

PASTORPEDIA™

Cutting Edge Conversations for Pastors and Church Leaders

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Evangelism in 2020

Now do we believe we need a Savior?

Okay, I know we believed that people needed the Savior before George Floyd and other killings and looting, riots, and pain. If we believed any part of the Bible, we knew we needed help.

But now, more than ever, or at least tied with any other time, we have seen the sometimes illogical and many times immoral opinions and actions of people who are angry without a spiritual governor, who determine what is moral without a guide, who make statements about eternity without a revelation, and who just plain need a Savior. The Savior.

Maybe one of the questions for the church is, will we allow ourselves to overlook this need?

We must not.

So come with us to talk about how to care about and act on this need better than ever. The church of our Lord and Savior does represent a different way of life, an orientation to actions that are clearly pure and loving, with accompanying spiritual help.

And this message that brings such helpful change, must be shared. Must.

Let's talk.

Hoping to do better,

Knute, with Jeff and Jim

Should we teach methods? Major on one?

Jeff Bogue

- We should teach methods like the FISH acronym (Friendly-Initiate-Story-Hope), but *not major on one*. Mostly, we should teach people to see the lost and see the harvest.
- Love compels us to share Christ. It's our lack of love and our lack of recognizing that people need the gospel that are the biggest barriers to sharing it.

Jim Brown

- Before any method is used, your life must reflect Jesus. People should look at us and see a difference in the way we live!
- Evangelism is a conversation and not a presentation.
- I like to begin with this question, "So, are you connected to any church?" That question quickly gives you information about their view on God and church.
- It is very helpful to give some tools, such as "Evangelism Explosion," and "Romans Road." It equips the people with a tool. But keep in mind, witness is best when flowing from a natural conversation.
- Your personal story is a great resource when sharing Jesus with people. Begin there and let the individual see how Jesus has impacted your own life.
- Always pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words to say. I have been blown away by the way He directs my conversations.
- Know when not to push the conversation any further.
- Always remember that every time you share the gospel, that person is pushed one step closer to Jesus. On average, it takes 7.5 contacts before someone responds to Jesus.
- Ask God to give you someone each day to help to move closer to Jesus.
- I will often ask, "Hey, what do you do with Jesus?"

Knute Larson

- Motivation nor method is the key. People certainly need strong inner motivation way ahead of methodology. We all need to love our Lord and all of the people that He loves or our class in evangelism methods will do little.
- On the other hand, there is strength that comes from a repetitious way of explaining the gospel and the message of the cross. Many can say, "Accept Jesus as your Savior," or "Believe in Jesus"—but what do such common phrases mean to someone who does not know any more than the average man on the street?

Give Cru, Young Life, and some churches and ministries credit for repetition of their way of saying it. They have helped many of us with their teachings. Myself included.

But real, continuous, natural witness and evangelism flow from a heart of love, not of training. So all we can do to strengthen that love spirit relationship is crucial for sure.

- Somewhere around year 11 of 26 at The Chapel, I took a survey of the whole church and was so alarmed by some of the answers to the question, "*How do you know you are a Christian?*" that I have

not preached a sermon since (I think) where I did not spend at least one or two minutes on the cross, what it means, and how we connect with Jesus Christ.

For that I always explain the atonement in common words, that all of our sins were put on Jesus on the cross; and also justification, the act by which our holy God declares us righteous in His sight because of the righteousness of His Son. The gift of righteousness.

I think you can teach all the methods in the world, but if people cannot summarize the gospel accurately in just a few minutes, they will never feel comfortable talking about Christ and salvation.

Also, I preached through Romans 3:21-26 every year at least once and often referred to it in the explanation of what happened when Jesus died and then rose again.

Just sayin' ...

How do we reach unsaved people rather than play “musical churches”?

Jeff Bogue

- Cater to them. This is where you really have to evaluate traditions, insider language, how you're teaching the Bible, etc.
- Find out what questions they are asking and answer those questions through your sermons.

Jim Brown

- Find ways to build relationships outside of the building—gyms, coaching, recreational opportunities, and friendships.
- Design your building in a way that draws them in with ways to connect besides your regular scheduled services. We have an indoor track, weight room, and open gym available.
- We built an indoor park for our community to use, and also host birthday parties there and in our building.
- Look for ways to touch your community with random acts of kindness.
- I often say this, “If your church building and church packed everything up on Monday and moved away, and no one missed you before Sunday, then you probably aren't reaching your community.”
- Just be involved in the community and live your life ON MISSION. Make sure you are sharing your stories as you preach, too.

Knute Larson

- I am not avoiding the question, but I have never been sorry or negative when “lapsed church people” came to understand and celebrate the assuring grace of Christ (see Romans 3:21-26) and His wonderful indwelling presence, and with that decided to be part of our church.
- How do we reach the unsaved? One at a time usually. I'm not sure many come to church for the “Sunday evening evangelistic hour,” as they called it when I was little. Indeed, it was a label only.

In today's world we must give good reasons for our people to first have unchurched and unbelieving friends and then gradually to invite them to accompany them to our services which are not going to slap them in the face with the gospel or a putdown.

A popular method is to urge people to have names of three friends written down on a card for prayer and love—three friends who do not attend church or believe anything strong about Christ. Just praying for them motivates relationships and words.

This certainly means we can't do what the church used to do and have people at the church or in a group from the church many evenings in the week. That's called making "groupies" out of them and does not help family or evangelistic relationships.

- Every church can also plan ministries that are not for themselves or Christian maintenance. There are many effective ways to serve the unchurched community: single mothers support groups, grief support, divorce recovery, food help, sports programs for all ages, and many more!

These are especially effective when one Christian invites and accompanies someone from outside.

Even in Sunday worship services, surveys in our country show that over 80% of guests came at the invitation of a friend. What does that mean about publicity budgets? 😊

How do we teach our people to be witnesses?

Jeff Bogue

- Teach them to "Pray for their three." We teach our people to pray for three of their friends, every day by name, that God would give them a "no-brainer moment" to share the gospel with them. A "no-brainer moment" would be the equivalent of someone looking at them and saying, "Can you give me the reason for the hope that's within you?"
- Teach them to wait on the Holy Spirit for the "no-brainer moments." We really want them to learn to hear the Holy Spirit and to engage the opportunities that He creates.
- Model it. I like to say that if a pastor's evangelism story is more than six months old, then we're not doing the work of an evangelist. So, using "God talk," be involved with people relationally, and simply connect with them—all these help us to be able to share our lives in such a way that we can model evangelism for the people around us.

Jim Brown

- Model it!
- Pray for the lost!
- Do whatever it takes to take the message across the street and around the world.
- Your budget must reflect your mission. You must have monies allotted to evangelism!
- Remind your people where you would be without Jesus!
- Preach on it!

Knute Larson

- I think every pastor and staff member in the church should have a DAG (discipleship-accountability group)—four, five, or six men if he is a man, or women if she is a woman.

There we build life habits into them and struggle together with the need to witness.

- “I do, we do, you do.” Have a third person be a part of a coffee appointment or breakfast meeting with a non-churched person, when feasible.
- Talk about your own attempts in sermons, regularly. And not always successful attempts where the person falls to his or her knees and requests baptism! (A friend on staff used to say to me often, you haven't mentioned an attempt to share your faith recently. It was good for me.)
- Every Sunday or home group that has questions related to the sermon should have at least one question that applies thoughts from the sermon to our relationships with the unchurched or our conversations with them. That keeps it in front of your groups regularly and it is not hard to do.
- We pray for them that way, and often in the pastoral prayer in the worship service.
- We model a genuine, positive, gracious, kind spirit from the pulpit and in the hallways and restaurants. That kind of person should share explanations of Christian faith. (We also urge grouchy people who attend our church not to try to witness! 😊)

Pastorpedia is a resource provided to you by CE National, a church effectiveness ministry. Please contact us at cenational@cenational.org or 574.267.6622 if we may be of any help to you or your ministry!

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