

Dialog Evangelism

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EVANGELISM STUDY COURSE

The following is a weekly study course to be used in conjunction with the 16-week training sessions. Weekly worksheets will follow the A, B, or C series, depending on the series being used. Remove all worksheets from the back of the book.

<u>CLASS MATERIAL</u>	<u>STUDY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>MEMORY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>DUE DATE</u>
1. Chapter V, pg.	Read Chapter I Worksheet 5 A,B, or C	Outline page 41 Rom. 3:24 Rom. 6:23	_____
2. Recite Outline Discuss Assign- ment-Review Memory Work- Chapter VI-pg.	Read Chapter II Worksheets 6 A, B, or C Review Outline	Eph. 2:8-9 Rom. 3:20	_____
3. Write Outline Discuss Assignment Review Memory Work-Chapter VII pg.	Read Chapter III Worksheet 7, A,B, or C	Eph. 2:1 Rom. 3:10	_____
4. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Review Memory Work-Chapter VIII, pg.	Read Chapter IV Worksheet 8 A,B, or C	Rom. 7:7 Is. 59:2	_____
5. Write Outline Discuss Assignment Review Memory Work-chapter IX, pg.	Reread Chapter V Worksheet 9, A, B, or C	John 1:1 John 20:28	_____
6. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Review memory Work-Chapter X pg.	Reread Chapter VI Worksheet 10, A, B, or C	Rom. 5:19 John 1:29	_____
7. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory-weeks 6 and 3 Chapter XI pg.	Reread Chapter VII Worksheet 11, A, B, or C	I John 2:2 Gal. 4:4-5	_____
8. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 7 and 2 Chapter XII, pg.	Reread Chapter VIII Worksheet 12, A, B, or C	II Cor. 5:18-19 I John 2:1-2	_____

9. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 9 and 5, Chapter XIII, pg.	Reread Chapter IX Worksheet 13, A, B, or C	James 2:19 Mark 3:11	_____
10. Write Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 9 and 5 Chapter XIV, pg.	Reread Chapter X Worksheets 14, A, B, or C	Acts 16:31 Rom. 5:1	_____
11. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 10 and 6 Chapter XV, pg.	Reread Chapter XI Worksheets 15, A, B, or C	Gal. 3:24 Rom. 3:28	_____
12. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 11 and 7 Chapter XVI, pg. and XVII, pg.	Reread Chapter XII Worksheets 16, A, B, or C	I Cor. 12:3 John 6:29	_____
13. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 12 and 8-Chapter I, page	Reread Chapter XIII, Worksheets 1, A, B, or C	Rom. 10:17 I Cor. 1:21	_____
14. Write Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 13 and 9, Chapter II, pg.	Reread Chapter XIV Worksheets 2, A, B, or C	Titus 3:5 Matt. 26:28	_____
15. Recite Outline Discuss Assignment Memory weeks 14 and 10, Chapter IV, pg.	Reread Chapter XV Worksheets 3, A, B, or C	Matt. 10:32 Luke 12:8-9	_____
16. Discuss Assignment _____	Review	Review	
General Review			

Chapter IV
Worksheets 4
A, B, or C

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to begin an evangelism program in a parish. No one way is best. Most ways are probably no better, nor worse, than others.

How We Look To
Others Billy Graham

This study begins with a look at what some people have said about us Missouri Synod Lutherans. Since this book is being written primarily with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod constituency in mind, we need to take a look at what others are seeing in us and saying about us. For instance, it has been repeatedly said (although this author has neither seen it in print nor heard it said himself), that Billy Graham is credited with having said that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is a sleeping giant. He is to have said that if the LCMS ever really became evangelistic in nature, the world would see another miracle. He credits LCMS with doctrinal excellence, with great interest in Christian education and so forth, but with very little real interest in the area of outreach evangelism.

Ted Raedeke

Dr. Ted Raedeke, at one time the Secretary of Evangelism for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, left that position to assume leadership of the mass US Evangelism effort, Key 73. In an article he wrote for The Lutheran Layman, paper of the Lutheran Laymen's League, he commended LCMS for being a preaching church, a teaching church, a singing church. He closed his article by exclaiming, "Would to God it would also become an evangelistic church."

Eldon Weisheit

Rev. Eldon Weisheit, formerly associate editor of The Lutheran Witness, official magazine of the LCMS, did some research on the history of evangelism in the LCMS. He discovered that the word "evangelism" does not appear in the official writings of the church body until the 1950's. Somehow the church waded through great programs of evangelism in the late 40's like "The Call of the Cross" and "Each One Reach One," without mention of the word in its official documents. Very interesting!

Mathematical
Illustration

Let one more illustration suffice: a mathematical one! Remember now, we are not speaking theologically, but just mathematically for the purpose of illustration. It has been said, that if every Christian in the world went out to win just one other person for the Lord any morning, and if in the afternoon of that same day, every Christian in the world (including the new ones) would go out and win just one more; and if the next morning every Christian would go out and win just one other, by the afternoon of that same day, there would not be enough nonchristians left in the world for each one to reach one!

Of course, the Holy Spirit does not work according to the laws of mathematics. he COULD do marvelous things, even above those laws, but experience seems to indicate that conversions and disciplings come much

slower than the above suggested rate. Looking at LCMS statistics, for instance, we are reminded that it takes between 50 and 60 of us one year to “win one for the Lord.” That figure is arrived at by suggesting a communicant membership of a little over 2,000,000 and 25,000 adult confirmations and 10,000 reinstatements per year. The figures are rounded off, but the mathematical point is made. Additionally, many of those confirmed or reinstated may well have been Christian BEFORE joining us, so their affiliation is more kingdom realignment than kingdom growth.

Backdoor Losses

It needs to be pointed out, that in addition to the rather small numbers of accessions to the LCMS, we do suffer heavy “backdoor losses” annually. Without being specific, it is safe to say that about 50,000 are annually removed from the rosters of the 6,000 congregations of the Synod. It is not the purpose of this workbook to look into all the whys and wherefores of the backdoor losses, or to suggest ways of stemming the tide. Suffice it to say at this point that the Board for Evangelism of the LCMS is actively looking into the matter, and will be presenting concepts to the church. On the other hand, no effort at presenting a system of sharing the Gospel will be complete without a sensitivity to the losses we are sustaining and the desire that something be done about that matter too. There seems to be little advantage in bringing people into the front door of the church, only to see them in larger numbers, find their way out the back.

New Hope

Our personal joy is the discovery that many people in our church, and particularly lay people are finding a new thrill in sharing their faith, and a new desire to win the lost for the Lord’s kingdom. More and more pastors are searching for ways to equip their laity to do that job, as they seek to equip the saints for their ministry. (Eph. 4)

A Way

It is the purpose of this workbook to present A way in which people can be equipped to share the Good News of salvation in Christ Jesus. It is important to note that there are many ways to prepare people for that task. One way may suit some better than another way. The technique to be shared in this method is not for all. it may work for some, and not for others. But we do suggest that we stop waiting around for some perfect method that can be prescribed for all. There is no one way! Whatever method we use should be used wisely and well - recognizing that the method is not an end in itself, but only a means to the end of sharing the Good News.

Work The Plan

It needs to be said, though, that the method to be presented here needs to be followed closely in order to be effective. Our experience in the church has been that too many times people take a little of this and a little of that, deleting here and there, short-cutting this and that - and coming up with little or nothing. The axiom which suggests coming up with the best of all worlds hardly fits evangelism techniques. Dr. D. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida suggests that if you short-cut, delete or change, you can expect to fail in short order. many times people who

have tried to come up with a hybrid, experience difficulty and then exclaim, “see, I told you it wouldn’t work!!!!”

With that in mind, this author evangelically suggests that the basics of this technique need to be followed very carefully. While there is all the room in the world for individuality and initiative, the rudiments of the technique must be followed. For example, you must learn to listen to people, you must begin with them where they are spiritually, perhaps even emotionally, mentally or physically; you must be concerned with a sharing of the message in a meaningful way; you have to be willing to be trained, and learn to present the Gospel through practice; you must prepare to follow up on a person so that he is not left unattended in his spiritual infancy, etc. etc. Stick to the basics. Do not take short-cuts.

Evangelism Is A
People Ministry

It should be said that this is not the last word in evangelism training. Please God, it is not OUR last word, for the work of evangelism is a people ministry which is always in a state of change, development and refinement. Just when you think you might have everything in order, a new development appears on the horizon, a new religion crops up, a new experience calls for the very best sharing from experience. Indeed, a new experience may put a whole new light on your understanding of the Gospel and your sharing of it. Development is a key concept in this workbook. Grow, grow, grow - is the challenge to the author, and to the user! In fact, we personally live by a little motto that goes something like this: “I hope I learn something the day I die.” You see, there is so much to learn - and when we are dealing with people, it’s learn, learn, learn.

Dialog Evangelism

The method presented in this workbook is called Dialog Evangelism because it seeks to share the Gospel in dialog with persons whom one meets or visits. The method is not “proclaiming” or “declaiming” in a one way conversation. It is not meant to be a “preachment,” but rather a somewhat directed conversation which grows out of the Christian’s desire to share the Good News with someone at that point in life and understanding which best suits the situation. The Christian wants to chat about ordinary things with the person; he listens to the conversation that develops, then, motivated by his desire to share the Gospel, and at the spirit’s direction he dialogs the Good News. How do you learn to dialog the Gospel? The purpose of this book is to give a back drop for such learning. Mind you, reading the workbook won’t do it. You don’t learn to do evangelism in a classroom. Actual sharing of the faith is learned out in the world of God’s people. The classroom, and the workbook provide the opportunity and present the tool - but the doing and the ability to do comes through on-the-job training. Accordingly, this workbook will provide background and study material, with the understanding that along with study, calling in homes of members, friends, and contacts of the church will be an integral part of the learning experience.

Personal Experience

The shaping of the author's stance in evangelism, and particularly dialog evangelism, stems from his own experience, limited somewhat, perhaps, but exciting. Over the past several years it has been our privilege to share this technique with over 1,200 students of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in an intensified weekend Dialog Evangelism Clinic; we have had over two hundred clinics for pastors and lay persons around the United States and Canada; we have conducted clinics in Australia and New Zealand, and of course, our own calling and sharing experiences are multiple, in the home, on the plane, in the hospital - wherever God has led us.

Growth and Development

It is only fair to end this chapter by acknowledging the real point of beginning and the development of our position. In 1969 we accepted a position with the Missouri District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as Director of Stewardship and Evangelism. Very candidly, we would admit that the urgency of the call was to accept the challenges offered by the stewardship ministry. Evangelism - well, we didn't know very much about that, and had not really done that much with it, although God had blessed us significantly in 21 years of parish ministry - but we felt we could rise to the level of everybody else's incompetency - so we accepted the position. Soon the Lord led us to Coral Ridge, Dr. D. James Kennedy and Evangelism Explosion. I am indebted to that experience, and two other experiences of clinic training at Coral Ridge for a basic understanding of what we wanted to share in Dialog Evangelism. As a result of our last Coral Ridge experience, we became a certified EE trainer. We pray that we have not stood still in our own understanding and method of presenting and sharing, but that we have moved onward and upward. We are truly indebted then, under the Spirit, to our experiences at Coral Ridge, to the many thousands of people who have permitted us to share the concepts and development of Dialog Evangelism, to the Missouri District for their encouragement in the developing and sharing the technique beyond the borders of the state, and especially to our Lord Jesus Christ for His renewed and renewing mercy which is so exciting that we need to share Him as best we can with as many people as we can.

The presentation will be rather informal, reflecting my own style of ministry and personality. Receive it as such, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is presented in binder form, so that you can add and delete pages, with wide margins so you can take notes, with study sheets so that you can work at home, etc. etc.

May the Lord bless you abundantly as you experience the joy of learning how to share your faith over a period of 16 weeks, in study, on-the-job training, reading, praying, sharing, growing, loving, living. To God be the Glory!

CHAPTER II

TWO TRACK EVANGELISM - THE EVANGELIST

Some years ago we made an astonishing discovery. We rediscovered one of those things that we knew all along but that had somehow escaped my understanding. We knew it - and we didn't know it. Through teaching and study of the Scripture we came to realize that not everybody is an evangelist. Somehow or other, that had not dawned on me before my awakening. That does not say that every Christian cannot "do" evangelism, but it does recognize the fact that not every Christian is a divinely gifted "evangelist."

Definition

That prompts us to admit that we have had problems with semantics in our church communication. Words mean different things to different people - the SAME words! The word "salvation," for instance, can mean something entirely different to a Baptist than to a Lutheran person. "Being saved" means one thing to one group, something entirely different to the other. So with the word "evangelism." Really, it has two senses. One is the broad, generic sense of the word which is all encompassing, covering the broad spectrum of sharing the Good News. It reflects the fact that we are messengers of that which is Good, and for the Christian, that which is good is the fact that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, the Savior of the world. In that broad sense, we are all evangelists, sharers in one way or another, of that Good News. One definition of evangelism is found in the Lausanne Covenant, a position paper developed by the World Congress on Evangelization at Lausanne, Switzerland in 1975. It says -

"To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose it to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world."

There is another sense of the word, one that refers more to the sharing of the Word in a persuasive way so that men may be moved by the Spirit, through the Word to proclaim Christ as their personal Savior. The Living Bible paraphrases the thought in Eph. 4:11 thus: "Some of us have been given

special ability as apostles; to others he has given the gift of being able to preach well; some have special ability in winning people to Christ, helping them to trust him as their Savior; still others have a gift for caring for God's people as a shepherd does his sheep, leading and teaching them in the ways of God." While it is not the purpose of this workbook to go into a deep exegetical presentation, it is commonly accepted that the Lord gave to the Church, some who would be gifted in being able to share the Word persuasively, so that people might be brought to confession of faith. That's the very nature of the Good News. It is not just good news, any good news, but it's the Good News unto salvation. Rom. 1:16

Everybody A
Witness

While not everybody is an evangelist in the narrow sense of the term, everybody is a witness - Acts 1:8. There is no dodging the issue, no argument, no choice. When a person becomes a believer by faith in Christ Jesus, that person IS a witness. Whether he is a good witness or a bad one is not at issue here. The point is, he is a witness. Every Christian is. To understand the simple truth that all are witnesses, some are evangelists, was indeed enlightening to us. It helped us understand ourselves better; it helped us understand the position of so many other people better; it helped us understand why some people found it so very hard to get into "evangelism programs;" it helped us understand why the very word "evangelism" is abrasive to some - and it helped us the better to reach both evangelists and witnesses. This workbook is dedicated primarily to the teaching of A method of Track II evangelism, to help in the training of those who have either been set apart by God as sharers for persuasion, or who are able to develop the expertise to do the same. We talk about those who have the gift of being an evangelist, or who are able to exercise the role of an evangelist. Paul said to Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist." (II Tim. 4:5)

It might be stated here that many in the work of evangelism in the church may be doing a creditable job, simply by mastering certain skills and techniques. Without the gift, but with a desire to share, they learn how - much like the preacher who does not have all the natural skills or the gift, but who, in face of the need to be in the pulpit every Sunday, masters the skills, and does a good job. Or the teacher, who does not have the natural gift, but who masters the craft in expert fashion. The writer does not believe he possesses the gift of evangelism, but rather works at developing sufficient skills to accept the opportunities for sharing that God gives.

The 10%

Donald McGavran, father of the Church Growth Movement, C. Peter Wagner, co-author and worker with McGavran and associated with Fuller Theological Seminary and its School of Missiology, D. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and founder of Evangelism Explosion, and others, say that at best from 10 to 15% of membership within a given congregation will either have the gift of evangelism or will be able to learn to evangelize by exercising the role.

Once a person has discovered that he/she has the gift of evangelism or the ability to do the work of evangelizing, that person will seek out the best possible training to do the job effectively. That means learning, studying, training, practicing. Who ever heard of a person excelling in the field of music, without much training and practice? It's the same in the field of athletics. To what tortures a person will subject himself in training, to excel in performance! Training in evangelism, "should be approached with no less determination."

With that thought in mind, this workbook, approaches Track II evangelism from the following six concerns.

1) Ongoing. Many, if not most of the evangelism programs in the church have been periodic, calendared to begin on a certain date, end on another. Track II, while it may involve certain periods of training and organized activity, recognizes the evangelist for his ongoing ministry. The evangelist is in the business of sharing the Gospel whenever and wherever the Holy Spirit gives opportunity. His sharing is not limited to or bound by organized effort. Rather it reflects his earnest desire to win souls for Christ by the continued sharing of the Gospel.

2) In-depth. Proper exercise of Track II evangelism calls for more than a shallow, fly-by-night, get-em-while-you-can attitude or approach. It calls for some real acceptance of a person and his freedom and right as an individual; of applying the Gospel to that person's need; of recognizing that there is a long road in most instances between decision and discipleship; that spiritual growth may be a long and arduous task; that some real sharing of Law and Gospel must be done, not in shallow "hit and run" style, but in a loving, caring way that recognizes a person's need, and seeks to fill it. In-depth evangelism will seek to recognize a person for what he is worth; will seek to recognize where he is at, and will seek to bring that person to a confession relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and incorporate that person into the Body.

3) Track II evangelism does not thrive on generalities. It's not a "you all do it" kind of approach, but rather a very personalized approach to evangelism by which the person who is gifted is sought out, enlisted, equipped and released! From our point of view, the pastor will again play a very important role in the selection of those who have been gifted for the ministry. Bear in mind, however, that experience has shown that there are at least 10% of the people in a given parish who have that gift, so the pastor should joyfully search out such and seek to equip them for His ministry.

4) Track II evangelism is caught, not taught. Kennedy and others rightly say that you cannot really learn to do evangelism in a classroom, any more than you can learn to fly an airplane in a classroom. There you learn the rudiments, you learn to know and recognize tools; you learn to know what tools are supposed to do - but up in the air, it all becomes REAL. So with evangelism.

Need For Training

Track II Principles

In-depth

Personal

Field Training

It's out in the field where it is caught. Experience has shown that people who have had course after course in evangelism do very little sharing of their faith. Learning about it in the classroom and doing it in the day-to-day situations in life are two entirely different matters. That is why field work or on-the-job training is a part of the philosophy behind this work and a necessary part in any learning technique.

5) Demonstration - no one can really tell you how to start talking to an airline attendant, or to your neighbor next door, or to your spouse. Track II evangelists will seek to learn how to evangelize by watching others, by going out on calls with them into their community, calling on members of the parish, friends and contacts. As they accompany those who have had earlier training, go about the business of sharing the Gospel, they see how it is done, and as they progress in their own understanding and expertise, little by little they find themselves able to evangelize on their own - like a child taking first steps, wobbly at first, but little by little gaining strength and know-how until he finds that he can walk alone. They have been shown how it is done in actual life situations.

6) Training. Training is such an important aspect of this concept that some things bear further attention here, although we have alluded to these matters above. Of course, there are those who say that you have no training needs. "All you have to do is tell people about Jesus - and anybody can do that!" In the first place, not everybody can do that. Additionally, wrong approaches, wrong presentations can really do more harm than good. Let me illustrate. Suppose a person is suffering from deep pangs of guilt, being torn up on the inside with frustrations and pains, knowing what he should be doing, but not being able to do it and becoming more guilt ridden with each passing day or thought. To say to such a person, "You really ought to do so and so" - is only confirming his position and will do no more than heap still more guilt on an already bowed head. Or, how do you think our daughter got to play the piano? By telling her to do it? By loading her with guilt by saying, "Look we bought a piano, now use it, or all that money will be wasted?" It took teaching, learning, training. So with Track II evangelism. Let none lull you into a felling of false security. When Satan is out there ahead of you on an evangelism experience, you will need all the training you can get, to win in the name of Jesus. In battle, all too many skirmishes have been lost by poorly trained troops. In the battle against Satan, there is little difference. While the BIG battle has been won at Calvary, the struggle for each individual soul is still a fiercely raging battleground that calls for the best in strategy. Training IS essential.

So you may not be an evangelist! You may not have that gift, nor may you be able to master the techniques of sharing for persuasion. DON'T FEEL GUILTY. God has not gifted all with the same gifts. An evangelism ministry may not be yours. God has a place for you in ministry. Find it.

Demonstration

Training

Free of Guilt

Searching For

Spiritual Gifts

Before you give up too quickly, however, you might consider the “E” method suggested by Wagner in Your Church Can Grow, page 74. Explore the possibilities; see what things there are to be done; what avenues of service are open to you. Experiment in various fields of endeavor until you find the one which seems best suited to your gifts and talents. Examine your feelings to discover what gives satisfaction. Evaluate your performance to ascertain whether you are really making a contribution to the ministry and finally, Expect confirmation from people. If people never say you are doing a good job, maybe you aren’t.

When you have done all of these things, you may well have discovered that doing the work of an evangelist is or is not your ministry. Be that as it may, you still are a witness, but more of that in the next chapter.

The Problem of the 9.5

Wouldn’t it be great if every member of each parish in the LCMS who is part of that 10% would come out of hiding and BE an evangelist in residence wherever he is? Wagner, in his book, Your Church Can Grow, page 78, points to the problem of the 9.5, indicating that for every 10 people who are gifted to be evangelists, 9.5 are in hiding, are God’s secret agents, untrained, unequipped, unenlisted. Wagner and others, including this author, would say that the failure to enlist those who have been gifted for evangelism, as well as the failure to equip them for their ministry is one of the greatest diseases of the church today.

Pastors Searching For Gifts in People

We have repeatedly said that it is the joyful task of the local pastor to discover the gifts that God has given to each of his parishioners, for God has done just that. In I Cor. 12:11 we are reminded that the Spirit of God gives a different gift to each person. We believe the busy pastor might do four things, then: (1) investigate the gifts that God has given his people; (2) on his knees and by the power of the Spirit seek to discern the various gifts that have been given to different people; 3 enlist people for their ministry and 4 equip them to do the task that God has gifted them to do! (Eph. 4:12)

It might be said here that too often in the church we have simply sought to fill vacancies with “warm bodies,” rather than with people who have either been gifted for a certain task, or who have the gift of being able to master the task. To illustrate: a vacancy develops in a Sunday school teaching position. The first question asked, all too often is: “Where can we get a teacher?”, instead of asking, “Who among us has the gift of teaching?” So it is with the work of evangelism. All too often the work of evangelism in the parish is left to those who have no talent or taste for the work, but are conscripted simply because they are available.

The problem of the 9.5, therefore, is a serious one. The workbook will seek to

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help unearth and train that great corps of people that God himself has readied for the great work of sharing the Good News.

CHAPTER III

TWO TRACK EVANGELISM - THE WITNESS

At first blush it might seem like Chapter III is at odds with the purpose of this workbook - to represent a tool for teaching dialog evangelism. At second glance, however, we need to realize that a congregation **MUST** have a broad view of what evangelism is all about. Evangelism cannot be an isolated ministry that has no relationship to the rest of the ministry of the congregation or that involves just a few people in it. People in a congregation must grow in their understanding of what evangelism is all about. They can learn that some are gifted to share the word for persuasion, but that **ALL** members of the congregation are witnesses.

Diagnostic work in parishes that have failed in evangelism efforts has usually unearthed a number of factors: 1) evangelism is approached as a separate/calendared program, like, "what are we going to do for evangelism this year?" With that attitude prevailing, one usually discovers that when the specific program is ended - so is evangelism. 2) Evangelism activity is limited to a few people who go out and make calls. The "masses" of the parish are not encouraged, or enlisted in witness activity. 3) What activity in evangelism is exercised, is short-circuited, like in the question, "What can we leave OUT of this program? Do we really have to do all of that?" 4) There is little evangelism consciousness, but rather an attitude that bespeaks maintenance and survival goals of ministry, expressed in ways like, "We've surely put a lot of work into this place, and it would be a shame to see everything go down the drain," or, "This church was good enough for my parents, and I want to make sure it stays the same for my grandchildren." 5) Little consciousness for the Great Commission with its prime thrust toward "making disciples."

Why Efforts Fail

This chapter then will deal with the need to work at helping the 100% become the witnesses that they already are. We call it Track I Evangelism. This is in distinction to Track II Evangelism described in Chapter II, dealing with the 10%, gifted to be evangelists, or able to exercise the role. Track I embraces all Christians, some of whom will never be able to make an evangelism call, never be able to enroll in a formalized evangelism program, perhaps never even be able to fully articulate the whole Gospel.

Track II

It needs to be said here that even though all are witnesses, it cannot be said that all are able to witness. To be a witness is one thing, to be an able witness is another. This chapter then will look briefly at some of the items involved in becoming able witnesses, and some of the items involved in becoming able witnesses, and will present numerous ways in which people can become involved in witnessing. It is only as a congregation becomes a community of excited witnesses that there will be much activity for Track II evangelism. To illustrate: when a congregation tells us that it has no "prospects," a word we

personally do not use in evangelism, its signals that they have very little going in Track I Evangelism. Excited witnesses in a parish are the ones who will be talking their faith, their spiritual experiences and their church. They will be “telling” their Christian life style through lip and life, so that others will be open to hear the Word and about the work at the parish to which these excited witnesses belong.

Let us review Acts 1:8 again. It tells us that: “when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Of course, most everybody knows that a number of items in this quoted passage need to be recalled. First, witnessing is for the Christian, the one upon whom the Holy Spirit has poured out his power. For many in the LCMS this took place at Baptism in infancy where, by Spirit power through water and Word the child was born again, ushered into new life and new relationship with God and man. Secondly, the verb indicating witnessing is in the present tense, although it sounds like a future in the quote. Christians are witnesses - NOW - not in some far off future date. Thirdly, the statement is simple and all inclusive. Witnessing is not only for the well trained, the specially gifted, the wealthy or the poor - but for all. That’s what the “you” indicates.

Acts 1:8

Helping People
Witness

Simply helping people understand who they are does not necessarily help them do the job of living out their witness. Experience has shown that although all are witnesses, not many witness. We do pause to give thanks to God for those who have been moved by God’s spirit to give a ready testimony to their faith in their life and conversation. But the number are few. In our own life and travels, in our own relationship within the church, we find a very low level of witness activity to the faith of the Lord Jesus and to the work He does in us. Even among church people, we find precious little important Gospel sharing. Oh, there’s a lot of “church talk,” “institution sharing,” “shop talk,” but not much “Gospelling.” Indeed, we have repeatedly suggested that one of the reasons we in LCMS find it so difficult to talk to others about Jesus, is that we rarely talk to each other about Him in a natural, casual, spontaneous way.

People Want Help

We have also found that it does little good to keep telling people, “You’d better witness to your faith.” One more time, that succeeds at best in making people feel guilty. Additionally, it does not provide answers to the need we hear expressed by people around the country. “I’d really like to tell people about my Savior, but I don’t know how. I don’t know what to say.” We need to recognize that people are ASKING for help, and we need to give it to them. Almost without exception, that calls for some kind of structured experience or activity, whereby people can be registered, taught and built up in their spiritual life and witnessing expertise.

In an article, “Structured To Be Free,” appearing in the LWML Quarterly, Summer 1977, we shared how in our own life it took a structured experience

for us to be freed up to be a happy voluntary witness to the work of the Lord in our own life. Through events we attended we learned to recognize opportunities to share, to use helps in sharing the faith, to speak up as God gave opportunity and power, to recognize when it was better to remain silent, to discern the difference between witness by life and lip, etc. etc.

Role of Witness

Before sharing a number of potential witness activities for all or part of the congregation, let us rehearse again the role of the witness, and some things that he/she must watch for. The word witness comes from a Greek word that looks like our word martyr. What it means is to simply tell or show it like it is - without any attempt at persuasion. Perhaps the simplest illustration comes from the court scene. What does a witness do? Does he try to persuade the judge or jury? If he does, the judge quickly rules: "Out of order!" By a simple "telling" of the situation or a demonstration of what happened, the witness lets others know what he has experienced, who he is, what happened to him - by what he says. That's all.

A Christian witness also simply tells it like it is. He lays out in simple terms what he has to say, what has happened to him, what he knows to be true in his life. He doesn't try to persuade anyone at all. He tells or he shows who he is. He can best do this by being sensitive to the people and their needs around him, by being non-aggressive, but available, by testifying to a specific instance (a courtroom witness can hardly deal in generalities), by being natural, spontaneous, non-programmed or preachy, by listening carefully, by being open and honest, by being willing to accept people as they are, by demonstrating a caring, loving attitude. All of these "witness attitudes" can be demonstrated, experienced and practiced in a structured situation or through the experience of a given opportunity. We will share some of these in the following section, giving a very brief description of each ministry, opportunity or effort. Scriptural references might be helpful at this point. Among other things, Scripture suggests that witnessing relates to personal experience, (Ps. 66:16); that it recalls God's blessings (Is. 63:7); that it happens often, perhaps daily (Mal. 3:16); that it becomes a driving force in the life of the Christian (Acts 4:20); and that it is an outgrowth of faith (II Cor. 4:13).

1. Educational Agencies - Christian Day School, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, Nursery School, Midweek School, Early Childhood Education, Small Group Bible Study, Pastor's class, etc., etc. can all be used to present an open door to the community. Parishioners can be encouraged to "tell" about the great value of these agencies and to invite the community to participate. A church which makes heavy use of educational opportunities, can use the already existing structure for outreach as well as for future.
2. AFC/OAFC - Ambassador For Christ and Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ are among any number of programs for youth, usually quite highly structured, to give youth an opportunity for spiritual growth and witness

experience. These are usually weekend programs, Friday-Sunday involving youth in a parish, circuit or District.

3. Guest Sunday - Annually a parish sets aside one Sunday on which all concentrate on bringing guests for the day.
4. FCA - For the athletes in the parish, there is the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, usually a very exciting and inspiring ministry to those in the sports arena of life.
5. Invitations - Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church each week gives out literally thousands in invitations to the worship and activity of the coming Sunday. These invitations, handsomely printed on calling card stock are handed out by members all over the Fort Lauderdale, Florida area. People in your parish can be encouraged to give out invitations on a programmed or spontaneous basis.
6. Newsletter to Friends and Contacts - St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Eureka, and Zion, Valley Park, both in Missouri, have started sending out special Newsletters to their friends, announcing items of interest, encouraging, inviting, etc., etc., without loading friends with the usual heavy in-house communication so often the burden of parish paper.
7. Tract Ministry - Everybody in the parish can learn how to handle tracts properly. Concordia Mission, 3558 South Jefferson, St. Louis, Missouri 63118 has a filmstrip, One Great Word Above the Din, which can help people learn how to use tracts.
8. Block Watching - Praying Hands - Everybody in the parish can be encouraged to watch for new move-ins, be encouraged to drop in for a "hello," get acquainted visit, or turn the name or a house number into the church office. A corps of people with limited training can then visit and present a gift, such as Durer's folded hands, a marked, customized New Testament, or even a brochure from the church. Great results have been noted from such practice.
9. Evangelism Festival - An annual service of celebration that highlights evangelism and strives to heighten evangelism consciousness can help. The last Sunday in January has become a traditional Evangelism Festival for many LCMS parishes.
10. Fishermen's Club, 70 Club, Evangelism Society - For many parishes, the old concept of the society is still a viable one. With careful programming, this concept can be a good tool in attitude building.
11. Congregation Brochure - An attractive brochure describing not only the facility, but the ministry of a local parish can be used in many ways,

including using it as a tool to give to members to give to friends, neighbors and move-ins.

12. Custom New Testament or Scripture - World Home Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, Illinois 60473, has a very inexpensive offer. For example, at reasonable rates a parish can provide copies of the Gospel of John with a picture of the pastor and church on the cover, activities, schedules, etc., etc., with the Gospel message indicated in the text in a special marking. It becomes both an excellent giveaway piece and witnessing tool.
13. LEW/WW - A Lay Evangelism Workshop or a Witness Workshop can be conducted in the parish each year to assist parishioners in their witness life. A Manual on conducting a Witness Workshop is available from the Board for Evangelism, St. Louis, Missouri.
14. Gospel Communication Clinic - This is another “in-house” experience where, without threat, people can experience the joy of sharing their faith with each other, and prepare a witness for a specific person in their life. A manual developed by LCMS pastors David Belasic and Paul Schmidt, is available from the Board for Evangelism.
15. Dial-a-Devo - Short phone messages can be a real witness of the local parish to the community. Parishioners can be encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to dial and listen in.
16. Operation Andrew - Once each year, at a special time and in a special way, people can be encouraged to list those whom they know to be in need of a visit, a Gospel presentation, a friendly visit - or whatever.
17. Bus Ministry - While not for all, this ministry has proven exciting in some instances. People in the parish, who might not be able to enroll in any other evangelism activity might just be the ones to take “care of the bus.”
18. Buttons, Pins - Many people find enjoyment in wearing Jesus buttons, Simon Peter pins, etc., etc. Stories of witness experience abound from the wearing of buttons and pins.
19. Pocket Cross - A cross in the pocket can do two things - 1) serve as a constant reminder of spiritual relationships through the cross and 2) become a conversation starter when thrown out on a counter with pocket change.
20. Birth Congratulations - Devise a card of congratulations to send to people becoming parents in the geographical area of your church. Such information is usually available in any community. The card can offer the services of the church to the new parents.

21. Hosts/Fellowship - Many members can be enlisted in a hosting, fellowship responsibility at the services and other church functions. There is nothing more disconcerting to a guest than to be “alone in a crowd.” many churches come off as “being cold,” simply because they have done little or nothing to enhance the visit for the visitor.
22. Recognize Visitors in Worship - Guests and visitors can be introduced in the worship setting, with designated hosts assigned to speak to the visitors after the service.
23. Open House Mission - The PTR mission of the ‘50’s is regaining popularity in many circles. In an Open House Mission the whole congregation can be enlisted in an evangelism activity of worship and inreach/outreach that can boost evangelist attitudes for some time to come.

The above are only a small sampling of the many, many things that can be done in a parish to help people in their witness life. If we are going to get Track I going in a parish, we must involve the 100%. When an active “witness ministry” is developed in a parish, there will be a spill over of spiritual excitement in other areas of church life: education, service, worship, etc.

CHAPTER IV

BUILDING EVANGELISM ATTITUDES

If at this point in your study you are asking the question, “When does this workbook get into helping us ready people to share the Gospel?”, you are asking a fair and natural question. For a long time in the church we have approached ministry so programmatically that we have expected a ten point program to start at page one, to list the points, and break off with good wishes. And that’s been part of the problem.

Evangelism is
People Related

Evangelism is a people ministry, effectively carried out in a parish when there is a good attitude toward evangelism ministry, and when evangelism is understood within the framework of the Great Commission, and the entire ministry of the church. To inject evangelism as an isolated program among others is to insure failure. Lets try to illustrate.

Some Grow,
Some Don’t

Imagine a rather large urban area with two mission congregations, one on either side of the area. To all intents and purposes, the communities in which the two churches are working are the same - educationally, ethnically, economically, etc., etc. One church is really growing, the other is not. What is the difference? Why is one seemingly standing still while the other is growing by leaps and bounds?

Why Some
Churches Grow

Principles of growth discovered by the Church Growth Movement in America might be of some help here. Wagner’s Your Church Can Grow, seeks to demonstrate why some churches grow and why some do not. Basic discoveries indicate the following seven characteristics, common to growing churches (remember, Church Growth principles do not suggest that you put these seven ingredients into a mix, to promote growth. Rather, in diagnosing growing churches, these seven characteristics have been common!).

- 1) Much depends on the pastor! If the pastor has “church growth eyes,” if the pastor has a deep commitment to evangelism and the desire to fulfill the Great Commission’s injunction to make disciples, he will lead his people into that same priority for ministry. This is to be expected, and probably shows itself throughout the church as the parish takes on the character of its spiritual leader. If a pastor has a strong liturgical bent, you can rest assured that liturgics will be high on the list of priority attention in his parish; if education is his thing, you can expect heavy emphasis in that field; if history, history. Be that all as it may, pastors need to be encouraged to equip their laity to exercise their God given gifts, and to take seriously the churches FIRST responsibility, namely that of making disciples.

- 2) Churches that have grown have had a well mobilized laity. In the church as in any other endeavor, things just do not happen by themselves. They are made to happen. To suggest to laymen that “they all do it sometime” will probably result in not much getting done. Growing churches have been sufficiently structured to mobilize for ministry.
- 3) Churches that have grown have been big enough to met the wide range of needs expressed by their constituent neighborhood. There needs to be something for everybody - early childhood youth, senior citizens, whatever, so that the needs of the community are met. Robert Schuller in his book, Your Church Has Real Possibilities, suggests that one of the secrets of success is to find a need and fill it. A church that is big enough seeks to fill the ministry needs of its people. While this concept does not refer basically to physical bigness, it has been noted that a facility may well reach its capacity. People will not join churches where they cannot find parking within six blocks, or where there is never a seat available, etc., etc. A church suffering from an overloaded facility has been said to be suffering from “sociological strangulation.”
- 4) Where churches have grown, a proper balance between small groups, larger fellowship groups and the worshipping congregation has been discovered. What this means is simply this: a congregation that majors in only small groups will not make it; likewise, a church that has fellowshiping in larger groups as its sole goal will not make it either, as will neither the congregation which has nothing more to offer its members than a large audience worship experience. Church Growth uses the terminology cell, congregation and celebration to describe the three concepts listed above.
The cell is a small group of people (8-10) meeting together in homes for Bible study, prayer and spiritual growth. In growing churches, non-members have first been brought to the cell - then the larger groupings within the church. The congregation is a larger group (40-120) who have common interests and enjoy each other’s company for fellowship and fun. These groups might also have certain other commonalities - like all the parents of children in a parochial school, all the senior citizens, all the singles, etc., etc. A fellowship group (congregation) might also be a choir, a bowling league, whatever. In LCMS terminology, the term “congregation,” of course means something different from that which is being described here, so it is necessary to note the difference to avoid confusion. The celebration is the worship experience where everybody, from cell and congregation alike come together to worship the Lord. Where a church has grown, the discovery is that all three functions are exercised, in proper balance.

John DeVries

John DeVries has published a small book, (copyright, 1978) called, The Little Church Program. In it he shares the “how” of setting up small groups in a

local parish. Included are 20 word study Bible studies to be used in the groups over a 40 week period. This book may be obtained from the World Home Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, Illinois 60473. Lyle E. Schaller, Yokefellow Institute, 920 Earlham Drive, Richmond, Indiana 47374, has some additional insights in his The Parish Paper, August 1979, Vol. 9, #2. In the piece, titled A Second Look at the Zone Plan, Schaller gives seven reasons why small groups have been set up in parishes and 12 points that merit serious considerations of anyone interested in the concept.

Donald McGavran
C. Peter Wagner

- 5) Growing churches are churches that are basically made up of one kind of people, following the human principle that people who like each other, who have much in common, flock to each other. This phenomenon has been called the “homogeneous unit principle.” WE suggest that for a full study of this principle the student study Donald McGavran’s Understanding Church Growth and Wagner’s Your Church Can Grow.
- 6) All growing churches have found a successful evangelism program which they use in their congregation. Not all methods are the same; what works in one place does not work in another. The growing congregation has found what works for it, and is using it to the fullest.
- 7) A church on the grow has well established priorities. It is no longer spinning its wheels to endeavor to determine its direction. It knows its mission, and has set its mind to the task.

If all of these ingredients are found in a parish on one side of a metropolitan area and none of them is found in the parish on the other side of the city, it is quite unlikely that the second will grow. There are other ingredients, however, that also must fit into the sociological mix being described here. In order for a church to grow - even with the above characteristics, the church must be in the right place and time, it must be dealing with the right people and the right methods, with the right goals. If a church’s time has passed, it may be too late to grow. If a church is located in the wrong spot, it will do well to maintain its current size and ministry.

Darwin Karsten

Long before we ever knew anything about the sociological studies coming from the Church Growth Movement, we asked the Rev. Darwin Karsten, pastor of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Eureka, Missouri to share his thoughts on the “why” of some churches growing and some standing still. He said, 1) it all depends on the pastor; 2) there must be an exciting administration of the Means of Grace, Word and Sacrament; 3) people must be given opportunity to witness through the program and ministry of the parish and 4) such opportunities must be structured to allow it to happen.

Church Diseases

To complicate the ministry and destroy the vision, a group of people, a community or a congregation may be suffering from one of the five ecclesiastical diseases which Wagner has proposed: 1) Ethnikitis - a disease (fatal) which afflicts a congregation when there is a major people change in the neighborhood, and the church fails to deal with it. 2) Old Age - a disease which develops when a parish fails to replace old members with young members. This happens more often in rural settings than in the urban situation. 3) People Blindness is the disease which develops when homogeneous principle, fails to recognize that people of similar interests and backgrounds like to be together, 4) Koinonitis, also called fellowship inflammation, develops when a congregation becomes so totally ingrown and concerned with itself that it forgets others and their needs. 5) St. John's Syndrome is the disease of second generation Christianity where complacency has set in. "All is well," "we have no real needs," "no real sacrifice is called for," and statements that speak of spiritual contentment and impending decay. Renewal or revival is called for.

To build an evangelism attitude in a congregation suffering from any of the above diseases, or from all of them is a most discouraging task. Under Spirit direction, something drastic has to happen - even to the development of some of those characteristics found in growing churches, and listed above.

Examine the concept of John Devries, formerly with the World Home Bible League, and now on leave of absence from the League, and pastor at Highland Hills Christian Reformed Church, 1025 West End Drive NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504. He talks about The Circle of Evangelism by which a congregation recognizes that a lot of sowing has to be done. This is accomplished in many ways in the parish. But after the seed has been sown comes the time of arduous cultivation - then the harvest time. The harvester, however, knows that if he is to have yet another harvest, he will have to do a job of reseeding before the circle or cycle can repeat itself. So in the business of evangelism in the church. The Seed of the Word must be sown in every way possible. A period of cultivation can be expected. But: LOOK FOR THE HARVEST. Seed is always sown with an eye to harvest. So the Word does not return void, but it accomplishes its purpose, the salvation of souls. Then, after the harvest follows the reseeding time, and the process continues. Attitude is important. Following good attitude and adjustment, we are ready to propose the process we have chosen to call Dialog Evangelism.

CHAPTER V

THE TECHNIQUE

Definition and Program

Dialog Evangelism embraces a ministry of training lay people to effectively share the Gospel, as God gives opportunity. It works best when integrated into the full ministry of a parish, seeking support from and giving support to the congregational emphasis on worship, education and service. It involves a one night a week, 16-week period of intense evangelism ministry which begins in a very small way with the pastor training two lay persons in Gospel presentation. As lay persons become equipped to present the Gospel meaningfully, they become trainers of others, who learn, then teach others until a corps of laypersons within the congregation are able to dialog their faith in and out of the structured program.

Congregations usually find it best to conduct two 16 week cycles each program year, with the first beginning shortly after Labor Day, the second sometime in February. At the end of cycle one, the pastor and his two laypersons have had 16 weeks of active evangelism ministry. At the end of that time they rest, reflect, recruit and regroup, so that round two can begin some weeks after round one is completed.

The Model

Each week the technique involves three, and hopefully four facets: study, action, reflection, and development. Intensive study is involved in the training. First of all, the trainee must learn the outline (p. 38) which becomes the basis of the presentation. Additionally, there are Bible passages which need to be learned, illustrations to be uncovered, reading to do, and a general need for practice/preparation before the trainee will be able to present the gospel on his own, and before the trainee will be able to present the Gospel on his own, and before he will be able to teach others. No one should enter this ministry without the commitment to study. However, none should be threatened by the task. Studying for this ministry will not be as hard as preparation for teaching or even taking the Bethel Bible series. Yet, we do not want to underestimate the need to be attitudinally ready for study.

Each week of the sixteen calls for action, beginning week one. Part of the problem in evangelism sharing in the past has been that people have studied and studied - and that's where it has ended. This technique, emphasizing on-the-job training, includes making calls every week of the training cycle. That's the action. The pastor who has already been trained in clinic or seminary experience takes his two lay trainees out with him, week one. They pray and observe as the pastor makes the call. That's the on-the-job emphasis. Little by little, as they learn, observe and study, the trainees will take over part of the presentation in the call, so that by the end of the 16 week period, they will be ready themselves to make a full presentation of the Gospel, or handle

the visit themselves.

Rather than be burdened with the task of making a full presentation the first time he tries it, it is better for the trainer to assign presentation responsibility bit by bit. The first two weeks, the trainees may do little more than observe - and look interested. By week three they might participate in the chit-chat; week four give a personal or church testimony; week five ask one of the diagnostic questions, etc. By this method of assuming additional responsibilities weekly, the trainee will be able to make a full presentation at the end of the cycle.

When the visit is completed, the pastor and laypersons return to the church for reflection on the visit - constructive criticism, if you will. What happened in the visit? What should have been said? What red lights were missed? What green lights? What more could have been done? Where do we go from here with the person called on? The period of reflection is indeed a very important learning experience. It is in this period that the pastor or the trainer shares with the trainees the why and the wherefore of his presentation: why he did what he did, why he went no further, why he asked a specific question, why he felt it was necessary to make an appointment to return the very next night, etc., etc. It is in this period too that the trainees should feel free to dialog very pointedly with the trainer to make sure that they are learning from their teacher. A good suggestion is to tape the reflection session for recall and future use. This is particularly the case when one realizes that there are only so many types of situations that develop in calls. If reflections are taped, the trainer has an added help in his study.

After the number of people in the program has grown to six, twelve or twenty-four, the period of reflection time becomes additionally important. Then teams learn from each other, and the learning process is extended and quickened as all learn from others the handling of certain situations in a call, what to expect and what to do in a given situation, etc., etc. One of the problems that arises when the number of people in the group of callers becomes large is that not all teams return from their visits at the same time. Now, on the one hand, it may become somewhat tedious for several teams to await the return of another. On the other hand, it would be very unwise for a team of visitors to say to their host, "We are very sorry. We know that this is a most important moment in your life, and we'd like to stay longer, but we must return to the church for a report session." Naturally, the soul in the home is much more important than the report session. A number of things can be done by those who return first to the church and who then must wait for others. One is to work at the assignment for the coming week; another is to use the time for collateral reading, another to practice repeating or writing the outline, the concept of saying the outline, and practicing the presentation is highly important, and will be alluded to again in this presentation.

Now that study, action and reflection have taken place for the week, the hoped

Learn By Doing

Reflection

Staggered Return

Development

for result is development, or growth. To stand still in this ministry is to regress. Growth must never stop, for new needs, new situations and circumstances will arise with each call. It's like being a parent! There is always a new phase the children go through, always a need for new answers, always a need for growth in parenting. We think of a person who said that he had been in the technique for four years, and therefore had four years of experience. How painful it was to tell him that he really did not have four years of experience, but really only one year, repeated four times. When we have been called into congregations to help them discover why this technique faded out after a few years, we usually discover that there was little or no development of the technique from cycle to cycle. On the other hand, our files are filled with things that pastors and laypersons have done to refine the basics of the technique to their own style and location of ministry.

Since this technique involves visits in the home, a very important question is, "on whom do we call?" Ordinarily a congregation that is attitudinally evangelistic, that will be heavy into Track I evangelism, will have many more calls to make than callers to make them! In fact, it has been our experience that such congregations never catch up. On the other hand we can almost always tell what is behind the complaint, "but, we have nobody to call on." Almost without fail, a congregation with that problem has little or nothing going in Track I. The mind set of the congregation is not oriented toward outreach. Rather it majors in maintenance, survival, nurture. It has become ingrown to the extent that it has little to commend it to others, or few available to make such commendation.

We have discovered that all calls can be made on three types of people - members, friends or contacts, and strangers. We do not suggest that evangelism callers visit only the homes of members of the parish. However, neither do we discourage such practice. many meaningful calls have been made in homes of people who have been members of a given parish for years and years. Sometimes the evangelism callers are the very first ones from the parish to visit that home, or the first ones in years. Sometimes the callers discover that the members have real serious spiritual problems, sometimes even questions about their salvation. Sometimes they discover that the members have never really understood the Gospel, or have never applied it to themselves. Calls on members should be made in precisely the same way as the calls are made on others. In a later chapter we will demonstrate how certain situations, like the response to the call might be handled in the case of member calls.

Many of the calls that evangelism teams make will be made on what we like to call friends of the church, or people who have had some previous contact with the church. many call these people "prospects," a term which we prefer to not use, simply because it has some abrasive overtones. people don't like to be thought of as a "possible catch." We have found that listing people as friends or contacts is not only less abrasive, but more meaningful. Usually these are

Who To Call On

Member Calls

Friends or Contacts

people who have visited the church at Christmas or Easter, have come for a baptism, confirmation, wedding or funeral, have attended some organizational function, bowl on the church league, are best friends with one of your members, remember attending the church as a child at Sunday school, VBS, etc., etc. Many of these people will be on what many churches call their responsibility list, or the winnable in a community.

Call Soon

If some congregations find it difficult to call on members, many find it difficult to call on their friends. In our experience we remember an instance where a couple had visited a congregation and were put on the responsibility list. Five months later they were called on - too late. They had been “church shopping” when they visited this congregation, and since it had shown little interest, there was no immediate desire to return. In the meantime they had joined another congregation. The sad thing about this is that the congregation that they did join is not part of the Christian Church. Perhaps you have heard it said that fish never jump into the boat. You have to fish for them. You have to catch them. Once in a while, “fish” may jump into the church (nave-boat) as they look for a church. Our contention is that we do not always take good care of those who come to us on their own. We wonder about a possible statistic which would show the cumulative loss of people who came to a church, but then were let slip out the back door without much display of love and concern! Now, if it is difficult for some congregations to keep up with their calling on their members and their friends, what about the strangers?

It is our contention that calling on people in the community, on strangers who may never darken the door sill of the local congregation is SUCH an important ministry and such a vital part of the Great Commission, that we will devote a separate chapter to that ministry.

The Multiplication
Of Lay Evangelists

Dialog Evangelism seeks to involve more and more lay persons in the training needed to make meaningful Gospel presentation. How is this done? Perhaps the Figure on the following page will best illustrate the method, both from the point of view of Evangelism Explosion and our personal adaptation.

Evangelism Explosion
Biesenthal

Cycle 1

P
A B 16 weeks

S
A D

Cycle 1

(SAME)

P = Pastor

AB = Lay persons

SARD = Model

Cycle 2

A
C D

P
E F

B
G H

16 weeks

S
A D
R

(three teams of three)

Cycle 2

A P B
C D E

16 weeks

week 1: PAE and BCD
week 2: PBE and ACD
week 3: ABC and PDE
(two teams of three)
week 4: PAC and BDE
week 5: PBD and ACE
etc.

(Two Teams of Three)

Cycle 3

A B C D E F G H P
IJ KL MN OQ RS TU VW XY ZZ

(27 people involved in a year and a half; extension
of this factor would have 84 involved in two years)

Cycle 3

A B C D P
E F G H

(9 or 12 people involved
after 1 1/2 years)

or

A B C D E P
F G H I J K

(3 or 4 Teams of Three)

Multiplication Slow Down

There are a number of basic considerations in our slowing down of the multiplication process. First of all, it did not seem realistic to suppose that a congregation that has had very little going for it in evangelism could in less than two years have 27 people enlisted in a demanding program such as Dialog Evangelism. Additionally, many congregations simply do not have enough people to call on to keep 9 teams of visitors busy for 16 consecutive weeks. Besides there are many more facets to ministry that evolve when calls are being made: discipling needs to be considered; call backs need to be made; one call often leads to another; counseling develops, etc., etc. The structure of ministry in a parish usually is not such that it can cope when a good evangelism program gets under way. The old axion still hold: begin with three; end up with thirty. Begin with thirty, end up with three.

Quality Assurance

However, there are other considerations. Look at the chart on the previous page. P is the pastor, A and B his selected lay persons. It has been our discovery that after the first 16 weeks or Cycle 1, A and/or B are not always all that well equipped to take over a teaching assignment. And remember, that becomes a basic assignment in Cycle 2. In addition to presenting the Gospel as God opens doors, they are teaching/training those who are not trainees in Cycle 2. Our suggestion, therefore is: let the pastor continue with A and B for another 16 week period, using a schedule such as is suggested. One week he goes with A, and other with B. He affirms them, he helps them in their growth process, he observes their teaching ability, etc., etc. In that way the pastor seeks to assure the quality of the presenting and the teaching. Our experience has shown that failure in this technique has often resulted from poor teaching, either on the part of the pastor himself, or on the part of those who have been released as trainers. Trainees can hardly be expected to rise above the level of their teachers. In fact, the degree of excellence in presenting the teaching diminishes in direct proportion to the level of teaching excellence at the top. SLOW DOWN and do a good job.

Not All Are Teachers

Another discovery reveals that some people just are not good teachers! They may be excellent presenters of the Gospel, but they cannot teach others. In fact, some people are so individualistic in their style and approach, that they should probably be included in the technique to learn how to share their faith, but then be released to do their own thing in their own way. Nobody can really pick up another's personality traits and remain natural. he can only learn a method or a system. If a person who is teaching says, "Forget all that stuff that the pastor is teaching and be like me" that person might better be directed to some other important ministry within the parish.

Parish Size

Then finally, some parishes in LCMS are just too small to have more than a small number of visitors, or are in a rural or other situations where there literally are not all that many people within miles of the church. We need to interject though, that we know of a rather small rural parish that with 9 people

in the technique was able to make calls for a period of three years. People are out there - members, friends and strangers, many of them open to a Gospel witness.

Calls as well as callers would be scheduled. When the group is large enough so that you have several teams out each week, we believe it is best to mix the teams from week to week, so that each trainee has the benefit of being out on call a number of times with the very best trainers in the program. The larger the group gets, the greater diversity in teaching ability! A poor teacher will effect poor training, further poor teaching - and trouble lies right around the corner. Schedule, therefore, for the best exposure and best teaching.

Following is a sample calling schedule (page 29) prepared and used at Faith Lutheran Church, Jefferson City, Missouri. We have underlined the Pastor's name (Rev. James Kalthoff) so that you can see how he moves around in his responsibility to the calling teams each week.

Before closing this chapter it might be well to deal with the need to make calls in threes, rather than in pairs. Classroom response to calling in threes is almost always, "Isn't that too many?" In the classroom it is; in the field, it rarely seems to be!

There are a number of good reasons for going in threes, rather than in pairs. Here are some of them: 1) it is not good to send a man out alone with another man's wife; 2) it could be unsafe for two women to go out alone in some urban areas; 3) two men calling in the home of a widow, or on a mother with children or a young single can bring a certain tightness to the call; 4) two women calling on a man can be counterproductive. Two is company, three's a crowd, has really worked well in this ministry. Mixing of the sexes in the teams means that there "is something for everybody." We do not recommend three men making a visit, except in special circumstances, although in our experience the exceptions have proven that rule many times. In seminary clinics, as well as in clinics around the country there are many times too few women trainers to take clinicians out on call - so three men go out together. Their calls, almost without exception have proven as exciting and as productive as any other combination. When God has doors opened, and when people go out in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the power of the Spirit, great things can happen.

In going out, what tools are used? What does the pastor or future trainers do in presenting the Gospel, and in training those who are with him on call? That's what we begin to deal with in the next chapter.

Scheduling

Sample

Go Out In Threes

CHAPTER VI

THE OUTLINE

Dialog Evangelism is a method of presenting the Gospel as God gives opportunity. It also seeks to help individuals attain expertise needed in presenting the Gospel. The method uses on-the-job training so that trainees can observe and learn from others who have already learned the art of sharing. It presents learners with a method of presentation that stems from learning the rudiments of the presentation in a designated order.

Outline Memorized

The message is presented through the medium of an outline which in basic format contains much of what anyone might present in a presentation of the Gospel. To help the learner, he is asked to memorize the outline of the presentation, and then observe his trainer on call so that he can see how the trainer uses the outline in the presentation.

There are those who approach the use of an outline in a negative way. people say, "I'm not going to use a canned presentation which pays little attention to the needs of the person being called on, and the situation that develops. If the outline is ever used in that fashion, the criticism is more than justified. The outline is not meant to be a mechanical presentation of salient points, "dumped out" upon an unsuspecting person, without regard for his rights or insensitive to his needs. It is not a tape-recorded type presentation from A to Z, shared in recitation like fashion to give the presenter the feeling that he has now shared the Gospel and can be on his way. In fact, if that were the case, it might be questioned whether the Gospel was shared at all in the presentation.

This author would be naive indeed to deny that misuse of the outline and the entire presentation has occurred. Other disciplines of ministry in the church have experienced misuse too. Not every pastor prepares his sermons for delivery, as taught by the professor at the Seminary, and not every Sunday School teacher teaches the lesson as she has been taught, or as the pastor or superintendent would have her teach it. Yet, preaching and teaching does not stop, and no one would suggest that one cancel the preparation of pastors and teachers because SOME might be guilty of misuse. Let's recognize that some people SO abuse and misuse.

Knowledge Track

On the other hand, the memorized outline DOES give trainer and trainee a "track down which to run," an organized body of knowledge from which to draw in any given situation. It does three things for the presenter: 1) it tells him where he is at in his presentation and sharing; 2) it tells him what he has covered in that presentation; 3) it tells him what is yet to be covered. He has this all in his mind as he sits in the living room and dialogs with his host. For the learner it is an excellent tool when he sees the trainer use the outlined message as he is moved by the Spirit in any given call. The trainee knows where the trainer is, what he has voiced, and where he is going.

To illustrate this point very graphically, let us give a situation as an example. Suppose you come to the door of a person who has heard something about your church and its teachings, specifically about Jesus Christ. You come to the door, introduce yourself and indicate that you are coming from your church and before you can get started, the person says, "Oh yes, you are from St. Paul's Lutheran Church. You teach that Jesus was more than a man, right? You believe that He was actually God? Well, I've been waiting to talk to somebody about that, because I don't see how that can possibly be true!" Your response is not, "Well, I'm surprised (dismayed, shocked) to hear that. I'll try to answer that later, but right now I've got some other things that I want to talk about. We'll get to your problem later."

Illustration

Begin Where The
Person Is

What folly! YOU BEGIN WHERE THE PERSON IS. Knowledge of the outline lets you move around within its parameters with ease - and the better you know the outline, the more comfortable you feel as you dialog within it. There may even be times when you will be led to forsake the outline completely. Figure F demonstrates that you do begin where the person is; you may move up in the outline, down, laterally, obliquely - out! Under guidance of the Holy Spirit, and with the knowledge of your subject matter at hand, you MINISTER to the person's needs. The best illustration that we have found to illustrate what we mean is that of the organist who improvises on a well known melody. In our first parish we had a fine organist who loved to improvise. But you could always recognize the tune; he always came back to it; he always stayed within the boundaries of the original melody. So a trained presenter. he may move in and about the outline, but you will always find him coming back to the basic message.

One other positive use of the outline might be mentioned at this point! When a visit is completed and report is made, the reporting trainer is not stuck with saying, "Well, we had a general chatting session about the church." He knows what he has covered; he knows that he has covered the Gospel; he notes what he has covered on the report form, so that the next time he calls, or someone else calls there is a written accounting of the visit.

Reporting

A well trained presenter will study well his own personal transitions that he uses to get from one point of the outline to the other, until the transitions are made so smoothly, that only the callers will know that an outline is being used! As the trainee observes and studies he will develop his own transitions until he becomes comfortable with them, and able to make a presentation. Let us demonstrate what we mean by giving an example of how one might get from the very first point of the outline to the next. The first point of the Introduction is what we call the chit-chat. The second is to talk about their church. How do you get out of the chit-chat and into their church conversation? Here is a suggested transition with which we are comfortable:

Transitions

“Well, its great to talk about these interesting things, and I guess we could go on all evening. But when we came to the door, we said that we wanted to talk about Susie and our Sunday school. We’re so very happy to have her, believe me, and look forward to chatting about our Sunday school and her part in it. By the way, has Susie ever gone to a Lutheran Sunday school before? (Or, ‘May I ask why you chose our Sunday school?’)”. This will open up the dialog to the reason why Susie came to your Sunday school and the former church affiliation or association of the people you are calling on. TRANSITIONS are extremely important. Samples should be memorized, and then the trainee should formulate his own, recognizing again that he is not held to a progressive presentation, but rather to the need to meet whatever situation develops in the dialog. A good set of transitions, and verbatim working knowledge of the outline, is suggested for best presentation. When the trainer and trainee have the outline down word for word, they can use all of their own vocabulary, their own illustrations, their own chosen bible passages, their own chosen Bible passages, their own initiative and personality to present the basic message.

Memorize Outline
Immediately

A word needs to be said here. The outline needs to be memorized week 1 of the sixteen week training course. It should be memorized so that it can be repeated orally, as well as in written form. Time should be spent in each weekly training session to have all repeat the outline to each other, and perhaps periodically write it out. Trainers should be encouraged to speak the outline into a tape recorder, then listen to themselves on replay. This will give them some indication of how they sound in presenting, and will be an additional teaching tool. Again - the outline must be memorized. Then it serves as the base from which the presentation flows.

Outline has
Good Progression

While it is true that a presenter must have the privilege to move in and about the outline, those who have used it repeatedly are amazed at how many times the outline can be followed, almost point for point. It hangs together, so that even as you dialog with the person on whom you are calling there is a pattern that works beautifully: you begin with chit-chat; you talk about their church association; then about yours. You give a testimony to the work of the Lord, or the meaning of the church in your life, and then you ask them about their own spiritual life. At that point you slip into the message portion of the presentation, a message of sin and grace, a message that includes God’s wrath against sin, but also his mercy in Christ Jesus. You share Jesus, both as to His person and His work, noting that it is only by faith at work in the heart by the power of the Spirit through the Means of Grace that a person can claim and confess Jesus as personal Savior and Lord. That’s the progression of the dialog, with only the response to your message yet to be dealt with. The Response, as well as the use of the Introduction and the Message will be dealt with in subsequent chapters of the workbook. If you haven’t caught it, then, the outline consists of three parts, I. Introduction; II. Message; III. Response.

The full outline is on pages 41-43. Each of these parts will be dealt with in detail in subsequent chapters.

Other Outlines

Before going further, however, it should be pointed out that the outline to be detailed in this presentation is not the only outline that can be used in Dialog Evangelism. Two additional outlines are presented for your perusal and/or use should they be your choice. The detailed explanation, however, will be given only for that outline which bears the author's name. The outline on page 42, is the basic and original outline formulated by Dr. D. James Kennedy, pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and Founder of Evangelism Explosion. The outline on page 43, was prepared by Dr. Arthur Vincent, Professor of Evangelism at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri when he wrote the outline in 1972. Other outlines may also be used. We suggest a few here:

1. A Personal Faith, Now and forever, Dr. Erwin J. Kolb
 - a. God's plan for man;
 - b. man misses the plan,
 - c. God restores man;
 - d. I receive the plan by faith;
 - e. Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone;
 - f. The results that grow. Presented in a tract.
2. You Can Be Sure, Rev. Jerrold L. Nichols - the basic Kennedy outline.
 - a. Grace;
 - b. Man
 - c. God
 - d. Jesus Christ
 - e. Faith - presented in tract form
3. Do You Know, by Dr. Armand Ulbrich. Using the outline from his book, Presenting the Gospel, around the three points,:
Our Greatest Need,
What God Has Done For That Need,
How It Becomes Ours Through Faith.
4. The ABC's of Life, American Lutheran Church Evangelism Department,
422 South 5th St., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415.
 - a. God loves you and wants your life to have meaning
 - b. Our sin separates us from God
 - c. Jesus Christ is the Gift that God gives for our need
 - d. We receive and confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
5. Seven Important Truths

Northern Illinois District - LCMS

- a. God love us

Biesenthal

- a. God loves me

- b. We rebel against God
- c. We cannot solve this problem by ourselves
- d. Jesus Christ is the God-given solution
- e. In Christ God gives us forgiveness and peace
- f. We receive Jesus Christ by trusting Him as our personal Savior
- g. Receiving Christ - we live Christ like

- b. I rebelled, goofed, messed it up
- c. There is no way out of the mess I have created for myself
- d. God provides the Way in Christ
- e. Christ restores the relationship I destroyed; peace is restored
- f. I am brought to trust what Christ has done for me
- g. I live for Him NOW

6. Four Spiritual Laws, Campus Crusade, Arrowhead Springs, San Bernardino, California, 92404.
- a. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life
 - b. Man is sinful and separated from God, thus he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life
 - c. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life
 - d. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

Numbers 1, 2 and 5 are available in bulk from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Missouri 63118. While we do not personally recommend the use of #6, we know of people who have come to know the Lord through presentations made from the Four Spiritual Laws, particularly with a different emphasis on Law IV, with the work of Spirit through Word and Sacrament inserted as the tool by which one comes to know, claim and confess the Lord Jesus as personal Savior.

Choose One

While we have suggested a number of outlines above, we caution against a choice of more than one; this can lead to a confusion on the part of the learning evangelists. Choose one method or outline of presentation and stick to it. The whole purpose in presenting more than one outline here is to indicate that there is no truth in the supposition that there is only one outline that works.

Know Alternate

We would share one other item from our personal experience. We have found it advantageous to have the Seven Important Truths outline memorized, because it is useful in certain specific instances. Let us illustrate. Suppose in the chit-chat or early portion of the introduction you discover that the person on whom you are making the visit does not believe in God, heaven or eternal life? Give up and go home? No, there is an alternate. Let us share it. Your response might go something like this, *Well, I appreciate your honesty and frankness about your feelings and your admitting that you do not believe in God or in heaven. I wonder if you would now give me a chance to share some things that I believe and feel? Thank you. Let me begin by asking what you consider to be the most important thing in your life. Good. I can understand that you would consider health, family, job to be very important. They are*

important to me too. But I have discovered something else that is very important in my life - do you know what it is? My biggest discovery is, 'God loves me.'"

At this point, with permission of the listener in hand, you proceed with the testimony of what God means in your life - and you are presenting the Gospel. Without use of an alternate route such as this, one might well be stymied by the person who early in the conversation evidences his lack of believing in heaven or hell. Having listened to his presentation, you simply ask to share equal time - and share yours by way of testimony to God's work in your life.

With outline in mind, and with an extra such as Seven Important Truths at hand for a special need, you are now ready to dialog the Good News.

OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

Biesenthal

I. THE INTRODUCTION

- A. Chit-Chat
- B. Their Church
- C. Our Church
- D. Testimony: Personal or Church
- E. Diagnostic Questions:
 - 1. Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where if you were to die tonight, you would know for certain that you would go to heaven?
 - 2. Suppose that you were to die tonight and stand before God and He were to say to you, "Why should I let you into my heaven," what would you tell Him?
- F. Bridge
 - 1. Heaven is God's free gift to man
 - 2. It is neither earned nor deserved

II. THE MESSAGE

- A. MAN
 - 1. Is a sinner
 - 2. Is spiritually dead
 - 3. Is unable to save himself
- B. God
 - 1. Is just - and must punish sin
 - 2. Is merciful
- C. Christ
 - 1. Is all powerful, all knowing, ever present God-man
 - 2. Is He who lived and died and rose for us, to forgive us our sins and give us new life with Him now and hereafter in eternity
- D. Faith
 - 1. Is more than mere intellectual assent or temporal faith
 - 2. Is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation
 - 3. Is created in the heart by the Spirit through the Word

III. THE RESPONSE

- A. The qualifying question: "Have I made myself clear to you?"
- B. The response: Question or Statement
- C. The clarification of response
- D. The prayer of thanks

E. The close

OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION
Biesenthal

I. THE INTRODUCTION

A. CHIT-CHAT

Transition: *It's good to talk about all these things we have in common, but when we came to the door, you will remember that we said we were here to talk about Susie and our Sunday school. Has Susie always attended a Lutheran Sunday school? or Has anyone told you about the churches in our community? or Was last Sunday the very first time you visited us? or - whatever question is appropriate to the situation, and consistent with the contract.*

B. THEIR CHURCH

Transition: *Its interesting indeed to hear about your church background. I'd like to tell you something about our church, if I may.*

B. OUR CHURCH

Transition: *I guess I'd just have to say that the ministry at our church has done much for my spiritual life. What about your spiritual life? May I ask you a question about it?*

C. OUR CHURCH

Transition - *I guess I'd just have to say that the ministry at our church has done much for my spiritual life. What about your spiritual life? May I ask you a question about it?*

D. DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS:

Transition - *from question 1 to question 2 - I can understand that you might say that. A lot of people answer the question that way, but you know, I have some good news for you. I'd like to share it with you if you don't mind! But before I do, I wonder if you'd just let me ask you an additional question.*

Transition - *from question 2 to BRIDGE - You know, you have given a very common answer to that question. When you answered the first question, I knew I had some very good news to share with you tonight. Now that I have heard your answer to the second question I really have good news for you, because, you see, heaven is a free gift; it is never earned or deserved.*

(Note: a full treatment of how to get from the questions to the bridge is dealt within the next chapter.)

E. BRIDGE

Transitions: *the fact that heaven is a free gift which can neither be earned nor is deserved is all the more marvelous when we consider that man is a sinner who cannot save himself.*

II. MESSAGE

A. Man is a sinner who cannot save himself

Transition: *To understand how this can be, it is necessary to know something about God.*

B. God is just and merciful

Transition: *This just and merciful God expressed both his justice and mercy in the person and work of Jesus Christ.*

C. Christ, the all powerful, all knowing, every present God-Man who paid for our sins through his life, death and resurrection

Transition: *Now all the benefits which Christ has won for us come to us through faith.*

D. Faith: not mere intellectual assent, but a faith created by the Spirit through the Means of Grace and evidencing complete reliance upon God for eternal life.

Transition: *Let me check up on myself by asking a simple question.*

III. RESPONSE

A. Qualifying Question: Have I made myself clear?

Transition: *The BIG question is*

B. The Response: whatever the person responds

Transition: *before you respond, let me just share with you what response really entails.*

C. The clarification of response: whatever the situation calls for

Transition: *Perhaps we could sum up all the things that we have said in a word of thanks to our gracious God.*

- D. Faith: not mere intellectual assent, but a faith created by the spirit through the Means of Grace and evidencing complete reliance upon God for eternal life.

Transition: *Let me check up on myself by asking a simple question.*

III. RESPONSE

- A. Qualifying Question: Have I made myself clear?

Transition: *The BIG question is*

- B. The Response: whatever the person responds

Transition: *before you respond, let just share with you what response really entails.*

- C. The clarification of response: whatever the situation calls for

Transition: *Perhaps we could sum up all the things that we have said in a word of thanks to our gracious God.*

- D. Prayer of Thanks: fitting the situation

Transition: *Being with you has indeed been a beautiful experience. In a way I hate to see it come to a close but*

- E. The Close

OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL PRESENTATION - Kennedy

I. THE INTRODUCTION

- A. Their secular life
- B. Their church background
- C. Our church
- D. Testimony: personal or church
- E. Two Questions:
 - 1. Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you know for certain that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?
 - 2. Suppose that you were to die tonight and stand before God and He were to say to you, *Why should I let you into my heaven?*” What would you say?

II. THE GOSPEL

- A. Grace
 - 1. Heaven is a free gift
 - 2. It is not earned or deserved
- B. Man
 - 1. Is a sinner
 - 2. Cannot save himself
- C. God
 - 1. Is merciful - therefore doesn't want to punish us
 - 2. Is just - therefore must punish sin
- D. Christ
 - 1. Who He is - the infinite God-man
 - 2. What He did - He paid for our sins and purchased a place in heaven for us which he offers as a gift which may be received by
- E. Faith
 - 1. What it is not - mere intellectual assent nor temporal faith
 - 2. What it is - “trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation”

III. THE COMMITMENT

- A. The qualifying question
- B. The commitment question
- C. The clarification of commitment
- D. The prayer of commitment
- E. The assurance of salvation

**OPTIONAL OUTLINE: An Adaptation from Kennedy
Vincent**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Use the regular Introduction: secular background, their church background, your church, personal testimony
OR
- B. Use the Personal Religious Opinionaire (pg. 126)

II. THE GOSPEL PRESENTATION

- A. Grace!
 - 1. Eternal life is God's free gift
 - 2. It is neither deserved nor earned
- B. God!
 - 1. Made us
 - 2. Is merciful
 - 3. Is just and must punish sin
- C. Man:
 - 1. Rebels - playing and fighting God
 - 2. Cannot pay for his own sin
 - 3. Nor change his own heart
- D. Christ:
 - 1. Is the God-Man
 - 2. Lived a perfect life
 - 3. Died to pay for our sins and purchases a place for us in heaven
 - 4. Arose from the dead and gives eternal life
- E. Faith:
 - 1. Is not mere "blind," "head" or "now" belief
 - 2. Is turning in trust to Christ alone for eternal life with Him
 - 3. Is created by the Spirit through the Means of Grace
- F. Repentance:
 - 1. Is sorrow for our sins
 - 2. Is turning from them to God

III. THE COMMITMENT

- A. Qualifying question: “Does this make sense to you?”
- B. Commitment question: “Would you like to receive this gift of eternal life now?”
- C. Clarification of commitment
- D. Prayer of commitment

IV. THE IMMEDIATE FOLLOW-UP

- A. Assurance of salvation: (not in feelings or prayer, but in Christ Jesus and His Word, His work in you!)
- B. Realities of abundant life: Bible-reading, prayer, witness, church attacks by Satan, struggle, service, growth
- C. follow-up appointment

CHAPTER VII

THE INTRODUCTION

It has been said that as far as any call is concerned, “you make it or break it” in the early part of the call, in the first few minutes, in the introduction. We have heard experts in communication say that you can tell in the first few seconds of a conversation whether or not a person is going to be responsive. In a house call, it may well take more than a few seconds, but the introduction is so important that a few things about it need to be shared in general, before taking a look at its parts.

A. CHIT-CHAT

First of all, the key word in the introduction is LISTEN. That may seem like an oversimplification, but if we are going to engage in meaningful dialog with people we have to listen to what they have to say. A “DE” visit is more than the delivery of a message, a declamation. It is meant to be a conversation. Everyone knows what happens to a conversation that is one way! The same thing holds in an evangelism visit. The callers must listen to the person they are calling on to assess his needs, discover where he is at spiritually, emotionally, historically, psychologically, etc. etc. Listening should be both supportive and active, as in the first instance you not only show interest, but affirm the person’s attitude and situation, like in a response that might go like this: *“I hear what you are saying; that must indeed have been a trying time for you.”* By active listening, the hearer listens carefully to what the speaker is saying, and seeks to move on in the dialog by extending or expanding the conversation in a response that might go: *“You said that you have younger children than Susie who came to Sunday school last week. I’d like to hear about them too.”*

Listen

In our own listening habits we have developed a system of “shelving” certain information for later use, either in that particular call, or for a later visit, or even for recording on the report form back at the church. We have discovered that it may be better to “put an item on the shelf,” rather than to deal with it immediately and disturb the flow of the dialog, or to present a matter when the person may not be ready to deal with it. To illustrate this, we might suggest the following: you discover early in the conversation that the callee is opposed to infant baptism. We have discovered that it is often best to file that little bit of information, either for a later time in the presentation when you might be talking about the fact that our new relationship with God is free and cannot be earned, or when you are talking about the work of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament. If the situation dictates, it may be best to postpone dealing with that subject until a subsequent visit. Training and experience will dictate to the trainer the best route to go. In the reflection period after the call, the trainer will share with his trainees why he proceeded as he did. That’s the learning process described in the reflection part of the model as noted in an

Shelving

earlier chapter. Use the shelf, and bring the pertinent information down from the shelf at the appropriate time.

Listening is not important only in the introduction. One must listen throughout the dialog. In the introduction, however, it is important to get off on the right foot with the people you are visiting. If they discover you have not listened to what they have to say, you might as well pack up and go home. Why should they listen to you, if you do not listen to them? We have heard Dr. Kennedy say, "We listen, not only because listening is the key to being heard, but because we care." That's another important facet. Dialog Evangelism should be a ministry of loving, caring, sharing. Listening is a part of that.

Why listen?

Overlap

Listening will also help you discover what you have in common with the person on whom you are calling. Rev. Eldon Weisheit, former Associate Editor of the Lutheran Witness calls this the area of "overlap." That area may reflect your sharing the joys of grandparenting, of similar job classification, of having originated from the same town, of parallel likes or dislikes, of child rearing, etc. etc. Conversation proceeds best along the lines of commonality. A presenter will do well to use the entire Introduction section to build rapport, common interest, etc. This is best done in the chit-chat portion of the Introduction and the outline. It may be as long or as short as the trainer determines. But - he should not move ahead until he has determined that sufficient rapport has been established for moving onto the next portion of the presentation.

Cautions

Several dangers need to be avoided at this point. There is danger of hurrying too fast through the chit-chat to the talk about their church, your church, etc., etc. Sometimes, in fact, the trainer feels pressed by the presence of his trainees, whom he may feel are concerned that he is taking too much time talking about mundane things. On the other hand there is danger of too much chit-chat. The trainer, who is in charge of the visit, must, under the Spirit, determine just when he should move from the chit chat.

A more subtle delay in the chit-chat area can be effected by the callee who always seems to want to bring up one more experience, recount one more fishing trip, one more tale about the grandchildren. This happens especially when people are lonely and have perhaps not had a visitor in a long, long time. At that point, the trainer will have to reassess the purpose of the visit and may even determine that the best method of handling the visit might be to treat it as a listening visit, gain the confidence of the callee and return at some time in the immediate future.

Dealing With
Stated Opinion

A further caution might be noted here. In today's somewhat sophisticated and opinionated society, one can expect some very pointed statements that might

indeed be abrasive, or at least not be in agreement with your own, or the position of the church. It is well, therefore, to know how to handle such situations, or perhaps even some conflicts. By all means, an argument should be avoided. No one will be won to the Lord through debate. Rather, the trainer should be schooled to respond in fashion such as this: *"I can understand how you came to that conclusion,"* or *"It is certainly an interesting insight,"* etc. The way the trainer reacts by word and voice tone should reflect already that rapport which has been built up in the earlier minutes of the visit. His response will be made to react to that trust level that has already been built in the room.

Establish Contact

When the trainer deems that sufficient time has elapsed and enough dialog has been shared to move on, he will do so, not by saying, *"Well, we've come to the end of the first point in the outline!"*, but by using a transition that might go something like this: *"This surely has been an interesting conversation. I'm sure we could go on for a long time yet, but you may remember that when we came to the door we said we were coming to say that we were happy to have Susie in our Sunday school, and that we would like to talk about her and our Sunday school a bit."* It's very important to establish a contact (say why you are there) immediately. Visiting leaders should know why they are making a specific visit, and state it. To move beyond the contract, the trainer needs to ask permission. To demonstrate in the above: the contract is set up to talk about Susie and the Sunday school. That contract can be expanded by a simple permission question, as, *"Do you mind if I ask you a question about your own spiritual relationships?"* Changing and expanding the contract is easily done, but should never be done without permission. The trainer will share with his trainees his method and timing in changing the contract in the visit.

Their Church

When Evangelism Explosion was formed, most visits were made on people who were already members of some church. Now, of course, it has been expanded so that its outreach includes friends of the church, and even strangers. In any case, one soon discovers that most people in America have had some experience in church membership, church attendance or relationships. Most often they are willing to talk about it. We like to introduce the subject of their church relationship with a question like, *"Is this the first time that Susie has gone to a Lutheran Sunday school?"* Such a question will almost always bring an answer that leads to further dialog and discovery. If Susie's mother says, *"Oh yes, we wouldn't think of having our children in any other than a Lutheran Sunday school,"* you know how to proceed. If on the other hand she says, *"No we always send our children to the nearest and convenient Sunday school,"* or, *"Well, we really don't think it matters much where our children go, as long as they go somewhere,"* you know how to proceed. In either case, the response, *"oh"* will probably bring on more conversation and sharing from the callee.

The Nonresponsive

Of course, the trainer has to be ready for the callee who is nonresponsive,

noncommunicative. There may be good reason for that. It may be that the chit-chat period has been too short; it may be that the trainer has failed to capture the overlap; it may be that the trainer failed to involve a trainee when he discovered that the trainee had more in common with the callee than he, the trainer did - or it may just be that the callee is a very shy, retiring sort of person who doesn't speak much. Probably the most difficult of all calls are the ones in which the callee says little or nothing. The dialog then can easily turn into a declamation. The trainer will have to use all the skills at his disposal to make a worthwhile call. The use of the question method is probably most helpful at this point. On the other hand, the callee may just enjoy listening, and may be soaking up everything that is being shared. A common response is, *"Why, I've never heard that before."*

Whatever the case, the trainer will do his best to give ample time for the callee to share everything that he wants to about his personal church relationships, memberships, habits, etc., perhaps shelving most of it, but listening with interest to show care and to ready himself for further and future sharing.

Getting rid
of feelings

Sometimes people will use this opportunity to empty themselves of some very bad feelings about their former church, its pastor, about God and/or religion in general. Here too the trainer must be patient, he must listen, accept the feelings of the person and move on without denying the person the right to his feelings or without entering into the negative criticisms. A good way to avoid being trapped is to say something like this, *"Well, I wasn't there, but I can see that you are very upset about the entire matter, and I can understand your feelings."* If the trainer is the pastor, he may want to make a personal counseling appointment to air the matter. If the trainer is a lay person, he may suggest a visit with the pastor or elder, depending on the way things are done in your parish.

C. OUR CHURCH

Our Church

Only after sufficient time has elapsed in dialoging the person's former church relationships should the trainer move onto the next portion of the outline. He might use a transition something like this: *"It's interesting to hear all these things about your church background. I wonder if you would allow me to tell you some great things about our Sunday school (church)?"*

Transition

Take a few minutes at this point to note how smoothly we have moved into succeeding points of the outline. Turn back the pages to note how that was done in getting from the chit-chat to their church, and then recall from above how we moved from their church to our church. The progression is natural, not forced. Of course, in telling about your church, we cannot expect a lot of dialog. Here we are "telling." The way to include the callee in this portion of the sharing is to ask a number of questions to determine what the callee knows about your church, its ministry and programs, his interests and needs. Again,

the listening ear will be of GREAT help and utmost importance. Depending upon the person's interest you may talk about the music program of the church, its educational program, its ministry to youth, or again, its community involvement, its worship life, its interest in the world mission - whatever comes to mind and seems pertinent in the visit. A printed brochure of the Church might well be used at this point to give some visual information, break up the monotony or oral dialog and at the same time put a piece into the hands of the callee which might help him when you leave.

Caution

The trainer will need to learn that this point does not give him license to praise the program of his own church to such a degree that he sounds as if he were bragging, or that his church is truly the very epitome of church life. In all honesty and with dignity, he can simply share the great things that are going on at the church. Worse is the situation that we discover when people are forced to admit that "there really isn't much going on at our church."

Move On

Discussion about 'our' church gives beautiful opportunity, when time is ripe, to move into the next point of the outline: testimony, personal or church. It could go something like this, *"You know, I'm telling you about all these things about our church, because I have found that our church has been such a spiritually uplifting place for me."* A simple sentence such as this allows for smooth movement in the dialog.

D. TESTIMONY: PERSONAL, CHURCH

The use of testimony in the LCMS has not been that popular in years past, and may still be difficult for some, whether that testimony is of the personal or church nature. We Lutherans seemingly have always been frightened that our testimony might come off as bragging, or might point to our own selves, instead of to the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, that is true. It could happen. On the other hand, personal or church testimony is often the strongest point in favor of the presenter - to share with the callee that he, the presenter, "has been there." To illustrate, it would be very hard for this writer to talk about what it's like to be president of a large corporation, because he's never been one! On the other hand, he can tell you what it's like to be a Christian, because he has been one since the day of his baptism at about 13 days of age.

Testimony

As a matter of fact, it might be well at this point to share my testimony. You see, I have never had what some people refer to as a "personal religious experience." I have never seen spiritual lightening, heard holy thunder or spiritual bells ringing in my head. I'm a plain, ordinary Lutheran of old stock. Nothing has ever happened to me - except at my baptism - and that's where it all happened. That's where my sainted father introduced me in a special way to the mercy of God through the Spirit's power at work in me through water and the Word. Through the years, that same Spirit has been at work in me - through that same Word and the Sacraments, molding, shaping, forgiving, loving, upbuilding, rescuing. That's my personal testimony - and I want the

world to know; and I assume that it parallels that of many an old-line long-time Lutheran.

But I can use that testimony as part of my Gospel sharing. When I have talked about “our” church, as above, it’s easy to say, *“I have found that at our church there’s something for everybody. I know that’s true in my case. I have found that the small group Bible Study has been most stimulating to me, and has been a real boost to my spiritual life.”* With that introduction, I can tell about the worship, the fellowship, the prayer breakfasts - all kinds of things that have strengthened my spiritual life.

Church Testimony

If I am moved to be less personal, I can simply share that the things going on at our church have had a real spiritual impact on a lot of people who seem to be growing spiritually. Our worship attendance is up; more people are coming to Holy Communion; more people are involved in the various ministries in the neighborhood, and in support of the world mission, etc., etc.

Content of Testimony

It should be noted here that people who strongly suggest the use of personal testimony indicate that such testimony should be of three parts: 1) how it was before I came to know the Lord; 2) how I came to know the Lord, 3) what it’s like now that I know the Lord. I believe all three of those elements can be found in my own testimony. Before I came to know the Lord I was lost in sin, born a child of wrath, even as others, without hope. In my baptism I was folded into His Kingdom - and He has been working in me every day since! Problem is, most of us simply have not been talking about it.

Example: Paul

The Apostle Paul uses personal testimony much in His Epistles. As a special assignment this week, on your own, read through several shorter epistles, and note how Paul time and time again refers to what God has done in and through him,. He is not silenced. Naturally he gives all glory to God, and would focus attention on HIM, not on himself. That is as it should be. We can do that too in our personal or church testimony. There can be real strength in that part of the sharing session. To keep the people on whom you are calling from becoming nothing more than a listener, you might interject your testimony with questions such as, *“I wonder if you have made the same discovery about yourself as I have,”* or, *I wonder if what happened to me has ever happened to you?”*

E. THE TWO QUESTIONS

If ever there is criticism of the Evangelism Explosion method or its offspring, it flows from the use of the two diagnostic questions. Most of the criticism comes from an academic rather than a practical use of the questions, so much so that we must digress to make some personal observations. We personally have had little difficulty in using the questions when we have followed the procedures above; have talked long enough with the person to discover where he is as a person; have talked about his church, our church, and our own

spiritual life and situations, etc. The only time we have had difficulty with the questions is when we have used them without having earned the right to do so, when we have moved in too fast, when we have not been hearing what the person has said, when we have been more interested in speaking than listening, etc., etc. In most instances we have found the questions to be most helpful. We have learned that they are not meant to place us in judgment of a fellow human, but that they serve as a bridge into the message that we want to share. While a person's answers to the questions might help you diagnose his spiritual stance, you do not use the diagnosis other than as an added piece of information for the shelf. Whatever answer the person gives to the two questions, you use it to get into the message.

Actually, there are only 8-10 different ways that people will answer the diagnostic questions. It takes some practice to learn how to receive a person's answer, and to use his answer as a way to get into the message. DE determined that the best way to do this is to actually illustrate, in capsule form, how to use the questions, and the given answers, to get to the message itself. The following box will illustrate the more common answers by situation. Note that persons never give wrong or right answers to the questions, although we personally have heard person after person, in reporting a call say that "*He gave a wrong answer to the first question.*" The answers basically indicate that a person is sure/not sure of going to heaven, and he is going to get there either by grace, or by works. The following illustrations seek to categorize these answers for the user/teacher/trainee.

USING TWO QUESTIONS TO GET INTO THE GOSPEL

1. Have you come to the point in your spiritual life where if you were to die tonight you would know for certain that you would go heaven?
2. If you were to die tonight and God were to say, "Why should I let you into My heaven?" What would you say?

<u>SITUATION</u>	<u>QUESTION I</u>	<u>QUESTION II</u>
A	Not sure	Works
B	Not sure	Grace
C	Sure	Works
D	Sure	Grace
E	I don't know	
F	I Wouldn't Be That Presumptuous	
G	I'm an Atheist, I Don't Believe in God	
H	I Don't Believe in Heaven	

SITUATION A

“Not sure - Works”

- BZ: Mary, may I ask you a question? Have you come to the point in your spiritual life, etc.
- Mary: No, I'm not really sure. I don't really think anybody can be sure.
- BZ: Mary, I have good news for you tonight, I can share with you that you can be sure and I'd like to do that. Would you let me?
- Mary: Sure
- BZ: Before I do that, Mary, let me ask you another Question, O.K.? If you were to die tonight and stand before God, etc.
- Mary: Well, I suppose all I could tell Him was that I had tried my very best, etc.
- BZ: Mary, when I came here tonight I knew that I had good news for you. Now that I have heard your answer to that second question, I really know that I have good news.

You see, Mary, heaven doesn't depend at all on what we do, because Heaven is a free gift. It is neither earned nor deserved.

SITUATION B

“Not sure - Grace”

- BZ: Mary, may I ask you a question? Have you come to the point in your spiritual life, etc.
- Mary: I'm not sure.
- BZ: May I share with you how you can be sure?
- Mary: Yes.
- BZ: Before I do so Mary, could I ask you another question? If you were to die tonight and stand before God etc.
- Mary: I guess I would have to say that if God let me in, it would simply be because of His goodness. I certainly haven't done anything to deserve it.
- BZ: Mary, that's the good news that I have come to share with you tonight. Heaven doesn't depend at all on what we do. It does depend on God's goodness. Heaven is a free gift which is neither earned nor deserved.

SITUATION C

“Sure - Works”

- BZ: Mary, may I ask you a question? Have you come to the point in your spiritual life, etc.
- Mary: Yes, I'm absolutely sure. There's no doubt in my mind. I know I would go to heaven, etc.
- BZ: Mary, that is really good news. I'm so happy to hear that. As a matter of fact, I don't hear it very often. Isn't it wonderful that we can sit here

how and share the assurance we have of our relationship with Jesus and our certainty of heaven? Before we do that, however, let me ask you another question, O.K.?

Mary: Sure.

BZ: Mary, if you were to die tonight and stand before God, etc.

Mary: Well I'd tell Him that I certainly have done the best I could. I have taught Sunday school, etc.

BZ: I can understand how you feel about all of those things. They are indeed commendable. However, I must share with you that God in His Word informs us that what we do really has nothing to do with our certainty of heaven. You see, Mary, God in His Word says that heaven is a free gift. It is neither earned nor deserved.

(There are other ways of handling this. You might, by personal testimony, assure Mary that you too would like to think that you have something to offer in terms of your relationship with God and your certainty of heaven. However, you have come to discover that works just won't do the job.)

SITUATION D

"Sure - Grace"

BZ: Mary, may I ask you a question? Have you come to the point in your spiritual life, etc.

Mary: Yes, I'm absolutely certain that if I were to die tonight I would be with God in heaven. No question about it.

BZ: Mary, that's really fantastic, and I thank God that we can sit here now to spend the next few minutes sharing with each other how we might be so sure of heaven and our continuing beautiful relationship here and in eternity as God's children. May I do that?

Mary: Sure.

BZ: Mary, before I do that may I ask you another question? If you were to die tonight and stand before God, etc.

Mary: I would simply say that Jesus is my Savior who died for me, paid for all of my sins, and assures me of new relationships with God forever and ever.

BZ: Mary, that is really great to hear. Now we can truly rejoice as we share together the Good News that heaven is a free gift which is neither earned nor deserved.

SITUATION E

"I don't know"

(There are three ways to handle the "I Don't Know" answer)

1. What do you think you would say?
2. What has been the position of the Christian Church down through the ages in relation to this question?
3. Let me share with you what the Christian Church down through the ages has said

SITUATION F

“I wouldn’t be that presumptuous”

(This is really a works answer, and would indicate that a person is relying on something other than the great grace of God.)

Accordingly when question 1 is answered with a nonpresumptuous attitude, a good answer is, “that’s precisely the truth!” We cannot presume on such certainty except by God’s grace. It is His love and mercy alone which gives us that certainty - and nothing we ourselves can do.)

SITUATION G

“I’m an Atheist, I don’t believe in God”

(You have already blown it! You should not ask the question, if you have not earned the right to do so.

If we discover that a person has no belief in God, we will ask the question, *how do you believe that man gets right with his fellow men?”*

Of course, we know that he can get right with his fellow man only after he is right with God. We will seek an opportunity to share that with the callee, by way of testimony.)

SITUATION H

“I don’t believe in Heaven.”

(You’ve already blown it! You shouldn’t have asked the question, if you have not earned the right to do so.

In situations such as this we switch the entire questioning process to

something like this: *What have you discovered to be the most important thing in your life?*” After the person shares and we have opportunity to affirm, we will ask this question: *“May I share with you some of the things that I have discovered to be very important to me?”*

At that point we will seek to get into a Gospel presentation, again by way of personal testimony and the Gospel outline from the Seven Important Truths tract.)

F. BRIDGE

We have included the GRACE section of Explosion’s GOSPEL in the introduction, and have called it BRIDGE to the MESSAGE. There is good reason for this. First of all, note that we call the second portion of the presentation Message rather than Gospel. The reason for this is basically one of definition of GOSPEL. For many within our church, it seemed that there was a juxtaposition in the Explosion outline of Gospel/Law/Gospel in the second section. To most it seemed that a presentation was beginning with the Good News, rather than the Law which depicts a person’s need FOR that Good News. Actually, if our understanding of Explosion is correct, the section GRACE was simply meant as transition, in response to the unsure/words answers that are so often given to the questions. Note in the situations above that the sentence(s) “haven is a free gift, neither earned nor deserved” is repeated in each situation. It works in beautifully - no matter what answer is given to the questions.

Change From EE

After that transitional statement has been made, the presenter has every opportunity to expand on that statement with the callee. If the word heaven is not the one to use, the trainer can use one that seems better fitted to the situation. Other words have been substituted - reconciliation, being right with God, eternal life, Sonship - all have connotations which need explanation. WE simply use the term heaven in the outline to have a point of reference, an identifying word. If it does not fit in the call, we simply use another word, but pick up on the answers given to the two questions.

Other Words

Whatever the terminology, man’s new life, the abundant life, heavenly citizenship is his simply because God gives him that new life as a gift of His love and grace. Scripture asserts that in passages like Acts 15:11, Rom. 3:24; 5:15; 11:6; Titus 2:11; 3:7. In the presentation, the presenter will joyfully hold out the truth that all this is free, free, free - in a world where nothing is free, in a world where we are used to earning our way or our honors, where even the air we breathe no longer is free, what with the cost of anti-pollution devices, etc. One thing only is free: the great Gift of God to man.

One Thing Is Free

Certainly, because heaven is free, one cannot say it is deserved. As a matter of fact, man has earned just the opposite. Job 4:8; Prov. 22:8; Hos. 8:7; Gal.

Not Deserved

6:7-8; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:2-3; Gen. 3:19; Rom. 5:12 all point to man's deserving something else from God other than the new and abundant life with Him, now and forever. Today man understands the axiom of getting what he deserves. If man got from God what he justly deserves, there would be no hope for him at all.

Not Earned

Not only does he not deserve heaven, but he cannot get there by himself. He cannot earn it. Of course neither then would it be a gift, for what is earned is no longer a gift. To support this position, Scripture adds a number of indicators that point to the insufficiency of works in meriting salvation.

Matt. 7:22-23; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-5.

Proceed With Care

It is very important that the trainer spend sufficient time here to assure himself that the callee understands that he cannot earn his way into a new relationship with God, into heaven because it's just not done that way. The Bible assures us that all this is free, undeserved, given, not earned. Unless the callee sees this clearly, there is little use in proceeding. If the callee should say, "*I don't get it; I don't believe it, I don't see how it can be,*" the trainer may best proceed by suggesting something like this, *Well, you are not alone, my friend. many people have difficulty accepting the fact that heaven is free, undeserved, not earned. Would you let me share with you what I believe about it from Scripture?*" With permission, you can proceed to share sin and grace in the balance of the message portion. You might want to include, in any case, the concept that reconciliation is effected by God - through His working in us, not through our searching for Him - II Cor. I 5:18; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20; Heb. 2:17.

By this time one might correctly conclude that a Dialog Evangelism call could last longer than 15 minutes. Recap what has gone on in the call so far. You have talked about every day interests; you have talked about their church and yours; you have given testimony, personal or church; you have asked the two diagnostic questions; you have proceeded to and through the transition which will now get you into the sharing of sin and grace. It is the second portion of the outline, the message, to which we direct your attention now.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MESSAGE

The message is the heart of the visit, without doubt. All of the other important items notwithstanding, the message is the medium by which the Holy Spirit can convict a person of his sin, and bring him to faith in the redeeming grace of God. The trainer and trainees will therefore give special attention to the message, both as to content and presentation. The burden of this chapter will be to present important facets of the message.

Message Begins
With Law

After the transition which points to the fact that heaven is a free gift which can neither be earned nor deserved, the message begins with a Law orientation, sharing the truth that the Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, the only Savior for mankind. This presentation of Law/Gospel should be done just as clearly as possible for it is through the Word and the working of the Holy Spirit, and through that medium alone that a person will be brought to the faith. In preparing the trainer/teacher for presentation of the message, we would share a number of items that have come to our attention in the past years of our experience in Dialog Evangelism.

God Alone
Works Faith

First of all, it needs to be stated that Scripture teaches that faith is worked in the heart of man in only one way, through the working of the Holy Spirit as He works through the Means of Grace. Nothing dare be done in the call, either to hinder or impede the Spirit's work, or to manipulate the Spirit or the person being called upon. The Seed of the Word must be sown carefully, and with an eye toward the harvest, but never forced. It may have to be said over and over again that man contributes nothing to his salvation. Even the faith by which he confesses is worked in his heart by the Holy Spirit. Man is totally incapable of believing on his own. he can do nothing to help himself. He does not even cooperate with God. God does all.

Full Gospel

Secondly, the Gospel must be presented in such a way that the listener understands that the Christian life is not a "pie-in-the-sky" religion which busies itself about the daily needs of life, but which really only keeps one eye fixed on eternity. The Gospel is for today. Already we have citizenship in heaven; already we have been given the abundant life; already we have been born again, at our baptism. Christ lives in and through the life of the Christian NOW as the Christian lives out the victorious life he has in Christ. Indeed, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17)

Man's Real State

Thirdly, the presenter will need to be able to present a clear picture of sin and man's condemnation under the Law. We have come to believe that this section of the message is oftentimes glossed over, a tragedy indeed. On the other

hand, it may be the most difficult part of the message to share. Sin needs to be presented in all its awfulness. Man needs to be presented in his dire need, totally depraved, unable to help himself, a lost and condemned creature. Man needs to be shown as a complete failure in his effort to save himself, to be shown that even his righteousness are as filthy rags, and that all the little straw gods that he erects for himself, morality, integrity, good parentage, honesty, etc. avail nothing before a just and holy God. The sinfulness of sin must be declared, together with its dire, eternal consequences.

Admittedly this is not always that easy to do. The presenter can hardly present himself in a “holier than thou” attitude, to preach at the listener. We have found that a method that works for us goes something like this: *Heaven is a free gift, neither earned nor deserved. You know that really becomes more marvelous when I take a look at myself and see how many mistakes I have made in my life, and still make every day.* (Note: Transition from Introduction to Message!) *I’ve made lots of mistakes, haven’t you? I think of my mistakes as a husband, as a father, etc., etc., etc. You know the Bible has a special word for these mistakes. it calls these mistakes sin.*” We do that because the word sin is a loaded word in our English usage. We want to introduce it as above, and show our own personal involvement in it, without first coming down hard on the person who is listening to the message. We suggest each develop him own open door to get into the sharing about the sin that besets us.

Fourthly, the presenter will be ready to present in-depth presentations on almost any subject that is related to the Gospel, and which might come up in the call. The call might lead to some in-depth dialog about the resurrection, repentance or forgiveness. Additionally, the trainer will seek to highlight the Means of Grace, Word and Sacrament, in his presentation, as well as the excitement of the Christian life. He can hardly expect to cover all of these facts in every call, but his cup should be filled so that he can sip from its fullness as every need arises. To illustrate, we might share that we have personally made entire message presentations around the concept of baptism, the child is a sinner, flesh of flesh; just as it cannot feed itself, so it cannot save itself; God loves that little child, and yet demands that payment also be made for its sin; He himself makes the payment in the name of Christ who suffered and died for the child; indeed, He Himself works faith in that child through the water and the Word, by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The whole message outline can be tailored to a baptismal emphasis, an emphasis on the Lord’s Supper or any other accent that may develop as a prime need of the listening individual.

To assist the learner we will share some further concepts, and particularly some Bible passages which may be used in presenting various emphases or part of the message itself. It is not supposed that all passages covering every subject are here presented; some are presented, simply by way of example.

Illustration

Trainer Responds
to Situation

Developing
The Message

neither is it the author's intention to rewrite the entire corpus of dogma of the LCMS. Indeed, each teaching pastor will do well to teach his learners in some detail, and in his own way. The concepts that are presented here following are offered as helps to the learning layperson with the prayer that they might expand his vision and help him develop his message.

Choose Your
Own Passages

It might be said here that we personally believe that each trainee should determine a large number of the Bible passages for his personal use. He should fill his truck with many, many Bible passages so that he can use these as God gives occasion. We like to think of this illustration: a plumber drives up to the house to do his job. He doesn't bring the whole truck load of tools into the house - but he has most everything he needs in that truck. He assesses the situation, then returns to the truck to get the tools he needs. The Gospel presenter has a whole truckload full of passages at his disposal. As he finds opportunity, he pulls each passage off the storage shelf, using it inductively, deductively or as proof passage, teaching tool, etc., etc. The following will give the learner much Bible food or part of the message itself.

MAN IS A SINNER

- a) sin's origin - I John 3:8; II Peter 2:4
- b) sin is passed on - Rom. 5:12-21; Rom. 5:18
- c) man by nature is corrupt - Gen. 6:5; Gen. 8:21; Eph. 2:3
- d) even depraved - Rom. 3:23; Rom. 7:18; Luke 11:13; Job 14:4
- e) sin blinds man - Eph. 4:18; I Cor. 2:14
- f) sin leads man to be prone to evil -
Rom. 8:7; Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21; Ps. 14:3
- g) sin enslaves man - Rom. 7:23-24; Rom. 6:17,20; Rom. 3:9-10
- h) actual sin - Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:9; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:11
- i) sins of commission - Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 3:13-15
- j) sins of omission - James 4:17; Rom. 1:21; Rom. 3:12
- k) sins in thought - Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 5:28; I John 3:15
- l) consequences of sin - Eph. 2:19/983; Gal. 6:8
- m) man condemned by the Law - Rom. 7:7; Rom. 3:19-20

- n) sin brings its penalty - Rom. 6:23; Rom. 5:12; Prov. 11:19
- o) penalty sometimes delayed -
Is. 48:9; Gen. 15:16; Luke 13:7-9; I Pet. 3:20
- p) punishment inevitable - Amos 9:2; Prov. 11:21; Jer. 11:11; I Thess. 5:3
- q) sin separates from God - Is. 59:2; Josh. 7:11-12; Hos. 5:6
- r) sin holds man in bonds - Prov. 5:22; John 8:34; Rom. 6:16; Rom. 7:23
- s) sin brings judgment - Ps. 9:16; Ezek.. 25:11; Mal. 3:5
- t) man sows what he reaps - Gal. 6:7 Ps. 62:12; I Pet. 1:17

MAN CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF - Eph. 2:1,5; Col. 2:13; II Cor. 3:5

GOD IS A JUST AND HOLY GOD - Lev. 19:2; Is. 6:3; Ex. 15:11; I Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 15:4; Ps. 145:17; Josh. 24:19

- a) He deals according to His Grace - Ps. 103:10; Rom. 3:22-24; Rom. 6:23; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 11:6; Gal. 3:18; Eph. 2:8-9
- b) He judges in conformity with His Laws - Ps. 19:9; Rom. 2:5-6; I Peter 1:17; Ps. 89:14

GOD IS A MERCIFUL LOVING GOD - I John 4:16; Jer. 31:3; Matt. 1:23

- a) He deals according to His Grace - Ps. 103:10; Rom. 3:23-24; Rom 6:23; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 11:6; Gal. 3:18; Eph. 2:8-9
- b) He is filled with mercy - Ps. 68:5; Is. 49:13; Luke 1:54; Luke 6:26; Eph. 2:4; Ex. 34:6

JESUS CHRIST - WHO HE IS!

- a) Son of God from eternity - Matt. 17:5; John 20:17; Ps. 2:7; Micah. 5:2; John 8:58; John 1:1
- b) Only begotten Son - John 1:14; John 1:18
- c) True God - Jer. 23:6; John 20:28; John 1:1-2; I Tim. 3:15; I John, 5:20
- d) Omnipotent (all powerful) - John 1:2-3

e) Omnipresent (ever present) - Matt. 28:20; Eph. 1:23

f) Omniscient (all Knowing) - Col. 2:3

THE SON - WHAT HE DID!

a) kept the law - Heb. 10:7; Matt. 5:a7; Rom. 5:a9

b) suffered passively - Phil. 2:8; Is. 53:4-7; I Tim. 2:6

c) suffered as my substitute - II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

d) active suffering - Luke 18:32; Luke 23:235-39; Matt. 27:27-30; Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:6-8; I John 3:16; Is. 53:12; Matt. 27:46; John 1:29; Is. 53:5-7

e) died - Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:6-8; I John 3:16; Is. 53:12; Matt. 27:46

f) He rose again - Mark 16:6; Matt. 17:23; Rom. 8:34; II Cor. 5:15; Matt. 28:5-6; Rom. 6:4,9

g) to pay for sins - I John 2:2; I John 1:7; Titus 2:14

h) for all people - II Cor. 5:14-15,19; John 1:29; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 2:9; I Tim. 2:6

i) to reconcile man to God - II Cor. 5:18-19; Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Gal. 1:20

j) still intercedes - Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1-2; Heb. 7:25; John 17:9, 20

FAITH IS NOT MERE INTELLECTUAL ASSENT - James 2:19; Matt. 8:29; Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41

a) faith is complete trust and reliance on God for salvation - John 1:12, 16; Acts 10:42; Gal. 2:16-20; Acts 16:31; John 20:31; Rom. 9:33; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8; Gal. 3:24

b) faith is worked by the Holy Spirit - John 6:29; Col. 2:12; Heb. 12:2; Eph. 2:1, 5; I Cor. 12:3

c) faith is worked by the Spirit through the means of Grace - Rom. 10:17; John 17:20; I Cor. 1:21; Titus 3:5; Matt. 26:28

When a person has been filled with the Spirit to share such concepts as listed above, and others that he himself will develop, he will have much to share in

dialog with his listener. From his own study of the Word he will be able to share from the mercies of God those truths that the Spirit leads him to share on his visit; indeed he will be able to teach his trainees the fullness of God's love in Christ and truths as revealed in the Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER IX

THE RESPONSE

People acquainted with Evangelism Explosion will note the change of terminology in the third point of the Outline in DE. We believe the change is significant. In our personal involvement with EE and people in that ministry, as well as in Lutheran circles we found continuing difficulty with the terminology in the Outline. Commitment is a word like grace. It has many, many meanings. When one roars down the runway, fastened to his seat in a large jet, he is committed. No doubt about it! A young man takes the hand of his bride at the altar. He is committed. A Christian makes a statement of intent to support the ministry of the church with a stated number of dollars per week, and he feels committed.

A person makes an evangelism call, returns to say, "I got a commitment," or, "I didn't get a commitment!" What does that mean? We have discovered that it can mean ALL KINDS OF THINGS, sometimes even depending on the needs of the reporting person. Now while the obvious shades of difference in reporting responses will not be eliminated, at least the overtones of the word 'commitment' that for some smacks of a Reformed decision theology or a synergistic influence may be silenced. We contend that there is always a response to the visit - from a 'nobody home', to an out-right refusal, to a no-interest, little interest or a full confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

For some, the response section will still present some problems, particularly if one never gets his evangelism out of the classroom. One can theologize, verbalize, systematize for ever and ever. Words are like that. However, when one gets out into the world of people where evangelism is done one senses the working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of people through the Word - and miracles can happen right before one's eyes. Any kind of miracle is hard to accept second or third hand. So the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit! Firsthand one can rejoice in His miraculous dealing with men, even as He has promised that the Word will accomplish that to which it has been sent. At the same time, it would be well to air, briefly, the concerns that need to be reckoned within the response area.

There is fear on the part of some that this area might lead to a structuring or a manipulating of the Holy Spirit. That is true. IT MIGHT. It is also true that some Sunday school teachers might sometime be guilty of sharing just a few false concepts with the children in their Sunday school class. People in the parish just might have a false notion of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper and believe that the bread is turned into body, etc. You don't close down your Sunday school or stop the celebration. You teach, instruct, trust and act. So, the teacher/pastor will instruct his evangelists in the proper distinction

What Does It Mean?

Problems For Some

THEOLOGICAL CONCERNS

between Law and Gospel, in waiting on the Spirit's work and trusting on the Spirit's guidance. We must not manipulate the Spirit, or the persons on whom we are making the call. Either is absolutely wrong. Scripture allows only for the working of the Spirit of God in the heart of man to bring that person to faith through the Means of Grace at His own time, in His own way.

Do Not Limit
The Spirit

There is another side to this problem however. In our effort to avoid a semblance of interfering with the Spirit's work, we may have failed to give a person opportunity to express that which the Holy Spirit has already worked in him. While we must say that we cannot structure the Spirit, neither dare we limit Him. Who is to say that the Spirit cannot, or has not already worked in the heart of a person? Sometimes the Word has been locked away in the heart of a person for years and years, and the Spirit uses your presence and presentation to unlock the door that has been shut. The person is reclaiming what has been hidden for a long time. On the other hand, if the Spirit is as powerful as we claim, and we believe He is, He can work wonders in the heart of a person very quickly, bringing him to a simple childlike faith and trust.

Illustration

Let us share one simple illustration that we have used frequently. In dealing with the work of the Spirit, we note that we believe that the Spirit operates Sunday mornings in our worship at a given time and place through the Means of Grace. Who is to limit the working of the Spirit to the hour of worship? Cannot the Spirit work on Thursday evening in the living room of an individual when you are representing Christ and bringing to that person the fullness of God's redemption in Him? We have often said that we believe a personal presentation of the Good News can be more productive than a general scattering of it over the heads of several hundred people gathered together in a large worship gathering. Limit not the Spirit. He can do what He wills. He blows where He listeth. That needs to be accepted also in the sharing of the Good News in the home.

Perhaps it bears repeating once more. Who knows but that the presenter is sharing with a person who is ready to explode with joyful confession of faith? Who knows who has preceded the presenter in a given situation? What personal family situation? What television message, radio sermon? Neighborhood sharing? Personal invitation? And God sent you at just the right time to pluck the already ripened harvest. What a travesty therefore if you were to fail to gather in the harvest that God has already ripened. The tension, therefore, for the caller is, under the Spirit, to ascertain where the person is in his spiritual relationship and respond in such a way that he is relating to that person's immediate need.

Incidentally, Jesus gave Peter the opportunity to respond to His presence in the John account (Chapter 21). Very pointedly, Jesus asks Peter whether he loved Him. To say that Jesus in His omniscience knew that Peter already believed would simply be to beg the question. Believing needs confession. So in the

living room. We let the believing person confess by giving him such opportunity. At worship, people are given opportunity to respond to the message in the offertory. Every preaching pastor prays that his message take root and bear fruit. What difference is there in the living room? Does not Matthew 10:32 apply today?

OTHER
DIFFICULTY

WE dare to suggest that the failure to seek response, or to recognize it stems from other than theological grounds. We are honest enough to say that we feel that many are simply afraid to ask for a response. They are afraid that if the person says, "no," they will suffer personal defeat and the agony of another turn down, something to be avoided at all costs. On the other hand, there may be those who fear lest the person might respond positively. We are reminded to the young man who in a clinic once said, "*I'm not afraid that they might say 'no.' I'm afraid that they might say 'yes.' What do I do then?*" Of course, the well equipped, well trained presenter will have learned to handle most cases, and will be that honest, that should something arise that he cannot handle, he will postpone the handling of it until he can get help for the situation. We have personally appreciated the honesty of those who have not hidden behind any smoke screens, but have in all honesty simply confessed their fears connected with seeking a response.

FAILURE TO
SEEK RESPONSE

In diagnostic work with congregations that have used EE and DE and have failed, we so often find that these congregations have failed to seek response. They have "sown the seed," without an eye to the harvest. Their philosophy has been, "all we have to do is get the Word out and the Lord will take care of the rest." That is one of these delightful half-truths that, standing alone, can be a beautiful way out. Remember that we stated above that the farmer always sows his seed with the expectancy of reaping. Why should the sowing of the Seed of the Word be any different? We have the promises of the Almighty Himself that there will be fruit in its season; we even pray that He sent forth laborers into His harvest; what a joy to be a reaper for the harvest of the Lord.

A. THE QUALIFICATION QUESTION

EE asks a question at this point that roughly states, "Does this make sense to you?" or, "Do you understand what I have been sharing?" In our experience, and at the suggestion of a brother sharer, we have found what we believe to be a better way of asking the qualifying question. The EE question places the burden on the person who is being called on. It can be a belittling question to him. If he does not say so, he may at least feel that he better respond in the positive or else come off as one who has not been paying much attention, or who at best is a rather slow learner. I prefer to shift the weight of responsibility on myself, away from the hearer, and so I ask the question, "Have I made myself clear on this point?" That suggests that I am risking

asking whether I have done the job, whether I have explained, etc., etc.

Actually, the qualifying question is asked of the listener to give him a chance to respond to your sharing, and your opportunity to check on your presentation and explanation. It should not be held off till the end of the presentation, as if at that point to ask ONE BIG question to determine that you have done the job. The question should be asked over and over again, perhaps at least once in each major point in the presentation, for example, at the end of the section on sin. It might well be best to ask at that point whether or not you have done the job in explaining that ALL men have sinned, without exception, and that man is totally incapable of saving himself.

Ask It Often

The answer to the qualifying question will pretty well determine the next move of the presenter. If you have not done the job in explaining (you have determined that when the listener responds in a way which will indicate he hasn't grasped the concept), you will then determine an alternate route - perhaps a return visit, perhaps a Bible correspondence course, perhaps a visit to the pastor's class, perhaps enrollment in a small group Bible Study, or perhaps nothing more than the offer to come again, or keep the person in mind and in service. Sensing the response, the presenter will move ahead and ask the appropriate question or questions, or even phrase the response in a summary statement, like, "I feel that you are ready to confess Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, etc., etc."

Answer Determines
Direction

B. ASKING THE QUESTION

There are any number of ways to give a person a chance to respond to the presentation. If you have been dialoging well, the person will have been responding all along, both vocally and with empathy, perhaps even with body language. Bearing all that in mind, the presenter will proceed.

Let us suppose that the time in the presentation has come for an honest question concerning the person's faith in the Lord Jesus. The questions I ask are determined by the level of trust, the level of personal relationship, etc., etc. that has been worked out in the call or prior dialog. It might go something like this: *"Well, the big question is, 'How do you feel about all these things that we have been talking about?'"* or, *"Do you believe, as I do, that Jesus is your personal Lord and Savior?"* or, *"Would you like to join me and the whole Christian church in confessing that Jesus is your personal Savior and Lord?"*

Samples of Questions

We like the latter, and use it for a number of reasons: 1) join me - I never like to ask someone to commit himself to that to which I am not already committed; 2) the whole Christian church - the Body of Life that is so

necessarily a part of Christian commitment and understanding; 3) confessing - owning up to, saying that He is, admitting to; 4) Jesus Christ - the One and Only, Who saves; 6) Personal - no one is saved by the faith of another; 7) Lord - when Christ becomes our Savior he must also become our Lord, and the Christian joins Paul in saying that in Christ all things have become new (II Cor. 5:17) and for me to live is Christ indeed (Phil. 1:21). To confess Christ as Savior without acknowledging His Lordship is contradictory.

What It Means To Be A Christian

On the other hand, if a person is responding positively to the presentation and seeks to join in confessing Jesus, or is already one who does, it is well to rehearse just what the Christian life is all about. Here is real opportunity for dealing with the sanctified life. To be a believer is more than just saying I believe. It means to live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, to commit your way to Him.

It is at this point that we deal basically in participles. We share that a confessing Christian seeks to be a growing person, a reading, serving, giving, loving, caring person. There are two dangers, at least, that must be avoided here. One is overload. While sharing the need to recognize that Christianity involves life as well as lip, one cannot expect a tender plant to bear immediate fruit. Such anticipation may be more the problem of the presenter than of the listener, however, and should be dealt with on that basis. Someone has said that while the Holy Spirit can take a few moments to bring a person to a confession of faith, it often takes a lifetime for that person to grow into a mature disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ! More of this will be dealt with in the chapter on follow-up/nurture/discipleship.

The second difficulty stems from a danger to turn the Gospel into a new law. The person being called on cannot be led to think that he is earning his way. Indeed, if this is not correctly presented, the person being called on might well say, *"I thought you said all this was free. Now you want me to serve, to give, to study."* A clear presentation indicating that one responds joyfully to what God has done in him needs to be made. All the things that a new person in Christ does, he seeks to do because of that which Christ has already done in Him. The presenter will be very sensitive to the needs of the callee in this section. many things that have been shelved or shared earlier in the visit, will go into the determination of the procedure that the visitor will follow.

D. PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We carefully avoid any indication that Jesus comes into the heart through prayer. He comes through Word and Sacrament. These alone are the Means of Grace. Of course, we might well ask for a full measure of His spirit and the effectual working of that Spirit in the heart of an individual. But we do not pray "to receive Christ," as such. We rather give thanks in our prayer for the

working of the Spirit thought the Word and/or Sacrament, and ask His continued blessing and work as we live under that Word.

The prayer of Thanksgiving, therefore, might well include thanksgiving for the free gift of heaven, for God's grace, for the gift of His Son, for the faith that He works in us and to which He brought us, indeed for the working of a positive response, no matter how small, in our heart. A prayer of praise will indeed be in place.

THE CLOSE

The visitor will endeavor to do all in his power to do a good job on the wrap-up of the visit. he will want to review a lot of the material that has been covered in the dialog: he may ask a few simple review questions, he may indeed wish to ask the two diagnostic questions again! He may want to ask the qualifying question again; certainly he will want to do all in his power to assure the person that there is salvation alone in Jesus Christ, and that all who have faith in His name have that promise.

Even in cases where the call might be difficult or unproductive the callers will seek to leave a good taste in the mouth of the people on whom they have called. The most longed for 'last word,' that callers can hear from persons on whom they call is, "Come back any time." However the feat is accomplished, the callers will want the callee to know that they are a sharing, caring community who have the welfare of the callee in mind, and pray to be able to do whatever it takes to demonstrate that love in word and in deed.

If the situation calls for it, a closing prayer, in a circle with joined hands, or in whatever fashion seems appropriate, may well highlight a new or potential spiritual relationship.

CHAPTER X

GROWING IN THE FAITH

If there were some way of writing the words, “Growing In Faith” in gold, or in flaming red, or with some quality that would impress them indelibly on the mind of every reader, we would be most happy. Growing in the faith is a quality, that should be sought by all of us, whether we have been in the faith and in LCMS since the day of our birth, or whether we are a newly confessing Christian. No child comes into the world fully grown, and no person can be expected to be a fully matured Christian immediately.

Two things should be highlighted here. On the one hand, we who are Christians of long standing should never let any Pharisaical thought cross our mind to suggest that WE have no more personal spiritual growing to do. Our own hunger and thirst for Word and Sacrament should gnaw at US repeatedly. If that hunger and thirst for Word and Sacrament has escaped us, perhaps we will have to begin some personal examination to determine our own relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ. Being into the Word is the first requisite for growing and caring and sharing.

The second thing we need to mention is the care we need to exercise in judging another’s spiritual status, and his rate of growth. Christians occasionally expect that the “new Christian” should suddenly “be all growed up!” The process of growing spiritually may be no faster than the process of growing physically, and every parent knows how growth patterns vary with their own children and their growth.

We once heard someone say that the Spirit of God may bring a person to faith in a very short time, but it may take a life time for that person to mature spiritually. If we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, the first part of that statement is certainly true. If we know human nature at all, we will certainly attest to the validity of the second part. Discipleship is a process of growth that the perceptive Christian will desire for himself and will patiently await in all **others**. The gap between decision and discipleship, we have heard others say, can be a very large one indeed, and can only be bridged by constant use of and growth in Word and Sacrament.

This chapter, therefore, will deal with some of the basic concepts that we believe to be important in helping new or returning, or growing Christians mature in their faith. The items that will be suggested can be used in a congregation for ALL members of the parish, not just for those who are for the first time expressing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many ministries in the church that could be described as being part
W. Leroy Biesenthal

We Need To Grow

Be Patient
With Others

A MATTER OF
DEFINITION

of the maturation or nurture process. We use words to identify these ministries, but sometimes we use words which mean one thing in our parish, something else in another! Our humble suggestion is this: choose the words that you will use to describe certain facets of ministry at your congregation, and stick by them. Know what you mean with what you say. Let us demonstrate this with our personal definition in four areas:

1) immediate follow up - this is what you do immediately after someone is led to a confession of faith. Just put yourself in the position of that person. What a moment in life! What an opportunity for the team of evangelists! How necessary to come to the side of that confessing person immediately - to take those steps that will be most beneficial in the hours and days that are ahead. Because this is SO IMPORTANT, we will later demonstrate what needs to be done at this instant.

2) nurture - is the ministry of feeding, which never stops for anybody, no matter how long he has been in the church. The food at first will be milk, rather than the strong meat of the Word, but discipleship develops through nurturing the Christian. Nurture ministry will need to be offered in School, Sunday school, worship, Bible classes, topics, correspondence courses, etc., etc., wherever and whenever a person has opportunity to feed at the green pastureland of God's Word and Sacraments.

3) sponsorship - is the support ministry that undergirds the life a new Christian, or for that matter any Christian entering your parish community until such time as that person is fully integrated in the life stream of the parish. We believe that part of our back door loss problem can be related to the fact that people are not properly integrated into the life of the parish. People entering a parish are often "strangers within the gate," given little attention, and sometimes even the cold shoulder, especially if some members of the parish are threatened by an increase in the numbers coming into the church, and again especially if some of those coming in are "not of their kind." Lyle Schaller's Assimilating New Members, one of the Creative Leadership Series, Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee, Copyright 1978 is a MUST reading at this point. We believe that all members of a parish, whether in an evangelism program or not, should be taken through a study of this book. We have heard it said by a number of experts in this whole area of new member assimilation that a church has only 6 months to integrate new people into its membership. Without that accomplishment, they can expect that many will end up on the inactive list.

4) recall - is the process of going back to a person again and again and again. Too often in the church we are too ready to take a "no" from people. We are so afraid of offending, so afraid of turning people off or of being turned off, that a soft spoken "no" on the part of people is all that we are looking for. Salesmen go back again and again and again. As a matter of fact, salesmen have told me that they sometimes have to make as many as 17 calls on people

before they will ever get an order. Others have called on people for years without getting any response - and they keep on calling. People should NEVER be taken off a congregation's responsibility list unless they have moved (and the name has been sent onto the nearest Lutheran Church) or unless the people have very pointedly said that they want no more attention from the Church. Even then the parting offer should be something like this, *"Well we appreciate that very much and will do everything in our power to heed your request. At the same time we want you to know that we care for you, and if there is ever anything that we can do to be of help, and it is within our power to do so, we would like to help. Thank you very much!"*

Callback Questions

Team callers often ask this about recalls: "What shall we talk about on the second call, or the fifth?" Naturally, that will somewhat be determined by the length of time between visits, and whether or not the same persons are making the call. We have discovered that the basic format of the call can be the same each time. Either one can highlight some things that were covered the previous visit, can highlight some things that were not covered, can answer questions which were left over from the last time, can share new insights or answer new questions, or whatever. Can you see how important is the dialog concept - and the reporting process by which you will have record of what is covered in a visit? Just for fun, review some of the concepts mentioned in the earlier chapter on the message. Note the many Bible passages and concepts that are shared - just under sin. That cannot be covered in one visit - or in five. The better trained and prepared the visitor is, the more he can share. Of course, if he knows very little, he will have that said in a few moments. How great the need for learning before sharing!

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

While it would not be within our province to detail programs of nurturing and discipling that would fit every instance, we do believe that we have discovered a number of principles that are vital to establish a parish discipling program.

1) Define your terms - decide what terms you will use in your parish, and stick by them. Know what all is included in the term "nurture" at your place; likewise with follow-up, discipling, sponsorship, etc., etc. Take nothing for granted. Write your definitions out, and share them not only with people in the parish evangelism ministry but with all people in the parish. Very important!

2) Write your parish format - determine steps and categories which will help you help people grow spiritually and record their maturation level. In the case of the former, you will want to train people to be able to answer the question, "what do we do next?" For example, if people make a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus, what does the caller do? In immediate follow up? Following that? What if that person is a member of another Lutheran Church? Of another Christian Church? Take nothing for granted. Write down the procedures and suggested steps - and don't worry if you don't have everything

all written down the first month. Build on experience and increase the body of writing.

In the case of establishing where people are in their spiritual lives we are not suggesting a quick judgment on people, but recognizing that at the same time, “by their fruits ye shall know them”. If people are faithful in their church and communion attendance, if they attend Bible Classes and service unites within the church, if they immediately enroll in some small group, if they openly profess faith, etc., etc., one will soon know where they fit into the life of the parish - also spiritually, without being personally judgmental at all. Recognizing a situation and judging are not synonymous.

3) Keep It Simple Sir - the KISS principle is very important and needs to be maintained. In most parishes, where there is little evangelism calling going on, the format of discipling will be relatively simple. Keep it simple as long as you can. However, as the number of people in the program grows, as well as the number of people on the responsibility lists, etc., etc., and people are in different stages of spiritual maturation, the technique of following up and the number of people involved can increase significantly. Incidentally, while it has been suggested that people who witness the confession of a person, stick with that person until he becomes a mature disciple, it needs to be noted that some people in the parish may be specifically gifted in assisting people to grow in their faith. Their prime interest or expertise may not lie in going into a home for the first time, but they may well be able to go back again and again with assistance in personal Bible study in picking up a new Christian for a home Bible Study, or in bringing them to church or some other event, etc., etc. Not all people who are in the evangelism ministry will necessarily be out making initial calls. Indeed some may be gifted to stay with just one person, teaching, exhorting, helping that one person along the road to spiritual maturity.

One simple suggestion: develop your discipling procedures as you develop an evangelism calling ministry. Remembering that form follows function, we believe it advisable to begin by doing what needs to be done in accordance with good sound care principles. Write it down. Take the next step in soul care; write it down, etc., etc. Before you know it you will have a set of steps which are uniquely yours and fitted to your parish, rather than to be choked with the detailed procedure that someone else has written, and which probably will not fit your situation. Again, however, take nothing for granted. Write the steps down as you develop them.

4) Schedule calls - much time and energy is lost by poor planning for calls. Somebody - the pastor, church secretary, evangelism secretary, or whoever has the assignment should have calls ready for teams of evangelism just as soon as the study portion of the weekly program is completed. It may not seem like much in early stages of the ministry, but just imagine - by the time you have ten teams of visitors going out, and six minutes are wanted in call assignment,

materials pick up, address searching, etc., you have lost one hour of precious time. The point is that a real effort must be made to have everything in readiness, so that people can “hit the road” as soon as possible.

Pastors may want to assume the responsibility for scheduling the calls, because there is a certain pastoral awareness in selecting the people to be called on. Certain basic principles need to be followed. People visiting the church should be called on that very week. There is a direct and proportionate ratio of positive response to the length of time elapsing between a visit to the church service and/or call to the home of the visitor. The longer the time between the visit at church and a call to the home, the weaker the response. (See The Contagious Congregation by George Hunter III, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, pp. 117-128). Now, if the number of visitors is larger than can be called on by the evangelism teams, some other arrangements for calling will need to be made until callers are sufficient in number to make calls each week.

Schedules for recalls, call backs or nurture, etc., should be scheduled for the same night the original call is made. We suggest a 3 X 5 metal box with dividers for each month. When a team returns from a call, and determines that a call back should be made on their callees, that needs to be recorded immediately. Let us illustrate. Suppose the call is made in September and it is felt that another call should be made in November. The team places the name and address of the callee behind the November divider. On November 1, the person responsible goes to the November file and pulls out all the cards that have been designated for that month - and these become primary calls for that month. All other pertinent information concerning the callee will be noted on the report form and filed in the family file. Only the family name and address will appear on the card in the schedule file box. This is very important. More sophistication on the scheduling of calls will develop as need arises. Basically, however, this format has worked. It is highly recommended.

5) Choose Materials - there is no lack of materials on the market for use in the nurture/discipling ministry. However, we suggest that you guard against the attitude of one brother who said, “there is so much stuff to choose from, I don’t know what to do,” and consequently did nothing. Some spend all their time choosing, rather than in doing. We would encourage gathering materials from the LWML, the LLL and the Evangelism Department of the Synod. For instance, from the latter, 500 North Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri 63102 there is a Growth Series, meant to assist the growing Christian, while from the former one could receive all kinds of Bible Study materials. (LWML - 3558 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Missouri 63118 and LLL - 2185 Hampton Ave., St. Louis, Missouri 63139). The Iowa District West, Box 1155, 1317 Tower Drive, Ft. Dodge, IA 50501, has many Bible study materials. Additional materials can be secured from such agencies as World Home Bible League, 6973 Chippewa, St. Louis, MO 63109 or 16801 Van Dam Rd., South Holland, Illinois 60473, The Navigators, Box 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado

80901 and The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Box 9313, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

MNT

We would like to suggest two immediate tools for materials, The first is a Marked New Testament such as is available from the WHBL. For a nominal fee, you can obtain a Gospel of John with a customized cover and passages marked with specific direction for reading. This is helpful when a need arises to assist the callee with a beginning Bible reading program. Every caller should be “armed” with the Word, and the Gospel of John in MNT form can be a real assist.

TAPES

One of the unused tools for nurture is the tape recorder. All kinds of good materials are available on tape. By leaving a tape with people you extend your visit immeasurably. Just imagine! You can introduce the callee to tapes of the pastor’s teaching on Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, Prayer - or whatever. How great to be able to respond to a persons questions on Baptism this way: *“Perhaps I haven’t answered all your questions on Baptism, but out in the car I have a tape of our pastor teaching the lesson on Baptism in our membership preparation class. I’d like to leave that with you, and pick it up perhaps at your convenience, or the next time I call.”* Lutheran Tape Ministry, Omaha Church Center, 124 South 24th St., Omaha, NE 68102, has many tapes on individual Bible studies and religious topics that can be of big help to the growing individual. The Rev. Fred Naumann, an LCMS pastor and founder of LTM has made these tapes available at a voluntary contribution level for people using the tapes.

Use or Lose

Of course, no amount of material is of any help if it remains in the library cupboard, or if direction for its use is not shared. The cell or small home Bible study is an excellent medium for the use of these materials, and for inclusion of the new and growing Christian. Many new Christians will come to the relative safety and non-threatening atmosphere of a small group setting whereas they will not come into the pretentious quarters and setting of church service.

6) Involvement/integration - as indicated above, a parish has basically six months to integrate and involve new people into the mainstream of the life of the parish. The small group (cell) as well as some fellowship group (congregation) is an excellent way to involve. Of course, stewardship people in the parish will want to discover the talents and spiritual gifts of the new people so that efforts can be made to help them find comfortable acceptance within the ministry of their choice and consistent with their gifts and talents. The work of involvement integration cannot be taken for granted in a parish. If it is, you can rest assured that many people will fall through the cracks, and people will begin to wind their way out the back door of the church very early.

7) On the spot immediate follow up - evangelism callers must be trained to respond to the situation and offer the callee precisely what is called for. We

would like to illustrate an approach to immediate follow up (remember our definition) that we have found helpful. Let us assume that Mary, the callee, has joined you in confessing Jesus as personal Lord and Savior. What should you do then?

Certainly you will want to offer Mary congratulations and show your joy in that confession. But Mary will need more than that. We suggest the following - and while we do not recommend any specific materials, we will demonstrate the use of Knowing Christ, one in a series of four booklets provided by the

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Box 9313, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440 for follow up work. (This booklet is 95% Scripture, so its source should provide no real problems for Lutheran users.) It has sufficient materials within it to present a number of principles which I believe to be absolutely necessary in the immediate follow up process. Let me demonstrate in a conversation with Mary:

"Mary, I'm really happy to have you join us in confession of faith in the Lord Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. Now, Mary, as a child needs to be fed to grow physically so we who are God's children need to be fed so that we grow spiritually. You know that it is not natural for a baby to remain a baby. So spiritual infants need to grow. We grow by use of the Word. I have here in my pocket (purse) a portion of the Bible called the Gospel of John. May I share it with you?"

Principle #1: get the person into the Word. This is a must! You may have to show Mary how the book is divided into chapters and verses and help her understand a bit about the Gospel of John, its being but one of 66 Books of the whole Bible, etc., etc.. If it is a MNT, you might want to run her through at least a portion of the marking to show her how she can hold onto your message after you have departed.

"By the way Mary, when you finish your reading, I'd like to have you look back here in the booklet to Lesson I, which will give you an opportunity to check your reading, and to make sure you are gaining some insights that are in the Scripture."

Principle #2" Give Mary some homework to do. This may seem very elementary to some, but it is highly important. It helps the called see that being in the Word is a serious business, and that he can expect to find answers to questions asked. You might want to work through the first question or so in the lesson with Mary to help her see how to find the answer by chapter or verse, and then write in the answers in the space provided. You will also show her the attached envelope with the name of your church pasted over the address of the Evangelistic Association, so Mary can send her answers to the church for checking. (The Evangelistic Association does not mind if you paste your address over theirs, because very honestly, they do not want to be correcting thousands of lessons from around the country.)

“Mary, when you finish this first lesson, please enclose it in this envelope, with the address of the church on it, already stamped, and at the church, we’ll go over your answers just to see how you are doing. When I return next week, we’ll go over your answers one more time. It will help you and me if we go over it together.”

Principle #3: Make a contract to return! This will show Mary that you care enough about her to make a return engagement, and are serious enough about it to set the date. (If there are many calls to be made on people in the parish, the call back to Mary may have to be made on a night other than your regular evangelism calling. If further down the line you have people especially trained to make these kinds of nurture call backs, they might be the ones to call on Mary to continue the study.)

“Oh yes, Mary, there are some other materials in this booklet I’d like to share too. Some additional thought are included for your own personal and devotional reading. You will discover that after I leave, Satan will do all in his power to destroy the confession that you have made. Reading what is included here may help you indeed.”

Principle #4: Give the person additional spiritual reading material. Believe it or not, we have discovered that newly confessing Christians are hungry for the Word. Additional reading can fill many a gap in their life and provide them with spiritual good to grow on.

“Have you ever thought of memorizing a few beautiful little things that God says in His Word, Mary, like the passage we quoted before, ‘by the grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast?’ Well, in this little Gospel of John we have a number of Bible passages printed on cards that are perforated, ready for tearing, and placement in your purse or shirt pocket, so you can study them, memorize them and use them.”

Principle #5: Encourage Bible memorization. Pastoral experience has many, many times underscored the benefits of having portions of Scripture committed to memory for use when reading the Word is no option. New Christians will respond more positively to Scripture memorization than many a long time church member.

Whatever materials you choose to use for immediate follow up, we believe that the principles listed above are a must. This has nothing to do with getting a person into a small group, into worship, into the pastor’s class, etc., etc. This is for the person’s own personal growth and use of the Word. Close contact will need to be made and kept, either by the trainer, or some other member of the visiting team, or by some other person in the parish who might be doing much of the nurture work. A postcard from American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, New York 10023 or a phone call the next day will be a big help.

8) Reporting - we cannot over-stress the importance of making good reports of visits that have been made. In our experience we have discovered that many congregations are very slovenly in their reporting process. Illegible scratchings on bits of paper, confidential material written for all to see, etc., etc., have been some of the sad discoveries we have made concerning the reporting habits of congregations. We would offer the following suggestions for the reporting process: (1) every call must be reported, including the not-at-home, for which recalls will be rescheduled as per above; (2) reports should be written; (3) information must be accurate (we remember a call where the information that had been written and was handed to us was almost totally inaccurate, even as to fact, causing us no little consternation and embarrassment); (4) tend to over-write rather than to under-write. There seems to be a tendency on return from a call to put down a thought or two - and let it go at that! If a call back is made in three months, some of those important details that should have been written, but weren't will have been forgotten. Additionally, suppose someone else makes the call? So - write down everything that might be considered helpful. (5) maintain an air of confidentiality and loving concern also in the reporting. A couple report forms are included here for your examination. We have discovered that each congregation prepares to develop its own system of keeping records, and therefore the enclosed are presented merely as samples. The important thing is that a congregation develop a form and use it. Get your own, or order one, but use something! (6) write down your recommendations for further action. If immediate action is necessary, get word to the proper person at once. Remember - souls are at stake.

9) Filing - would you believe that people have been actually lost through improper filing? We suggest the use of manila folders, kept alphabetically in a special locked drawer in the church file. When a report is made on the form of the parishes choosing, that report is placed in a family file in the special evangelism section. When another call is to be made on a person the file is made available to the callers, but it never, never leaves the church building. As soon as information is gathered from the file, the file is placed back in the cabinet. When a "friend" becomes a member, the file is simply moved to the member section of the filing system and joins the other family file folders. This way one builds a history of contact with the family, as with every family of the parish. We highly recommend this simple system for your use.

Details of a parish nurture program, using all the facility of the parish ministry, will have to be worked out on a local basis. However, the principles that we have enumerated here will go a long way in helping a congregation establish a good program of discipleship. Repeatedly we have heard from congregations that their program of follow up is not working. I oftentimes wonder which of the above they are not doing?

CHAPTER XI

SETTING OBJECTIVES FOR CALLS

While every call will produce some response, not every call will lead to a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is necessary for the trainer to be alert to what is happening in the call, and to be ready to accept the direction of the Spirit of God in the call. We have established a number of objectives that the trainer might seek in a call. It is to be noted, however, that things might change within the structures of a call, and therefore the trainer needs to be ready to change objectives. It may look like a call will be only a listening call, for instance, and then something might happen to bring the called to a point of profession of faith - and the caller needs to be sensitive to that change. On the other hand, what started out looking like a great call for confession of faith purposes may wilt! Following is a prioritized rating of potential objectives, presented with the understanding that these are not all the objectives that might be sought in any call, or that a call might not end up having several objectives, or even mixed objectives.

PRIORITY I

Level I -

- A. Confession of Faith
- B. Affirmation of Faith
- C. Reaffirmation of Faith

PRIORITY II

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| listening | doing |
| caring | teaching |
| encouraging | edifying |
| exhorting | directing |
| helping | being |
| sharing | learning |

Level II -

- A. Enlistment
- B. Enrollment

Level III -

- A. Future Considerations
- B. Door Openers

Without apology, we believe that a call should be made with the welfare of souls at stake. For that reason the callers would hope to receive a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus from the persons called on. If the Holy Spirit has that arranged, praise Him! On the other hand, the caller has to be ready for whatever is readied for him! If he believes that the callee is not ready to confess, to affirm his faith or to make reaffirmation of it, the caller will reach for another goal. The call does not become a wasted exercise if the person does not respond excitedly with confession. We have heard repeated report sessions where the person reporting has begun in this fashion: "We didn't get a commitment but...." It was that kind of reporting which first led us to recognize the need to set objectives for calls other than a commitment, indeed, to rid my vocabulary of the word commitment itself. That led to the use of the term response, rather than commitment. It was right at this point that I

discovered that people were pressing for “commitment”, either as a hedge against ego smash, or for ego building. On the other hand, there was some confusion as to what was meant when a person made a commitment. There is more to calling than receiving a “commitment.” The trained caller will be open to whatever response the Lord has arranged.

Be ready to
Change Objectives

If the caller recognizes that Level I, Priority I, goals are not attainable, he needs to be ready to move to Level II. The suggestion here is the caller might enroll the called person in a home Bible study course, the pastors class, a small group (cell), a Sunday morning Bible class for lay persons, etc., etc. Or, he might be enlisted for some other activity in the church, simply because he is not ready to make that confession of faith. The caller will in no sense push the person he is calling on. That would be either manipulation of the callee, or the Spirit of God.

Keep Doors Open

Should the caller determine that the person is not yet ready for enrollment or enlistment in some function of church study or activity, he will move to Level III and do all in his power to keep doors open to the home for future consideration, calling and attention. For example, the caller may ask to keep the person’s name on the list of those who receive periodic mailings from the church. Everything should be done to keep a given address an open one for ministry.

Many other things can develop in a calling situation. We have developed a list of participles which covers many of these. It is our contention that a call may end up in a nothing more than a listening experience. Yet, that could be a very good and necessary call. The person being called on may be so burdened with things of get off the chest that the callers may have to listen and listen and listen. Sometimes people have to empty themselves of things that they have kept inside for a long, long time before they are ready to receive information or input from the callers. The trainer will endeavor to determine what is going on, and will guide the call accordingly. We will avoid being manipulated by Satan, however, who will endeavor to direct the visit and keep the Gospel sharing in the background. Many of the ministries listed above in Priority II column can lead to some really exciting Gospel sharing and ministry in future meetings with the individuals.

When the team returns to the church for reflection, the caller/trainer will discuss with his trainees his decisions made concerning the goals and shifting of goals within the call. He will endeavor to recall for the trainee those items which caused him to shift emphasis and goals, so that the reflection period can be a real time of sharing and learning. With goals established, shifted and/or reviewed, a real learning experience can result from the calling experience.

CHAPTER XII

GETTING STARTED IN THE LOCAL PARISH

The time to get started with an evangelism program is NOW. Someone has said that if a program is not started within thirty days after the pastor and/or lay persons have had workshop exposure to the technique, nothing will happen. It will become one of those planned programs that sounded nice at the time, but which got stuffed away in the closet with so many others before it.

Of course starting NOW may sound easier than it actually is. There may be such heavy current commitment to other interests and pursuits that accepting the load of an evangelism program might indeed be heavy. We suggest an earlier step: assess congregational and personal priorities. Remember that point in an earlier chapter relative to growing churches! The last of Wagner's seven points was this - a church that grows has its priorities settled. It might be said that many congregations, AND PERHAPS PASTORS TOO, spend too much of their time deciding which comes first, what has priority and years later are still endeavoring to make that decision. A young pastor we know, has his evangelism priorities so set that nothing gets in the way of his commitment and the commitment of his people to the Thursday night learning/calling program. It's on the calendar - just like the Sunday morning service. Of course, to get to that point, one might have to let some things go; one might need to turn down an invitation or two; one might have to refrain from attending some unimportant meeting. One might have to declare himself and his position for evangelism as the important task of 'making disciples,' the real obligation of the church!

Assess Priorities

After clearing out some of the cobwebs from the schedule and list of obligations, clergy and church might move ahead in their determination to do something about their evangelism obligations. Many strongly suggest writing down a series of objectives for mission and ministry by which the congregation must live. It might take a rewrite of the whole constitution, as Don Abdon would suggest in his Parish Leadership Seminars; or it might simply take a restatement of purpose within the framework of an old constitution. One objective for consideration might be: TO ALERT THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION TO ITS OBLIGATION TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY.

Write Objectives/
Goals

Once objectives have been written, goals can be set and written too. (Obviously, there is a difference of opinion in defining an objective and a goal. We are using that definition whereby an objective is an overarching, general statement of purpose, while a goal is something that is specific, attainable, measurable). One sample goal might be to conduct a Witness Workshop for 30 people in the parish once each year; another, that each year

the congregation celebrate the Evangelism Festival; another that each year the congregation observe an Open House, Sharing-The-Love-of-Jesus-Week, and that in two years 9 people be trained in Dialog Evangelism. With such goals in mind, and set before the congregation, some real evangelism work can be begun.

Depending on the administrative setup in the congregation, some clearance will be needed. Programs should not just be started without proper approval. Efforts will have to be made to mesh the ministry into already existing ministries, or at least to show an awareness and sensitivity to what is going on, what commitments are already fixed, what meeting nights are taken, what people are involved, etc., etc. Arrangements for spending of funds will have to be made. Books will be needed for the library and for the use of evangelists in the congregation, as well as for members who enlist for discipling. Funds should be made available for pastor and layperson to attend, clinics and workshops, for providing some form of recognition to people who have finished 16 week cycles, for beginning and ending banquets, etc., etc. For too long congregations have placed little or nothing into their budgets for those monies needed to launch and maintain a good program of evangelism.

A suggested procedure for launching a DE program in a parish follows after the pastor has prayerfully selected his first two trainees, with his wife, his trainers and their spouses, he could perhaps go to a restaurant for a meal where they can begin their time of fellowship and learning. The pastor can share some of the excitement. In early rounds, the number of participants will of course be small, but as the program grows, more and more people will be involved in the initial kick-off banquet. More and more sharing will have to be done, speakers can be brought in, an exciting program can be arranged, and the whole ministry of evangelism can be elevated to an exciting level. If provisions for a meal cannot be made, at the very minimum a dessert luncheon could be held at which the same programmatic content could be presented.

Through all of this, no big announcement should be made to the parish. Simply make sure that administrative clearance has been achieved. Work through the entire plan with the Board of Evangelism, or the Board of Elders, or both, or whoever is in charge in the parish. We are suggesting nothing secret in the beginning of the program but nothing flashy either!

While congregations will find it best to work through their 16 week program individually, a good idea is a certain clustering of congregations where that is possible. To illustrate, the initiation banquet referred to above could be held jointly by several congregations in a given geographical area. With three participating congregations, 18 people could already be present at the very first meal. Singing, excitement, testimony, anticipation could all help make for a good evening. Following the joint kickoff, each parish should proceed individually for the cycle, with the pastors conferring with each other at

Observe Parish Procedures

Suggested Procedures

Clustering

regular intervals. All manner of problems will evolve during that 16-week period. One pastor will lose a trainee; another will run out of calls to make; another will run into opposition from those in the parish who think he should be going to a dartball meeting instead of calling on all those strangers in the community, etc. In consultation with his brother pastors, he will find strength, advice and encouragement. Likewise, it might be well for all involved to meet once or twice during the cycle for sharing, prayer and praise, future plans, etc. While some congregations have tried joint training before calling in their own congregations, it is not advisable. Most of the time, too much time and effort are spent in travel, etc., etc. Time for calling is of the essence; little of it should be spent in the automobile.

At the end of the cycle, it is suggested that some special note of that achievement should be made in the congregation. A special pin for those who have completed the cycle, a graduation dinner, a ceremony in a church service, etc. are ways in which this ministry can be given visibility and the participants recognition.

Recognition

But who do you choose for the ministry? Who will be the very first two trainees? Experience shows that the first choice is not always the best, but here again, many pastors have said that they still are happy with their first choice, and that people chosen first are still in the program. There are a couple don'ts and do's, in the process of selection. Let us share first the don'ts. 1. Don't choose someone because you feel he/she is a good salesman who could sell anybody anything. 2. Don't choose somebody with emotional problems, who may be looking for a platform to share personal concerns. 3. Don't choose somebody who will not be taught. Beware of the person who has all the answers! 4. Don't choose somebody with marital problems. 5. Don't choose somebody who has demonstrated an inability to listen. 6. Don't choose somebody who does not have a heart for people. 7. Do not choose a husband/wife combination for the same team. This has been proven to be a disastrous move for several reasons, viz., they usually cannot criticize each other constructively; if the husband moves, you lose both members of the team; if a family crisis develops, it wipes out the whole team, etc., etc.

Choosing the People

On the other hand the selection process can proceed with positive action relative to the above concerns. Male or female makes no difference, although as indicated above, three males calling is heavy. A mix of the sexes is best. Age really has little bearing on the ministry either. We shall never forget a young lass of 14, from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, who took pastors out on Clinic evangelism calls, and did more than a creditable job. We have had callees marvel at youth who have called, while others have wondered why "those young people" were doing that! On the other end of the spectrum, we have discovered that some well seasoned veterans of the cross have taken up the call and have become excellent teachers and sharers of the Word. Their spiritual maturity and long life have simply stood them in good stead as they worked in this ministry.

One caution for which we will take little space: avoid intimacy problems at all cost. Finally, in the selection of people, most have found it best to commit people for only one 16-week period at a time, that is, do not expect them to commit themselves to an evangelism calling program for the rest of their life! Naturally, they would want to commit themselves totally for the whole cycle, and they might well hope and pray that they would continue, but if you have them only in word and not in life their commitment does not mean much anyway. Besides, people's habits change, as do their responsibilities; young people who might be enrolled may develop, etc., etc. At that, those who have been exposed to the ministry will find that their lives are changed anyway, and even if they are not enrolled in the program, they probably will make some of the best evangelists in the parish as they witness to their faith in the Lord Jesus as opportunity arises.

Having now obtained proper parish administrative clearance, having made provisions for funding, and having been led by the Spirit to the right first two people as trainees, time is ripe for beginning. Week one should reflect the determination to follow the SAR D model. Week one should incorporate some study, some action (that is, a call should be made), some reflection and constructive criticism of the experience and some development which can be expected as an outgrowth of the total experience. It bears repeating one more time: do not spend weeks studying the technique. Hit the road, week one!

Each parish will want to determine its own time of calling, as well as the method of operation. experience has indicated that each parish should seek that day and time for DE that best fits it and its community needs. We know of congregations that are calling Saturday afternoon, another, Sunday afternoon. Others are using almost every night in the week. We still have hope for the possibility of some parish, with multiple staff, programming their DE for Sunday morning, with the evangelists worshipping in the early service, doing their study during the last 12 1/2 hour time slot on Sunday morning. Naturally, that is when they will find most people home. Experience in doing cold turkey on Sunday mornings at workshops and clinics had demonstrated the value of the Sunday morning hour.

Parishes should even decide in what order they will do their study, action and reflection. Ordinarily, they will be done in that order, but we know of a congregation whose community was made up of a large majority of early-to-bedders! Accordingly, after their study period and their entry into the community, they found that they were calling on people who have already retired for the evening. Wisely, they rescheduled their evening activities, meeting for a very short period of prayer and assignment, then went out to make the calls, then returned for both study and debriefing. It worked well. What needs to be avoided is the temptation to leave out any one of the three model ingredients. Sometimes parishes are tempted to forego the reflection period, suggesting that everybody might just as well go home after the call,

Week One

Parish Choices

because all calls will end at a different time anyway. Experience has shown that one of the reasons this technique fails is that debriefing is neglected.

The study period will be outlined in a subsequent portion of this work, but several things need to be noted about the reporting session. Oral reporting is not to be confused with the written report spoken about in an earlier chapter. Neither excludes the other. It is suggested that the pastor conduct the report session, asking the evangelists such questions as, “What did you learn specifically in your call?”, “Where do you feel you might have done a better job?”, “Did you leave the door open to further ministry?”, “Did the people respond positively to the Gospel?”. As more and more people are enrolled in the technique a rather rigid time schedule of reporting will have to be maintained. To illustrate: if ten teams are calling and each reports for five minutes, an hour of reporting time will be required! Reports should be brief and to the point, avoiding a recall of not-at-home, growling dogs, etc., etc.

A paragraph needs to be inserted here to note that teams will be returning to the church at different times following the calls. Naturally, even though we have indicated the importance of the reporting session, the call itself is even more important. No one brings a good call to an early conclusion just to make it back to the church in time for reporting! There are several activities for those who return early from their call: (1) work at the assignment given for the next week; (2) practice oral and written presentation of the outline; (3) do extra assigned reading; (4) refine testimony and presentation; (5) pray for those still out on call, etc. With such and other activities, there will be no sitting around wasting valuable time while waiting for the late comers. Some specific time should ordinarily be set to begin the reporting, whether all teams have returned or not.

There are at least two specific benefits that accrue from the reporting experience. One has to do with the learning aspect. Evangelists learn from each other how they handled a given situation, e.g., how did you handle the situation when company arrives in the midst of a presentation, or when company was already present when you arrived; when people wanted to argue about some cult obsession; when people wanted to use the visit as an opportunity to empty themselves of all their personal vendettas against the church, etc., etc. It has been said that there are only so many basic experiences discovered through sharing, one can learn to cope with whatever develops.

The other positive benefit develops when one team fails to find anybody home, and is not equipped to do cold turkey. It can be rather discouraging to try call after call without finding anyone home. The discouragement is somewhat abated at the discovery that somebody else did get in, and was used of the Lord to be His ambassador.

We like the suggestion of taping oral reports for future reference and learning

Oral Reporting

Staggered Returns

Benefits From Debriefing

Taping

aids. new trainees can be introduced to some of the better reports and testimonies to the working of the Spirit in a call and can be speeded along in their own learning process. Of course, anything of a confidential nature would not be disclosed in an open report session; neither should people be judged, debased, etc., etc.

As callers do their reporting, they should not consider themselves above constructive criticism or incisive questions from their trainees. A real part of the learning process goes on here as the trainer explains to his trainees and all the evangelists precisely why he did what he did on a call. For instance, the trainer might share his determination to begin the message portion of the call with Christ, rather than with sin, if he determines in the chit-chat that the person already knows his sin, is burdened with guilt, is groveling in the dust and feeling unworthy of forgiveness. The trainer should share his method and approach in such instances.

On the other hand, a perceptive learning trainee may well ask the trainer, "Why did you not ask the second diagnostic question?" He can try his own wings, offer any suggestions, why he thinks the trainer did not ask the question, or can wait for the answer. We have found this immediate post-call debriefing session to be absolutely necessary as part of the learning process.

Certainly the evening will end with prayers of thanksgiving to God for His working through the Word, and for His continued blessing on the evangelists, the people called on, the unsaved in the community, the church members that they become excited for evangelism, etc. When all has been accomplished, the evening may be reviewed one more time. Participants will have studied the Word and some facet of the DE technique; they will have made their call and reported on it. Without doubt, they will likewise have developed in their understanding of the entire evangelism ministry, and quite probably in their own relationships with their Lord and their fellow evangelists.

A final word should be said about the weekly activity in the congregation. Each congregation should determine whether it wishes to make its calls by appointment or take the chance that someone will be found at home somewhere. Those who prefer to make appointments insist that people feel more comfortable if they are expecting visitors who will not find the house upset, etc., and that indeed the callers themselves feel more at ease knowing that they will not catch the callees "unaware."

Others have worked best without appointment. We have found that making an appointment gives people the exact hour when "not to be at home", even though they have made an appointment. Likewise, we have found that they are not always at ease, even though an appointment has been made, and they have been wondering for hours what would happen in the visit. Finally, we have discovered that the chit-chat portion of the call is abbreviated by use of

A Learning Process

Appointment

the appointment. In effect, people say, “We know you are here from the church, and want something specific. Lets get to it.” While that message may never be said in so many words, it often is suggested.

If evangelists are trained to make cold turkey calls using the instrument shared in a coming chapter, callers can go house to house until they find someone home.

CHAPTER XIII

A SIMULATED CALL

After studying and assignment has been completed, evangelists will go out into the community with the Good News, seeking to lay the claims of Christ on any and all whom the Spirit has prepared in His own miraculous way.

We'd like to share a visit, limited by the printed page, but simulated sufficiently to demonstrate the Action portion of the weekly activity. We start with the assignment which should be carefully prepared. Some pastors like to determine who should be given which calls; others simply pass them around; others give callers the choice of picking their own calls; still others are very carefully assigned by the volunteer secretary who has paid attention to call backs, scheduling, etc., etc. Whatever method is used, every effort should be made to avoid loss of time in looking for addresses, in assembling of materials, etc., etc. Everything should be in readiness, so that immediately after the study session all callers can be on the road with as little delay as possible. The congregation brochure, the Sunday school lesson, the MNT, the tape - whatever makes up the kit that a congregation uses to equip its callers should be ready - and off the callers go.

In the simulated call that follows, we will be out with Tom and Jean, who are in the first weeks of the training cycle. Ordinarily, we allow them to participate in the chit-chat and the early conversations. Indeed, depending on their grasp of the technique, we might offer the opportunity to share an experience or a testimony, or join in the talking about the church. However, when we get to the point of asking the diagnostic questions, we would expect them to be the silent, praying partners. Upon our departure from the church, we would have shared a word of Scripture together, a prayer, a word of assurance, and request complete reliance upon the Spirit for direction and power.

As we walk up the steps, we already look for things to talk about in our chit-chat portion of the call. Tom and Jean might join in that, too, but in this simulated call because of the difficulty involved in writing a call, we will do the talking with Mary, whose daughter, Susan, had just been enrolled in our Sunday school the previous Sunday. We go to the door, knock in the power of the Spirit, and the call proceeds:

Leroy: Good evening. This is the Johnson house? Right? We are from Trinity Lutheran Church. I'm Leroy Biesenthal, and these are my friends, Tom Meyer and Jean Henry. You are Mrs. Johnson? Mrs. Mary Johnson?

Mary: Why, yes, of course.

1. Introductions

2. Contract

Leroy: We just want to drop by to share our joy at the fact that your daughter Susan has been enrolled in our Sunday school, and we would like to talk about Susan and our Sunday school. Would you mind if we step in for a few minutes?

Mary: Why, no. Of course, step right in.

3. Chit-chat

Leroy: This is certainly a lovely home that you have here, Mrs. Johnson. By the way, would you mind if we would call you Mary? I'm Leroy, and these are my friends, Tom and Jean.

Mary: Why, no, that would be just fine.

Leroy: As I was saying this is a lovely home that you have here. By the way, Mary, I have been on your street a good many times, and I know that we have quite a number of people from our church who live on this street. Yet, this is the very first time that I have stepped inside a home in this particular area. I live some distance from here, and don't often get in this vicinity. Have you lived here long?

4. Shelving

Mary: No, we have just moved in recently. My husband has been transferred here.

Leroy: Oh?

Shelving

Mary: Yes, he works with the Brown Chemical Company as an electrical engineer. We were transferred here from Chicago.

Contract

Leroy: Oh, I see. We are really very happy to have you in our neighborhood, and certainly we are very happy to have Susan in our Sunday school. As we said when we came to the door, we'd like to talk about Susan and our Sunday school. May I ask you a question about Susan?

Mary: Why, yes, of course.

Leroy: Has Susan attended a Lutheran Sunday school before?

Their Church
Background

Mary: No, not really that I can recall. What we usually do is find a Sunday school near our home so that we can get Susan ready on Sunday mornings and send her off to Sunday school without having to be too concerned about driving her there or getting her there ourselves, except, of course in inclement weather.

5. Listening

Leroy: Oh, I see.

Shelving

Mary: Yes, you see we both work, and we are very busy. Sunday morning is

the only time that we have to ourselves, so sending Susan off is a real break for us, and we know that she is getting some good training, even though the Sunday school may be of any denomination. We think they all teach what is good and really don't think it's all that important that she go to a specific one.

Contract

Leroy: Oh, I see. may I tell you a little bit about our Sunday school?

Mary: Why, yes, of course.

6. Materials

Leroy: I have Susan's last Sunday school lesson here in my pocket. I would like to share with you what she is learning and then perhaps a few other things about our Sunday school if you don't mind.

Mary: No, go ahead

Leroy: Well, if we take a look at last Sunday, you will note that the lesson that Mary studied with her classmates was the story about Moses and his being found in the bulrushes. This is really a story about how God takes care of His people and how He prepared to raise up for them a great deliverer from their bondage in Egypt. I suppose you remember that story from some earlier time in your life?

Shelving

Mary: Oh, yes, even though my husband Paul and I do not go to Sunday school or church ourselves now, we both have had some background. As a matter of fact, when we were children our parents sent us to Sunday school a lot of times. I have a long chain of attendance bars that indicate that I went to Sunday school for a good number of years.

7. Expanding

Leroy: Well, that is great. I am sure that this brings back a lot of memories, particularly when Susan comes with some of these stories like the one that she had this week in Sunday school. I might say, too, Mary, that we are very happy with our Sunday school for a number of reasons. Our teachers are trained. I think it will be a joy for you to know that Susan just doesn't come to sit and play games, but she sits at the feet of a teacher who like the rest of our staff meets regularly for Sunday school teaching lessons. This is the way we feel that we can insure a good corps of teachers and excellent staff for our children. You see, we feel that the Sunday school is indeed very, very important. We want to do everything within our power to give the children the best possible Christian education that we can.

Mary: Well, I believe that's very good for the children. They can't get enough of that kind of teaching. It will do them good in later life.

Expanding

Leroy: Yes, I certainly can understand that, Mary. By the way, I'd just like to share with you that our Sunday school doesn't stop with children. We

do have classes for adults so that they, too, can continue to learn some things about God's will for man and how He has shown His continuing love for us. As a matter of fact, we have a number of classes that are especially geared for adults.

Mary: Well, I'm not really sure that we would be interested at this time, but then again one never knows when we might have a little more time or when something we have planned may simply fall through.

Leroy: Well, we are happy to hear you say that, Mary. As a matter of fact, if you would give a minute or two I would just like to tell you some things about our church. We do appreciate our Sunday school, but I would like also to say that we think very highly of our church and what it has to offer people. After all, the church is what keeps the Sunday school going, and I'm very happy to say that our church is truly an alive place. I don't know if you like good church music, for instance, but I would just like to share with you that we have an excellent music program at our church. We have a very fine organist and several very fine choirs. In addition to this, particularly at festival seasons of the year, we have some excellent music programs with brass and even strings.

Mary: Well, I like good music, and I suppose maybe a church could also offer some music.

Leroy: Of course, our music isn't the only thing that our church offers. We like to think that our church has something for everybody. We have a very fine youth program, Mary, one that Susan might find herself interested in as she gets a little older. WE have a director of youth ministry who truly relates to the kids and does a fine job with them.

In addition, we have a senior citizens' group, and while I know you are not interested in that right now, it truly does give those who have reached the golden years a lot of opportunity for fellowship and ministry together.

Additionally, we have an active social ministry committee in our church, and we week to do a lot of things that help people who are in need. For instance, we participate in the mother-to-mother program through which we have volunteers from church take mothers shopping - mothers who have no man living in the house, who are burdened with a large family responsibility and so forth. Sometimes all they need is a helping hand.

8. Change Contract With Permission

9. Church Testimony

10. Broad Enough Ministry

11. Transition to

Diagnostic
Question

I did mention the Bible class that we have for adults. We have any number of these, and I suppose I could share a lot of things that go on in our own circles at church. As a matter of fact, Mary, I would want to say that through my association at the church my own personal spiritual life has been strengthened in the last couple of years and that has been very, very important to me.

Permission

That prompts me, Mary, to ask you a question about your spiritual life. I mentioned that mine has been upgraded, (growing) and I just would like to ask a question about yours. Would you mind?

12. Diagnostic
Question

Mary: No, no, go ahead.

Leroy: Mary, I'd just like to ask you if you had come to that point in your spiritual life where if you were to die tonight you would know for certain that you would go to heaven.

Mary: Well, that's a touchy question. I guess I would have to say that I wouldn't really be all that sure. As a matter of fact, I don't really think anybody could be sure of anything like that. After all, nobody has come back to tell us about it.

13. Repetition

Leroy: Well, Mary, that's the answer we receive many times. A lot of people simply are not sure that if they were to die tonight they would know for certain that they would go to heaven. Tell you what, Mary, I would like to share with you, if you will let me, how you could be sure that if you were to die you would know that you would go to heaven. Would you like me to do that?

14. Permission

Mary: Well, I guess it would be all right if you want to do it.

Permission

Leroy: Thank you, Mary. I would like to do that, but before I do, if you don't mind, I would like to ask you one more question, okay?

Permission

Mary: Well, you've gone this far - okay!

Diagnostic
Question

Leroy: "Suppose you were to die tonight, Mary, and God would say, "Mary, why should I let you into my heaven," what would you tell Him?"

Mary: Now, that's a real question. I don't know really what I would tell Him. I guess if I thought about it awhile I would have to suggest that I had done my very best, that I had been faithful in trying to bring up my children in the right way. As you know I am sending Susan to Sunday

school, and I want her to learn the right things. I have been faithful to my husband, and I think I have tried to be a good wife. I tried to be a good neighbor, and I certainly have tried to avoid those things which just are not good things to do. I guess that's what I would tell Him.

15. Affirmation
Repetition
Transition To
Bridge

Leroy: Mary, those are certainly all excellent things. As a matter of fact, I think if everybody would really try to achieve those things which you have mentioned, the world would certainly be a better place in which to live. But you know, Mary, when I heard your answer to that first question, remember - you said you were not sure that if you were to die tonight you would go to heaven - I knew I had some good news for you tonight. Now, however, that I have heard your answer to that second question, I know that I really have some good news which I would like to share with you. May I do that, Mary?

Mary: Why sure, go ahead.

16. Bridge

Leroy: Mary, the Good News that I have to share with you tonight is that you can be sure of going to heaven, and that it doesn't depend at all on anything that you do. You see, heaven is a free gift which is neither earned nor deserved. May I share a little with you about that?

Mary: Why, yes, go ahead.

17. Art of
Questioning

Leroy: Mary, tell me something that is free today.

Mary: Well, there's really not very much free, I guess. If I were to think for a minute, I guess I would have to say that about the only thing that I can think of as free is the air that we breathe.

Leroy: That's right! Yet, you know that even the air that we breathe isn't free anymore. With all the pollution in the air and antipollution devices attached to our automobiles, even the air is no longer free. Mary, if we take a real honest look at things around us, I think we really have to admit that absolutely nothing is free anymore. We're used to paying for everything, we're not really used to having anything free. Somebody has said that there is no such thing as a "free lunch!" When somebody does something for us, we feel obligated to return the favor. It's very difficult for us to really expect that something is free, free, free.

Mary: Well, I guess you are right when it comes right down to it. We do have to pay for everything, or we stand in obligation for things that are

done for us.

Heaven Is A
Free Gift

Leroy: That's right, Mary. There's only one thing that is really free and that is heaven. You might call it man's new relationship with God. You might call it salvation. You might call it new life. Call it what you will. But if we really take a look at that new life which we have with God, it is the only thing that is absolutely free.

And if it's free, Mary, it can't be earned nor deserved. If it were either earned or deserved then it wouldn't any longer be free, would it?

18. Word Choice

It Is Neither
Earned Nor
Deserved

Mary: Well, no.

19. Scripture

Leroy: Perhaps we could just take a look at Scripture, Mary. I have a little Testament here in my pocket. I would like us to take a look at one of my favorite passages. In St. Paul's letter to a little congregation in Ephesus, he wrote, and we read in chapter 2, verses 8 and 9, that we are saved by grace through faith and that it is not of ourselves, it is not of works, lest any man should boast. There are other places in the Scripture, Mary, where we read very clearly and plainly that we are justified freely. That simply means that salvation comes to us as a gift without any strings attached; it is given to us - and when something is given it cannot be earned and it cannot be deserved. Isn't that something rather marvelous, Mary?

Repetition

Mary: Why, yes, of course it is.

20. Qualification
Question

Leroy: And remember you are answering this in the light of your answer to the question about your being uncertain that you if you were to die tonight would go to heaven. We are saying that we can be sure and that certainty comes to us as a free gift which we cannot earn or deserve. Have I made myself clear on this, Mary?

Mary: Yes, you certainly have.

Transition To
Message

God Talk Or Church
Language

Leroy: Well, perhaps I could go on then to share a little more about this, Mary. You see, when we consider that man is a sinner who cannot save himself, the fact that heaven is a free gift which cannot be earned

nor deserved is even all the more marvelous. When we consider man's condition - this free gift which comes to him from God is something almost beyond understanding and explaining. Let me try. We all make a lot of mistakes in life. I would like to put myself into that position now. As a husband, I certainly make a lot of mistakes in terms of dealing with my wife. I have many times taken her for granted. I expect her to do a lot of things for me. I guess I have even treated her with disrespect on occasion. Perhaps as a spouse you can empathize with this and understand what I am saying.

Mary: Why, yes, of course I can understand that. We come up short in terms of how we relate to our spouses.

Leroy: If you want to go farther than this, Mary, I can look to myself as a father and find that many times I have missed the mark in terms of fathering my children. I have taken them for granted, too. Many times I have been suspicious of them. Many times I have not given them a chance to explain - well, I have just not totally done the job. I know that I do many things that really are not all that right.

Mary: Well, I guess I could understand that too because in my relationships to Susan I know that I am not always able to do that which is right.

Leroy: Mary, you know the Bible has a special word for these mistakes that we make as spouses and as parents. The Bible uses the word "sin." Now I am sure that when you went to Sunday school as a child you were introduced to this word and concept. You know it's something very, very important, and I think perhaps we should just recall that sin is something more than just some little weakness of our individual personality. God says that sin is missing his mark. And this is very, very serious in the sight of God. God says that the soul that sinneth shall die. He says, that the wages, the payment, for sin is death.

Mary: Yes, I remember some of those passages, but I haven't really paid too much attention to them. We are pretty young as you note, and we really don't think a lot about death at this point.

Leroy: Well, it's not just a matter of thinking about dying, Mary, it's a matter of recognizing what sin is. And it's not only a matter of what we do, it is even a matter of what we leave undone. You see, God expects us to do certain things. If we don't do them, this is just as wrong as doing some things that are wrong in his sight.

21. Holding Up Self
As Example

Expanding

Teaching

22. Expanding
Message
Scripture

Omission

God Is Just
And Holy

Mary: Well, I never really thought about that.

Scripture

Leroy: Yes, there is much to be thought of in terms of what sin is all about, Mary. And as we consider this, we have to understand that God is a just God who simply cannot put up even with the smallest sin. He is Holy as the Scripture says. He is perfect, and as the perfect being, He cannot be satisfied with anything less than perfection.

Mary: I don't understand that at all because nothing around us is really perfect.

Scripture

Leroy: Mary, you are right. Only one thing is perfect, and that one thing is God, and as a perfect being He does demand perfection. He says of us, "Ye shall be Holy, even as I the Lord your God am Holy!" That's what God demands of us according to His justice.

Mary: Well, I don't see how anybody could shape up to that. You yourself said that you missed the mark in many, many ways as a husband and as a father. I don't understand what you are driving at then.

God Is Merciful

Leroy: Mary, the beauty of it is that God is not only a God of justice, but He is also a God of love and a God of mercy. If He were only a just God, none of us would have a chance. But in His mercy and in His love, He sent Jesus His Son in whom we might have the gift of forgiveness for all of the sins which we have committed.

Transition To
Jesus Christ

Mary: Well, that's interesting indeed, but I don't really understand what Jesus has to do with all of this.

Who Jesus Is
What He Did

Leroy: Mary, let me share that with you. You see, Jesus came into this world as the all-powerful, all-knowing, every-present God Man. He lived a life here on earth, and at the age of 33, He died on the tree of the cross, was placed in the tomb, and on the third day, victoriously arose. I am sure you remember that from your earlier Sunday school lessons and from what Susan has brought home, and just your general knowledge of Christianity and the teachings of the church. Right?

Mary: Yes, I guess so.

Passive
Obedience
Active Obedience

Leroy: Well, the beauty of all this, Mary, is that this Jesus who lived, died and rose again did all of this to purchase our place in heaven. He did all of this to forgive the sins that we commit. He did all of this so that we might have forgiveness with God. He did this so we could have new

life NOW! As a matter of fact, He Himself kept the Law of God perfectly, so that at least someone would have kept that Law, and the justice of our great God would be satisfied. Isn't that something?

Mary: I really don't get it all yet.

Scripture

Leroy: I can understand that. It's really something for the mind to grasp. We simply know that Jesus, as God's Son, came into the world to forgive us all of our sins. The Scripture says that His blood cleanses us from all our sins. It says He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that no one comes unto the Father but by Him, and that in Him all of our sins are removed as far as the East is from the West. That's the excitement of all of this for us.

Mary: Well, if Jesus did all of this, how does anyone get the benefit of what He does?

Repetition
Transition To
Faith

Leroy: Mary, I am really happy that you asked that. If you remember, I said that you couldn't earn this, that this is a gift that is neither earned nor deserved. We get the benefits out of what Jesus does by believing in Him as our personal Lord and Savior. We call that faith, believing, not only a sense of knowing that Jesus came, lived died and rose, but knowing that He did this for us, and confessing Him as our personal Savior and Lord.

23. Assurance

You see, we can be sure of Heaven, not because of what we have to do, but because of what He has already done for us, and by trusting in this with our whole heart and soul. Scripture says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47)

Mary: Well, that's something indeed, but I'm not sure that I can say that I believe what you are saying.

Affirmation
24. Teaching

Leroy: Well, Mary, faith in our heart does not come by any personal decision. It rather comes in our heart as the Spirit of God, the third person in the Holy Trinity, works in our heart through God's Word so that we come to believe what the Word of God says, and what God does for us in Jesus Christ. It's not really what we do at all, Mary, but it's what God does in us. He brings us to faith.

Scripture

When I went to Sunday school and confirmation class, I remember having learned a statement that declared: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel!" That's the

way it is Mary, or to quote Scripture, “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost!”

That faith is already worked in our hearts by the Spirit at our baptism. I remember your saying in our earlier conversation that you were baptized, and that Susan had also been baptized, and that Susan had also been baptized. That’s the greatest day in one’s life. That’s the day when the Spirit of God first brings one to faith. Following that, through the Word, He continues to work in our hearts and to keep us in that faith which He has created in our hearts. That’s what is happening to Susan right now, Mary. The Word of God is at work in her. As she studies a story like Moses being found in the bull rushes, the Spirit of God will work faith in her that even as He was raising up a deliverer for the children of Israel, so He has raised up a deliverer from sin for all of us - Jesus Christ.

Mary, have I made that clear to you?

Mary: Yes, I am beginning to see what you are saying now.

Leroy: That’s really great, Mary. I guess the question that I would like to address to you at this moment is a very important one.

I would simply like to ask you, then, if you would like to join Tom and Jean and me and all believers in Christ, in professing that He is your personal Savior and Lord.

Mary: Yes, I feel compelled to say that I do believe that what you say is true. I know that I can’t do anything, that the things that I have tried really cannot stand before God, and that there has been a great void in my life which I see can be filled by a faith in Jesus Christ.

Leroy: That’s really fantastic, Mary. I want to remind you again that such an expression of faith is not something which you come to on your own, but which only God can bring you to. I don’t want you to feel rushed in making such a statement. I don’t want you to feel in any way pressured or manipulated. I want to repeat that this faith is worked in you only by the Spirit of God. If you are convinced that it is God who is bringing you to such a statement of faith, we simply rejoice with you and praise God for the working of His Spirit in you.

25. Means of Grace

Qualification
Question

26. Response
Statement

27. Response
Question

28. Clarification
Of Response

29. Gospel Not A
New Law, But
A Response

Also, Mary, just very briefly, I would like to say that when we are brought to faith, God also works in us so that we respond to that which God has already done in us. Once we know how much God has done for us, then we want to begin doing things for Him. Our life takes on totally new perspectives at this point. We want to serve Him; we want to study; we want to read the Word; we want to grow; we want to do all kinds of things, not in any effort to earn our way in, but in thanksgiving for those things which He has done for us.

Qualifying
Question

Mary, am I making that little point clear?

30. Growth Process
Slow

Mary: Yes, I see that all right. I see that a lot of changes will have to be made in our life. However, I feel that this is going to be somewhat slow in coming. After all, we have been living a specific life-style for quite a number of years. Suddenly to change is going to take some real doing on our part.

31. Immediate
Follow-Up

Leroy: Mary, I can understand that, but you know that same Spirit of God which prompted you to say "I believe" will fill your heart and life not only with the desire, but with the power to live that new life which you are speaking about. Mary, there are some things that I would like to share with you, now that you have made this profession of your faith. In my pocket I have a little portion of Scripture which I would like to share with you. (See chapter on Growing In The Faith.)

32. Prayer of
Thanksgiving

Mary, I would just like to bring our gathering to a close tonight by offering a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all that He has done among us. Would that be okay, Mary?

Mary: That would be just fine.

Leroy: "Oh, Heavenly Father, we praise you in the name of Jesus for all of the gifts which You give us. First of all, we thank You for having created us and counted us among those marvels which are an evidence of your creating, sustaining hand. We think of all of the things that You have given us to preserve the life which You first created in us.

However, we thank You especially for Jesus Christ. Without Him none of the things of this earth would mean anything anyway because You have said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul!" So we thank you dear Heavenly Father for

having sent your Son, in whom all things become new, and in whom we indeed have new life.

We praise your name this night dear Heavenly Father for having worked through your Word in Mary's heart, to bring her to a point in her life where she joins us in confessing Jesus as her personal Savior and Lord. Oh, Heavenly Father, by the power of your Holy Spirit, continue to work in her so that she, and we, may find ourselves constantly growing in the faith, even as we surrender more and more of our life to You.

We do praise your name, oh, Heavenly Father, and commit ourselves to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with You and the Spirit lives forever and ever. Amen."

33. The Close Contract Review

Leroy: Mary, we just wish to praise God again for your kindness in letting us in, and letting us talk to you about Susan and Sunday school and then to tell you about our church and to have a chance to share with you God's love in Jesus Christ. Mary, let me just ask you again, would you - have you come to the point now in your spiritual life where if you were to die tonight you would know for certain that you would go to heaven?

Mary: Yes, yes, I know that I would go to heaven without any doubt.

Leroy: Mary, that's really, really great and in whom are you trusting for your salvation now?

Mary: I'm trusting alone in Jesus Christ, for He alone is the One. I cannot do it on my own. He must work in me.

34. Body Life

Leroy: We praise God for your confession of faith, and ask you to join us and believers at Trinity in praising God for His grace and goodness. As a matter of fact, as you continue to grow in your faith, we will be wanting to do things together so that we may grow in grace and in knowledge as part of the family of God. I would like to invite you and Paul to join Susan on Sunday morning. I'll look for you in the Adult Bible class and then we will sit together in worship so that I can assist you just a little bit, and then after the service introduce you to our pastor and to other brothers and sisters in Christ. Would that be all right?

Mary: Yes, we'll look for you. I assume that church follows the Bible class, and we'll make it a point to be there on Sunday morning.

35. Departure

Leroy: God bless you. Thank you again. Tom and Jean join me in praising

God and thanking you, and we will all look forward to seeing you on Sunday morning.

CHAPTER XIV

ANALYSIS OF SIMULATED CALL

It is to be remembered that the call described in Chapter XIII is simulated, that respondents spoke as reported. Had the responses been different on the part of Mary, the dialog would have taken a different direction. To illustrate: If in answer to the question, “Has Susan gone to a Lutheran Sunday school before,” she had responded, “Oh yes, we have always sent Susan to the Lutheran Sunday school because we like what she learns there,” the response would have been entirely different. What she responded may still have been “shelves,” but certainly the dialog would have taken a different direction.

The analysis therefore will deal only with the given responses. Indeed, the analysis will be rather brief, pointing only to a number of items that can be used as leaning experiences in developing the technique of dialog through listening, responding and sharing. We have numbered the first appearance of each analytical notation, but the reader may find that same analysis repeated in the margin in a later part of the conversation. Likewise, parts of the outline itself have been identified throughout the presentation so that the learner may know where in the presentation the presenter is.

The balance of this chapter will take a look at the analytical notations of the simulated visit in Chapter XIII by number.

1) Introductions: It is very important to state clearly who you are and where you are from. Identifying yourself as being from trinity Lutheran Church, clearly and plainly, will leave no doubt as to your identity and relationship. Make something of names. Be sure you state yours, and that of your trainees clearly. Try to get on a name calling basis with the callee as soon as possible. This makes for a more relaxed, natural, casual atmosphere.

2) Establish the Contract: One of the most important facets of the call is to tell the callee why you are there, and what is the purpose of the call. We call this “establishing the contract.” In the instance of Chapter XIII the contract is clear: “We would like to talk about Susan and our Sunday school.” Two points should be noted here. First of all, by establishing this contract you are touching on two points of interest with Mary: a) Susan, her daughter and b) your Sunday school into which she has just enrolled. The second point is, that by establishing this contract, you really have no right to talk about anything else unless you ask permission and receive it to change the contract. At this point, you are asking permission to talk about Susan and the Sunday school.

3) Chit-chat: While this is not part of the contract per se, as explained in an earlier part of this Workbook, it is necessary to begin to establish rapport with the callee. Here is where you do MUCH listening; you discover the persons feeling and ideas about a lot of things; you discover the points of

commonality, etc., etc. In the simulated call, the chit-chat is too short. As related in an earlier chapter, a shortened chit-chat period can really be detrimental to the success of the call. In this instance, it is shortened because of writing limitations.

4) Shelving: One of the most important concepts that we have learned is that of shelving, that is, simply placing certain items on a shelf to be dealt with later in the visit or even in a subsequent visit. Many times the temptation is to jump right in to correct a person's opinion or wrong idea, without having earned any right to do so, or even without having earned that person's confidence or listening ear. Many times, by dealing with a matter immediately, you find yourself dealing with a symptom, rather than with the disease. In the simulated visit, the real problem is not that Mary and Paul send Susan to the nearest Sunday school; the real problem is their lack of relationship on the other hand is not to say that it will not be dealt with, or that you condone every thing that Mary is saying. It is simply suggesting that it be dealt with at the proper time in the dialog.

5) Listening: EE says that most calls are made or lost in the introduction, because there you will be establishing relationships and rapport with the person. Much of that is done by listening. One key to let people know that you are listening, and to call for more expansion on their part is simply to use the response, "Oh?" That little word begs for further explanation, and will for the most part generate more Dialog. If the person sees that you are interested and listening, most times the person will be sharing more and more about himself, his life, his beliefs, and opinions, etc., etc.

6) Materials: Callers should always go out with sufficient materials to cover the needs of the call they are making. Some of these may even be left in the car. There is nothing wrong with saying, for example, "I have a tape out in the car I'd like to get and leave with you." In the case of the simulated call of Chapter XIII, we can think of no better material to have on the call than Susan's Sunday school lesson. By the way, never take the change of embarrassing Mary by asking her if she just happens to have Susan's Sunday school lesson around!

7) Expanding: Note how we have not violated the contract. We are still talking about the Sunday school, expanding on it, however, to give Mary a broader picture of what our Sunday school includes.

8) Contract Change with Permission: When you have exhausted all the things that there are to talk about as far as Susan and the Sunday school is concerned, you may then well determine that the situation is such, that you might move on - but - not without permission, and not without getting a new contract. This is very important. Remember, you have to ask the right to talk about something more than Susan and the Sunday school - so - you ask permission to talk about your church.

9) Church Testimony: It is truly great when you can with integrity and joy share the great things that are happening in your church. This is never done in a boastful way, to give any impression that your church is without sin or flaw, but by way of personal testimony and honest sharing. We personally find it easier to give a church testimony than a personal testimony because of our own personal upbringing and background. We have found the church testimony to be just as valid as personal testimony in the presentation. This by the way, is a very important part of the presentation - and dare not be left out. Through the church testimony, you will have opportunity to testify to the spiritual growth that you have personally received. This will later give you opportunity to ask the callee about the situation with their spiritual life, and how it is with them.

10) Broad Enough Ministry: Church growth principles indicate that a church must have a “large enough ministry.” That means there has to be something for everybody. A church which ignores any segment of society simply cannot expect to be in ministry to its total community. A church should therefore, always be examining its total ministry picture to make sure that it is covering every facet of ministry opportunity.

11) Transition: The transition from one part of the outline to the next, as has been earlier noted is of the utmost importance. While we have included sample transitions in the presentation of the outline in the workbook, and note them in this analytical chapter, we repeat the suggestion that each trainer and trainee establish his own storehouse of transitions for use in whatever situation develops. An illustration may help here: If a person dialogs in such a way that the ordinary progress of the outline cannot be followed, the trainer will have to be able to sue different transitions to bet back on the track of the presentation. That can be learned through on-the-job training.

12) Diagnostic Questions: Sufficient has been said about the Diagnostic Questions in an earlier chapter, but note how the caller gets to the diagnostic question! He first talks about his own spiritual growth and health. It is not then unnatural, if proper dialog has preceded, if listening has been done and rapport established, to say in effect, “Hey, what about your spiritual life? How is it with you?”

13) Repetition: You will note throughout the presentation that many things are repeated. This is done not only as a good teaching tool, but to check on yourself to make sure that you have heard what the person is saying, that the person is indeed saying what you hear and still holds to it etc., etc. It also gives a beautiful supplemental transition to the next point that you want to make. By reminding the person of what they have said, they know that you have listened and that you are now ready to move on to another point.

14) Permission: Reread the simulated call to determine how many times
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permission was requested in one simple form or another. If a person fails to grant permission, you have reached the limit of the presentation for that occasion, and will do well to proceed no farther. Any number of things can be done at that point, again with an expertise that has simply developed through experience.

15) Affirmation: It is very important to agree with a person as far as you can. You never cut a person down or belittle them. Through supportive and active listening you can attempt to move them from a given position to the possibility of another thought. Let us illustrate: Someone really gives a bold and final sounding statement on a given issue. You disagree with the statement; in fact you are convinced that the person is dead wrong. Rather than say to the person, "You are dead wrong," it would be better to say, "Well, I hear what you are saying; perhaps there is another way of looking at it"

16) Bridge: As explained in an earlier chapter, no matter how the person answers the diagnostic questions, you are able to get to the message by stepping up to the bridge, "heaven is a free gift which is neither earned nor deserved."

17) Art of Question: Much of the secret of dialog lies in the art of questioning, and through the questioning process, the involving of the person into the conversation. The message portion of the presentation is probably the most difficult to do in dialog. It is so easy to become preachy in talking about sin and God and Jesus and faith. Bring the person back into the dialog time and time again with question, anecdote, recall of something you have shelved etc., etc. Some training skills need to be developed here.

18) Word Choice: We make much of the concept of "church language" and "God talk." Many times by using ecclesiastical and theological jargon which may be commonplace to the trainer, he will find himself talking right past the callee. To illustrate: if he is calling in a home of the Roman faith, he may use the word "grace," thinking he is communicating with the callee, without realizing that the callee has a totally different definition of the word. The point is: make sure before proceeding that you have a common understanding and an accepted meaning of the Word. If earlier dialog had shown that Mary really knew what "sin" was, then we may not have used the word "mistake" in introducing the concept of sin. This principle applies to many of our theological terms.

19) Scripture: We suggest the use of much Scripture in any presentation. It can be used by actually reading, as done in one instance on the simulated in the call, by direct quote, or by reference. We repeat the earlier suggestion: let each trainer and trainee establish his own warehouse of Bible passages, and how to use them! Then, as they become pertinent to the dialog, they can be used. Remember, the Word is the Sword of the Spirit. He works through the Word. The callers will therefore want to use as much of the Word in the

message portion of the visit as is possible.

20) Qualification Question: As noted, we have changed the EE Qualification Question from, “Does this make sense to you,” or “Do you understand what I am saying,” to “Have I made myself clear?” Once again, this takes the burden off the callee and puts it on the caller. The point is: Am I doing the job of explaining that heaven is a free gift? If not, I need to back up; try it again; use another illustration; another Bible passage - or perhaps even admit that the person is beyond any further comprehension. It would be useless to proceed any farther at this point with the dialog. Why proceed if you have not made your point clear? Incidentally, this question of qualification needs to be asked over and over again - not just at the end of the dialog in the response section. It can be asked repeatedly, perhaps after each minor, or at least each major portion of the presentation.

21) Holding Self as Example: we have personally found that the best way to deal with the presentation on sin, as well as in other sections, is to hold one’s self out as example number one. Certainly one does not want to come off as being better than the person that you are calling on. Any “holier-than-thou” attitude will spell certain disaster. Being willing to admit your own failings, questions, etc. simply affirms to the callee your own questions, doubts, problems, sins, etc. It helps you come off as a human being.

22) Expanding Message” The simulated call does a small amount of expanding on the matter of “man is a sinner who cannot save himself.” We personally believe that this portion of the message has been too often watered down and presented in less than its entirety. A full study of this section needs to be made and learned well from the text so that the presenter is ready and able to dialog deeply about sin, depravity, lostness, bondage, sins of commission and omission, original sin, etc., etc. No short cuts dare be taken here. The Law must be proclaimed in all its severity. It is here again that the holding of oneself as an example is helpful.

23) Assurance: Callers will find many times that people “believe.” but they really lack that final assurance, the certainty expressed in John 6:47. It may be that the dialog will take such direction that the trainer will spend most of his time, or all of it dealing with the promises by which we know that God is a God of His Word who has promised us life and forgiveness through Jesus Christ - a gift which we have NOW already, of which we can be absolutely certain.

24) Teaching: There may be many places in the dialog where an opportunity for teaching may develop. A question or statement on the part of Mary may open the door for expansion, explanation or encouragement.

25) Means of Grace: As Lutherans, we rejoice in God’s Gifts to us, among them the precious Means of Grace. We know that God comes to us though

His Word, and through Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Depending on Mary's response and sharing about Baptism, this could well become a focal, vital part of the entire conversation.

26) Response Statement: Here again the reader will note that we have departed from the EE philosophy in that we are willing to recognize that the callee may be led by the Spirit to make a statement of her belief even before any question of confessing or of response is asked. In answer to the question about having made clear to Mary the fact that God has sent a deliverer in the person of Jesus Christ, Mary responds by stating that "she is beginning to see what you are saying now." That can well be the beginning of the working of the Spirit of God in her. It can be her very first, though feeble, confession of faith. The light is beginning to dawn. The trainer will listen carefully for all such response statements, and will remember them, if it becomes necessary to ask a response question. Indeed, the callee may be making so many response statements on her own that a question actually becomes unnecessary. All the caller needs to do is recap what Mary has stated, put it in the form of a statement and say, "Is that what I am hearing you say, Mary?"

27) Response Question: The trainer may well be moved to ask the response question. See details in an earlier chapter.

28) Clarification of Response: At this point the caller will want to be absolutely sure that Mary knows what she is doing in responding to the Gospel. He will go slowly; ask questions; repeat; clarify again so that there is absolutely no chance that Mary is being manipulated, or that the caller is playing games with the Spirit. Under Spirit direction he will endeavor to do his best to note that the Spirit Himself is bringing Mary to her confession.

29) Gospel not a new Law, but a response: Here it is very important to help Mary see that heaven is still free. In fact, some have heard it said, "But I thought you said all these things were free." It is absolutely necessary at this point that we show that what we now do, we do in response to what God has already done in us. Out of gratitude we serve, study, give, etc., etc.

30) Growth Process Slow: We have indicated in an earlier chapter that somehow we expect Christians to be born "all-growed-up." Of course that is simply not the case. The statement of Mary bears careful notation. She and her family have been living a certain way for years and years. It will take a lot of discipling for them to make a complete change of life style, to choose a new set of priorities, etc., etc., to follow through on the confession that she has just made. Congregations which help people come to a confession, but then do not help them to mature by growing in the faith are doing a gross disservice to these people, and are contributing to the back door losses mentioned earlier in the book. Mary is crying out for help at this point - and the parish needs to have much to offer.

31) Immediate Follow Up: It is as soon as Mary has made her confession that we suggest what we have earlier described as immediate follow-up. By our definition, nurture, discipling, etc. comes later. But as soon as Mary has made that first confession she needs to be tied down. She cannot be left to dangle. Review the steps carefully, and fully described in the earlier chapter on Growing In The Faith.

32) Prayer of Thanksgiving: There is much to bring to God in prayer at this point. In a prayer spoken from the heart the caller can sum up all of those things that God has done for all who are gathered in the room, what he has especially done for Mary, and what He will continue to do for all of them through the continued working of His Spirit in their hearts and lives. What an opportunity for prayer and praise. This may well be done in a circle prayer with hands joined around the room; it can be done by having all present repeat the words that the trainer speaks (a responsive type prayer); it can be done as each of the trainees adds a sentence thought, or in whatever way the Spirit leads the prayers of thanksgiving to God for His goodness.

33) The Close: The character of the close will naturally be established by everything that has preceded. In the simulated call, it was easy. Nonetheless, note how in the close we endeavor to recap what has been said. Again, depending on the dialog, a lot of recapping could be done at this point. Note that the two diagnostic questions are repeated in the close. Incidentally, if you were to get an unsure answer again to the first diagnostic question, you might have to start all over again, make an appointment to return, or recognize that you failed to make yourself clear in the first place - and even worse, failed to discover that you did not make yourself clear.

34) Body Life: In the definition of Evangelism in Chapter One, we noted that, "The results of Evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into His church and responsible service in the Word." Note the invitation to Mary, together with Paul to join you at Trinity. Of course, you may be inviting her to a small group Bible class or other groups, but you will make sure that she is folded into the fellowship. You will do all within your power to make sure that you offer to take her, go with her, support her, etc.

35) Departure: Always leave with having left a good taste in the mouth of the people being called on. If you have had opportunity for immediate follow up, you probably will have made an arrangement for a call back; no matter what happens, you will want to leave the door open for future calling and contact. You have established a friend - and a good relationship with the parish.

CHAPTER XV

HANDLING OBJECTIONS

We have heard that there are three major ways of handling objections that people raise to the church. The first of these is to meet the objection before it comes up, that is, deal with a subject disarmingly, recognizing that it is one of the major objections that most people have (“Sunday is the only day I have for rest”); a second way is to shelve the objection, simply by asking people to let you deal with their important concern at a later day; the third way, and this is necessary when an objection is really vital to continuing a meaningful dialog, is to meet the objection head on, with a determination to help the person work through whatever has been troubling him. Many times, objections are smoke screens to hide some real frustrations, to serve as an excuse, to nurture hostility, to hide laziness, etc., etc.

Much has been written on the handling of objections in LCMS materials. In former attempts we have not included additional writings, but in order that this workbook might be more complete, we are including a chapter on the handling of excuses. However, the following pages are a direct copy from Rev. Donald Abdon’s Equipping the Saints, pp 161-174 and copied with permission of Rev. Abdon, Parish Leadership Seminars, Inc., 5601 S. Meridian St., Suite B, Indianapolis, Indiana 46217.

OBJECTIONS TO BE HANDLED

1. Self-righteousness.
2. “I’m good enough to save myself.”
3. “All religions are the same.”
4. “I had religion shoved down my throat as a child.”
5. “My religion is the golden rule.”
6. “I am waiting for my husband or wife to do something about religion.”
7. “There are too many hypocrites in the church.”
8. “I’m just not interested.”
9. “I’m too busy.”
10. “I work on Sunday.”
11. “The church is becoming too involved in politics, social gospel, etc.”
12. “The church has never done anything for me.”
13. “The church is behind the times.”
14. “Religion is too unscientific.”
15. “I can’t believe in a God who allows sickness, suffering, war, and death.”
16. “I don’t believe in the Bible,” or “There are so many interpretations of the Bible that I can’t be sure what you are telling me is true.”
17. “I’ll take my chances.”
18. “Jesus was only another prophet.”
19. “I don’t have to go to church to be a Christian.”
20. “I don’t like the minister.”
21. “I don’t like to get up in front for communion.”
22. “I can’t stand to be in a crowd.”
23. “It’s too hard to get up on Sunday morning.”
24. “I have a grudge.”

25. "The kids get religion five days a week at the school."
26. "We are usually gone on weekends."
27. "All the church wants is my money."
28. "It's none of your business what I do."
29. "That's only your interpretation."
30. "I have bad health and am unable to come to church."
31. "I can't get my spouse to come so I don't go either."
32. "I have nothing to wear."
33. "I don't like communion from the common cup."
34. Confession or remorse which is not genuine.
35. "Sunday is my only day of rest."
36. "I'll handle my own problems myself."
37. "I don't have any transportation."
38. "I'll straighten my life out first, then I'll come to church."
39. "I'll come when I'm ready."
40. "Church bores me."

Almost every call on a delinquent or an avowed non-believer will produce one of the 40 objections you have just read. What we often fail to realize is that the individual you are dealing with is **ABOUT TO GET YOU OFF THE SUBJECT**. Since we do not usually train our callers properly, the caller gets embroiled in an "argument" of some kind and the ruse has worked; we never get back to discussing the **real subject** - the delinquent or unbeliever and his relationship to God.

MAJOR INSIGHT: *We do not "owe" the delinquent or the unbelieving an "answer" to their unbelief, anymore than God promises us answers for all our defiant challenges of His word or will. What we **do** owe the individual we are calling on is to keep the **communication process open** long enough to "put the Gospel home."*

We have devised a simple, four-step method for managing an interview with the delinquent or the unbelieving so that objections can be handled and the real subject - the Gospel - discussed. This method has been extremely successful in actual use. Think through the four steps with us and we will then apply it to the 40 objections listed.

FOUR-STEP METHOD FOR HANDLING OBJECTIONS:

STEP 1: DETERMINE WHAT THE REAL OBJECTION IS.

Almost every objection “leaks” if one presses the issue. Few people tell you what they really think. Emotions are not bad, but disguising them is bad. The person may not intend to “lie” to you or himself, but he is often close to doing precisely that. You are not there to **accuse** him, but to **help** him. You cannot help him unless you are prepared to recognize that you are dealing with a person who is probably not a Christian and is therefore subject to self-deception without being aware of that fact.

STEP 2: ACCEPT THE OBJECTION.

Note that we did not say **agree** with the objection, but accept it. Acknowledge the fact that the objection is there and that it is real to the person who is raising the objection. Too often Christians try to “argue” people into the Kingdom by proving them wrong or silencing them. You gain nothing that way. When you accept an objection, you indicate that you recognize its presence in the conversation, have understood what the person said, and **are willing to let him have his opinion at this point**. There are three or four ways of accepting objections. You can say, “I know a lot of people who think that,” or “I used to think that myself,” or “I’m glad to hear you say that,” or “I’m sorry to hear you say that.” Obviously, the answer must fit the objection. If someone says, “I hate God,” you obviously don’t say, “I’m glad to hear you say that!” Likewise, do not say that you used to think so-and-so unless it is actually true. The purpose in step two is simply to **acknowledge the existence of the objection and to keep the communication open**.

STEP 3: REASSERT THE SUBJECT.

Whether it is apparent at first or not, the objection has introduced a new subject and we are no longer discussing the individual and his relationship to God. Examples: “The church is full of hypocrites.” Now we are no longer discussing the individual but how many hypocrites there are in the church - quite a different subject! “I don’t have to go to church to be a Christian.” Now we are discussing “going to church” instead of the individual’s relationship to God. *Handle objections with two or three short sentences and get back on the subject. Remember: You do not owe this person an air-tight, rational “proof” that God is right and he is wrong. The best method for reasserting the subject is to pick the **key word** out of his objection and **go back into the real subject where he came out**. We will demonstrate this technique in the paragraphs below.*

STEP 4: REAFFIRM THE GOSPEL

This is what we came for - to present the good news of God’s love and mercy in Christ to someone who, though they may have been church members, either didn’t hear it or refused to hear it. *The whole purpose of our visit is to bear witness to the tireless love of God for people and to invite the person back home to the father’s house. The Word of the Gospel is the only power in the world that can affect the change of heart and life we are seeking through this visit.*

HANDLING OBJECTIONS AND MANAGING THE INTERVIEW

The list of 40 objections looks rather foreboding, yet a little training and some experience indicates that there are really six or seven major objections behind all 40 on the list. You will recall that Step 1 in the process of handling objections was to determine what the **real** objection is. Let's see if we can break the list of 40 major objections down into groups that really stem from the same objection. These are the major objections:

SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRIST: Objections #3, #5, #14, #18

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS: Objections #1, #2, #8, #15, #17, #28, #34, #36, #38, #39

BLAMING OTHER PEOPLE: Objections #4, #6, #7, #20, #24, #31

THE ORGANIZED CHURCH: Objections #11, #12, #13, #19, #25, #27, #40

“INTELLECTUAL” DIFFICULTIES: Objections #16, #29

THE ENVIRONMENT: Objections #21, #22, #30, #32, #33, #37

LIFE ITSELF: Objections #9, #10, #23, #26, #35

Now let's see if we can analyze these groups of objections and follow the four-step method of managing the interview and presenting the Gospel.

GROUP 1: SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRIST

The objections in this group seem quite diverse. Actually, they all stem from the same basic problem - the attempt to cope with the diversity of religious viewpoints and competing ideologies by reducing them all to the lowest common denominator. *In actuality, the real objection is to the exclusive claims and the centrality of Christ.* He is not one option among many; *He is the **only** option for salvation.* These objections lead one off the subject because we end up discussion “religions” or “religious viewpoints” instead of the person’s relationship to THE PERSON, **JESUS CHRIST**.

Now let’s see if we can handle these objections and get back on the subject.

Objection #3: “All religions are the same.”

Caller: “I know that there are lot of people who think that and there are certain similarities in religions. But there is one basic difference. A religion is something people **do**, or **practice**. Christianity isn’t a religion; it’s a **faith**. Christ is the center of that faith. To be a Christian is to know and believe in a Person - Jesus Chris. He’s the One we came to talk to you about.”

Comment: You will note that we could spend all night talking about “religions.” We came to talk about this person’s **faith** or lack of it. Get back on the subject. Note that we use his concept (religions) to get back to the real subject. Go back into the subject where the individual came out.

Objection #5 “My religion is the Golden Rule.”

Caller: “I’m happy to hear that. The Golden Rule talks about doing to others what we would like them to do to us. The real idea behind the Golden Rule is **love**, and that’s what we came to talk to you about - the man who formulated the Golden Rule - Jesus Christ. **There** was a man who knew how to love. Let me tell you about Him.”

Objection #14: “Religion is too unscientific.”

Caller: “You know, you are absolutely right. Religion is totally unscientific. Science deals with the five senses: what we can see, touch, taste, feel and smell. That’s the scientific side of life. There is another side of life that is just as real and that’s the spiritual realm, our spiritual life. Jesus Christ said that there was truth in this realm too. In fact, He said, “I am the Truth.” Let me tell you about the truth of God’s love for people we can know in Him.”

Objection #18: “Jesus was only another prophet.”

Caller: “I can see you’ve given this some thought and have heard about Jesus Christ. You’re right. He was a prophet. But He was so much more than that. He once said that He came to **fulfill** the Law and the prophets. **He** was the One the prophets all talked about as the promised Savior. Let me tell you about Him.”

GROUP 2: SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

Basically, all objections to God or His Word are self-righteous in some way. The objections handled here are specifically rooted in self-righteousness as an **overt objection** to the Gospel. These objections are some of the most difficult to deal with until we understand that *the person who uses overt self-righteousness as an objection knows that he is wrong. We do not attempt to defend ourselves or prove our “righteousness” unless we know that we are wrong. Truth and righteousness need no defending.* The real problem behind all of these objections *is the fear that they will be “found out” or proven wrong.* Do not attempt to argue with this type of person or the communication will collapse almost immediately. Help this person to understand that he can give up the self-justification game through the righteousness of Christ.

Objection #1: Self-righteousness, **per se**. “I’m as good as the next man. I try to do right. I wouldn’t hurt a fly. I try to keep the Ten Commandments.”

Caller: “I’m glad to hear that you are concerned about moral things. Far too many people today don’t care. But the great moral code that underlies all moral codes, the Ten Commandments, is like a balloon. It only takes one hole to break the whole thing. That’s why the New Testament says, ‘Whoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend it in one point, he is guilty of all.’ That’s why Jesus Christ came. He kept the Ten Commandments for us so that we wouldn’t have to be afraid of God continually. Let me tell you about how and why He did that.”

Objection #2 “I’m good enough to save myself.”

Caller: “I know there are some people who think that; it would be true if it was human judgments we had to face. But here we are talking about the judgment of **God**. Someone has to answer for human sin - and Someone has - Jesus Christ. We call Him Savior because he makes it possible for us to stand before the judgment of God unafraid. Let me tell you how that happens.”

Objection #8 “I’m just not interested.”

Caller: “Thank you for your honesty. I’m sure you are telling me the truth. Getting interested in God and spiritual things is about the last thing most of us care to do. But I know Someone who is interested in you. He worries a lot about you and would really like to have you back in His care. His name is Jesus Christ. Let me tell you a little bit about how much he is concerned about you.

Objection #15: “I can’t believe in a God who allows sickness, suffering, war, and death.”

Caller: “To be truthful with you, I don’t believe in a God like that either. The implication in your statement would be that somehow God is responsible for sickness, suffering, war, and death. But you know, God has given us the awesome power to reject Him and do without Him. What’s causing man’s problems is **sin**, and the hatred and bickering, etc. that come from sin. **Man** causes most of the suffering, war, and death in this world. In fact, God was ready to suffer with us and for us,

and He did. he sent His Son Jesus Christ for that. Let me tell you about Him.”

Objection # 17: “I’ll take my chances.”

Caller: “I know a lot of people who feel that way. But, you know, our **eternal** life is one time that we can’t afford to take chances. If the Scriptures are right, it would be horrible to miss an eternity with God and spend it separated from Him when it could all be different. Why take chances? God sent His Son Jesus Christ so that we can be sure, absolutely certain, of His love for us and that we have eternal life. Let me tell about Jesus Christ and how **you** can be sure.”

Objection #28: “It’s none of your business what I do.”

Caller: “I can understand how you might feel that way. Most of us don’t really want someone snooping around in our business. There is one thing we ought to be sure about, though. mankind felt the same way when Jesus Christ came, but God made it His business to try and win people back to His love. Jesus Christ made it His business to help us even when we didn’t know we needed it. Let me tell you about Him.”

Objection #34: Confession or remorse that is not genuine is the person’s attempt to get rid of the caller. It comes out sounding this way: ‘Well, I know I should go to church, and I’ll be around Sunday. You can count on it.’ Or, ‘I know I do some things wrong once in a while, but so does everybody.’ *Be particularly conscious of the person who is trying to shoo you out the door or tell you what he thinks you want to hear.*

Caller: “I’m glad to hear that, but I didn’t come to talk to you about going to church Sunday or anything like that. I really came to talk to y9ou about Someone you need to know and who knows you - Jesus Christ. He’d like to have a word with you.”

Objection #36: “I’ll handle my own problems myself.”

Caller: “I am sure that there are many people who feel the way you do. It takes courage to be responsible for yourself. But there is one problem none of us can handle himself - sin, and the death that is sure to follow. That’s why God sent His Son Jesus Christ, to handle the greatest problem of life for us. He’s offering you and me His help and forgiveness. Let me tell you how.”

Objection #38: “I’ll straighten my life out first, then I’ll come to church.”

Caller: “You know, there are a lot of people who think that. But that is like saying that I’m sick, so I’ll wait till I get well and then go see the doctor. That’s our problem, you see. Only God can straighten out our lives so that they are really good for us and pleasing to Him. That’s why God sent His Son Jesus Christ for us, to make all the bent things in our lives straight. Let me tell you how He did that.”

Objection #39: “I’ll come when I’m ready.”

Caller: “That would be a good idea. Things usually work out badly when we aren’t ready to do something. But I wonder if you’ve thought about the fact that God cares about things and people being ready. Jesus even said that about our eternal life. He told His disciples that He was going back to eternity to prepare a place for them, to get things ready. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection God’s love has won our forgiveness for sin. **He’s** ready to take us back. He’s offering that to you as a gift through His Son Jesus. Let me tell you what He’s promising you.”

GROUP 3: BLAMING OTHER PEOPLE

The objections encountered here come from people who are not very mature emotionally. They will blame all their failings on someone else. There may be some truth to what they say in certain instances, however. For example, the person who says he had religion shoved down his throat as a child may be telling the truth. One man once told me that his father used to beat him if he didn't go to Sunday School. That individual will be hostile toward religion and for good reason. Be aware with this type of objection, however, that there is something hypocritical under the surface of most of them. *The real objection here is the attempt to transfer one's spiritual responsibility to someone else, and then justify my spiritual irresponsibility because they failed to be responsible for me.*

Objection #4: "I had religion shoved down my throat as a child."

Caller: "I am really very sorry to hear that. No one should ever be forced into anything as wonderful as our relationship to God can be through Jesus Christ. But, you know, you aren't a child anymore. I have something adult for you that any person can make up his own mind about - Jesus Christ - and God's offer of love and forgiveness through Him. Let me tell you about Someone who loves you."

Objection #6: "I am waiting for my husband or wife to do something about religion."

Caller: I can understand how you might want to begin your spiritual life together. But, you know, Someone is waiting for you with outstretched arms. He has a gift for you and wants you to rise up and claim that gift. His name is Jesus Christ and the gift is eternal life. You can have that now. Let me tell you how."

Objection #7: "There are too many hypocrites in the Church."

Caller: "I'm sorry to say you are right. There are some. Unfortunately, not everyone in the Church lives up to all that is taught and believed. But that is the heart of what God has to say to us. We all sin and fall short of what He demands. In His love He sent His Son Jesus Christ to help us with **all** our failings and hypocrisies. He loves us just as we are. He loves you. Let me tell you about His promises to you."

Comment: This is one of those objections that needs qualification. The Church is not **full** of hypocrites; there are **some**. Be sure you qualify that on the way past.

Objection #20: "I don't like the minister."

Caller: "I can understand how you might feel that way. Ministers have a difficult job. They have to talk to people about sin, their sin, and about God's Law and wrath. Nobody wants to hear that. The Bible itself is full of people who hated the prophets and apostles of God because they exposed their sin. But, you know, God doesn't ask us to **like** the minister. Our personality and his may just not match up. What God **does** ask us to do is to **love** the minister for the sake of the difficult job he does for us all. His real job, you see, is to tell people about the **remedy** for sin, Jesus Christ, and how much God loves us all. Let me tell you about Christ."

Objection #24: “I have a grudge.”

Caller: “I am sorry to hear that. I know how difficult it can be when something gets stuck in our hearts and we can’t get it out. We have all had that problem. I always think about how fortunate we are that God doesn’t hold any grudges. If anybody ever had a reason to hold a grudge it was Him. We disobeyed Him, killed his messengers, and finally crucified His Son. But that is what makes God different from men. he knows how to love and forgive. The best news is that he is able to give us His own nature and helps us to love and forgive through His Son Jesus Christ. Let me tell you about Him.”

Objection #31: “I can’t get my spouse to come so I don’t go either.”

Caller: “I can see that you and your spouse have a lot of regard for each other. That’s great to see, God, you see, has a great deal of regard for all of us. That’s why He sent His Son Jesus Christ. It was His way of loving us and offering us His forgiveness and help. That’s what he is offering you and your spouse. Let me tell you about that.”

GROUP 4: THE ORGANIZED CHURCH

This group of objections really deals with **externals**. The Church here is not viewed as a spiritual fellowship but as an organization that ought to be run to suit the individual you are dealing with. It is a blind alley to attempt to deal with any of these issues without faith in Christ. The real objection here is that the Church *is not run to satisfy the selfish needs of the person you are talking to and his **pride** has been hurt somewhere along the line.* Objection #40 may be the most **honest** response among all the objections. he is usually telling you the truth.

Objection #11: “The church is becoming too involved in politics, social gospel, etc.”

Caller: “Yes, there are some churches that have gotten off the beaten path pretty far. But, you know, Jesus Christ came into a world where the issues of politics and social problems were pretty hot. In fact, His way of life ran counter to those in power and they finally crucified Him. The real issue that God wants His church to be concerned about is human sin and hatred that produced all the political and social problems. God did something about that. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to help us, you and me, get our own attitudes toward Him straightened out. He loves us and wants us back. Let me tell you about that.”

Objection #12: “The church has never done anything for me.”

Caller: “I can understand how you might feel that way. So often the church can seem like a cold, unfeeling organization. But, you know, God has done something for you through His Son, Jesus Christ - a very great thing. He has redeemed you from the power of sin and an eternal death. The church is here simply to keep telling people

that good news. God is offering you His forgiveness and help right now. Let me tell you how.”

Objection #13: “The church is behind the times.”

Caller: “I can understand how you might feel that way. Everything today moves pretty fast. But, you know, some things never change, things like sin and the need for forgiveness. How about death? Everybody still does that. The real problems of man don’t change; the only thing that changes is the way man shows his sin and hate and fear. That’s why God did something about that, once and for all. He sent His Son Jesus Christ because man was behind the times and out of tune with the Creator’s plan for living. Few people have been able to catch up with Jesus Christ. he had a vision for a better world that nobody has been able to match - love. God is offering you a chance to enter that world and get a glimpse of what it’s all about. Let me tell you how.”

Objection # 19: “I don’t have to go to church to be a Christian.”

Caller: “You are absolutely right. Nowhere does the Bible command us to ‘go to church./’ What God does talk about is **worship**. The word ‘worship’ comes from the Old English word ‘worthship’ which means the value or worth we place on something. Christians gather to worship because they want to tell each other and the whole world the value and worth they place on God. He is first in their lives and they want everybody to know it. That’s true because God places a great deal of value and worth on us. St. Paul once said, “You are bought with a price.” The price was the lifeblood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. That’s how much value God places on us. Let me tell you why.”

Objection #25: “The kids get religion five days a week at the school.”

Caller: “Yes, and that is a great blessing. But, you know, it is difficult to learn to fly a plane in the classroom. The training in faith your children receive is useless if they never fly, if they never put any of what they learn to work in worship. That’s why your children are learning to know Christ personally. Knowing Him is more than a religion. It’s walking with Him every minute of every day. That’s why Jesus came - so that we could know God and His love for us. That’s what he’s offering you. Let me tell you how.”

Objection #27: “All the church wants is my money.”

Caller: “I can understand how you might think that. It does seem that the only contact some churches have with their members is when it is pledge time. But, you know, your money isn’t what God wants. That belongs to Him anyway. God wants your heart. That’s why He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to open your heart and mine to Him again. He loves us and wants us to respond to His live. Money is only a very small part of that response. What He really wants to know is if you love Him and are willing to show that. Let me tell you how that happens.”

Objections #40: “Church bores me.”

Caller: “Thank you for your honesty. It bores me, too, sometimes. That’s a major problem with the whole human race. God always bores us when we don’t understand what He is trying to say to us. That’s why He did the most exciting thing anybody ever heard about. He sent us His own Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ by His death and resurrection opened up a new life that never ends, an eternal life that can begin right now. God loves us and is offering that to us. It’s the most exciting life there is. Let me tell you how we can share that.”

GROUP 5: “INTELLECTUAL” DIFFICULTIES

The person who objects on intellectual grounds usually is suffering from an overestimation of his own importance. He may be genuinely confused by the conflicting claims of many denominations. *The real objection here is the fear that religion and faith are not intellectually acceptable options. This person fears that he will be thought to be “unintelligent” if he accepts religion.* He does not understand that his standards of what is “intelligent” are warped.

Objection #16: “I don’t believe in the Bible,” or “There are so many interpretations of the Bible that I can’t be sure what you are telling me is true.”

Caller: “I can understand your difficulty, and I would like to ask you a question. Would you agree with me that the Bible has influenced the lives of more people than any book ever written? (If the person knows anything, the answer is “yes”.) Would you tell me what you think the main theme of the Bible is? (If the person is not a Christian, you will get the wrong answer every time, something other than God’s plan of salvation by grace through faith.) I was afraid that might be the case. You have dismissed the book that has influenced the lives of more people than any ever written and you are not sure what the main theme is. Let me share it with you. God wants us to be sure of one thing: His love for us and our salvation through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Intelligent people have recognized that sacrifice of God as real love. That’s the way love is. The Bible can interpret itself when it comes to that central theme. Anybody can read and understand that for himself. Let me tell you more about it.”

Objection #29: “That’s only your interpretation.”

Caller: “I can understand how you might think that. There are many religious ‘nuts’ loose in the world, genuine fanatics. Sensible Christians have found that God’s Word is capable of making its own meaning plain, particularly when it comes to the central message of salvation. God wanted to interpret his feelings about us, His lost and straying creatures. He wanted to let us know how He felt about us, the longing love He had to bring us back to Himself. That’s why He sent us His Son, Jesus Christ, instead of a letter. By His death and resurrection, Christ made God’s love and mercy available to us all. It’s not hard to interpret that kind of sacrifice. It is

love at work. Let me tell you what God is trying to say about you.”

GROUP 5: THE ENVIRONMENT

This group of objections all share a common factor - in some way the environment of worship makes their participation impossible. The person who uses these objections may, on occasion, have a genuine problem. Objection #22 about being in crowds **may** be a genuine psycho-neurotic problem that needs therapy. For the most part, however, the person using these excuses is extremely selfish. *The real objection here is the fear of sharing oneself with others. These people are usually lonely because loneliness is the fear of love.* Remember, however, not to make uncharitable judgments. Some of these objections may be valid.

Objection #21: “I don’t like to get up in front for communion.”

Caller: “I can understand that. Many of us are self-conscious about being up in front. I’ve always thought about something else, however. Did you ever think about how God, through His Son Jesus Christ, has put us “up in front”? He has singled us out and made us very special people through His Son. Holy Communion is His offer to share all the benefits of Christ’s death and resurrection with us and assure us of His love. Everybody partaking of Holy Communion is being assured that they are precious in God’s eyes. let me tell you about that.”

Comment: You may have to deal with a genuine shyness here or offer to serve this person the sacrament in the pew. It possible, get off the subject of their fears and self-consciousness and onto the Gospel and what God is offering **them**.

Objection #22: “I can’t stand to be in a crowd.”

Comment: This objection may be real. Of the three persons the author has dealt with here, one was genuine, the other two ingenuine. They could stand crowded supermarkets, etc., but not crowded churches. You need to **clarify** this situation before proceeding further.

Caller: “Oh? I’m sorry to hear that. Do you get out at all? (Answer). How do you get your groceries and other necessities? Could we be of any help?

Comment: Should you suspect from the answers that you are dealing with a person who is genuinely having difficulty in crowds, let the pastor deal with this problem professionally. Should you conclude that the problem is manufactured, you might want to proceed along the following lines:

Caller: “I guess we need to keep reminding ourselves that we are something very special with God and not just one of the crowd. he speaks to us personally though His

Word, Jesus Christ. He died for us one-by-one and assures us that He calls us by name. he promises that He knows us well enough to be able to number the hairs on our head. That's what I came to talk to you about - God's love for each of us no matter what our problems. Let me tell you about that love."

Objection #30: "I have bad health and am unable to come to church."

Caller: "I'm sorry to hear that. But, you know, God came to **us** in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. That's what He offers to do for us every day of our lives through His Word. Let me tell you about His love for you and me and His promise to be here with us right now."

Comment: This objection may also be genuine. If so, here is a person who needs the supporting love and helpfulness of God's people. If it is an excuse, present the Gospel and offer the 16-week type course at home. If they come to faith, the problem will resolve itself.

Objection #32: "I have nothing to wear."

Caller: "I can understand how you feel. It does seem that people put on their very best clothes to come to church. But, you know, God made provision for us all to have something to wear. The Bible calls it the righteousness of Christ. **That's** what God sees when people come to worship. With an old coat or housedress you might be the best-dressed person there; people look at the outward appearance, but God looks at our hearts. Let me tell you a little bit about how God sees you through the eyes of His love in Christ."

Objection #33: "I don't like communion from the common cup."

Caller: "I have heard people say that before. From a purely physical point of view, the cup is non-absorbing metal and the wine has strong enough alcohol content that germs are not a problem. But I think we need to remind ourselves of something else. In Holy Communion Christ offers to unite Himself to us and us to Him. My problem is worse than germs; the problem is sin and it's killing me. Our Lord Jesus Christ unites us to Himself and to each other because joined to Him I have what He has - purity, holiness, righteousness, cleansing. In Holy Communion He takes what I have - sin, death, disease. In Holy Communion God seals His love to us. Let me tell you about the meaning of that love."

Objection #37: "I don't have any transportation."

Caller: "I'm sorry to hear that. It must be frustrating to want to move around and have no way to get there. I guess, in a sense, that's why I'm here. When it comes to God, we don't have any way to get to Him. No transportation is the problem **there**, too. That's why He sent His Son into the world - to open the way for us to get back to Him. Let me tell you how Jesus Christ did that for us and what God is promising you."

Comment: Don't be too quick to offer to pick this person up. If they had wanted to find a way, they would have. Talk the Gospel to them first or you will find that there is no "power" for them to want transportation even if you offer it. If you present the Gospel and they respond, you may find them accepting your offer of transportation later.

GROUP 7: THE PACE OF LIFE ITSELF:

This group of objections is very common in the hustle and bustle of life in this country. Many of the objections in this group seem insurmountable *only because we think our task is to get them to come to church, which, of course, is on **Sunday**. Remember that "getting them to come to church" is not what you are there for.* The 16-Week course or its equivalent doesn't meet on Sunday! Inviting them back to church will not solve the spiritual problem here anyway. The real objection here *is that this person is in love with the world and usually has worn himself out chasing it. He wants to escape the consequences of the feverish pace the world keeps. However, sleep and trips are escape mechanisms for this type of person.*

Objection #9: "I'm too busy."

Caller: "I understand what you are telling me. Life can get to be pretty much of a hassle, a real rat-race sometimes. To live well takes a real sense of timing. God had that kind of sense of timing when He sent us His Son, Jesus Christ. He came into a world that was just as busy then as now. But here was a difference. Jesus was busy with the Father's business - winning for us forgiveness of sins and eternal life. he loves us and wants us to acknowledge that love. We need to take time for that. let me tell you about Him."

Objection #10: "I work on Sunday."

Comment: This objection needs two stages of clarification before it can be dealt with. The first clarification: "Oh, is that **every** Sunday?" We need to know if the person is leveling with us. The second clarification: "Does your employer require you to work on Sunday? Would you lose your job if you didn't?" Here we are checking to see if the person let his faith go to pieces by neglect, then was approached by his employer to work on Sunday and accepted the offer. Remember that the person using this *is assuming that you are there to get him to go to church on Sunday.* If we succeed in getting him to a 16-week course and he comes to faith, he may change his working hours **voluntarily**, thereby resolving the problem.

Caller: "I'm sorry to hear you have to work Sundays. But that really isn't why I came - to get you to go to church. I came to share with you something about One who is working for us seven days a week. he never tires of helping and serving us. I'm talking about Jesus Christ, our Savior. God loved us and sent His Son to do the work we couldn't do, the work of our salvation from sin and death. Let me tell you about Him."

Objection #23: “It’s too hard to get up on Sunday morning.”

Caller: “I can understand how you feel. I’m not always too keen on getting up on Sunday either. Life is made up of ups and downs. That’s why I get up for worship on Sunday. Worship is one of those high-spots in the week. In fact, without praising and worshipping my Savior, Jesus Christ, on Sunday, the week doesn’t have any “ups” or high-spots to speak of. It’s a great thing to know that God loves us and invites us to share His love and forgiveness every day of our lives and not just on Sunday. Let me share a little of what that means to me.”

Objection #26: “We are usually gone on weekends.”

Caller: “I can understand that you like to take the time to be together as a family. But I really didn’t come to talk to you about weekends or Sundays. I know that there are a lot of people who believe they can worship God out in the woods or in nature and don’t need church anyway. They overlook one important fact, however. God comes to people in two ways. It is true that He is present everywhere, but that is according to His **power**. What says He won’t use that power to burn me to a cinder? Only a child of God knows that God harnesses His power with His love in Christ. That’s the second way God comes to people - according to His mercy. Out in the woods trees don’t tell us God loves us or that our sins are forgiven. Nature tells us nothing about how God feels about us. That’s what I came to talk to you about - how God feels about you through His Son, Jesus Christ. Let me tell you about that.”

Objection #35: “Sunday is my only day of rest.”

Caller: “I can understand how you feel that way. Life is pretty much of a hassle sometimes. But, you know, the real problems most of us have, deal with rest, too. St. Augustine put it this way: “Our hearts are restless until they rest in God.” What’s wearing us out is sin and the guilt of knowing our lives are out of tune with our Creator. That’s why somebody else said, “Come to Me, you who labor and are heavy laden, and **I** will give you rest.” Jesus Christ said that because through His death and resurrection He brought us the forgiveness of sins and the only real rest we will ever know through His peace. Let me tell you about Him.”

Remember as you train to handle objections that there are no “right” answers. Our objective is to bring the good news of Christ to people. Skill in handling objections is important for keeping the communication process open and helping us find an entrance for our witness. It takes love and humility to be a good witness.

CHAPTER XVI

COLD TURKEY

Definition

Our definition of Cold Turkey is a ministry of going from house to house in a parish community, seeking opportunity to present the Gospel as the Spirit opens doors. It challenges a parish to discover who lives in a community, what is their church affiliation, and specifically how the parish can better serve the people in their community. It involves a saturation process of total community coverage, and a record keeping of ministries that have been effected in every home in the community, together with whatever opportunities that may open. It's an effort for a parish to "really get with" its community for total ministry.

Our Discoveries

One of the saddest discoveries that we have made in Lutheran communities in recent years is, that church after church is doing little or nothing to reach out to its community. It simply sits and waits for people to come to it. We sometimes say, with tongue in cheek, "We've changed the Great Commission from 'Go and Tell,' to 'Sit and Wait.'" We build beautiful churches on prominent corners, and wait for the community to arrive - and it stays away in droves.

It would not be fair to say that every congregation is failing to go out to meet its neighborhood! Some are out on a very regular, and in a very fine fashion in their continuing efforts to 'win the community for the Lord.' Interestingly enough, many congregations that have a good Track I evangelism program are most active in getting out into the community - even though they probably 'need' to do so less than most congregations. We say that because we have discovered that congregations heavily into Track I have so many friends and contacts to call on that they find it impossible to keep up with the 'prospects.' It seems that such congregations have developed such a vision for the 'dying,' also in their own community, that they just have to be out there! We have discovered others who have used the worn-out excuse, "We have no unchurched in our area." That excuse has been proven false so often, that we would pray the coming of the day when in Lutheran circles it would be no longer heard.

To sum up our discoveries, in thousands and thousands of calls made across the length and breadth of the country, and in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, we have discovered a ministry that, described in the words of the satisfied customer, "Works." We have had some very sad discoveries where people from parishes have uncovered people within a stone's throw of the church - unchallenged by the church for years and years, while on the other hand we know of churches whose rosters are filling with people first introduced to the church through the community house to house approach.

What It Is Not

We would like to make it clear that we are not proposing city wide or community canvasses. These may have their place, but we have discovered too many piles of canvass cards, unused long after the canvass. The negatives from a canvass that have resulted in nothing are not worthy of lines in this workbook. There are some good reasons for a community wide canvass, however. The canvass can be used for a quick way of gathering information; it can be used for a method of disseminating information and giving invitation, as to a Lutheran Open House Week. Or it may even be used for inspiration, to get a core group of people interested in the spiritual welfare of the parish community. **BUT** - all materials uncovered in a canvass need to be translated in ministry, not as wasted man-hours on the part of either the canvasser or the canvassed. We believe that many canvasses have ended up in travesty!

Opinionaire

Neither are we proposing a survey of the community to ascertain certain sociological, ethical, racial or economical factors to be used in starting a church. There may on occasion, be justification for such activity. The secret to our approach is the use of an opinionaire which allows people to dialog their religious opinions and convictions. Many times, with their permission, this develops into an opportunity to share the Gospel. The problem was, we could discover no instrument to assist us in achieving the goal of reaching every home in the immediate parish vicinity in such a way that the local parish could feel comfortable in having ministered to its surroundings. materials from Campus Crusade and EE did not seem to do the job we were after - so we developed our own, a copy of which is included in this chapter under title: "Personal Religious Opinionaire."

It is important to know how to use the instrument. You see, in the instance of the friends or contacts of the church, it is often easy to get to a Gospel presentation through the introduction, to the diagnostic questions, onto the bridge and into the message. In the case of strangers, most people can simply not go to a strange home and begin a chit-chat type conversation which will lead to the two diagnostic questions and then, if the Sprit leads, to a Gospel presentation. The instrument (opinionaire) therefore, was developed to do in the case of strangers precisely what the introduction has done in the case of friends and contacts. That is exactly what has happened in thousands of instances.

Establishing the
Contract

Participants go out in twos in this ministry. (Three look rather heavy standing on your porch on a Sunday morning!) One is the interviewer, the other the scribe. When they approach a door, preceded by training and prayer, they establish the contract, and many times the interview begins. We suggest a very carefully worded and memorized contractual presentation at the door. It goes like this:

*Good morning. I'm Leroy Biesenthal and this is my friend Jean henry.
We're from Trinity Lutheran Church on 5th and Elm. We're out in our*

community this morning, calling on our neighbors to find out what they think about a number of religious items so that at Trinity we can do a better job of serving our community. Would you help us by answering a few questions, please?

At this point, if people grant permission, you initiate the interview. If permission is not granted, depart with a greeting that might go something like this: *“Thank you very much. We truly appreciate your time, and if ever there is anything that we can do for you at Trinity, please do not hesitate to call on us. We have this little gift from the church (marked New Testament, perhaps) that we’d like you to have anyway.”*

The contract which you have established holds through the first twelve questions on the instrument. Remember - you have received permission to hear these people’s opinions! You have no right to correct, preach or add. You record what they say! If someone feels that Jesus is a fraud, then in answer to number 11, you write “fraud.” However, while you are receiving these opinions, you are shelving a lot of information, which will either help your congregation do a better job of serving its community, or will serve you in good stead, should the people give you permission to proceed with a Gospel presentation.

Many exciting and unexpected things develop in an interview. For instance, people may answer many questions at one time as they hurry to share their opinion; others may say, ‘I’m Lutheran and I don’t want to talk about it.’ Still others will say, ‘Those are some pretty important questions, I think you’d better come in so that we can talk about them.’ No matter what happens, and even if the instrument has accomplished its purpose in establishing rapport and giving people a chance to talk about their opinions, you can still go no further than question number 12. Even if you were to tear the instrument in shreds, you have no right to proceed without a change of contract.

At that point, it is very important that the callers say something like this, *“Well, we certainly thank you for all of your time, your kindness and your sharing. I know that at Trinity we are going to take all this material, put it together, and really try to do a better job at ministering to our community. You have been most helpful. Thank you very much....”* It may well be that that is obviously the time for the interview to come to a halt. On the other hand, surprisingly, its more likely just to be the beginning. However, you cannot proceed without or before changing the contract.

There is a very simple way of changing the contract - with permission. After having thanked the interviewee (I personally try to discover the persons name

Begin or Leave

Contract for first
Twelve Questions

Stay True to
Contract

Express Thanks

Change Contract

by looking on the mailbox, or by simply asking for it) you seek to add to the thanks above by asking, *“Would you mind if I ask you a couple questions of a more personal religious nature.”* The BIG SURPRISE is how often they will heartily agree.

Nothing further is written on the instrument! Even though people may give an unsure answer to number 13 and a works answer to number 14, the caller has to be trained where to go from there. He seeks to change the contract again, in one of two ways, (1) *Do you have a few more minutes so that I might share with you how you might be certain of heaven,* or, (2) *Would it be all right if we (someone) came from the church on Thursday (any) night to share with you how you might be sure that if you were to die tonight you could be certain of going to heaven.*

A number of things astound. First of all it is amazing that so many people open their door, and dialog in pleasing fashion; how many cooperate; how many give permission to ask the diagnostic questions; how many give permission to present the Gospel - and how many make confession. Our simple discovery has been that the only place where the technique is not at work is where congregations are not working it! One little anecdote might suffice. A brother exclaimed, after not having tried Cold Turkey, “Well, in our community, we find that people just do not get in.” Imagine his surprise when I was able to tell him that in his community, not one team failed to get in. As a matter of fact, a number of teams got only to one house - and that is the epitome: one knock, one answer, one use of the instrument and one Gospel presentation.

We discover that people can be trained to do Cold Turkey in short order. However, when it comes to presenting the Gospel, other measures and precautions need to be taken. There are those who feel that well trained Gospel presenters should not be wasting their time in going from house to house. The thought is that others can be trained to do that, and have the Gospel presenters follow up on those who have shown some interest. We know that this has worked in some instances. On the other hand, the Spirit Himself may just have someone ready when the callers come to the door. What a shame if they are in no way equipped to share the Gospel.

Our own experience has been that people who make community calls can be trained in the use of such tracts as A Personal Faith, Now and Forever (Kolb) or The Seven Important Truths (Northern Illinois District) in a few hours. Minimal training might at least help meet a potential need for on the spot Gospel presentation.

Reports need to be carefully written upon return from the calling. Usually we suggest that a simple verbatim be written right on the back of the opinionaire itself. Of course, if any chance for ministry will have developed, the callers will do all in their power to get name and phone number to go along with the

On Your Own

Special Corps

Special Training

Reports

address. This information can then be transferred to the card file or the call back schedule file, while the basic information can be filed in a family folder.

Much, much could be written to share hundreds of anecdotes and experiences that have developed in this type of ministry. They cannot all be covered in several books. The best advice is to get out of there and do it in a very orderly, calendared, saturating way. That way a parish will know that it is ministering to its community. When it follows up on every ministry opportunity, it will know that it is being serious about its commission.

To assist congregations with a potential way of keeping track of calls made in communities and areas, we are including a sample record sheet developed by Salem Lutheran Church, Black Jack, Missouri, identified as “COLD TURKEY” EVANGELISM CALLS. This church not only takes its Cold Turkey seriously, but keeps good records on calls made so that they will always know how to minister in the community, where potential friends of the church reside, where there is opportunity for ministry, etc., etc. Again, from such a sheet, information can be transferred to 3 X 5's for filing and future scheduling of calls.

One final warning. Any church going about ministry in its community can expect WORK. One never ceases to be amazed at the number of ministry opportunities that develop from a single hour of Cold Turkey activity in any given community. But as in all instances, you have to do it to discover it works, and that it is enjoyable.

Do It

Record Form

Cold Turkey
means work

PERSONAL RELIGIOUS OPINIONAIRE

1. According to earlier results of this survey, the majority of people today feel the need for a more personal religious faith. Why do you think they have this need?
2. In the past year do you feel that your spiritual interest has increased?
3. Do you feel the need for a more personal religious faith?
4. Do you feel that churches today are meeting concerns of people today?
5. Why or why not
6. Do you feel that people should belong to a religious group or church?
7. How do you feel about the programs of Trinity?
8. How often should people attend church according to your opinion?
9. In your opinion, what is God like?
10. In your opinion, what is sin?
11. Who is Jesus Christ according to your understanding?
12. In your opinion, how does one become a Christian?
13. Have you come to the place in your life where you know for certain that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?
14. Suppose you were to die today and stand before God and He said to you: "Why should I let you into my heaven?" What would you say?

“COLD TURKEY” EVANGELISM CALLS**Numerical Record of Calls Made**

Subdivision: _____

Street Traversed: _____

House No.	Date of Call	Name of Person Responding to Opinionaire	P.H. Given	N.H.	N.A.	Opinionaire Ret'd to off. Call Back?	Names of Callers
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u>	_____

Please attach this form to any completed Personal Religious Opinionnaires and return to the church office.

Key N.H. (Not Home) N.A. (Not Admitted) P.H. (Praying Hands Given) Rev. 9-78

CHAPTER XVII

ADDENDUM

There are many things that are not written in the workbook. The very nature of evangelism, people ministry that it is, is such that many of the things that have been written could well already be outdated. We would pray, however, that the principles that have been enunciated, in terms of equipping saints for their ministry will not be out of date or out of step - ever. On the other hand, there are a number of items that are missing from this workbook by choice and design, not by oversight.

We have not included a large section on youth evangelism - for a number of reasons. First of all, we have discovered that youth can be incorporated right into Dialog Evangelism ministry and also into Track I activities. We are told that today, the youth enjoy being with others, other than their own age exclusively. We have seen many youth deeply involved and well trained in Dialog Evangelism ministry.

On the other hand, there are programs especially geared for the youth. The Board for Evangelism in conjunction with the Board for Youth Ministry has prepared the Share Life Retreat ministry. The Gospel Communication Clinic, founded by Pastors Dave Belasic and Paul Schmidt are meant to include and involve youth. Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ, founded by Pastor Fred Darkow enlist and involve many youth around the country. Mini Expos, such as that held under the auspices of the Evangelism Board of the Michigan District and their Counselor, the Rev. Paul Foust, and the Youth Gathering of the Eastern District under the auspices of their Board and Exec., Mr. Warren Helming are but samples of the many, many "youth things" that are going on around the country. We believe anyone with any eye to youth, and interest in them will have much at his disposal to initiate youth evangelism ministry.

Another significant gap, by choice, is the devotion of a section on illustrations. Everybody knows about the tight rope walker; add the multiplication of just one sin per day over a period of fifteen years; about the unsigned check; about the transference of ones weight to a nearby chair; about the transfer of a New Testament from one hand to the other. Without degrading any of these, we have a different suggestion. Our suggestion is that EACH trainer and trainee develop his own set of illustrations and anecdotes to make his points. These can be from life; they can be from Scripture; they can be apocryphal; they can be clipped from a newspaper; they can be humorous - but when they become the person's OWN, he has a command of them which he can get no other way. This may take some courage and patience, but when the art of discovering your own illustration is mastered, the results are excellent.

A long section in the Workbook could be written on the ministry of prayer and the positive addition of prayer partners to Dialog Evangelism. At one time, at

Youth Evangelism

Programs

Illustrations

Prayer Partners

Coral Ridge, one third of the people engaged in the ministry were staying behind to pray for the two thirds who were out on call, praying by name for the callers, the trainees and the people being called on. Congregations around the country have affirmed the blessing that comes from adding powerful prayer practice to the technique. A bit of imagination can help one discover how shut-ins, youth or others not able to call might be enlisted in the ministry of prayer, either at home or at church, either individually or in groups. For more information on fine work being done in special prayer ministry for evangelism undergirding, we suggest writing to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Eureka, Missouri, Zion Lutheran, Brainerd, Minnesota or St. Peter's, Arlington Heights, Illinois. Prayer power dare not be left out of Dialog Evangelism.

Bibliography

One final deletion. We have omitted a bibliography. Books on Evangelism and Church Growth are coming out so fast that any attempt at printing would already be outdated on publication. Those who are interested will already have discovered the sources and the catalogs and have the major works, while those who are not interested will not be helped anyway. Any inquirer will always receive an outstretched helping hand, should he desire anything specific.