

Friendship Evangelism

The Role of Relationships In Winsome Witnessing

"Those who have been *most successful* in soul-winning were men and women who did not pride themselves on their ability, but who in humility and faith *sought to help* those about them. *Jesus did this very work. He came close to those whom He desired to reach.*" Gospel Workers, p. 194

"There is need of *coming close to the people* by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in *personal ministry*, *greater results* would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled ... *Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.*" Ministry of Healing, p. 143, 144

"While He ministered to the poor, Jesus *studied* also to find ways of reaching the rich. He *sought the acquaintance* of the wealthy and cultured Pharisee, the Jewish nobleman, and Roman ruler. He *accepted* their invitations, *attended* their feasts, made Himself *familiar* with their interests and occupations, *that he might gain access to their hearts*, and reveal to them the imperishable riches." Ministry of Healing, p. 24

"Go to your neighbors one by one, and come close to them till their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. *Sympathize* with them, *pray* for them, *watch* for opportunities to *do them good*, and as you can, gather a few together and *open the Word* of God to their darkened minds. Keep watching, as he who must render an account for the souls of men, and make the most of the privileges that God gives you of laboring with Him in His moral vineyard." Review & Herald, March 13, 1888

"If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be *one hundred conversions* to the truth where now there is *only one*." Testimonies Vol. 9, p. 189

CHRIST'S METHOD ALONE:

"*Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'*" MH p.143

There are many ways to do outreach to the lost, but there's only one way that brings true success. It is the way that Christ reached people. Notice Christ's method for reaching individual hearts:

1. Mingled with men
2. Desired their good
3. Showed sympathy for their problems & situations
4. Ministered to their needs
5. Thus winning their confidence
6. THEN, He called them to follow Him.

Note: There is much more to soul winning than merely giving doctrinal Bible studies. SOUL-WINNING IS A SCIENCE TO BE MASTERED. It is about relationships, friendships, meeting needs, and winning confidence to be able to point them to Christ so that He can save them.

Winning Their Hearts –

“Jesus ... reached the hearts of people by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them ... In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are. They will seldom seek us of their own accord.” *Desire of Ages*, p. 151-152

Note: Waiting for people to walk through the church doors will never fulfill the Divine Commission. We must seek them out in their homes, work places, and wherever else we may come in daily contact with people. They need us to go to them.

“There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.” *Ministry of Healing*, p. 143

Jesus Meets Every Need

All through the ministry of Christ, we see Him involved in people's lives. Sometimes He was preaching and teaching. **Most of the time, He ministered one on one.**

- **Christ's method reaches out to the whole person:**
 - Socially
 - Spiritually
 - Emotionally
 - Mentally
 - Physically

- **Jesus met the needs of the people.** He was always interested in the people around Him. He looked to see what they were seeking, what were their longings, what were their needs. Throughout the book of John you see Jesus demonstrating His immense care for people by meeting their needs.
 - **In John 2 – Jesus met a SOCIAL need.** At the wedding feast at Cana, the host ran out of wine. Jesus turned six stone jars of water into refreshing new wine. He alleviated the host's social embarrassment.
 - **In John 3 – Jesus met a SPIRITUAL need.** Nicodemus, a Pharisee, asked for a meeting in the dead of night. Jesus showed him exactly what he was looking for and how to get it. He said, "You must be born again." He satisfied Nicodemus' soul, which was longing for salvation.
 - **In John 4 – Jesus met an EMOTIONAL need.** The woman at the well had an emotional need. This woman had gone through six husbands. Jesus offered her emotional support, treating her with kindness.
 - **In John 5 – Jesus met a PHYSICAL need.** A man had lain by the pool of Bethesda for 38 years. Jesus said, "Do you want to be made whole? Then He healed him."

**CHRIST'S METHODS ALONE WILL
GIVE TRUE SUCCESS**

If we follow Jesus' example, we will have success!

**Watch the people around you for their felt needs. They
may not always know what their need is. Pray for
discernment to know their true needs and reach them
through that need.**

The Lord's Methods Are to be Followed-

*"In every city that is entered, a solid foundation is to be laid for permanent work. **The Lord's methods are to be followed.** By doing house-to-house work, by giving Bible readings in families, the worker may gain access to many who are seeking for truth. By opening the Scriptures, by prayer, by exercising faith, he is to teach the people the way of the Lord." Testimonies Vol. 7, p. 38*

Notice Christ's methods for the work:

1. House to house work (Most of Jesus' work was one on one)
2. Giving Bible readings (studies)
3. Opening the scriptures
4. Praying for the people
5. Faith in what God would do
6. Teaching the people the *way of the LORD ... not our own way!* God has His methods of soul-winning that work! We are not to do things our own way! Remember, Christ's method alone will bring success.

Note: We do not develop friendships with people for the purpose of sharing the gospel with them. We develop friendships because we care for them, as an expression of God's love that is operating through us. We do it because it's a way of life for us, a lifestyle of service and giving. We do it because Christ is living in us and working through us. We do it because we live for others, not for ourselves. Yet, true friendship and true love will compel us to share the gospel. It will make a difference - having compassion on people and rescuing them from the fire. It is only as we share the truth of God's love and man's binding obligation to obey and surrender to the authority of God's word that we can develop friendships that will last for eternity.

Notice, again, how Christ's method works:

"Go to your neighbors one by one, and come close to them till their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. Sympathize with them, pray with them, watch for opportunities to do them good, and as you can, gather a few together and open the Word of God to their darkened minds." Christian Service, p. 116

We come close to people **UNTIL** their hearts are warmed, confidence is won, and trust is gained. **THEN**, we share God's word. This is the method of Christ.

It's important to remember Christ's method in ALL our relationships. Our one purpose in relating to others should be to work unselfishly for their salvation. This includes times when we relate to our boss,

our fellow church members, leaders, co-workers, our spouse, or our children. In order to be effective and have true success in sharing God's word with them, we must first ask: "Do I have their confidence and trust?" If not, seek to gain their trust. Be trustworthy. Show love. Come close. Watch for the time when their heart is soft. Then share God's Word.

Circle of Influence –

Every individual has a circle of influence or network of friends that they influence. Often we long to reach out to those closest to us but we never really get around to it. There are a number of reasons why this takes place. Often it is because we don't know how to turn their conversations in such a way that spiritual interest is awakened.

"John (the Baptist) directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Savior. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathaniel. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends, and neighbors." Desire of Ages, p. 141

Here are some simple approaches that have been used in the past to awaken spiritual interest within your circle of influence. Your goal is to personalize these canvases to meet the needs of your circle of influence.

**Be Prepared - Carry some of these
"Witnessing Tools"
with you at all times**

Watch for divine appointments. Be prepared and God will amaze you with those whom He brings in contact with you.

- Steps to Christ
- The Passion of Christ
- DVD Final Events
- Free Bible Study Cards (It's best if you can fill this out and send in)
- Bible Universe Cards

Get their name, phone number, and address so you can follow up with the contact. Always have your name and phone number or e-mail on whatever you give out so they can contact you for more information. Follow up on the person in a visit with a loaf of bread or some other gift. Share God's Word through Bible Studies after their confidence has been won.

Starting Bible Studies with Friends!

Are there friends within your circle of influence that God is calling you to reach? Is there someone that you recently had a spiritual conversation with? Someone who is struggling or discouraged? Take a moment to pray over these questions and write down five friends that God is impressing upon your heart!

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

Truly, God has already given you these five Divine appointments! Praise God for the opportunity to be an ambassador for Him.

There are many ways that you can turn these friendships into Bible studies and, Lord willing, see these friends make eternal decisions for Christ! Below are a few examples:

- “I have just come across some really amazing Bible study guides that you might be interested in. They cover Bible prophecy and other interesting topics. I’ve wanted to do them myself, but was hoping to find someone to share them with as well. I’d like to give you the first lesson, and see if it looks interesting to you.” (*Show them the studies if you have them on hand. Set a time to meet with them once a week to go over the lessons together.*)
- “We were recently talking about your concern about the future and stress at work. I remember going through a similar situation and feeling so scared about what might happen! But then a friend shared something with me that gave me so much comfort and hope! Can I share it with you, too?” (Proceed to share an encouraging Bible passage and connect them with the life of Christ.)

It’s that simple! Pray for them. Offer these lessons. Watch God work!

CREATIVE MINISTRIES

God has a plan for you to share the gospel. He has gifted you for ministry. Let Him speak and direct you to the ministry that He has for you. These ministries will produce Bible studies for you and other members of the church

throughout the year. Remember our goal is at least one soul per year. Below is a list of methods of sowing “seed”.

Final Events DVDs

Order the DVDs (sharing edition) and a display box. Place it in a busy location like a restaurant or other public place that you frequent and know the manager. Check on your box once a week. You will be surprised how fast they will disappear!

You can also place an ad in the local paper for free Final Events DVDs. People are always looking for a good bargain. You can't beat free!

Website Link

If you have a website, place a link to www.BibleUniverse.com.

Newspaper Advertisement for DVD Studies

Advertise in your local free paper for free Bible studies. Sign them up for either in-home studies or a DVD drop off. Purchase a set or more of Most Amazing Prophecies DVDs and study guides. Drop off a DVD and the two study guides that go with it. Return when the student is finished and deliver the next DVD and studies.

Widows Ministries

The leader of this ministry should be a widow.

- Contact those who have lost their husbands, giving sympathy and support.
- Assist them as they work through the grieving process.
- Invite them to join a small group for widows, which will include Bible studies.

New Baby Ministry

When visitors or friends of church members have a new baby, give a special gift to both mom and baby!

- Visit the new mother and give the gift.
- Give a homemade gift such as a blanket or cap and Bible storybooks.
- Follow up and keep in touch with the mother. Make a friend.
- Invite them to bring their newborn to the “cradle roll” Sabbath School to have fellowship with other new mothers and eventually other church programs such as Vacation Bible School (VBS).

Business

If you have your own business, do the following:

- Insert literature or Bible verses in outgoing mail.

- Invite both your clients and employees to bridge events.
- Have a lunch hour Bible study with any employees who are interested.

Literature Distribution

Distribute small books and pamphlets.

- Leave them with your tip at a restaurant
- Put them in the envelope when you pay bills
- Keep it in your pocket and give it to whomever you meet (at toll booths, cleaners, etc.)
- Put your phone number or e-mail so they can contact you.

GLOW tracts

Purchase a pack of 100 from your local Adventist Book Center (ABC) or <http://glowonline.org/> and hand out to friends, neighbors, and daily contacts. The cost is very inexpensive and the results are incredible! Work with your church to plan fun, creative outreach with these tracts - spread them like the leaves of autumn!

Bible Universe Signs

The website www.BibleUniverse.com has online Storacles of Prophecy Bible Studies and Amazing Facts Study Guides. Below are some ideas how you can direct people to the website.

Place a sign on your church property advertising www.BibleUniverse.com or contract to have a billboard put up in a prominent spot where it will be a witness to many people who pass by. Have a magnetic sign made and place it on your vehicle to advertise free online Bible studies. Amazing Facts sells window decals at www.AFBookstore.com

Flea Market Ministry/Fair Booths

Flea markets are a great way to share God's Word. Rent a weekly booth at a local flea market. Give away magazines, books, and DVDs such as the Final Events DVD, Amazing Health Facts magazine, Steps to Christ, and the Amazing Facts Study Guides. Be consistent. Once they start reading the books you give away they will be back for more!

1. Locate a local flea market, preferably indoors, with a corner booth for double the table space. It is good to be near the entrance, bathroom, food concessions, or wherever you will get the greatest volume of traffic possible. Secure a month at a time, if possible (for return visits). If the booth is in a locked building, books will not need to be moved each week.
2. Place books on a table in stacks of three or four in a row next to the aisle. Place small signs on the table that say FREE BOOKS. Also place FREE BOOKS signs on walls and/or posts. Use a tablecloth to hide boxes underneath. Bring at least four chairs to sit on.

3. An added attraction to the book is to have a DVD continuously playing a Final Events DVD or Doug Batchelor sermons (i.e. Most Amazing Prophecies). Have enrollment cards and the first Bible study lesson with a sign saying: FREE AMAZING FACTS BIBLE COURSE.
4. It is essential to pray before, during, and after the books are given out. All human effort, not combined with divine power, will ultimately fail. Develop a prayer list and use it.
5. Avoid controversy; let the books and the spirit teach truth.
6. Count books as they are given out. Expect to distribute 500 to 1,000 books per month. Give monthly reports to the church to excite and involve the other church members!

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Nursing home ministries
- GED programs
- English classes
- Free guitar or instrument class
- Advertise everything in your church to the community
- Bakers for men (bake gift loaves of bread for visitors)
- Community projects
- Yearly Christmas program
- Advertise Free Bible Studies in your paper
- Host a community Forks over Knives or Final Events Showing

For many, evangelism is a scary word. "How can I start a conversation with a stranger?" they wonder. "How do I befriend them? And ultimately, how can I lead the conversation to Christ?" The following acronym, FORT, has helped thousands overcome their fears and build lasting friendships for Christ!

F-O-R-T:

F – Family

The first thing that you can most easily talk to people about is their families or themselves. Someone has said that the sweetest word in the human language is the name of the person to which you are talking. Talk to the person about himself and his family and he will know that you are interested to learn about various interests that they may have. Get them to tell you where they were born, how many children they have and where they live. This will relax and divert their minds from the fear of you and your "mission". They will feel that you are truly interested in them – and you should be!

O – Occupation

Typically, if you ask a man about himself, they will start talking about his job or hobbies. These are the things that often hold their strongest interest. Get the man to tell you about his occupation or what he does for recreation and he will warm up to you telling you about the things that he would not have thought of telling you a few minutes before. You will learn a great deal about people by just listening to what they will tell you and also by what you do not say.

R – Religion

It is helpful to know the person's religious background so that we can help him in his religious growth. You may ask, "Did you grow up in a Christian family?" or "Do you find much time to attend a church in the area?" This approach lets the person start where they are most comfortable and it will give you an opportunity to ask other short questions that will give you a religious profile of the person. This is very valuable information as you discover if he/she is a church member, attends church, studies the Bible, etc. This will help you adapt your approach to fit their spiritual needs.

T – Testimony

You have the opportunity to build a bridge by which you can now lead the person to begin thinking about the message of salvation that you have come to share with them. You will not want to preach, but you can witness to your own relationship with Jesus Christ. **This is not a time to share the Sabbath or how you became an Adventist. It is a time to share how you came to know CHRIST. Simply, you are to share what Christ has done for you, how He has delivered you from sin, how He is your friend, etc.** Try to fit your testimony to some felt need that the person with whom you have been visiting has expressed. Show them, by sharing your own experience in Christ, how He has been the answer to a similar problem that you have had in your life. This will help the person want to know the same Savior who has helped you, and it will create a feeling of kinship with you as he or she identifies with your problem and the solution you found in Jesus.

Note: When you ask a person a question, try to phrase it in such a way that it cannot be answered by a "yes" or a "no." This is called asking open-ended questions. It makes for a much more enjoyable conversation. Remember to share personal information about yourself as it relates to each question. Notice the example below.

F	Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you have any children?• Are you originally from this area?• In what area were you raised?
----------	---------------	--

O	Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of work do you do? • How long have you worked there? • What type of work did you do? (retired or unemployed) • How do you like your job?
R	Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you find much time to attend church? • Have you been a <i>Methodist</i> all your life? • Does your whole family attend together?
T	Testimony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My life before I accepted Christ was... • How I became a Christian... • My life since becoming a Christian... • I have recently been sharing with my friends some interesting Bible lessons that have meant much to me. May I share them with you? <p>(NOTE: Focus on the gospel and not how you became an Adventist.)</p>

Intercessory Prayer:

"It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask." Great Controversy, p. 525

- Is intercessory prayer biblical?
- Why is intercessory prayer powerful?
- If God already knows what we need, why pray?
- Does it make a difference if you pray for your contacts by name?
- When does God begin to hear your prayers?

Is Intercessory Prayer Biblical?

The apostle Paul was a believer in intercessory prayer. While in a Roman prison, Paul had an overwhelming desire to pray for the believers in Asia-minor.

"We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." Colossians 1:3

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Colossians 1:9

What was Paul praying for?

- That they would be filled with knowledge of God's will
- That the church would have wisdom and spiritual understanding

"That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Colossians 1:10

What was Paul praying for?

- That you might walk worthy of the Lord
- Being fruitful in every good work
- Increasing in the knowledge of God

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy." Philippians 1:3, 4

Why is Intercessory Prayer Powerful?

Intercessory prayer is powerful because in the Great Controversy there are certain ground rules that both sides are following. **When you pray, you invite God to work in a way that He would not have been able to work if you had not prayed.**

"Ministering angels are waiting about the throne to instantly obey the mandate of Jesus Christ to answer every prayer offered in earnest, living faith." 2 Selected Messages, p. 377

If God Already Knows What We Need, Why Pray?

*"Moreover as for me, **God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you:** but I will teach you the good and the right way." 1 Samuel 12:23*

- **IT IS A SIN NOT TO PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF CHRIST!!!**

"O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor!" Job 16:21

Intercessory prayer does four things for the individual who is doing the praying.

1. Gives you a love for souls

2. It strengthens your walk with God
3. You will be in tune with how the Holy Spirit is working in their life.
4. You will be in tune with how the Holy Spirit is working in your life.

Does It Make a Difference If You Pray for Your Contacts by Name?

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke 22:31, 32

Jesus not only believed in intercessory prayer, but He prayed for Simon by name. In intercessory prayer it is far better to pray for individuals then for large groups of people. People are won as individuals so why not pray for them as individuals.

"Why do not believers feel a deeper, more earnest concern for those who are out of Christ? Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another? Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 21

Praying with People:

"Love one another, help one another, pray with each other, and for each other." 3 Manuscript Releases, 52

"Pray one for another." James 5:16

1. Prayer will win hearts:

"By visiting the people, talking, praying, sympathizing with them, you will win hearts." Christian Service, p. 118

2. Look for opportunities to pray with people:

- a. When they have a perplexity.
- b. In sickness.
- c. At the end of a pleasant visit.

3. Ask if you can pray with them (not for them). Ask, "Could we have a prayer together?" Don't say, "Can I pray for you."

4. When praying with people remember:

- a. Keep it short and simple.
- b. Mention their name.

- c. Include yourself in the prayer; don't pray FOR them as if you were above them. (Example: "Jesus, help us to be faithful" ... not "Jesus, keep Bill faithful.")
- d. Paint word pictures to inspire them (talk of heaven, the joy of eternity, and God's love).
- e. Pray in faith, thanking God for the answer. Use this as a guide: ABC – Ask, Believe, and Claim.
- f. Pray with thankfulness. Praise God for something.
- g. Mention the needs, joys and perplexities of the one you are praying with.

What do Seventh-day Adventists believe?

Have you ever been asked this question? How should we respond? Do we immediately list all 28 fundamental beliefs of the SDA Church?

"Here is a lesson for all our ministers, colporteurs, and missionary workers. When you meet those, who, like Nathanael, are prejudiced against the truth, do not urge your peculiar views too strongly. Talk with them at first of subjects upon which you can agree. Bow with them in prayer, and in humble faith present your petitions at the throne of grace. Both you and they will be brought into a closer connection with heaven, prejudice will be weakened, and it will be easier to reach the heart."

Evangelism, p. 446

One of the most effective and unifying responses is Adventism's Four C's:

1. **CHRIST** - Jesus is the divine Son of God. He is God in the form of man. He is the Eternal Self-Existent One and is NOT a created being. He is fully God and man. Jesus is the creator of all things. *Hebrews 1:1-3. Colossians 1:16-18.*
2. **CROSS** - Jesus Christ, the Son of God, paid the penalty for man's sin through His suffering and death on the Cross of Calvary. *2 Corinthians 5:19.* Only Jesus, the Sinless One, could pay our sin-debt. "The wages of sin is death..." *Romans 6:23.* By believing on Him and accepting the grace of His shed blood, we receive the gift of eternal life..."Not of works, lest any man should boast." *Ephesians 2:9.*
3. **COMMANDMENTS** - **Because** we love Jesus for His sacrificial death, we want to obey Him as He commands in *John 14:15.* We are not saved by our works. But, because we are saved, we choose to keep His commandments as the guide for successful living. **(This next part is to be shared only if the person inquires about the Sabbath:** "This is the reason we go to church on Saturday, the 7th day of the week

... the Bible Sabbath. *Exodus 20:8-11*. The Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday long after the New Testament record.

- Do not get into the topic of the Sabbath with them. Do not reveal the Anti-Christ, or how the Sabbath was changed by the papal church. If they continue to ask questions, reply to them, "I have a wonderful set of free Bible study lessons that would be much more beneficial than what I could share with you in a few short minutes. If you are interested, I could give you the first one. They don't take long to do, and I would be happy to study them with you! Would you like to try them out?"
4. **COMING AGAIN** - One of the greatest promises in the Bible is that Jesus will return to this earth very soon! Bible Prophecy reveals that very fact based on the events that we see happening in our world today. We call ourselves Adventists because we are anticipating the advent, or return, of Jesus when He will take His people back to heaven with Him.

Use these exciting tools to make eternal friendships for Christ today!