Christian deeds and actions, it makes the proclamation of gospel more genuine and receptive. Robert Linthicum concludes,

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<sup>47</sup>Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice* (New York: Penguin Group, 2010), 18.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

If those in the church seek to live Christ like lives but provide no verbal witness as to why this is so, people will simply conclude that we are “nice people” If we defend the cause of the widow and orphan but provide no interpretation of why we are committed to the broken and hurting in the world, people will conclude that the church is simple made up of social reformers. It is proclamation—and only proclamation—that gives explanation for “the hope that is within us.” It is only as the church shares its faith that the people are aware that the church has any faith at all.<sup>52</sup>

Social justice is essential for the urban church but it must not be the only Christian act that it displays to the community. Evangelism must be the driving force behind social justice initiatives. Urban social justice ministry must always be a means to proclaiming the gospel (evangelism) to the poor, the prisoner, the blind, and the oppressed.

### **Christian Community Development**

Started in 1989, the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) is a network of Christians committed to seeing people and communities holistically restored.<sup>53</sup> Christian community development begins with people transformed by the love of God, who then responds to God’s call to share the gospel with others through evangelism, social action, economic development and justice.<sup>54</sup> The objective of CCDA is to empower the American poor emphasizing the role of God’s people in moving beyond monotonous charity to uplifting ministry based on building relationships and effective program development within communities. Christian community development and Christian evangelists both work best when they care for and love the people they are serving. Each entity must have a strong understanding of their own goals, purposes, strategies, and procedures; but without some genuine compassion and love for the people they interact with, very little gets accomplished. Both the community developer and the

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<sup>52</sup>Linthicum, *City of God, City of Satan*, 186.

<sup>53</sup>Perkins, *Beyond Charity*, 17.

<sup>54</sup>John M. Perkins, “What is Christian Community Development?,” in *Restoring At-Risk Communities*, ed. John M. Perkins (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 21.



urban evangelist must have a sense of the large transcendent values if they are to succeed in their work — especially through discouragements and deterrents that will inevitably occur. The Christian community developer must know that the temporary victories and defeats in their work are laying the foundation for better living conditions (social, economic, spiritual) for families and individuals. However the urban evangelist must also have a larger assurance that God is taking the good news (gospel) they proclaim and using it to build a strong reassurance in the hearts and minds of the people in the community.

Christian community developers and Christian evangelists are active, people-centered, caring and transcendent urban servants. Both are enthusiastic and centered upon change in people's lives. As the community developer and urban evangelist continue to work for change, they complement, teach and even transform each other. However, they both must be careful not to allow individuals to be reliant on handouts, outreach platforms, and government assisted programs. Charity within urban communities seems to stifle the efforts of ones who want to have more and desire self-sufficiency. Christian charity is not wrong nor is it non-effective but it must have an aspect in which it helps the recipient move toward individual responsibility. John Perkins further asserts,

Acts of charity can be dangerous because givers can feel good about actions that actually accomplish very little, even create dependency. The result is that their sense of satisfaction takes away any motivation to seek more creative long-range development strategies. Christians should never be discouragers, and there will always be a place for acts of sharing and kindness, but charity is only a beginning point, not the final strategy or solution.<sup>55</sup>

Christian charity helps the individual temporary but development moves one to a more permanent position and self-sufficiency. Christian community development is a church based ministry among the urban poor that places a focus on the felt needs of the families,

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<sup>55</sup>Perkins, *Beyond Charity*, 23.

community building, and allowing individuals to assume prominent roles within ones community.<sup>56</sup>

There are three key principles that guide Christian community development—reconciliation, redistribution, and relocation (three R’s). One cannot discuss Christian community development without them. Many have dismissed the three principles of Christian community development as being non-biblical and simply principles of social reform. Social reform and social justice are components within the three principals but each of the principals are biblically aligned. Phil Reed writes,

What separates Christian community development from other forms of social change is that we believe that changing a life or changing a community is ultimately a spiritual issue. I want to be clear that a ministry of Christian community development without evangelism is like a body without a soul. To be Christian, by definition, is to live and speak in such a way that our lives continually point to the wonderful person of Jesus Christ.<sup>57</sup>

Evangelism and discipleship is at the root of Christian community development. Each community that seeks to improve their urban area through the principles of Christian community development is charged to evangelize and disciple individuals of that community to lead within their community.

### **Relocation, Reconciliation, and Redistribution**

Relocation is perhaps the hardest and most radical of the three principals. It calls for Christians to have an invested interest in the people they are seeking to help. Relocation centers on Christians returning to an impoverished community and bettering the people around them. John Perkins states,

By relocating, we will understand most clearly the real problems facing the poor; then we may begin to look for real solutions. For example, if our children are a part

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>57</sup>Phil Reed, “Toward a Theology of Christian Community Development?,” in *Restoring At-Risk Communities*, ed. John M. Perkins (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 41.

of that community, you can be sure we will do whatever we can to make sure that the children of our community get a good education. Relocation transforms “you, them, theirs” to “we, us, and ours.”<sup>58</sup>

Relocation involves putting oneself in threatening situations, coming into areas that others have long since abandoned, or merely planting one’s feet in neighborhoods that “smart” people are leaving.<sup>59</sup> Christians that relocate must have a genuine zeal and call to work within a community. Relocation demands discipline and a spiritual sense of seeing beyond one’s current reality.

The second principal is reconciliation. Reconciliation deals with bringing one back into a relationship with Christ and the local church—spiritual development. Christian Community development is concerned with reconciling people to God and bringing them into church fellowship where they can be disciple in their faith.<sup>60</sup> Mark Gornik writes, “Reconciliation is the heart of the Christian story, both vertical (with God) and horizontal (with our fellow human beings). Enfolding in the story of a sinful people forgiven and reconciled to a holy God, the church is to embrace, love, forgive, and incorporate people across all barriers of gender, ethnicity, race, gifts, and skills.”<sup>61</sup> Reconciliation creates a community of evangelized and disciplined believers that seek to restore a community with a Christ centered approach.

The last of the three principals is redistribution. Redistribution puts resources, skills, jobs, and labor back into the community to empower the people to rebuild and maintain a welcoming community.<sup>62</sup> Phil Reed states, “Redistribution means providing opportunities to the poor to obtain skills and economic resources to be able to work their

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<sup>58</sup>Perkins, “What is Christian Community Development?,” 22.

<sup>59</sup>Reed, “Toward a Theology of Christian Community Development,” 36.

<sup>60</sup>Perkins, “What is Christian Community Development?,” 22.

<sup>61</sup>Gornick, *To Live in Peace*, 168.

<sup>62</sup>Perkins, “What is Christian Community Development?,” 23.

way out of poverty, whatever the cause for their situation. Redistribution is not complete until the community has its own economic base.”<sup>63</sup> Redistribution is the empowerment element of the three principles. It ensures that the poor and downtrodden have a way to pull themselves up and gain economic and social stability. Each of the three R’s can be done separately within a community but authentic Christian community development cannot occur without all three.

### **Conclusion**

Christians should not overlook the necessity to personally evangelize to the downtrodden and the non-believers. When personal evangelism is combined with social outreach ministry, the Christian is preparing to face the poor, disinherited, the unchurched, and the non-believer with readiness and confidence with sharing the gospel of Christ. Personal evangelism takes on a different approach depending on the setting and the person being evangelized. Urban ministry is a “learning laboratory” for personal evangelism that inspires, informs, and motivates Christians who has a zeal for urban renewal and spiritual transformation for the poor. It is clear that the urban church deals with conditions brought about by poverty, classism, prejudices, cultural differences, and language differences. Underlining challenges within urban environments have unfortunately produced a postmodern culture of crime, substance abuse, along with a courageous Christian population struggling to make life better and more enjoyable for ones that live in poverty. The challenges faced in urban ministry must be met with genuine and compassionate believers. The spirit of the Lord is upon the urban church and it is anointed to bring the “good news” to the poor and it exist to proclaim that captives be released, that the blind see and that the oppressed be set free (Luke 4:18).

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<sup>63</sup>Reed, “Toward a Theology of Christian Community Development,” 34.

CHAPTER 4  
INTEGRATION OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND  
SOCIAL OUTREACH TRAINING

**Introduction**

This chapter's purpose is to report the implementation of the ministry project of integrating personal evangelism and social outreach training at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia. The need to integrate personal evangelism and social outreach training came from a strong desire to reach the unchurched and lost individuals for the purpose of conversion.

The strong desire to reach the unchurched and the lost is solely based on the fact that we are commanded to (Matt 28:19-20). Often individuals tend to minimize this as a reason; however, this is the foremost foundational principle behind Christian evangelism. Therefore, we must evangelize because unbelievers will not believe unless they hear the message of the gospel of Christ (Rom 10:17). My personal conviction to personally evangelize is my desire to help individuals distinguish the difference between social outreach initiatives and personal evangelism. There are many churches and religious organizations that tend to confuse, manipulate, and communicate the two with being the same. This is un-biblical and far from the truth. Social outreach is only one vehicle used to get to personal evangelism—presenting the Gospel to non-believers for the purpose of conversion. Evangelism is simply the spreading of the Christian gospel by preaching, teaching, or personal witness. Personal evangelism is the foundation that social outreach should be developed upon and it is the end result to every social outreach initiative.

### **Enlistment of Project Participants**

In the first two weeks of my project, I corresponded with the leaders of the children and youth ministry, specifically those who had some knowledge of social outreach and personal evangelism. Because I am the Director of children and youth and the youth pastor, I intentionally enlisted individuals serving within the children and youth ministries. The 15 participants included 7 participants from the children's ministry and 8 participants from the youth ministry. Many of the leaders enlisted were involved with serving in other ministries; therefore, I had to take into consideration their work schedules, personal family schedule, and also compete with the limited meeting space of our church facility. Due to each of their schedules and them serving within other ministries we had to come up with a meeting time and space that would fit their schedules. Fortunately, we were able to meet on Bible study night (Wednesday), whereas each participant could participate in the trainings while their spouses and children participated in age-level Bible studies.

### **Administering of Surveys**

The first meeting was held on March 21, 2012, at the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia in rooms 14L and 15L. From this point forward we met for ninety minutes on Wednesday nights. After opening prayer, initial introductions, and an ice breaker to keep the energy and enthusiasm high, I gave participants an overview of my project and reviewed the commitment I was asking from them. I opened the floor for participants to ask questions about the project. After I entertained four questions, I gave participants surveys before and after the project. The first survey centered on questions around personal evangelism (see Appendix 1). The second survey questioned their knowledge of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church and social outreach (see Appendix 2). I explained to the participants that both surveys would serve as a reference point of their growth for personal evangelism and that it would be compared with the post-project

survey using the same questions at the end of the fifteen-week project. It was my hopes that the pre- and post- projects surveys would give me a good measurement on the growth and knowledge of how each participants view has changed or stayed the same about personal evangelism and social outreach.

Both surveys took twenty minutes to complete. The participants handed the surveys in to me and without hesitation questions and comments arose about some the questions. Particularly, the participants had questions about sharing their faith and the fear and embarrassment they faced when non-believers and other religions questioned their Christian beliefs and practices. The participants also commented about their individual fear and anxiety of sharing and not knowing how to communicate the gospel to lost individuals and other cultures whose beliefs are different. I expected the participants to ask questions and make comments randomly manly because some of the questions from the survey aroused their thinking and challenged some of their current theological perspectives. Because I did not want to preempt our training, I explained to the participants that each of their questions would be answered as we journeyed through our trainings and weekly discussions. The participants were receptive to other peer questions and comments and were open to listening and providing valuable feedback to one another. The class participants grew in camaraderie quickly and were helpful and open to one another's perspectives.

The participants ranged in demographics that helped with class discussion, peer support, and perspective. Survey 1 asked demographic information about their gender, age, children, and marital status. The class was well balanced with 9 females and 6 males. I also asked their ages; 2 were between 18 and 30, 7 between 31 and 40, 5 between 41 and 50, and 1 between 51 and 60. I also asked their marital status; 4 were single, 9 were married, and one divorced. Lastly, I asked the participants the number of children they had in increments of two; 5 had 0 children, 4 had between 1 and 2 children,

and 6 had between 3 and 4 children. Each participant brought a range of perspective, knowledge, and life experiences that gave each class training vigor and enthusiasm.

### **The Project**

In March of 2012, I meet with 15 leaders from within the children and youth ministry of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia to participate in my D.Min. project. Within the framework of the project it was my objective to accomplish five strategic goals that I believed would help augment the necessity of integrating personal evangelism and social outreach training: (1) to increase the knowledge and confidence of the leaders of children and youth in the area of personal evangelism and social outreach, (2) to equip the leaders of children and youth by teaching them the basics of personal evangelism and social outreach in order that they may be able to affably present the Gospel and share their faith when doing social outreach, (3) is to engage lost people with a biblical and affable presentation of the Gospel, (4) to equip our leaders with viable social outreach and personal evangelism techniques so that they can train our youth in social outreach and personal evangelism, (5) to enhance my effectiveness at personal evangelism and social outreach.

In addition, this project consisted of three main stages that helped guide and meet each goal: equipping the leadership, engaging the community, and reaching the next generation. The stages helped the participants understand where they were as their journeyed through the fifteen-week project. The books I chose to help guide each week's training were *Personal Evangelism for Today* by G. William Schweer and *Share Jesus without Fear*, by William Fay and Ralph Hodge. These two books held many of the key elements and principles that I wanted to convey during the training. I did not require the group to get the books, but I extracted key principles from each book and placed it into handouts for each training.



## **Phase 1: Equipping the Leadership**

During the next six weeks of training, I was charged to train each participant and give them a thorough training on personal evangelism integrated with social outreach. Although I am the pastor of Children and Youth and have interacted with the participants for several years, I was a little nervous. I became nervous because this training would impact their leadership and challenge them to move out of their comfort zones. I admit, that many of our leaders were stuck at being comfortable at only speaking to Christians about the gospel and had a fear of speaking and presenting the gospel to the unchurched and lost. The next five weeks was enlightening and it presented great opportunities for learning, personal growth, and discussion.

Week 3 of the project, I started engaging the participants on personal evangelism methods and exploring the biblical and theological support for personal evangelism. During weeks 3 and 4 of the training, I developed a 5 to 10-minute ice breaker scenarios that required them to talk with one another about evangelism. The ice breaker was entitled “Speed.” Class participants were randomly given an challenging evangelistic scenario and intern they had to present the scenario to another random class participant. The key was to catch the person off guard and the person then had to answer the questions within the scenario within 30 seconds or less. The scenarios were often controversial and challenging and the participant had to use at least one Scripture to answer the scenario. The scenarios allowed the participants to become comfortable with talking about controversial issues and being able to evangelize in any given situation. The scenarios also challenged the participants to think about how to engage family members, lost people and the unchurched. Some of the scenarios given were the following:

1. Scenario 1: On Sunday mornings, my neighbors are always out running, washing cars, etc. They never talk about religion and they are a different race. I want to tell them about my church and even invite them. But I don’t know how to. How can I evangelize in this situation?

2. Scenario 2: My daughter asked me is abortion right. I had an abortion when I was 18 years old that no-body knows about and I don't want to lie; nor do I want her to make the same mistake. What should I do and how can I use the word to support me?
3. Scenario 3: I have an uncle that believes that he can get into heaven just because he is nice to people and he gives a lot monetary things to people. What should I say to him? And how can I use this as a way to evangelize?
4. Scenario 4: Since I moved out of low in-come housing and learned a better way of living. I want nothing to do with "those people." Am I right for thinking like this? And what does the Bible say?
5. Scenario 5: I let my son get away with bad behavior and he can wear anything he wants. But with my daughter it is a different story. I want her to be a lady at all times and she cannot wear pants. Am I right for treating my kids this way? And what does the Bible say?
6. Scenario 6: My husband always punches my son in the chest and it makes him very angry. He does not allow him to go to church, because he says it's for "sissies." My son has developed anger problem in school and amongst his peers and he says he does not believe in God. What should I do? And what does the Word say?
7. Scenario 7: My mother-in-law does not believe in heaven or hell, but she says she loves Jesus and can't wait to see him. I want to talk with her about her theological beliefs. How should I approach her and what does the Bible say?

The above controversial scenarios engaged the participants during the first ten minutes of weeks 3 and 4. The scenarios affected a range of emotions and some participant comments had to be followed up after class through discussion and email. Being able to see participants meaningfully engage one another in seeking truth through Scripture brought tears to my eyes. In continuation with week 3, the participants learned biblical and theological support for personal evangelism by analyzing the ministry of Jesus and his model for personal evangelism. I started by explaining to the participants that personal evangelism is a joint effort between the evangelist and God. The evangelist speaks the word of God to lost individuals, but it is the work of the Holy Spirit that convicts the individual to see the need of having Christ in his life. Using the New Testament Scriptures to guide the class discussion and training, we looked at how Jesus provided us with countless acts of personal evangelism. The three New Testament

Scriptures that we analyzed were (1) Luke 19:1-10, Jesus interacts and invites himself to the home of a chief tax collector names Zacchaeus; (2) John 3:1-22, Jesus interacts with a Pharisee named Nicodemus; and (3) John 4:1-42, Jesus interacts with the adulterous Samaritan women.

After reading and analyzing each case, I explained to the participants that all of these cases were conversations with strangers and people of shame. Participants were told that it is probably a good idea to get to know someone, and for them to know and trust you, before leading them to belief, but it was not essential in any of New Testament encounters presented. Presumably all of those converted by Jesus were, in some sense, spiritually prompted by the Holy Spirit and was ready for this step—conversion and discipleship. The New Testament accounts of personal evangelism that the participants analyzed suggested that Nicodemus were deliberately looking for some spiritual direction, the Samaritan woman, and Zacchaeus was searching for spiritual answers. As the participants analyzed each New Testament account, they had eight questions that guided our discussion through each scenario:

1. What was the evangelist doing prior to his interaction with the non-believer?
2. How did the evangelist arrive at his interaction with the non-believer?
3. What was the physical setting of the place of engagement?
4. What was the spiritual health of the non-believer?
5. What method of evangelism was used?
6. How was the conversion experience started?
7. What was the result of the interaction?
8. Was their follow-up with the individual?

Walking through each of these questions per scenario allowed the participants to gain an even greater insight into the evangelism ministry of Jesus and the biblical necessity of personal evangelism. In addition, the participants were able gain a knowledgeable

biblical and theological reference base for the critical need of personal evangelism. The participants also had a handout guide that I adapted from *Personal Evangelism for Today* that provided them with evangelism methods and biblical and theological support from personal evangelism (see Appendix 5).

Week 4 the participants we trained on the common barriers that affect believer from doing personal evangelism. This week presented perhaps the most truthful experience for the participants. During the beginning class participants were handed four questions about fear of evangelism on a sheet of paper that they had to answer and openly discuss with their class peers. The questions allowed the participants to speak openly and honest about their individual fears and hesitancies about witnessing. The participants also engaged in a few evangelist scenarios surrounding evangelism and fear. Fear was the leading barriers of why Christians do not evangelize. In addition to fear of evangelism the participant learned several additional common barriers to evangelism and how to cross barriers to evangelism by analyzing the Acts 1:8 (see Appendix 6). By helping the participants get to the root of their individual fears and hesitancies about evangelizing non-Christians and understanding the barriers that hinder their witness gave the participants a clearer understanding of how to evangelize in awkward and challenging situations. This class training allowed the participants to view the Bible differently and affirmed how Scripture discusses every part of human existence and action. By analyzing the Scriptures, asking personal questions about evangelism, and providing applicable handouts proved to be very effective at reinforcing effective evangelism strategies and recognizing barriers that hinder ones witness for the kingdom.

Week 5 the participants were trained in effective social outreach strategies and we explored the biblical and theological support of social outreach. This topic was easier to approach than personal evangelism, mainly because all of our participants had engaged in some form of social outreach initiative with their job and our church. What was a little

challenging was helping them connect and seeing the need for personal evangelism with their zeal for outreach. Foremost, I had to give them an understanding of why social outreach seems a little more comfortable simply by explaining social outreach is promoted consistently through various media and organizations. Hence, making social outreach a “vogue” experience and more comfortable by both Christians and non-Christians. What becomes difficult is when Christians have to share the gospel for the purpose of conversion. The participants understood the need for Christians to be concerned about the physical state of people but also to be even more concerned with the spiritual state as well. During this training we explored the biblical and theological support of outreach by analyzing Scripture: Romans 1:6, 1 Peter 3:15, Proverbs 11:30, James 2:15-16, Matthew 25:37-40, and Matthew 5:14-16. The Scriptures reinforced biblically why Christians should do outreach and also be intentional with personal evangelism. In addition, we reviewed several models and strategies of social outreach: Seeker Sensitive Model, Missional Model, Servant Evangelism Model, Social Gospel Model, Charismatic Model, Discipleship model, and Social Media Model (see Appendix 7). Also the participants was given a template to review and a whole we put together a sample social outreach plan to aid them in training the children and youth given their charge. This allowed the participants to be specific and intentional about helping reach the un-churched and lost.

Week 6 after being trained on the biblical and theological foundations for social outreach we looked at the barriers that affect social outreach within our communities and neighborhoods. I started this class by posing four relevant questions that would lead to the teaching for this week on barriers:

1. Can you describe the “ideal” person you are trying to minister to or reach?
2. Describe the demographics within a twenty minutes’ drive of our church?
3. Is your “ideal” person a part of the demographics in your area?

4. Are these the type of people you are already reaching?

These four questions sparked a fifteen-minute discussion among participants that allowed them to see that judgmental attitudes, racism, sexism, and classism are barriers that can hinder social outreach.

Many of the participants lived the majority of their lives in the middle of communities and neighborhoods with a church on every corner. Yet despite the large number of churches, most participants noticed that their communities and neighborhood churches had little or no apparent influence in their communities. One of the major factors that arose from the participants' views was the mindset of the church leaders and members. By nature, the participants noticed that Christians tend to gravitate toward others who have things in common with them. This happens a lot in churches and religious organizations. Christians tend to open up more with people who are like us, people with whom we feel are "safe." Many non-believers think that Christians are judgmental, unhappy, controlling people who just happen to meet together once or twice a week. Narrow and negative generalizations of Christians often build barriers that won't allow Christians to be very effective at evangelizing or doing any type of social outreach. This week class we discussed personal and common barriers that can affect social outreach. As a homework assignment for the next class training, I had the participants answer three questions on a slip of paper:

1. Have you have been discriminated against? If so, how did you feel?
2. Name one group of people you are overly judgmental about?
3. Do you use classist or racist ways to engage people?

I asked participants to answer each question and be ready to discuss in the next training. These questions charged participants to truly think about their individual barriers that prohibit them from engaging un-churched individuals and the lost. The three questions were opening questions and discussions for Week 7 training.

Week 7 the participants learned how to personally evangelize cross culturally. The participants opened with answering and discussing the three homework questions from week 6. The three homework questions spurred positive, open, and honest, discussion that helped the class move into the topic for this week's training. This week's training focused on how to do cross-cultural evangelism and the biblical and theological bases for cross-cultural missions. In addition, the participants analyzed strategic and cross-cultural approaches to mission work in today's world. The message of the gospel never changes, but our approach to reaching individuals is constantly changing. An individual who is not ready to give up being an American for a time and to begin learning as a child is not ready for the challenge of cross-cultural ministry.<sup>1</sup> Our goal is not to convince those who are resistant to the message but rather to create a new reality; a healthy multi-ethnic ministry for those who readily embrace the gospel.<sup>2</sup> Cross cultural evangelism calls for one to unlearn all biases and presumptions about other cultures and people. The participants learned four foundational basics of cross-cultural evangelism: (1) understanding your own culture, (2) understanding the culture of the people you are evangelizing (3) defining the elements of the gospel and how it can be seen as good news for them and (4) carrying out steps to effective evangelism. Being trained on how to properly evangelize cross culturally allowed the participants to sharpen their world-view perspective and appreciate all cultures and their differences. In addition, the participants studied a Sarah Lanier's breakdown of hot and cold climates, found within her book *Foreign to Familiar* (see Appendix 9). Evangelism with a worldview perspective helps individuals evangelize with cultural sensitivity.

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<sup>1</sup>Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 25.

<sup>2</sup>Harry Li and Mark Daymaz, *Ethnic Blends: Mixing Diversity into Your Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 58.

In week 8, the participants were trained on how to logically and affably communicate and defend the gospel to the unchurched. As our culture's worldview shifts more into universalism, relativism, and inclusivism, believers must equip themselves to defend the faith apologetically, so that the effectiveness of soul winning Christian methods will not be diminished. Thus, the Christian must obtain skills in personal evangelism and apologetics. The challenging part of this class training was that the participants felt unequipped and ashamed when challenged concerning issues about the Christian faith. Thus, the training this week focused mainly on educating the participants in what they believe and why they believe it. In terms of apologetics, two important purposes begin to appear according to Steve Cowen: "(1) to bolster the faith of Christian believers, and (2) to aid in the task of evangelism."<sup>3</sup> The study of apologetics educates the believer to answer many objections to the faith that unbelievers hold. Apologetics trains not only for the sake of evangelism, but also for edification and firming of the life of the Christian believer. The application of apologetics must not be misunderstood as apologizing for the faith and Christian beliefs, but rather it is the defense of the gospel. Apologetics is the ability to defend the gospel (1 Pet 3:15) in an attitude of compassion (Eph 4:15) for the sake of presenting the gospel logically and affably (Acts 17:22-31). William Lane Craig affirms how spiritual growth through apologetics and evangelism work together: "Apologetics training is a tremendous boost to evangelism, for nothing inspires confidence and boldness more than knowing that one has good reasons for what one believes and good answers to typical questions that the unbeliever may arise. Sound training in apologetics is one of the keys to fearless evangelism."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Steven Cowen, "Introduction," in *Five Views on Apologetics*, ed. Steven Cowen (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 8.

<sup>4</sup>William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008), 21.



As a result, much of the time was spent defining apologetics and training the participants on recognizing the biblical command to study how to defend the truth of the gospel. Each member became familiar with the basic concepts of how to use apologetics in the midst of sharing the gospel logically and affably. The participants were also introduced to various books, methods, and websites that are available to help them understand the study of Christian apologetics.

### **Phase 2: Engaging the Community**

During weeks 9 and 10 of the training sessions the participants focused on engaging the people and community around the church. This part of the training was designed to allow the participants to put into application what they had been learning and to alleviate any fear that was causing them not to want to engage the lost and unchurched. Engaging various people and cultures of the local community is one of the most critical parts in the life of a church. Engaging a community does not occur at only one stage in the life of a church. Rather, it is done in concert with all the other steps to effective social outreach, discipleship, and evangelism. Engaging and re-engaging the community has to consistently happen throughout the life of any community focused church. The more the church engages the neighborhood, the greater the support it will have from the parishioners and the better the chance for long-term partnership and discipleship efforts from those within the community. Class participants were asked several questions before they engaged the community.

1. How can your church or its individual members engage effectively and sensitively with your local community?
2. What are the perceived needs of the community?
3. What do you consider your church's greatest strengths in relation to community?
4. How can your church benefit from engaging the local community?

5. How can your church move from being a “regional” church to a “community” church?

The questions allowed the participant to think beyond the norm of reaching individuals and dismissing this as another social outreach event to bring people into membership of the church. The questions centered on brainstorming and transforming the church to see the needs of the community. In addition, the class participants were giving personal evangelism sheets to fill out as they engaged friends, strangers, co-workers, family members, and others who they might evangelize. In weeks 9 and 10 the class participants guided the discussion and direction of the class as they talked about their encounter with the unchurched and lost individuals.

Week 9 of the training focused on evangelizing the community. The participants were given church tracts and door hangers, highlighting our church information and what the Baptist church believes. Class participants were sent in groups of five to hang door hangers on doors in the community and to talk with people about salvation and to pray for and with people who desired prayer. In addition, as the participants hung door hangers, others prayer walked each area of the neighborhood. Participant expressed that seeing their prayer target inspired them to concentrate and direct their prayers more effectively by walking near the people and places they are praying for. Personally evangelizing the community around Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church allowed individuals to see and feel the needs of the community. In addition, it allowed the lost within the community to hear the gospel message. During the last fifteen minutes of the class, participants were given a chance to discuss their encounters with the various people, prayer concerns, key issues they noticed, and insight they gained by way of the Holy Spirit as they prayer walked the community.

In week 10 the participants were given evangelism report forms to record any face-to-face personal evangelism encounter with a co-workers, neighbor, friend, stranger, or family member. The evangelism reports allowed the participants to evaluate their growth in witnessing to lost or unchurched individuals. Participants were given instruction how to fill out form and to be detailed with their responses. In addition, the evangelism forms allowed participants to keep in contact and follow-up with individuals they came in contact with. Follow-up is one of the most important aspects of the personal evangelism and engaging new believers. Participants were taught that their personal evangelism experience does not end with a mere distribution of a salvation tract, a passing prayer, or a canned talk about the Christian faith. New believers must enter into a continuing process of discipleship with the believer. Follow-up should be a succinct, well-planned encounter for the purpose of encouraging, growing, and maturing new believers into becoming like Christ. The evangelism reports were intricate to the training of the class participants. Participants were given a chance to share one of their personal evangelism encounters and their plans for follow-up and discipleship during this class training.

### **Phase 3: Reaching the Next Generation**

Weeks 11 and 12 were spent on reaching the next generation of youth believers and helping them understand the critical necessity of personal evangelism. Effective youth ministry revolves around the development of a discipling relationship with young people. Before considering a process for personal evangelism it is important to clarify the contextual barriers that prohibits youth from personally evangelizing. The purpose of personal evangelism is to present the life-changing message of Christ in a culturally

relevant manner to lost youth. While personal evangelism involves bringing a life changing message, it also involves producing generational life-changers as youth move from non-believer to disciple to a ministry worker and leader. Just as youth ministry is not an event but a process built on relationships and discipleship, so too personal evangelism is a relationship-based process.

In week 11 the participants were trained in the common barriers that affect youth from personally evangelizing. During this class period, several of the youth were chosen to have a discussion on the barriers that affect youth from doing evangelism and the challenges of spreading the gospel. The youth identified several barriers that caused them not to evangelize. The barriers the youth presented and discussed were identity barriers, religious barriers, language barriers, and social barriers. In general, the youth identified that the church has barriers that seemed to go unaddressed. The church has developed over time four contextual and cultural barriers that limit evangelism with youth. First, there is a church youth vs. an unchurched youth barrier. The vast majority of youth entering churches are unchurched. Second, there is a modern vs. post-modern divide among youth's beliefs and thinking. Third, there is a social media and technology gap because the internet and social media changes the way youth think and communicate and many churches have not consistently kept up. Fourth, a generational gap exists, which means that one must translate and transmit the gospel into forms understandable to youth. This translation is vital to reach and disciple them. This discussion allowed the participant to connect with our youth and refocus their thinking about the youth they are charged with developing and it helped them to see the critical necessity of reaching lost

youth. The youth comments and dialogue were healthy to this training and hearing the voice of this generation was even more genuine and effective.

Participants, in week 12, learned different techniques on teaching and preparing youth for personal evangelism and social outreach. God instituted his church to carry out the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20). The church and youth leaders must put an amplified focus on young people, seek to understand them, and as a result evangelize them appropriately. Knowing that the priority to reach the youth of the world is great and the challenges of relating to them difficult, the local church must find effective and relevant ways to evangelizing youth in their realm of influence. Participants were taught to understand the role youth leaders play in maintaining a youth ministry environment that emphasizes personal evangelism, discipleship, and social outreach. Youth leaders also must keep evangelism and discipleship as the center of their strategy for spiritual growth among youth. Techniques that the participants learned were (1) social media techniques, (2) popular culture techniques, (3) developing culturally relevant youth events and programs, (4) communicating biblical messages to youth with coherency. Participants were also given a list of youth ministry literature, social media websites, and conferences contain a wealth of events, programs, and detailed strategies of evangelism.

Week 13 concentrated on discussing, reviewing, asking questions, reflecting and clarifying key principles, evangelism techniques, and biblical references discussed during the personal evangelism training. This week's class began by reviewing key principles and technique learned in order to personally evangelize. The participant had the opportunity to share with one another highlights about the class, growth experiences,

their experiences with personal evangelism, and feeling concerning the training. In helping to guide the discussion and reflection, the following questions were posed:

1. Is there a need for us to train other church members in personal evangelism and why?
2. How effective was this personal evangelism training?
3. What were some of your personal growth experiences during this personal evangelism training?
4. What would you have added to this personal evangelism training to make it more effective?
5. Are you still hesitant or fearful about personal evangelism?
6. What were the strengths and weaknesses of this training?
7. Were the training materials and concepts learned relevant and communicated clearly each week?

By using guided questions, each participant was given a chance to speak on each question and the questions kept the participants on task and from veering off on to tangential discussions.

In week 14 the participants were surveyed on the project's effectiveness. The post-project survey results were compared to the pre-project survey results that were given during the first two weeks of training. This comparison helped to measure the effectiveness of the training, the confidence levels of the participants, and their knowledge of personal evangelism and social outreach. The participants were excited and less fearful about taking the post-project survey for a second time. In addition, the participants signed a personal evangelism contract affirming their commitment to personal evangelism and the Great Commission.

In week 15 the participants celebrated their fifteen-week accomplishment and each of them gave personal feedback to me as the instructor and some gave suggestions on how we can further develop this training for the entire church body. Suggestions were given that personal evangelism and discipleship should be a part of new members'

training and weekly Bible study classes. The training ended with the participants praying for the continuation of this training and the training was dismissed early. I then began to evaluate the surveys.

### **Class Participation and Accountability**

During weeks 1 and 2 the participants were given time to interact with one another and to get acquainted with one another. Participants' e-mail addresses and phone numbers were distributed so that participants could communicate and follow-up with one another outside of the class environment. In addition, the class participants began to pair with one another to ask questions and to ensure that they made it to training on time and homework assignments and evangelism reports were completed. Class participation was encouraged and was the greatest benefit of the class. Participants were given an opportunity during the first and last five minutes of each training class to ask questions, clarification, and provide brief follow-up comments.

### **Evangelism Reports**

Each participant was asked to fill-out an evangelism report that allowed the participants to carefully note any personal evangelism interactions they had at work, in the neighborhood, grocery store, and with family members. The evangelism report (see Appendix 12) provided each participant the opportunity to evaluate his or her witnessing experiences. The evaluation provided time for personal reflections and to evaluate his or her strengths and weaknesses during the interaction with the non-believer.

The reports also provided great insight to the application of the training course. Each report served as an evaluation of how the training sessions were impacting the actual sharing to the gospel. The evangelism reports also allowed participants to help other participants who were having challenges with transitioning from normal conversation to presenting the gospel. The participants enjoyed discussing personal

interactions and it encouraged other participants. Lastly, the personal evangelism reports helped to guide weekly discussions and some training sessions were altered to fit the needs of the training participants.

### **Ice Breakers and Opening Questions**

Each week the participants were engaged in tailored, personal evangelism ice breakers and opening questions. The ice breakers were tailored scenarios that prompted responses from the participants. Opening questions varied each week, but was centered on personal evangelism and social outreach. The ice breakers and opening questions helped me facilitate introductions, assess prior knowledge, energize and to develop the training environment while performing any of a number of other functions during the weekly trainings. The need to establish such an environment of open discussion where everyone could get to know one another was critical in gaining the trust of individuals and allowing them to feel at ease when discussing. I found that the ice breakers created an interactive and fun training session before I proceeded with the main discussion. The participants enjoyed the energy of the class and responded well to the ice breaker scenarios and opening questions.

### **Fostering Participation and Feedback**

Each week, I wanted to illicit some type of feedback from the participants. Fostering an environment where both the participant and I could engage in healthy dialogue and individual ideas and healthy criticism was critical to my personal growth. I explained to the participants in the first week that honest feedback is among the most valuable things that they can provide one another and myself. Participants gave feedback in several ways: e-mail, office appointments, verbal, social media platforms, and in writing. As the weeks developed, the participants provided feedback, asked questions, gave valuable suggestions and that added to the effectiveness of the training sessions. I



used the feedback to reinforce personal evangelism principals, align training expectations and priorities, fill gaps in knowledge and perspective, alleviate the fear and hesitance of individuals, and for personal growth.

### **Post-Project Surveys**

During week 14 of the training session, I distributed the post-project surveys to the participants. The post-project survey was identical to the first survey. I intentionally made both surveys identical because I felt it was the best way to gauge any changes that had taken place in the spiritual growth of the training participants. Having participants take the same survey allowed me to also see personal growth points during my personal assessment. I took into consideration during comparing and calculating the pre-project survey and post-project survey that participants' mood, prior knowledge base, resistance to change, personal church experiences, and personal predispositions. The pre- and post-project surveys were used to measure the total effectiveness of the training.

### **Personal Evangelism Notebooks**

Over the years, I have seen facilitators devote time to developing workshops and trainings and provide handouts only to get to the end and see training participants leave half the materials and notes behind. I wanted to guard against this type of pattern and participant behavior; therefore, during week 2, I gave each participant a professional development notebook that had fifteen weekly dividers and had each week's materials behind each divider. The notebooks, kept the participants materials organized, easy assessable, and centrally located. The notebooks also equipped the participants with extra materials that I found pertinent to personal evangelism and social outreach. The participants were able to use the notebooks to keep track of materials, note-taking, handouts, questions, and personal evangelism training handouts. The notebooks also added to the professional tone of the training sessions and improved participant

motivation and fostered a more positive attitude toward studying personal evangelism and social outreach.

### **Corporate Prayer**

Each training session started and ended with corporate prayer. Corporate prayer allowed the participants to gather together and be in one accord before the training sessions began. Prayer for personal and visible needs is not enough. I realized that prayer was needed to keep the participants completely loyal to Christ and to the purpose at hand, namely, personal evangelism training. Prayer helped set the tone for the sessions and it allowed the participants to feel at ease after coming in from a hostile work environments and battling through daily frustrations. Prayer at the end of the class centered on asking God for traveling mercies and thanking him for allowing the participants to fellowship and to further the commandment of the Great Commission—to make disciples and personally evangelize (Matt 28:19-20).

### **Personal Commitment**

During the personal evangelism and social outreach training, I was personally responsible for the teaching and facilitating of all the training sessions, the weekly ice breakers, evangelism reports, and fostering a healthy environment. For the weekly training sessions, I planned each week materials meticulously by reading advanced materials, developing handouts, and assessing various books to help aid in-class discussion and training. It was my goal to have on hand access to materials to provide an environment of learning. I was responsible for all training communications and follow-up with participants. Each week some class participants would arrive early to help me set out materials, pray, and help me with any other administrative functions to ensure the training session went smoothly. By participating and volunteering with set-up, distribution of materials, and praying together, the participants developed a sense of

family and gained personal ownership of the training sessions. This made the class enjoyable, accepting, and effective.

### **Conclusion**

The personal evangelism and outreach training for the leaders of children and youth was more than a fifteen-week project, but it was critical training to the life of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. Evangelism is as necessary to our own survival as it is to the salvation of other people's souls. When believers become lethargic in the matter of evangelism and discipleship, the devil is able to insinuate all kinds of evil things into our midst. If he can keep Christians inactive in their communities, jobs, and homes, he will have robbed them of many of the blessings of their faith and caused them to be ineffective in other areas of the Lord's work. This training taught individuals to be bold and fearless in their approach to win souls for the kingdom (Rom 1:16). Lastly, it challenged individuals to step out of the norm, out of their cross-cultural and economic boundaries, and to be true witnesses.

## CHAPTER 5

### PROJECT EVALUATION

#### **Introduction**

This chapter is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. A strategic evaluation of the project's purpose, goals, observed strengths and weaknesses, combined with theological and personal reflections will be assessed in this section. During the duration of the fifteen weeks, I endeavored to meet, with full expectancy, all five goals of the project. Each week the participants encouraged each other, asked questions, and provided healthy feedback and suggestions to help strengthen the class' character and effectiveness. Without question, the project has made a lasting impression on the spiritual growth and health of the participants and Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. During the training, I developed an even deeper yearning to evangelize the lost and to find effective methods and biblical principles that I could share with the participants that would aid them in their spiritual growth. It was a strong desire of mine to train the leaders of children and youth on how the essentials of the gospel message apply to those who are lost, unreached, and unchurched. At this point, evangelism training became personal and genuine. I recognized that many church evangelism and outreach ministries over-emphasize techniques and methods of evangelism without explaining biblical and theological principles. This training helped delineate many biblical principles on how the message can be applied to all aspects of life and to bring those that are lost into an eternal relationship with Jesus—conversion.

It is hard to express into words the many lessons learned, the countless growth moments, the endless testimonies, the constant prayers, and the “thirst” for personal

evangelism that each participant rendered during the weekly trainings. The project's impact has allowed me to listen to the voice of God more intently, pray fervently for the lost and unreached, and spend time developing my leadership skills and abilities. From the insightful beginning to the sentimental ending of the training, I walked away believing that I had been in the presence of the Lord and that this training was a part of the Master's plan. My prayer is that God will use this training to build a viable ministry of personal evangelism social outreach and impact the lives of those within Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church and its neighborhood and community.

### **Evaluation of Project's Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip the leaders of the children and youth at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia, to be more efficient in social outreach by integrating personal evangelism training with social outreach training. Ultimately, my desire was to use the project to help sensitize the hearts of the leaders of children and youth to see the critical need for personal evangelism. The project began with meeting the adult leaders of the children and youth ministry to discuss the project and its purpose and to solicit a fifteen-week commitment from each participant. The follow-up to this meeting was with the pastor of the church to solidify his support and to have him pray for our team and their fifteen-week commitment.

The demographics of the 15 participants and the diversity of the class were exciting and well balanced. Of the 15 participants, 40 percent were male and 60 percent were female. Of the 15 participants, 13 percent were between the ages of 18 and 30, 47 percent were between the ages of 31 and 40, 33 percent were between the ages of 41 and 50, and 7 percent were between the ages of 51 and 60. Thirty-three percent were single, 60 percent were married, and 7 percent had recently divorced. Of the 15, 33 percent had no children, 27 percent had 1-2 children, and 40 percent had at least 3-4 children. In order to better gauge the participants' knowledge of personal evangelism and social outreach,

two identical pre- and post-project surveys were given during the first week of the project. The first survey asked basic biblical and theological questions about personal evangelism. The second survey asked basic questions about social outreach and personal evangelism. The data from both project surveys was analyzed and some critical inferences were drawn. The data of the two project surveys were analyzed to help gain an understanding of the participants' knowledge of personal evangelism and social outreach; it helped in the development of each weeks training. The results of the two pre-project surveys were then compared to the results of the post-project surveys in order to determine if the stated purpose of the ministry project was achieved.

### **Project Surveys**

Two pre-project surveys were given to the participants on the first week of the training. During the course of the fifteen-week project, there were 15 adult participants that fully attended and participated in the project surveys. One hundred percent of the participants completed and submitted both pre-project surveys. At the end of the project, the same two identical surveys were again distributed to the 15 participants. The surveys were designed to reveal what each individual believed about personal evangelism and social outreach. The surveys also included questions that related personal evangelism and social outreach at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. The success of the purpose of this project can be seen by measuring the participants' responses to the following four survey statements acquired from the surveys:

1. Are you hesitant to share your faith for the fear of rejection?
2. Is evangelism an option for Christians?
3. I am confident in sharing my testimony with strangers.
4. Evangelism is more important than outreach?

In theory, being able to communicate the gospel to a lost or unchurched person can be relatively easy. However, various social, psychological, and economic barriers can

hinder the efforts of the best communicator. Barriers are obstacles that make it difficult for Christians to reach another person with the lifesaving message of the gospel. Fear of rejection was the common barrier that the participants discussed as being the main reason they don't evangelize. The pre-project survey revealed that 60 percent of the participants were hesitant to share their faith for the fear of rejection. I was not surprised by this percentage because fear of rejection and not being able to handle rebuttal questions from the non-believer can be intimidating for the believer. By the end of training, 80 percent of class revealed that they were no longer hesitant to share their faith for the fear of rejection. I believe the majority of participants overcoming their fear of rejection demonstrated that the purpose of the project was accomplished.

Throughout this training and teaching the participants, I found that Christians are often lacking in love for the lost, which causes a severe lack of love for evangelism. Evangelism ministry in many churches are lacking in participants and budgets because churches have made evangelism an option. Christians must understand that the commission to evangelize (Matt 28: 19-20) is not an option but a solemn obligation of the believer. One of my main tasks in this project was to instill in each participant that evangelism is not an option for Christians but an obligation. The pre-project survey revealed that 33 percent of the participants believed that evangelism was an option for Christians. Although the number of participants may seem low, I wanted all the participants to see that evangelism is a command and an obligation. To help change the participants' perspectives, I had them analyze several Scripture verses that revealed the critical need for evangelism as modeled by Christ. We then discussed why evangelism was so critical to the ministry of Christ and constantly reviewed Scripture to help reinforce the need. By the end of the training, an astounding 100 percent of participants believed that evangelism was not an option but an obligation. This change revealed that the participants knew they had a task, as believers, to seek after non-believers and bring

them into a relationship with Christ. Also, at the end of class, the participants signed a personal evangelism contract (see Appendix 13).

Another survey question that added to the effectiveness of the project was the question on the confidence level of the participants and their ability to share their testimonies with strangers. The survey revealed that 40 percent of the participants strongly disagreed, agreed, or were uncertain. This number was high, but I was not surprised. Trying to get the participants to understand the power of their testimonies was a huge task. Some were hesitant because of past judgments and failures. I had to teach them about how not to glorify their past sins and to tell their story in three parts and within two minutes or less. I posed three foundational questions that helped the participants shape their testimony:

1. What was your life like before knowing Jesus Christ personally?
2. How did you come to know Jesus in your life?
3. How are things different today because you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior?

When Christians are saved they become God's messengers and living witnesses of how the gospel can change lives. I believe that God wants to speak to the world through his people. A believer's testimony is the story of how Christ has made a difference in his or her life. This telling of one's testimony is the essence of witnessing. By the end of the training, the post-survey revealed that 93 percent of the participants felt confident in sharing their testimony with strangers. Many non-believers will not accept the authority of the Bible but will listen to a humble, life changing personal story. This change in the participants revealed the effectiveness of this project.

The final pre- and post-survey statement that was used to measure the effectiveness of the project had to do with whether evangelism is more important than social outreach. The pre-project survey revealed that 86 percent strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were uncertain. It is evident that Christians have blurred the line between



evangelism and social outreach. Some Christians argue that social outreach is evangelism because it demonstrates the gospel (Matt 25:31-46). Other Christians argue this not evangelism because the gospel is not verbally shared and the non-believer has not been given a chance to make an authentic decision to accept and follow Jesus Christ. Yet, what is it that separates one's Christian service from that of the local atheist group or community volunteer? How does the non-believer know the difference? The difference comes when the gospel is presented and the non-believer is given a chance to receive the gospel of Christ. By the end of the training, 100 percent agreed that evangelism is more important than social outreach. I can only assume that the evangelism reports, the Scripture verses, and the prayers during the opening and closing of the weekly trainings changed the participants' views on personal evangelism and aided them to see the difference between social outreach and personal evangelism. The surveys revealed that the purpose of this project was accomplished.

### **Evaluation of Project's Goals**

This project had five goals and these goals served as the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to increase the knowledge and confidence of the leaders of children and youth in the area of personal evangelism and social outreach. The second goal was to equip the leaders of children and youth by teaching them the basics of personal evangelism and social outreach in order that they may be able to affably present the gospel and share their faith when doing social outreach. The third goal was to engage lost people with a biblical and affable presentation of the gospel. The fourth goal was to equip our leaders with viable social outreach and personal evangelism techniques so that they can train our youth in social outreach and personal evangelism. The fifth and final goal of this project was for me to become more effective at personal evangelism and social outreach.

## **Evaluation of First Goal**

In order to lay an effective evangelistic foundation by integrating personal evangelism and social outreach training, the first goal was to increase the knowledge and confidence of the leaders of children and youth in the area of personal evangelism and social outreach. The first goal was accomplished by giving participants identical pre- and post-project surveys. Both surveys analyzed the participants' knowledge and confidence levels concerning social outreach and personal evangelism. The data gathered from both surveys helped in developing the weekly training to fit the participants' strengths and weaknesses and provided them with a grounded understanding of personal evangelism. The participants were constantly reminded of trusting each other with answers, to ask pertinent questions, and the importance of recognizing their spiritual growth points. During the training, the leaders studied biblical and theological principles of personal evangelism and social outreach demonstrated by Jesus (Matt 28:19-29; John 3:1-22; John 4:1-42; Luke 19:1-10; 1 Pet 3:15-16). By surveying the biblical knowledge of the participants on personal evangelism, Jesus' models of personal evangelism, and social outreach, the children and youth leaders increased their biblical and theological knowledge and gained confidence in both areas.

## **Evaluation of Second Goal**

The second goal of the project was to equip the leaders of children and youth by teaching them the basics of personal evangelism and social outreach in order that they may be able to affably present the gospel and share their faith when doing social outreach. Throughout the project, the participants committed themselves to learning and memorizing core Scripture verses and studying basic tools, methods, and principles of personal evangelism. *Personal Evangelism for Today* by G. William Schweer and *Share Jesus without Fear* by William Fay and Ralph Hodge were the two core books I used with the participants to teach them key evangelism tools, methods, and principles in order

that they may be able to present the gospel and share their faith during social outreach initiatives. In addition, pre-project survey revealed that 60 percent of the participants were hesitant to share their faith for fear of rejection. By the end of training, 80 percent of class revealed that they were no longer hesitant to share their faith for fear of rejection. Studying and examining Scripture, learning key evangelistic tools, principles, and methods was instrumental in completing the second goal of this project.

### **Evaluation of Third Goal**

The third goal was to engage lost people with a biblical and affable presentation of the gospel. Once the leaders were equipped with sound biblical and theological knowledge of personal evangelism and their confidence had improved, the leaders engaged in a two hour personal evangelism initiative within the neighborhood of Mt. Pleasant Baptist church. The personal evangelism initiative afforded the leaders an opportunity to evangelize the unchurched and non-believers by handing out tracts and telling other cultures about the gospel of Christ. This initiative allowed the children and youth leaders to witness the need for more community social outreach and neighborhood personal evangelism. I believe that I met the third goal by having the participants engage lost people in the neighborhood around Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, handing out salvation tracts, and presenting the gospel to lost individuals. This initiative allowed the children and youth leaders to witness the need for more community outreach and neighborhood evangelism. As a follow-up to the initiative, each leader received a follow-up questionnaire and discussed their evangelism experience.

### **Evaluation of Fourth Goal**

The fourth goal is to equip our leaders with viable social outreach and personal evangelism techniques so that they can train our youth in social outreach and personal evangelism. It is a priority of this project that our leaders use the techniques learned in

prior training sessions and train our youth within the ministry. During the training, our leaders had a chance to engage 12 of our youth about their fears of evangelism and social outreach. This session allowed both the leaders and youth to ask questions, gather information, and gain an awareness of barriers and fears that youth face when evangelizing. The participants developed questions in advance and answers were noted from each of the teens' responses. The attainment of this goal was having the leaders begin to develop effective ways to teach personal evangelism strategies to the youth and to implement a future teaching plan to address common barriers that prevent youth from evangelizing during social outreaches.

### **Evaluation of Fifth Goal**

The fifth and final goal of this project was for me to become more effective at personal evangelism and social outreach. As the Director of Children and Youth, it is a priority of mine to strengthen my skills and abilities as I seek to meet the needs of the leaders and youth of our ministry. In order to accomplish this goal, after each training, I engaged the participants in personal dialogue about the effectiveness of the training. I received multiple follow-up emails from class participants about their personal growth as a result of this training. I facilitated each class during the project and developed all the materials that were given to each participant. Lastly, I gave a brief evaluation at the end to assess my training and facilitating skills and the overall quality of materials I used to help facilitate the class (see Appendix 14). By teaching this training, I was able to learn more about the leadership of children and youth and sharpen my confidence in witnessing to the unchurched and non-believers.

### **Strengths of Project**

Overall, I am satisfied with the project and what it has meant for the life of our children and youth ministry and church family. Because of this project, the children and

youth ministry has sparked a “flame” within the congregation, causing members to want to know and learn more about personal evangelism. Personal evangelism training had never been done at our church and the people wanted to learn how to defend their faith, reach other cultures, and reach out to their family and friends about the love of Christ. I was asked if I could do a second training session again this year for the entire congregation. The culmination of the project exposed numerous strengths about personal evangelism and Christians. The first strength observed was our willingness to address personal evangelism and social outreach. Within the African American church context, social outreach is held in high esteem and is often viewed as evangelism. However, this project shed light on the notion that outreach and personal evangelism are not the same. Our participants learned that personal evangelism and social outreach are distinguishable, yet inseparable. Promoting social and spiritual well-being are equally important and are interdependent aspects of the church’s mission. Meeting social needs opens doors to sharing the gospel, and spiritual nurturing is believed to enhance the outcomes of social outreach interventions.

Second, seeing the participants’ spiritual growth throughout the training was significant. Some of our participants only came on Sunday mornings and never engaged the church house throughout the week. However, their commitment to the training, adding to class discussions, and sharing their personal evangelism stories with one another created an inviting and unified environment. Those who came consistently participated developed a lasting bond with one another. Lastly, the major strength was seeing Christians get excited about learning how to spread the gospel to the lost. Spiritually caring for the lost people of society and seeing the need for discipleship brought about a personal change in the participants’ lives. One of the participants e-mailed her notes to her mother and father weekly to help them grow in evangelism. Experiencing growth allowed me to work harder at putting the lessons together each

week. Because of this training, a change has occurred in the participants. They have gone from being nonchalant about evangelism to being “on fire” about spreading the gospel to non-believers. I pray that each participant continues to have the boldness and zeal to spread the gospel and make disciples everywhere he or she goes (Matt 28:19-20).

### **Weaknesses of Project**

The project had weaknesses and limitations that I believed hindered some of the effectiveness of the training. The first weakness or limitation was timing. Participants often wanted to converse and ask more vital questions about personal evangelism, but time moved so quickly and, for this reason, I had to cut them off and resolve the issue in the next week’s training session or by e-mail. This affected the growth of some of the participants because when people are growing and learning they yearn for answers to deep rooted spiritual questions.

The second weakness was not being able to give the participants more of a physical connection to personally evangelize and do social outreach in the neighborhood and community. I believe hands-on training is the best type of training. Talking about personal evangelism during social outreach is quite different than actually engaging the homeless, the loss, and the unchurched. I wanted to give our participants more of an up-close-and-personal style of training.

The third weakness was the fifteen-week limitation. Fifteen weeks went quickly and the hour and half training each week often went over and then the church building was scheduled to close at a certain time. This affected the length and responses to questions. Although there were weaknesses with the project, I am confident that the participants were still able to grow spiritually.

### **Changes to Project**

This training had its ups and downs. In hindsight, I would have changed a few things to enhance the effectiveness of the project. Outside of the weaknesses, there were several changes that I believe would have enhanced the project's effectiveness.

First, I would have developed the surveys a little differently. I believe the surveys could have captured more evangelism and social outreach questions and given more solid feedback that was geared to where the participants were experiencing challenges. The survey was my foremost insight into how the participants thought and felt about aspects of Christianity and the church.

Second, I would have changed the meeting day from a week night to a weekend. Many of my participants commuted from other areas and had to pick up and drop off their children, which made their commute more challenging. Once some participants got to the training, they were tired and hungry and often had other things on their minds. I would have liked the participants to be more relaxed and have their minds free from travel and the challenges that come with the normal work day.

Finally, the third thing I would have changed was that I would have sent out, via e-mail, all the notes and handouts from the current training week for the following week's training session. This would have helped with the participant's questions, follow-up, and other administrative aspects of the class. I believe the participants would have appreciated having more accurate and solid notes to review and reflect upon. Reading, reviewing, and reflecting on something helps the individual grow and feel more connected to the material.

### **Theological Reflection**

The Bible is clear concerning the biblical mandate to be witnesses to all people (Matt 28:19-20). The command to evangelize reflects on the church's calling to live out and share the gospel of salvation in and through Jesus Christ. Churches must affirm and

fulfill their evangelistic vocation by illuminating the biblical mandate and promoting and implementing strategies for world evangelization. To evangelize means to proclaim the good news of the gospel of Christ. Jesus, in giving the Great Commission to the eleven disciples, says in Matthew 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you.” Imagine Jesus saying these words to Christians today. What would be their reaction? Their reaction should be like that of the eleven disciples. Christians today are under this same obligation to reach all nations and teach others. This project was life changing for the participants and myself. By the end of the training, personal evangelism was no longer viewed as a Christian’s act but viewed as a Christian’s duty.

But why did the disciples do this? The main reasons were that many had come to faith through Jesus’ discipleship (Matt 4:19), lived under his teachings (John 14:15-27), witnessed his miracles (Luke 8:22-25), witnessed his death (John 19:26), and were personal witnesses of his resurrection (Acts 4:33; 1 Cor 15:3-8).

In retrospect, what did this good news mean to the first century church and to the people with whom they shared? Undoubtedly, they knew the good news concerned the Messianic promises that God would bring salvation to his people. It was available to the gentile world, and the Messiah would be the sovereign king of all (Isa 49:1-13; Matt 1:21; Rom 3:29; Titus 2:11). Like the first century church, the participants of this training must continue to stand on the promises of the sacred Scriptures, reach across barriers, and present the gospel to anyone that desires to hear the good news. Sharing our faith with another person is indeed a scary thing to do. But the promise that that he would be with us (Matt 28:20; John 14:25) must motivate Christians to put their hand to the plow and not turn back (Luke 9:62).



## **Personal Reflection**

During the course of this project and matriculating through the Doctorate of Ministry program, I learned a lot about myself, about people, and the hand of God upon my life. Growing up in my teen years, I saw the glass of life half full and wanted very much to better myself. I never imagined, in a million years, that I would have traveled to three countries, finished several schools, and be receiving a graduate degree in ministry. Keeping my faith in God is something that I cherish because I have experienced discouragement, setbacks, and disappointments that interrupted so many of my plans. The people that I met along the way in this program served as voices of inspiration that could only have been from God.

This project taught me a lot about myself. I used to procrastinate, but the deadlines set by this program pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me to stay focused. At times, I thought the reading of numerous papers was exhausting, but I learned so much about church growth, personal evangelism, urban ministry, and cross cultural ministry that made the readings worthwhile. Because of the readings, I now read books outside of my comfort zone. This habit has sharpened my biblical worldview perspective.

Lastly, growing up in impoverished conditions and being reared in a single parent structure gave me a deep desire to help people. I always knew that I wanted to help people when I grew older, and now I have the opportunity to help nurture people both physically and spiritually. Helping people in need (social outreach) requires getting at the root of the problem through the process of spiritual conversion and discipleship. Real social change comes only as people personally experience spiritual change through Christ Jesus. Therefore, I believe the only way to genuinely transform society is by reaching one soul at a time with the life-changing message of the gospel (personal evangelism) and encouraging spiritual transformation, which remolds a person's lifestyle, character, and attitude (discipleship) in a supernatural way. I once was lost but now I am found;

therefore, I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (Rom 1:16).

### **Conclusion**

The Doctor of Ministry program has tremendously blessed me and the ministries under my guidance at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia. Through my journey in this program, I have met some people that I will never forget. I will forever remember my time spent at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as a time of growth, maturity, sacrifice, and faithful endurance.

## APPENDIX 1

### PRE- AND POST-SURVEY 1

#### Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is intended to measure your confidence level and your knowledge level relating to personal evangelism and outreach. This research is being conducted by Nathaniel Brooks for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer the questions before we begin training and you will answer the same questions after we complete the training. The data from both questionnaires will be compared to record the progression or regression of each participant. Any information that you provide will be kept *confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, shared, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study or obtain from answering any question at any time.*

#### Section I. Demographic Information

1. Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you Male or Female: (*Please Circle*) Male or Female
3. Age (*Please Circle*): 18-30      31-40      41-50      51-60      61+
4. What is your marital status? (*Please Circle*) Single Married Divorced
5. How many children do you have? (*Please Circle*) 0    1-2    3-4    5+

#### Section II. Confidence and Knowledge of Evangelism & Outreach

1. How many social outreach initiative have you ever done (inside or outside of church)? (*Circle your answer*) **1-5    5-10    15-20    20+**
2. How often have you shared your faith while doing social outreach?  
(*Circle your answer*) **Often    Sometimes    Most of the time    None    Don't Know**
3. Are you hesitant to share your faith for the fear of rejection?  
(*Circle your answer*) **Yes    No or    Don't Know**
4. Are social outreach and evangelism considered the same?  
(*Circle your answer*) **Yes    No or    Don't Know**

5. Is evangelism an option for Christians? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes or No**
6. Is social outreach an option for Christians? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes or No**
7. I am more comfortable with sharing my faith around other Christians  
(*Circle your answer*) **Yes or No**
8. Social outreach initiatives should be separate from evangelism. (Circle your answer) **Yes or No**
9. The church should focus more on a new building rather than evangelism and social outreach. (Circle your answer) **Yes or No**
10. Were you ever trained on how to personally evangelize while doing social outreach? (Circle your answer) **Yes or No**

### **Section III. Biblical and Theological Knowledge of Evangelism and Social Outreach**

**Directions:** Using the below scale, please answer the below comments to the best of your knowledge. Please place all answers on the line provided next to the corresponding number.

#### **Scale**

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<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. \_\_\_\_\_ All good people will go to Heaven.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel confident in sharing my testimony with strangers.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Outreach is more important than evangelism.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Evangelism is more important than outreach.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I am more confident in sharing my faith in a group rather than by alone.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ There is no such thing as Hell.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ There is no such thing as Heaven.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ As long as I help needy people, I am going to Heaven.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I am confident in striking up a conversation about my faith and beliefs.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ I rather let others hear about Jesus on their own.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ All religions lead to Jesus.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Some people sins are greater than others.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ All people should be baptized.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ I do not like talking to other cultures about Jesus Christ.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ All bad people will go to Hell.

APPENDIX 2  
PRE- AND POST-SURVEY 2

**Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is intended to measure your knowledge level about your churches involvement with personal evangelism, its community and social outreach. This research is being conducted by Nathaniel Brooks for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. The data from both questionnaires will be compared to record the progression or regression of each participant. Any information that you provide will be kept *confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, shared, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study or obtain from answering any question at any time.*

**Section I. Demographic Information (circle only one)**

6. Are you Male or Female: (*Please Circle*) Male or Female
7. Age (*Please Circle*): 18-30            31-40            41-50            51-60            61+
8. What is your marital status? (*Please Circle*) Single    Married    Divorced

Section II. (circle only one)

- 1. The idea and need for social outreach and evangelism ministry in this church come mostly (circle a *single* number that best answers the question):**

Neutral

From the pastoral leadership of the church    1            2            3    From the Congregation

- 2. This church's ministries to the community are (circle a *single* number that best answers the question):**

Neutral

Directed from pastoral leadership    1            2            3    Directed from Laity

- 3. Please indicate the single main reason you remain involved with Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. Please (mark ONE response only).**

A.  I grow spiritually at this church

- B.  I feel the presence of the Spirit in this church
- C.  The church reaches non-Christians with the gospel
- D.  I feel this church is under the leadership of Jesus
- E.  Opportunities to do ministry
- F.  Church evangelistic program

4. **Have you participated in any (social) community outreach ministry programs in the last 12 months?** 1  No 2  Yes

5. **Do you *routinely engage* in (social) community outreach ministries?**  
1  No 2  Yes

6. **For each of the following “reasons for doing social outreach ministry,” please circle a single number showing how important each reason is for your involvement in outreach ministry.**

**Scale**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not at all Important
A. Showing compassion to individuals in need	1	2	3	4	5
B. Helps me experience God in a deeper way	1	2	3	4	5
C. Bringing persons served by outreach ministries to the Christian faith	1	2	3	4	5
D. Bringing persons served by outreach into church by way of conversion.	1	2	3	4	5
E. Obeying a sense of call and direction from God	1	2	3	4	5
F. Doing what is expected by church leaders	1	2	3	4	5
G. I’m following the leadership of the Spirit	1	2	3	4	5
H. I feel called to do it as a Christian duty	1	2	3	4	5

7. **Check the SINGLE, most important reason you believe people do not spend time involved in Mount Pleasant’s evangelism and outreach ministries:**

- A.  They are too busy with work, family, and activities outside the church

- B.  No one has asked them to get involved
- C.  They don't think I'm gifted or called in this area
- D.  They was involved in the past and got burned out

**8. Please circle a *single* number from 1 to 5 according to how much you think each phrase describes *Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church*.**

**Scale**

	Strongly Disagree <b>1</b>	Disagree <b>2</b>	Uncertain <b>3</b>	Agree <b>4</b>	Strongly agree <b>5</b>		
<b>A.</b> Traditional Church			1	2	3	4	5
<b>B.</b> Contemporary Church			1	2	3	4	5
<b>C.</b> Refuge for members			1	2	3	4	5
<b>D.</b> Cares for people outside the church (outreach)			1	2	3	4	5
<b>E.</b> Live according to gospel principles.			1	2	3	4	5

**9. Please identify the priority you believe *Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church* places on each of the following aspects of ministry**

	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority
a. Outreach and ministry to the lost and un-church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Evangelism in the local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Diversity (age, ethnicity, income etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Encouraging members to participate in short-term missions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. MPBC Tries hard to live up to the gospel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## APPENDIX 3

### PRE- AND POST-PROJECT SURVEY 1 RESULTS

#### Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is intended to measure your confidence level and your knowledge level relating to personal evangelism and outreach. This research is being conducted by Nathaniel Brooks for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer the questions before we begin training and you will answer the same questions after we complete the training. The data from both questionnaires will be compared to record the progression or regression of each participant. Any information that you provide will be kept *confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, shared, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study or obtain from answering any question at any time.*

#### Section I. Demographic Information

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you Male or Female: *(Please Circle)*

Pre	Male	<b>40%</b>	Female	<b>60%</b>
Post		40%		60%

2. Age *(Please Circle)*:

Pre	18-3yrs	<b>13%</b>	31-40yrs	<b>47%</b>	41-50yrs	<b>33%</b>	51-60 <sup>+</sup> yrs	<b>7%</b>
Post		13%		47%		47%		7%

3. What is your marital status? *(Please Circle)*

Pre	Single	<b>33%</b>	Married	<b>60%</b>	Divorced	<b>7%</b>
Post		33%		60%		7%

4. How many children do you have? *(Please Circle)*

Pre	0	<b>33%</b>	1-2	<b>27%</b>	3-4	<b>40%</b>	5+	<b>0%</b>
Post		33%		27%		40%		0%

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## Section II. Confidence and Knowledge of Evangelism & Outreach

1. How many social outreach initiative have you ever done (inside or outside of church)? (*Circle your answer*) **1-5**    **5-10**    **15-20**    **20+**

Pre	1-5	<b>40%</b>	5-10	<b>20%</b>	15-20	<b>20%</b>	21+	<b>20%</b>
Post		40%		20%		20%		20%

2. How often have you shared your faith while doing social outreach? (*Circle your answer*) **Often**    **Sometimes**    **Most of the time**    **None**

Pre	Often	<b>13%</b>	Sometimes	<b>60%</b>	Most of the time	<b>20%</b>	None	<b>7%</b>
Post		20%		33%		46%		0%

3. Are you hesitant to share your faith for the fear of rejection? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes**    **No**    **or**    **Don't Know**

Pre	Yes	<b>60%</b>	No	<b>33%</b>	Don't Know	<b>7%</b>
Post		13%		80%		7%

4. Are social outreach and evangelism considered the same? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes**    **No**    **or**    **Don't Know**

Pre	Yes	<b>13%</b>	No	<b>73%</b>	Don't Know	<b>13%</b>
Post		0%		100%		0%

5. Is evangelism an option for Christians? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes**    **or**    **No**

Pre	Yes	<b>33%</b>	No	<b>67%</b>
Post		0%		100%

6. Is social outreach an option for Christians? (*Circle your answer*) **Yes**    **or**    **No**

Pre	Yes	<b>47%</b>	No	<b>53%</b>
Post		33%		67%

7. I am more comfortable with sharing my faith around other Christians (*Circle your answer*) **Yes**    **or**    **No**

Pre	Yes	<b>60%</b>	No	<b>40%</b>
-----	-----	------------	----	------------

Post	27%	73%
------	-----	-----

8. Social outreach initiatives should be separate from evangelism.  
(Circle your answer) **Yes or No**

Pre	Yes	33%	No	67%
Post		27%		73%

9. The church should focus more on a new building rather than evangelism and social outreach. (Circle your answer) **Yes or No**

Pre	Yes	0%	No	100%
Post		0%		100%

10. Were you ever trained on how to personally evangelize while doing social outreach? (Circle your answer) **Yes or No**

Pre	Yes	33%	No	67%
Post		0%		100%

### Section III. Biblical and Theological Knowledge of Evangelism and Social Outreach

**Directions:** Using the below scale, please answer the below comments to the best of your knowledge. Please place all answers on the line provided next to the corresponding number.

#### Scale

	<b>1</b> Strongly Disagree	<b>2</b> Disagree	<b>3</b> Uncertain	<b>4</b> Agree	<b>5</b> Strongly Agree			
			Pre/Post	SD	D	U	A	SA
<b>1. All good people will go to Heaven.</b>			<b>Pre</b>	53%	27%	20%	0%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	60%	27%	13%	0%	0%
<b>2. I feel confident in sharing my testimony with strangers.</b>			<b>Pre</b>	7%	13%	20%	33%	27%
			<b>Post</b>	7%	0%	0%	60%	33%
<b>3. Outreach is more important than evangelism.</b>			<b>Pre</b>	20%	60%	13%	7%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	13%	87%	0%	0%	0%

<b>4. Evangelism is more important than outreach.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	13%	53%	20%	13%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	0%	0%	0%	53%	47%
<b>5. I am more confident in sharing my faith in a group rather than by alone.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	0%	60%	27%	13%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	13%	60%	27%	0%	0%
<b>6. There is no such thing as Hell.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	67%	30%	7%	7%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	53%	47%	0%	0%	0%
<b>7. There is no such thing as Heaven.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	80%	13%	7%	0%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	87%	13%	0%	0%	0%
<b>8. As long as I help needy people, I am going to Heaven.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	67%	13%	7%	0%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
<b>9. I am confident in striking up a conversation about my faith and beliefs.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	0%	0%	7%	60%	33%
	<b>Post</b>	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
<b>10. I rather let others hear about Jesus on their own.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
<b>11. All religions lead to Jesus.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	60%	33%	7%	0%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
<b>12. Some people sins are greater than others.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	73%	7%	13%	7%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	73%	7%	13%	0%	0%
<b>13. All people should be baptized.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	0%	0%	27%	47%	27%
	<b>Post</b>	0%	0%	20%	47%	33%
<b>14. I do not like talking to other cultures about Jesus Christ.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	13%	73%	7%	7%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	47%	47%	7%	0%	0%

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<b>15. All bad people will go to Hell.</b>	<b>Pre</b>	20%	47%	33%	0%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	27%	53%	20%	0%	0%

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## APPENDIX 4

### PRE- AND POST-SURVEY RESULTS 2

#### Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is intended to measure your knowledge level about your churches involvement with personal evangelism, its community and social outreach. This research is being conducted by Nathaniel Brooks for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. The data from both questionnaires will be compared to record the progression or regression of each participant. Any information that you provide will be kept *confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, shared, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study or obtain from answering any question at any time.*

#### Section I. Demographic Information

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you Male or Female: (*Please Circle*)

Pre	Male	<b>40%</b>	Female	<b>60%</b>
Post		40%		60%

2. Age (*Please Circle*):

Pre	18-3yrs	<b>13%</b>	31-40yrs	<b>47%</b>	41-50yrs	<b>33%</b>	51-60 <sup>+</sup> yrs	<b>7%</b>
Post		13%		47%		47%		7%

3. What is your marital status? (*Please Circle*)

Pre	Single	<b>33%</b>	Married	<b>60%</b>	Divorced	<b>7%</b>
Post		33%		60%		7%

4. How many children do you have? (*Please Circle*)

Pre	0	<b>33%</b>	1-2	<b>27%</b>	3-4	<b>40%</b>	5+	<b>0%</b>
Post		33%		27%		40%		0%

**Section II.** (circle only one choice)

1. **The idea and need for social outreach and personal evangelism ministry in Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church come mostly (circle a *single* number that best answers the question):**

		Neutral				
		1	2	3		
		<u>Directed from pastoral leadership</u>				<u>From the Laity</u>
Pre	Pastoral Leadership	7%	Neutral	67%	Laity	27%
Post		0%		20%		80%

2. **This church's ministries to the community are (circle a *single* number that best answers the question):**

		Neutral				
		1	2	3		
		<u>Directed from pastoral leadership</u>				<u>Directed from Laity</u>
Pre	Pastoral Leadership	7%	Neutral	60%	Laity	33%
Post		20%		20%		60%

3. **Please indicate the single main reason you remain involved in ministry with Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church (MPBC). Please (circle ONE response only).**

		Pre/Post	
<b>A.</b>	I grow spiritually at the MPBC.	Pre	40%
		Post	40%
<b>B.</b>	I feel the presence of the Spirit MPBC.	Pre	0%
		Post	0%
<b>C.</b>	MPBC reaches non-Christians with the gospel.	Pre	0%
		Post	12%
<b>D.</b>	I feel MPBC is under the leadership of Christ.	Pre	47%
		Post	47%
<b>E.</b>	Opportunities to do ministry.	Pre	0%

Post 0%

4. **Have you participated in any (social) community outreach ministry programs in the last 12 months?** 1  No 2  Yes

Pre	Yes	20%	No	80%
Post		20%		10%

5. **Do you routinely engage in (social) community outreach ministries?**  
1  No 2  Yes

Pre	Yes	47%	No	53%
Post		47%		53%

6. **For each of the following “reasons for doing SOCIAL outreach ministry,” please circle a single number showing how important each reason is for your involvement in SOCIAL outreach ministry.**

**Scale**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>						
	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not at all	Important					
						Pre/Post	VI	I	SI	NI	NAI
<b>A.</b> Showing compassion to individuals in need.						Pre	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
						Post	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
<b>B.</b> Helps me experience God in a deeper way.						Pre	40%	47%	13%	0%	0%
						Post	47%	53%	0%	0%	0%
<b>C.</b> Bringing persons served by social outreach ministry to the Christian Faith.						Pre	47%	27%	20%	7%	0%
						Post	53%	27%	20%	0%	0%
<b>D.</b> Bringing persons served by social outreach ministry into church as potential members.						Pre	33%	27%	27%	20%	0%
						Post	47%	33%	20%	0%	0%



<b>E.</b> Obeying a sense of call or direction from God.	Pre	60%	27%	7%	7%	0%
	Post	67%	27%	7%	0%	0%
<b>F.</b> Doing what is expected by church leaders.	Pre	0%	40%	27%	13%	7%
	Post	0%	60%	33%	27%	0%
<b>G.</b> I'm following the leadership of the Spirit.	Pre	53%	33%	7%	7%	0%
	Post	60%	40%	20%	0%	0%
<b>H.</b> I feel called to do it as a Christian duty.	Pre	33%	40%	13%	13%	0%
	Post	47%	40%	13%	0%	0%

**7. Check the SINGLE, most important reason you believe people do not spend time involved in Mount Pleasant's evangelism and outreach ministries**

	Pre/Post	
<b>A.</b> They are too busy, with career, family, and other activities outside the church.	Pre	93%
	Post	93%
<b>B.</b> No one has asked them to get involved.	Pre	7%
	Post	7%
<b>C.</b> They don't think they are gifted or called in that ministry.	Pre	0%
	Post	0%
<b>D.</b> They experienced burnout in the past.	Pre	0%
	Post	0%

**8. Please circle a single number from 1 to 5 according to how much you think each phrase describes Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church (MPBC) .**

**Scale**

Strongly	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly
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	Disagree 1	2	3	4	agree 5			
			Pre/Post	SD	D	U	A	SA
A. MPBC is traditional			<b>Pre</b>	13%	20%	53%	7%	7%
			<b>Post</b>	13%	20%	20%	33%	13%
B. MPBC is contemporary			<b>Pre</b>	13%	7%	73%	7%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	13%	20%	67%	0%	0%
C. MPBC is evangelistic			<b>Pre</b>	27%	33%	60%	0%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	407%	40%	20%	0%	0%
D. MPBC cares for people outside church.			<b>Pre</b>	53%	27%	20%	0%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	73%	13%	13%	0%	0%
E. MPBC tries hard to live up to the gospel.			<b>Pre</b>	53%	33%	20%	0%	0%
			<b>Post</b>	60%	33%	7%	0%	0%

**9. Please identify the priority you believe Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church places on each of the following aspects of ministry**

Scale

	High priority 1	Medium priority 2	Low priority 3				
				Pre/Post	HP	MP	LP
A. Social outreach ministry to people who do not attend church.				<b>Pre</b>	47%	40%	13%
				<b>Post</b>	33%	20%	47%
B. Personal evangelism in the community				<b>Pre</b>	53%	20%	27%
				<b>Post</b>	47%	27%	27%
C. Diversity (Age, ethnicity etc.)				<b>Pre</b>	60%	20%	20%

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	<b>Post</b>	67%	27%	7%
D. Encouraging members to participate in short-term missions.	<b>Pre</b>	60%	27%	7%
	<b>Post</b>	60%	27%	7%
E. MPBC tries hard to live up to the gospel.	<b>Pre</b>	53%	47%	0%
	<b>Post</b>	67%	33%	0%

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## APPENDIX 5

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT

#### Methods of Evangelism

⇒ **Inductive Approach (Particular to General)**

- It is an approach that moves from the particular to the general. In the process of relating to a given prospect, some specific need surfaces, for example, a lack of peace or fulfillment. The witness shows the relevance of the gospel to that particular need. The next step would be to show that Christ alone is the source of these things, and one must know him by personal faith to enjoy them.

⇒ **Deductive Approach (General to Particular)**

- This approach offers to all alike a general summary of the gospel and invites the prospect to pray and accept Christ. This approach allows the witness to share their faith in a more reticent way.

⇒ **Relational Webs**

- Every person has relationships with family, close personal friends, and other associates through the work place, the school, clubs, and other groups and organizations. These are now seen to be the most natural persons to receive our witness.

⇒ **Witnessing Ministries**

- Day Care, literacy classes, tutoring, employment assistance, emergency shelter, medical care, counseling services, food distribution, clothes closet, serve as examples.

⇒ **Small Groups**

- Bible Studies, Home Bible Study, Neighborhood Bible Study.

⇒ **Media & Electronics**

- Text messaging, Facebook, e-mail, Skype, etc.

#### Tools of Evangelism

⇒ **A Testimony---Biblical and Faith based**

- A testimony is an account of what someone experiences or sees. (John 14:1, John 4: 29,39)
- Three aspects of Testimony: Pre-Christian existence, Focus on Christ and how he forgives, Show the Difference between the old life and new life.

⇒ **Memorized Scripture**

- It is best to let the Bible tell some of the good news in its own words.

- When some of our presentation is directly from the Bible, it adds to the authority of the effort.
- ⇒ **A Booklet and Bible**
  - First, they aid in overcoming the greatest enemy, fear. A part of that fear is not knowing what to say.
  - Be careful not to use obsessive tracts and booklets, as to present an a canned or rehearsed gospel.
- ⇒ **Illustrations (Relational analogies, stories etc.)**
  - Every witness ought to have an arsenal of simple illustrations that help people understand the meaning of faith. If one can draw them from personal experience, they can be especially powerful, and this is less danger of relating something the prospect has heard before.

### **Biblical Bases for Personal Evangelism**

- ⇒ **It's rooted in the Scriptures as a whole and demonstrated by the Spirit and model of Jesus, the apostles, and the early church.**
  - John 1:1
- ⇒ **Pre Crucifixion Directive**
  - One directive is found near the beginning of Jesus' ministry. He addressed two fisherman and said, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17).
  - Matthew's account of the sending of the twelve contains a series of powerful imperatives: "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:6); preach...saying the Kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7); heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons (Matt. 10:8).
- ⇒ **Post Resurrection Commission**
  - The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).
- ⇒ **Centrality (Centered) in Jesus**
  - The Model of Jesus (Nicodemus, Samaritan Women, Zaccheaus)
  - As a personal evangelist, he has no peer. He is the supreme teacher and example. His model is the pattern and design every Christian must strive to imitate.
- ⇒ **Apostolic Model (Peter, John, & Paul)**
  - The ministry of those closet to Jesus understood their evangelistic responsibility, and how present-day believers must understand.
  - Pentecost: Peters great sermon (Acts 2:4-8, 11)
  - Paul wrote a great amount of the New Testament.

### **Theological Basis for Personal Evangelism**

- ⇒ **First, the Scriptures represent Christ to be the only God Given means of salvation.**
  - John 3:18 (A matter of Life), John 14:6 (Way, Truth, and Life)
- ⇒ **Second, evangelism is the human activity God uses to bring about transforming experience from which all else that is Christian flows.**
  - John 13:1 (Repent or perish)

- ⇒ **Third, transformed disciple's persons represent the best hope of a just society.**
  - John 4:29 (come see a man...) Ephesians 2:15 (New Humanity)
- ⇒ **Fourth, evangelism is the opportunities to both do and respond to evangelism are limited---life is uncertain.**
  - Psalm 23, John 3:16
- ⇒ **Fifth, evangelism is healthiest and it grows out of our relationship with Christ.**
  - Philippians 2:5 (mindset of Christ); 1 Corinthians 11:1 (As I follow the example of Christ)

## APPENDIX 6

### COMMON BARRIERS TO EVANGELISM

#### 1. READINESS

**A. Spiritual readiness = a Christian who doesn't feel spiritually ready to witness.**

- No mention of readiness in Bible; rather, witness builds faith (Isaiah 43:10)
- "I don't have the gift of evangelism" – but you are a human being who should care about the spiritual future of your friends
- "There must be someone else who is better equipped to share with my friend." Not true. If you're the person's friend, you are the most equipped person. God has specifically and strategically placed you for your friend's good and your own good

**B. Tough questions = a Christian who doesn't feel ready to answer the tough questions others may ask.**

- Of course someone will ask you a question you can't answer but what has that got to do with being a witness? Similarly in college no one drops out of school after missing a question on a test.
- If you don't know what to say, say what you know.
- Do the same thing that Jesus did
- The purpose of apologetics is to help remove genuine barriers so you can talk about the person of Jesus. Avoid getting into discussions ("debates") that don't lead to Jesus and the gospel.

**C. Mistake = a Christian who doesn't feel ready, and they are afraid they will make a mistake that will turn the person off from pursuing Jesus.**

- Only God saves. As a result, there is nothing you can say or do that will send a person to hell or heaven.
- Many do not evangelize because they do not want to make a mistake.

#### 2. TIMING

**A. Waiting = a Christian who is waiting for perfect time. Meanwhile, the Christian is building trust with the other person.**

- When was the last time you had the thought to witness to someone (that is, mention God to someone)? It's easy to come up with 5 reasons why it's not the "perfect time". \
- Saying that you are waiting for the perfect time means that you are waiting for the time that is easy and convenient for me.
- Satan and your thoughts say wait, but God says GO!

**B. Starting conversations; transitions = a Christian who is wondering how to start (or make transitions to) spiritual conversations. What is the right timing?**

- Take a secular example of trying to tell someone about your favorite store.
- Feel free to ask "What's your spiritual background?" just like you would ask about a person's hobbies, job, major in college, etc.

**C. Nothing will happen = a Christian who thinks that regardless of time, nothing is going to change in another's life.**

- Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant.
- You don't know who was praying for or talking to this person before you met them.
- By sharing, I might not see the fruit, but I am giving them a positive interaction. They can associate a cool interaction with God and that is a good thing. Later, God will use it when someone else meets that person.
- Why not assume good things in evangelism?
- My Core Assumption = People want to know about God.

**D. No Urgency = a Christian who is ok being comfortable and has no feeling of urgency to share the gospel. The time is now!**

- Evangelism Procrastination: You want to, but you don't get to it – ever!
- It's not just about what I want.
- Satan and your thoughts say wait, but God says go! People are on a one way street to Hell.
- The lost don't save the lost.

### **3. LIFESTYLE**

- Did Jesus only live his life or was he teaching as well? What would we know about Jesus if he only lived his life?
- Because if I don't introduce Jesus to people, then I don't believe Jesus is an important person.
- Its deceiving to always hide the biggest part of your life.
- Often I hear people say that they need to spend time praying for a friend before any action steps are taken.
- The bottom line is that we pray for open doors + boldness because we are living out evangelism



#### 4. SHAME

**A. Ashamed = a Christian is ashamed or embarrassed of speaking about Jesus.**

- We are not used to talking about it. It's similar to a boy who has just started dating. He is very embarrassed to discuss his girlfriend. In contrast, people who are married are not embarrassed to discuss the existence of their spouse.
- We think what we have is not cool or it's not affirming us.

**B. Too Strong = a Christian is afraid she'll come across as too forward, pushy, or judgmental.**

- Live out your life as a Christian AND interpret your lifestyle by sharing about Jesus. We must interpret what we are doing or else they will interpret it how they want. (Always be genuine in your approach)

**C. Rejection – what if they don't love me in return?**

- We don't feel rejected when we tell people about a movie and they are not interested. But, we take too much personal investment in witnessing rather than feeling like a messenger.
- Everybody is somebody to Christ.

## APPENDIX 7

### SOCIAL OUTREACH STRATEGY

#### **Outreach is the umbrella that covers evangelism, global missions, and discipleship.**

1. Social Outreach marketing does not replace evangelism, but it can enhance the effectiveness of evangelism. Many churches have deferred to marketing as their evangelism strategy. This transfers the responsibility of the Great Commission from your people's mouths to your church's mailers. Instead, marketing should energize both corporate and personal evangelism.
2. Evangelism is about relationships. The best evangelism takes place when people are on a journey with Christians in a local church. Outreach advertising helps bring more people into relationship with the church so they can hear the claims of Christ in the context of believers living out their faith.
3. The interested unchurched are not offended by outreach through marketing if it is honest, authentic, and excellent. It is those who are interested that are the most fruitful for outreach - not those who are hostile.
4. Outreach advertising does take into account the felt needs of people. However, it must lead them to their real and deepest needs if it is to be biblically appropriate.
5. Outreach advertising itself does not need to present the plan of salvation in order to assist in bringing people to faith in Christ. However, the strategy must ultimately include a presentation of the gospel and incorporation into a local church.
6. Marketing a dying or dysfunctional church is dishonest unless you say it is dying and dysfunctional or if the problem is fixed.
7. Outreach advertising must be integrated with a broader outreach strategy. Mobilizing a church with advertising without empowering them with a passion and tools for evangelism will leave everyone frustrated. Advertising must be integrated with a broader outreach strategy.
8. Outreach advertising is a tool (like a parking lot, chairs, gymnasium, etc.) that is useful for sharing Christ. Evangelism is a commandment that can couple with advertising for effective outreach.

9. Your church needs a comprehensive outreach plan to use every available means to tell every accessible person God's redemptive story.

## APPENDIX 8

### OUTREACH MODELS

#### **Seeker Sensitive Model**

The seeker model is a very attractive method of church evangelism that uses modern forms of communication like media, drama, and popular music to reach out to people who are not yet believers. In addition, the sermons tend to be short, sweet, easy for a non-Christian to understand and super relevant to where people live. It's very non-confrontational and is a very inviting method of doing church outreach.

#### **Missional Model**

The missional movement seeks to have churches that are solid in the word of God, but communicate it through contextualizing it to the culture around them. Those who use this model often point to the Apostle Paul's sermon in Athens as their Biblical basis. In that sermon Paul used the 'unknown god' of the city as a bridge to preach the Gospel. He used a commonly understood theme in Athens to explain the Gospel.

#### **Servant Evangelism Model**

The tag line for the Acts of Kindness movement is taken from Mother Theresa who said, "small things done with great love will change the world." The whole idea is that God is a God of kindness. And the Bible says that it's the kindness of God that leads us to repentance.

A servant evangelism project might be to take a group of people from church and hand out cans of Coke or cold bottled water to random people in the community. To go along with the token of kindness would be a card with the churches information on it. But here's the catch, there can't be any strings attached. That means no trying to witness to people as you're giving it out. If they ask, sure why not. But it's a very non-confrontational method.

#### **Social Gospel Model**

The social gospel model seeks to serve the felt needs of a community to do church outreach. This model believes that we are to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and give a cup of cold water to the needy just like Jesus did as a way to preach the Gospel.

## **Charismatic Model**

The charismatic model, also may be known as prophetic evangelism, relies on the supernatural power of God to bring people to Christ.

## **Discipleship Model**

The discipleship model is in stark contrast to the seeker sensitive church. The discipleship-centered church tends to attract older, more mature Christians looking for depth and growth in their faith. Accordingly, the sermons tend to be longer, and focus more on exegetical and expository preaching that is full of rich doctrine. That's a fancy way of saying that they really dig into what the Bible says.

## **Social Media Model**

Marketing and outreach strategies for church growth definitely need to implement the social media networks. Living in the U.S., we often use social media to reach domestic customers. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn were popular here first, and that sticks with us. But as social networking expands worldwide, the size of the audience we could be reaching has multiplied.

### **Common Questions for Social Outreach Initiatives**

#### **Mission Field Questions:**

- ✓ Can you describe the "ideal" person you are trying to minister or reach out to?
- ✓ Describe the demographics within a twenty minutes' drive of your church?
- ✓ Is your "ideal" person a part of the demographics in your area?
- ✓ Are these the people your vision/purpose is trying to reach?
- ✓ Are these the type of people you are already reaching?
- ✓ Does your church meet the needs of people outside your church?
- ✓ Are there new ministries that would meet needs of your community that you have qualified people to operate?

### **Common Types of Social Outreach Initiatives**

- ➡ Homeless Ministry
- ➡ Clothing Closet
- ➡ Soup Kitchens
- ➡ Angel Tree
- ➡ Sponsor a newly Release Prisoner
- ➡ Substance Abuse Programs
- ➡ Tutoring
- ➡ Craft Donation

- Prom Dress Exchange
- Christmas Tree Delivery
- Water Delivery
- Turkey Delivery
- Missions Meals
- Paint the Town Clean
- Reading Program
- Service Day
- Neighborhood Cleanup
- Raking & Begging Leafs

APPENDIX 9

FOREIGN TO FAMILIAR

<b>"Hot-Climate Cultures" [Rural]</b>	<b>"Cold-Climate Cultures" [Urban]</b>
<b>Area(s):</b> Southern United States, Asia, The Pacific Islands, South America ( <i>except much of urban Argentina</i> ), Africa, The Mediterranean Countries ( <i>except Jewish population of Israel</i> ), The Middle East, and most of the rest of World.	<b>Area (s):</b> Canada, The Northern States of U.S., Northern Europe ( <i>Switzerland and above</i> ) Israel ( <i>Jewish population that came primarily from Europe</i> ), White Population of New Zealand and South Africa, Australia, Southern Brazil, Argentina.
<b>Relationship and feeling oriented:</b> communication seeks a feel-good atmosphere over exactness, people are more important than efficiency and time.	<b>Task and logic oriented:</b> communication must provide accurate information, respecting efficiency and time shows respect for people
<b>Indirect communication:</b> It's all about being friendly, "yes" and "no" are not always literal, direct questions or statements may be rude or embarrassing, avoid embarrassing people.	<b>Direct communication:</b> short and direct questions, "yes" and "no" are taken literally, and honest, polite words are usually not taken personally.
<b>Group oriented culture:</b> value group identity (belonging), taking initiative in a group is largely determined by roles, an individual's behavior reflects on the entire group.	<b>Individualistic culture:</b> value own identity, individuals speak for themselves, taking initiative in a group is encouraged, an individual's behavior reflects on themselves, does not represent the group.
<b>Inclusive:</b> being left alone is undesirable; individuals welcome to join conversations or group activities without asking, possessions freely shared, rude not to include everyone in conversations or activities.	<b>Private:</b> value personal time and space, ask permission to borrow things or interrupt conversations, respect personal possessions, acceptable not to include everyone in invitations or plans.
<b>Hospitality is unprompted:</b> invitations are not required and preparation is not expected, host takes care of all needs and expenses of the guest, host may expect a gift.	<b>Hospitality is planned:</b> host usually requires advance notice and makes special preparations, guests pay for many of their own expenses such as transportation.

<p><b>Low Context Societies:</b> Nothing Matters, who you know matters but not as much, a casual atmosphere of dress, manners, and rules limited, address people by given names.</p>	<p><b>High Context Societies:</b> Everything Matters, who you know is more important than what you know, Power Distance oriented, better to overdress than under dress, use manners and respect rules, give attention to appropriate greetings.</p>
<p><b>Event oriented:</b> spontaneous and flexible, moderately unstructured, value experiencing the moment over saving time, less emphasis on the clock, flexible, chatting is part of an event.</p>	<p><b>Time oriented:</b> structured, make plans and schedules, time efficiently, expect events such as meals or meetings to begin at the actual time announced, chat before or after events.</p>



## APPENDIX 10

### PERSONAL EVANGELISM BIBLE VERSES

**Luke 19:10**

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

**John 3:3**

In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

**John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that he gave his One and Only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**John 10:10**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

**Acts 1:8**

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

**Acts 2:38**

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

**Acts 4:12**

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

**Romans 3:23**

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

**Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 10:9-10**

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God

raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

**Romans 10:13**

For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

**I John 5:11-12**

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

APPENDIX 11  
EVANGELISM REPORT

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**I. CONTEXT**

- A. Person(s) with whom you shared: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. This outreach opportunity came as a result of:
- an appointment (explain): \_\_\_\_\_
  - a referral (explain): \_\_\_\_\_
  - a "way of life" situation (explain): \_\_\_\_\_
  - talking with individuals "at random"
  - other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**II. INTERACTION**

- A. What did you learn about this person's spiritual condition?
- B. What key issues &/or questions surfaced during your conversation?
- D. Which of the following statements best describes your witnessing encounter with this person?
- I gave a complete/thorough presentation of the gospel.
  - We had a Christ-centered religious discussion, but I did not present the gospel.
  - We did not discuss religion or Christ.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

A. Did you specifically ask the person if he/she were willing to receive Christ? What was his/her response?

D. What plans did you make for follow-up?

### **IV. SELF-EVALUATION**

A. What did you do well?

C. What would you do differently?

## APPENDIX 12

### POST-EVANGELISM QUESTIONS

1. How did you feel about sharing your faith?
2. What were your feelings as you evangelized
3. Where you ready to share your faith within the community with non-believers?
4. Did you feel comfortable about evangelizing a multicultural environment?
5. What was one need that you observed while walking the neighborhood?
6. Would you be willing to evangelize this neighborhood again?
7. Were the people receptive to your tracks, prayers and sharing information about Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia?

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## ABSTRACT

### INTEGRATING PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL OUTREACH TRAINING AT MT. PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH IN HERNDON, VIRGINIA

Nathaniel T. Brooks, D.Min.  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012  
Faculty Supervisor: T. Vaughn Walker

Chapter 1 highlights the ministry context at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Herndon, Virginia. In explaining the context of ministry, this chapter focuses on the history of the church, as well as, the current environment and context. Chapter 1 includes a description of the purpose, goals and rationale for the project.

Chapter 2 establishes the biblical and theological foundation for integrating personal evangelism and social outreach training by examining in detail Jesus' acts of personal evangelism. First, four separate texts from God's Word are discussed in order to demonstrate the biblical necessity to personally evangelize.

Chapter 3 focuses on the theoretical outside sources that pertain to the concept of personal evangelism and social outreach. To achieve the goal, this chapter contains content that focuses on various methodologies, techniques, to sharing one's faith with in an urban context. It lays the groundwork for some key perspectives in community outreach, Christian community development. This chapter centers on the interaction between personal evangelism, social outreach, the urban church, and its community.

Chapter 4 depicts the project's set up and fifteen-week process. By outlining the project in detail, this chapter allows someone to duplicate what has been done at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia. This chapter shows the transition from biblical and theological to practical implementation.

Chapter 5 describes in detail the evaluation of the project. The evaluation is a summation of the surveys that were given and other credible feedback that added to the effectiveness of the project. Chapter 5 addresses the strengths, weakness, and changes of the goals set forth at the beginning of the project and examine whether or not the participants has developed through the process.

## VITA

Nathaniel T. Brooks

### PERSONAL

Born: June 21, 1979, Baltimore, Maryland  
Parents: Leonard N. Brooks and Shirlevia L. Dorsey

### EDUCATION

Diploma, Lake Clifton Eastern High School, Baltimore, Maryland, 1997  
B.A. English, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Virginia, 2001  
M.Div., Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union  
University

### MINISTERIAL

Children's Pastor, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia, 2008-2011  
Youth Pastor, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Herndon, Virginia, 2012-