



**SYNOD OF THE TRINITY
PRESBYTERIAN MEN**

FOUNDATIONS FOR EVANGELISM

By

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PART I

**INTRODUCTION
What is Evangelism?**

The very word “evangelism” brings to mind many vivid images, both positive and negative:

- A fiery backwoods preacher toiling before a large crowd at a tent meeting.
- A television preacher, making an appeal for contributions.
- An earnest young seminarian handing out leaflets on the streets of urban America.
- A stadium filled with people listening to Billy Graham giving his usual invitation while the choir sings, “Just As I Am.”

Plumbing the dimensions of its power, derived from the ministry of Jesus Christ himself, we often struggle with the personal challenges of winning others to Christ. “Foundations for Evangelism” is designed to provide Biblical insights and answers to the questions facing our church today regarding how to effectively share our faith with people who are not yet believers.

A simple dictionary definition tells us the following:

- Evangelist – one who is a preacher of the gospel, who brings the message - brings the Evangel.
- Evangelism – preaching or promulgation of the gospel.

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The dictionary definitions sometimes imply that evangelism is the job of the hired professional pastor, and not a job for the laymen of the church. Nothing could be further from the truth.

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In his ministry and letters, Paul wrestled more with the role and tasks of an “evangelist” than many of his brother Apostles. Yet, even Paul does not provide a direct, exhaustive definition. However, he and the other Apostles may be used as examples to guide the church in that role. Further, Paul labeled Timothy and Titus as evangelists (II Tim 4:5). Philip (Acts 8:5-8; 26-40) and the Gospel writers represent other examples.

Paul often alluded to his work as “the building up of the Body of Christ” (or His Church). His work was part edification of believers, and part evangelism of non-believers. He lists those who were organizationally central to this great work: Apostles, prophets, pastors, and evangelists. Paul describes (I Cor. 12 and 14) the various levels of participation, the process of edification, and the benefits for the common good. Without regard to status or rank, the Holy Spirit confers gifts, or special giftedness, upon the members of those assembled. Among these is the gift of evangelism.

The work of the ancient evangelists was a “diverse ministry”, possibly supported financially by those with the means to do so (The New Interpreter’s Bible, Vol. 11, Page 855, 2002, Abington Press, Nashville, TN). Not having shared in the three-year ministry of Jesus, yet being the most organizationally trained and gifted, Paul would need “diverse ministry” support to build up the Body of Christ. However, recognizing the strategy of the Master, Paul included teaching, healing, prophecy, and a convincing case for the Kingdom of God in his “church building” evangelistic efforts wherever he was able to make contact and engage dialogue.

Considering Timothy as an example of an evangelist, we see his mentor, Paul, offering him advice: (II Tim. 4:5) “But you [Timothy], keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.” In this advice we see that the work of evangelism is dependent on the other functions of ministry. Therefore,

- Evangelism is an integral part of the ministry of the church. On one hand, it is not the only function of the church, and on the other, it is not an optional activity of the church.
- It is the means of evangelism by which non-believers come to faith in Christ, when they hear the full message of God’s salvation for them through God’s Son.
- Using this evangelistic foundation, the Word and Work of Christ, Paul and the other evangelists erected and built up the church under the leading of the Holy Spirit.

All was done, not for one person or office, but for the good of all and the glory of God, as He would have His will known and obeyed.

PART II

KOINONIA AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS LEADING TO MINISTRY BY THE LOCAL CHURCH

Introduction

The Apostle Paul wrote:

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of workings, but the same God works all of them in all men.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing, by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another the ability to speak in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

I Cor. 12:4-11⁴

The verses that follow this text place the concept and reality of spiritual gifts into the context of unity within the Body of Christ – the Church. Paul goes on to elaborate about how the different Body parts work together and exist in mutual dependence for the work of the Lord and for the common good to “build up the church” (I Cor. 14:12). The main characteristic for this existence is love, which Paul presents in Chapter 13, and which may be the most well known of Paul’s writings.

In this section, Chapters 12 through 14 of I Corinthians, Paul has presented the characteristics of Koinonia – Christian believers sharing their lives together with Jesus and contributing their spiritual gifts toward the benefit and growth of the Body. The benefit is for the individuals in the Body, for the worship of the Lord, and for the resulting influence of the Body in the world as salt and light for preservation and revelation.

The spiritual gifts, listed in addition to the above, are recognized in the Body by the appointment of various workers. These are listed as follows in verses 12:28-30: apostles, prophets, teachers, helpers, and administrators. However, not all the gifts of the Spirit are listed in these chapters. Elsewhere in Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul adds evangelists and pastors to the list. It is interesting that as Paul presents these lists, he does so by linking them to love and unity. The exercise of the gifts without love and in disharmony neither contributes toward the common good of the Body, nor toward making a positive difference in the world. In fact, Jesus said, “All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another” (John 13:35). Francis Schaffer elaborates on this statement in “The Mark of the Christian,” by pointing out the corollary – that the world will think that there is nothing to

⁴ Unless noted otherwise, quotations from the Bible are from the New International Version, 1984, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI..

our faith if we demonstrate no love toward one another. Philip Yancey in “What’s So Amazing About Grace,” describes this unloving behavior as demonstrating “ungrace.”

One biblical example of “ungrace” was the practice of showing partiality toward the wealthy, which the Apostle James (James 2:1-9) argued against. However, partiality is potentially still a problem in the church today. Although James directed his example toward the wealthy, there are other forms of social bias that are just as destructive – racial, ethnic, occupational, geographical origins, dress codes, cultural values, education, gender, and perhaps others. Such diversity among God’s people enhances the Body, but prejudice divides, and if unchecked, destroys unity.

Presumptions like these, based on outward appearance, hide spiritual gifts. For example, sometimes the spiritual gift of teaching is assumed to exist in a person whose occupation is teaching in our community schools or universities. The corollary to this assumption is that a person with a manual occupation, or one without a university degree cannot have the spiritual gift of teaching. The error is associated with discrimination. It also reveals a poor understanding of the nature and purpose of a spiritual gift, which can be similar but also very different from a natural talent. Preferential treatment also implies that one person, because of race, social status, position, etc. is inherently more valuable than another.

When it comes to having spiritual values, spiritual understanding, and the ability to live out biblical principles, is it possible that the church custodian may be ahead of the corporate leader in our congregation? Does God pay more attention to management than labor? Are the rich and beautiful people more valuable to God than others? Paul addressed these questions by conferring equality on all who believe in the name of Jesus Christ:

“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Gal.3:26-29

Therefore, we should humbly consider our heritage, position in the community, natural talents, wealth, and other such things as blessings from God, and then commit to prevent them from dividing us by concentrating on what we have in common, and then sharing these things together in the Lord. Considering this, our spiritual gifts can be recognized and then exercised in the context of unity, mutual love, and in commitment to the common good and purpose of the Body. There is no other way for the church to be effective in its calling and purpose. We must support one another, love one another, celebrate each other’s gifts, and hold each other accountable to our commitments in reaching the goals God has placed before us. To do otherwise is to encourage disunity and miss Body building opportunities He gives us.

Implementing Unity and Christian Love

However, this conclusion begs the question: How should these goals be reached in the context of the local church at the start of the twenty-first century? Or, as an individual in a large church may see it, “How can I love people in my congregation that I do not know, or only associate with on an infrequent basis?” And, perhaps the more difficult question: “How can I love people in my congregation that I do know, or those who may not be so lovable?” These are not easy questions. But, in any circumstance, we must implement the

command that Jesus gave us to love one another. Also, by His provision we have the Koinonia model in Acts 2:42-47 to guide us:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miracles were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Consider that these people lived in an era when "free time" was rare, if not nonexistent. Working for survival did not allow disposable time. This thought indicates the importance that the early Christian community put on their time together. Their fellowship has no hint of social bias associated with racial, ethnic, occupational, geographical origins, dress codes, cultural values, or any other differences that are noted in Acts 1:1-13.

What was the motivation for their devotion? What benefits did they receive? How did this activity affect their community outside the group? What were the results? How did the Lord respond to this unified Body of Christ, practicing Koinonia? The obvious answers are found in the above text. Without Koinonia, there would have been few people "added to their number," and it is clear that Koinonia was a foundation for the successful evangelistic effect of the early church.

The implementation and practice of the Koinonia model in the life of the modern church is also foundational for successful ministry and evangelism. Koinonia provides the environment for the synergistic employment of the spiritual gifts of the members. The aim and result of Koinonia is to produce a cooperative, nourishing, and edifying environment to hold believers in the love of Christ and to support them in the exercise of their spiritual gifts. This is why Paul writes:

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Eph. 4:1-3

Then he notes that the spiritual gifts are given:

. . . to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Eph. 4:12-13

The more closely the church today achieves these goals, the more effective she will become in making a positive difference in the world. That is why Paul prays for the Ephesian church:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that

surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.
Eph. 3:14-19

Can this unity, as desired by Paul for the Ephesian church, be programmed? Can love be programmed? Perhaps not, yet Christian love is a discipline that can be demonstrated and taught by implementing the Acts 2:42-47 model. And Christian unity is the result.

Implementing Contemporary Koinonia for Men Using the Acts 2:42-47 Model:

Interactions among men are different than among women, and that difference is demonstrated by the way we communicate. Men speak in “report language” when asked to share about who they are, whereas women speak about feelings much more readily. However, what men do is not who they in truth are, and their achievements are not what give them value. As a result, Koinonia among men is somewhat more difficult to achieve because the inner person is not clearly revealed when communication tends to remain at this superficial level. Something more is required among men to produce fellowship that can be described as “glad and sincere hearts.” And implementing the Acts 2:42-47 model in the context of small groups for men is a deliberate, overt strategy and Biblical discipline for fulfilling Jesus’ command to love one another. It is a discipline because Christian love and unity is not automatic. It takes planning, thoughtful respect, capacity for listening, and initiative to act on behalf of others. Christian love and unity grow in a context that promotes expression and acceptance of who and what we are in Christ. In these conditions, people can grow, discover their spiritual gifts, and then exercise them within the small group and beyond, in the congregation and in the secular community.

Cultivating Koinonia for Men Within Local Congregations.

1. Organize and develop cell groups. The small group has the greatest potential for practicing and demonstrating Biblical Koinonia. Generally, a group of between four to twelve people is ideal for creating an atmosphere for developing spiritual intimacy. This intimacy is necessary for the members to promote expression of who they are, what God is accomplishing in their lives, what their needs are, what they are learning, how they are growing in Christ and how he is leading them to use their spiritual gifts. These are just some of the benefits to be expected, which may differ from group to group.
2. Recognize and train cell group leaders. There are methods of Bible study, techniques for becoming good listeners, disciplines for focusing on the needs of others, and ways to demonstrate love and grace. These can be taught, learned, and exercised by all. There are local and national resources to train people in leading small groups that are characterized by Biblical Koinonia.
3. Appoint a local cell group coordinator to facilitate training in Biblical Koinonia. A pastor, elder, and/or outside trainer should be chosen to fill this responsibility. Other cell groups (youth, women, couples, etc.) within the congregation could share the coordinator for the same purpose. Such training sessions could involve discussions and evaluations of what is working for some groups that can be reproduced for others.
4. Balance activities of Bible study, worship, prayer, and recreation. Implementing the Acts 2:42-47 model is where Biblical Koinonia takes root and is exercised:

- Devoting themselves to the Apostles' teaching – Bible study.
 - Devoting themselves to fellowship – creating an environment of mutual trust, understanding, recognition and value, thereby promoting spiritual intimacy.
 - Devoting themselves to prayer – making the effort to pray for each other's needs, concerns, and spiritual growth; and to pray for the ministry of the local church, the pastors, staff, world missions... That is, being in concert with God's heart for our needs and the needs around us.
 - Devoting themselves to worship – a response to what God reveals about Himself out of the context of Bible study, and from seeing Him at work in the lives of the group members. When we recognize and learn about how His trustworthiness, power, and love for His people apply to us in a personal way, spontaneous praise and thanksgiving are natural responses to God's revelation. Considering worship within the small group, there are times appropriate for celebrating the Sacrament of Communion.
 - Spending time together – other activities in addition to the above that result in simply having a great time being together. These activities, including recreation, develop spiritual growth and maturity, fostering friendship, trust, intimacy and service beyond the small group.
 - Sharing each other's needs – Biblical Koinonia helps individuals reveal their inner self, including strengths, weaknesses, and needs for support. It is by focusing on the needs of others that we become less self-centered. It is by receiving love from others that we learn about God's love for us. And it is the support from others that help us deal with the bumps along the road of life. Contributing to the needs of others may involve a commitment of time, energy and material resources directed toward those in the group or outside the group. This includes where the group can take on a project to support – for example, “adopting” one of the missions or missionaries approved by the Session.
5. Identify spiritual gifts of cell group members. Cell groups that practice Biblical Koinonia cultivate church leadership. They are incubators for spiritual leaders – members providing “Paul-Timothy” relationships in discipleship training, and recognizing leadership potential. Through encouragement and practice, spiritual gifts are developed within the cell group.
 6. Recognize and support outreach ministries of cell group members. It's not possible to be a lone-wolf when it comes to Christian outreach. Even Paul needed support from the Jerusalem home base. Paul did not simply “go” on the four mission trips, he was “sent.” Leaders need accountability and support for fulfilling the Lord's calling for them. The small group adds to the support base of its members who are involved in evangelism or other Christian ministry.
 7. Invite outsiders into the cell group. This includes men from within the congregation, the community, and the work place. This is one means of evangelism, as friends and neighbors become captivated by God's love, demonstrated by those in the group. New Christians need this environment to be nurtured to maturity.

8. Split. A cell group can become too large for intimacy. Growth should be expected, and splitting should be planned for when the number reaches about twelve to fourteen members. A new cell group of about four to six members should have enough critical mass to continue the growth process.

Some Suggestions for Getting Started:

1. Initiate a group of men who have a desire to study the Bible together. There are many publications available which are based on an inductive approach:
 - Making observations from the text – What does it say?
 - Making interpretations from the text – What does it mean?
 - Making applications from the text – What does it mean to me?

The objective of an inductive study is to investigate a Biblical text, determine its message and intent from the text, and then respond to God with application of that message – personally and individually, and also as a group. The results will be spiritual growth of the members, and of the group for Christian service.

Inductive Bible study guides are available through Neighborhood Bible Studies, Inc., InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and other sources. In time, experience with this method sometimes negates the need for a study guide, as the study process becomes a workshop. In a mature group, all the participants dig for Biblical truth, under a leader who simply guides the discussion to keep it on track.

The study of one of the Gospels is a good place to start.

2. The group leader should guide the discussion by raising questions that invite disclosure – not only about intellectual opinions and theological concepts, but more importantly, how the Bible text impacts who we are, how we feel, and where God is leading us; i.e., disclosure of our inner selves and our relationship to God. Thus, the leader and members must consciously drop (remove) personal and professional barriers, considering racial, economic, social and other diversities.
3. Promote discussion to identify goals that emerge from the group. These goals should not be imposed from outside, but should be identified by the illuminating Spirit of God in the context of the scriptures.
4. Include refreshments sometime during the meeting to enhance the fellowship.
5. Provide enough time during the meeting to share personal needs and concerns that can be a focus of prayer. This is the time for listening, and is not the time to offer advice to “fix” anyone’s problems with unsolicited advice.
6. Members must commit to confidentiality. Anything shared in the group must stay in the group. This will enhance individual and group trust.
7. Celebrate each other’s gifts and successes. Look for the natural and spiritual gifts of others in the group and identify opportunities where they can be applied. Such opportunities for service are in ministries outside the group and also within the group. The group can confirm God’s call for group members to fill these opportunities. Individual group members in Christian service are thereby affirmed.

8. As recovering sinners, humbly encourage each other in the face of any personal failures.
9. Make friends and develop prayer partners. Relationships developed in the context of a small group need not be limited to the assembly of the group. Additional one to one times with others in the group will only enhance the times when the group is together.
10. Rotate the role of the discussion leader. There are different styles of leadership, and different people will respond to them in different ways. This is one way to identify spiritual gifts emerging from within the group.

Implementing and exercising Biblical Koinonia will produce the following results:

- All the spiritual gifts are engaged.
- It is healthy for the participants.
- A revealing perspective of the church is developed.
- Unity adds synergy to the work of the church.
- Our relationship to the Lord is enhanced.
- Outreach and evangelism is supported.

Reproducing Success

Successes from implementing Biblical Koinonia in one congregation by Presbyterian Men provide the platform for recognition and implementation in neighboring congregations and other church organizations such as Presbyterian Women, etc. Success is contagious, and Biblical Koinonia can be implemented into neighboring churches by offering help and training by those already successfully involved.

Outreach and Evangelism as an Outcome of Biblical Koinonia:

The results listed above represent the resources needed for successful ministries of outreach and evangelism. People who have experienced these results are supported and strengthened by their small group. They are therefore more likely to sail into what may seem like uncharted waters and move ahead by exercising their spiritual gifts as they are recognized and encouraged by their small group. With that perspective, Biblical Koinonia is indicated as a necessary prerequisite and foundation for evangelism and outreach, as well as for any other ministry within the church.

Outreach and evangelism as an outcome of Biblical Koinonia is illustrated in Acts 1:12 to 2:41. Reviewing this text indicates an interesting process:

1. The Apostles, along with others, spent time together, “constantly in prayer.”
2. Peter’s leadership emerged from the group.
3. Using the scriptures they were decisive in adding Matthias to replace Judas.
4. At Pentecost “they were all together in one place” when they were filled with the Holy Spirit and given spiritual gifts.

5. With the implied support of the group, Peter delivered an evangelistic sermon, which resulted in the addition of 3000 baptized new Christians.

The contemporary Christian Church uses many forms of evangelism. Some denominations and independent churches are more active in evangelism than others. Also, there is a noticeable correlation between church growth rates and evangelistic effort. In addition to these evangelistic efforts by local churches, para-church organizations represent a considerable, supplementary segment in the evangelistic effort.

For example, where local churches do not have a strategic location and/or sufficient resources to have a ministry to college students, organizations like Campus Crusade, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Navigators, and others have developed that opportunity with substantial and successful evangelistic efforts. To enhance these efforts, these organizations have published much material that can be employed in other sectors. Usually, these organizations have chosen the strategy of friendship (or personal) evangelism to be employed on a one-to-one basis. They have also employed large group meetings, small group meetings, surveys, visitation, and investigative Bible studies as evangelistic efforts. Depending on the circumstances, some of these methods are more effective than others. Because of the successes of these organizations, they represent object lessons and role models for the local church. Therefore, we can learn from them, adapt their methods and materials, and thereby add to the denominational evangelistic effort. In any case, however, successful evangelistic work is a team effort, supported by a synergistic combination of spiritual gifts.

Implementing Evangelistic Efforts:

A. Lifestyle Evangelism

A few years ago a large prominent and influential Presbyterian church (PC USA) in eastern Pennsylvania called a relatively young senior pastor. Shortly afterward, he was invited to a gathering of other pastors in the area, many of whom did not yet know him. When asked which church he represented, his answer surprised them somewhat because of his age. They responded by asking how many ministers they had there. His answer was, "We have four pastors and 2000 ministers." In that church, ministry was not reserved for the paid professionals – the whole congregation was called to ministry. They effectively ministered to each other and to the community in various means of outreach. People were attracted to the church, not only because of its prominent and influential reputation, but also because it was an inviting church. The members and staff received new people with warmth and recognition.

It is no coincidence that about one third the members of this church were actively committed to practicing Koinonia in small groups, using the Acts 2 model. The outwardly inviting characteristic of the church environment was the direct result of the inward effort of practicing Biblical Koinonia. It should also be no surprise that the Acts 2 model really works. Since the inviting, attractive characteristic of the church environment resulted in new members who were coming to faith in Christ, the environment itself was an effective tool of evangelism. The Acts 2 model is therefore an effective evangelistic lifestyle, but it is not the only model for evangelism.

B. Personal Evangelism

Another more descriptive term is “friendship evangelism”, making friends, and presenting the gospel in the context of genuine friendship. This is the model that is appropriate for implementation away from the church – in the workplace, neighborhood, market, and school. It is a one-to-one process, involving significant relations with people who know our faults, failures, and weaknesses. This is both a strength and a weakness as we try to communicate the gospel to others who do not believe.

It is a weakness because sometimes our words and convictions do not always agree with our attitudes and actions. Hypocrisy is not a characteristic that others want to emulate. It works against our message. On the other hand, it gives us the opportunity to be authentic when we fail, demonstrating that real people are recovering sinners. And it is the gospel that provides the way of recovery and redemption.

Much could be said here and about friendship evangelism. However, Paul Little presented the concept of friendship evangelism in his book, “How to Give Away Your Faith,” published by IVP initially in 1966, updated in 1988, and it is still in print. Here, Little presents the concept of “the effective ambassador,” which we are all called to be. It is also another form of lifestyle evangelism, which requires an inviting attitude and a listening ear, and is totally consistent with the Biblical Koinonia model, where those practicing friendship evangelism receive support and encouragement from the Koinonia group members.

C. Large Group Evangelism

The most visible form of large group evangelism is the Billy Graham Crusades. Much smaller versions of this approach are often seen as local churches invite outside “evangelists” to be the keynote speakers for special church meetings. Although the method depends on the message given by the evangelist, it equally depends on individuals in the local congregations to invite non-Christians to hear it. However, when they do attend, their receptivity to the Gospel will be enhanced when the church environment is “inviting” to them – an environment that is developed by people practicing Biblical Koinonia.

D. Social Action

Providing for the needs of others, whether they are material needs or otherwise, and being involved in contemporary issues is sometimes considered as a substitute for evangelism. However, it is part of the mission of the church to be “salt and light.” If evangelism is “light,” then providing for the needs of others is “salt.” It also gives the church the right to be heard. Christian outreach should be to the whole person, not just to “save the soul,” nor just to “feed the body.” Christians involved in social action are in a position to provide light where often there is none. Social action and the Christian message must work together. Friendship evangelism works here, too.

In any case, evangelistic efforts are only successful because of the empowering Spirit of God. This is evident from Luke’s account in Acts, where repeatedly he indicated the Apostles were “filled with the Spirit” before each difficult task. In that sense, we must be followers, recognizing where the Spirit is already working, and then becoming an active part of the success.

PART III

EVANGELISM OF MEN

Evangelism begins when Christians understand their call to be witnesses for Christ, then engage their spiritual gifts with effective strategy, and rely on the Holy Spirit to work on unbelievers. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we should aim all strategy and structure at the unbelieving man.

Strategy for Evangelism

- A. **Recognize our call to evangelism.** Jesus commissioned us by saying, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you!” (John 20:21) Also, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matt 28:19) We have a responsibility to share our faith with other men, family, friends and the persons we come into contact, being aware of our role in advancing God’s Kingdom.
- B. **Recognize the Mission Station.** Men need to be aware that God has created His mission station in the world, and that it is the church. We are not “lone-wolf” evangelists. Rather, we have the resources of the local church and the support of our brothers to support, pray and encourage us in our calling to evangelize.
- C. **Recognize that people bring people to the Lord.** Not many of us are “Billy Graham” type evangelists. However, we have a very important role in advancing God’s Kingdom by personal relationships with other men. Men bring men to the Lord. How we act and the things we say influence others in their search for God. If we hide our true feelings and understanding about God, then other men may never know the Good News of Jesus.
- D. **Recognize the target.** Who are the people God has put in our area of influence – family members, neighbors, co-workers, clients, etc.? As Paul wrote, “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” (II Cor. 5:20) Our target is the bundle of people God has given us, those that we have some influence upon. We can identify them and try to reach them for Jesus Christ. Our relationship with them is key.

Excitement for Evangelism

Learn from the new Christian! The new Christian is excited about his newfound faith. He often comes from family and friends that are not church. Therefore, most of his contacts

are likely not Christians, and in his excitement, he is more willing to talk to his non-Christian contacts about his faith and what he is experiencing.

It is important to structure, (being very intentional), opportunities for the new men to have time to share their faith. They need opportunities to give service to others. They need to know their Spiritual Gifts. Then they need to be able to use this giftedness. There needs to be intentional spiritual growth. The result is joy in their life.

Typically, a new believer who gets active in a men's Christian fellowship group is very effective in reaching un-churched men for about four years. As the new convert gets active in a Men's fellowship, he makes friends within the Christian fellowship, and then spends time with this new circle of men. Eventually, the number of non-Christian contacts diminishes, and his family and friends have heard his story. These persons have already decided as to whether they will seek a personal faith.

Therefore, we need to do two things:

1. Maintain the excitement for Christ that we had as new believers. This is dependent on our daily walk with the Lord – spending time with Him, studying His Word and praying for His concerns.
2. Develop new contacts for evangelism. The Lord places new people in our path every day. Keeping ourselves within the shelter of the church and limiting our significant contacts to only believers significantly limits our target area.

Evangelism: Formation of Personal Faith

Formation of personal faith begins with stages of faith development: friendship, fellowship, communion and witness.

Friendship. The first encounter by a Christian with a non-Christian with a person-to-person contact is a friendly impression of the faith community.

Fellowship. A friend, who is in the faith community, invites a non-Christian to a Bible Study to experience the faith community. A meal may be shared, but the real encounter is hearing and experiencing the faith community relating with God.

Communion. A potential convert is encouraged to share in the spiritual workings of the faith community. The faithful people struggle with doubts and realizations of answered prayers and the non-Christian is able to enter into the dialogue. Here people are searching for a deeper walk with their Lord. The faith community is open to the struggles of being disciples of Jesus Christ. The non-Christian is exposed to the inner spiritual working of the faith community.

Witness. It is at the point where person is able to verbalize the spiritual reality he has experienced with the Living God in and through our Lord Jesus Christ that a person has a personal faith.

Practicing Effectual Attitudes for Evangelism

A men's group with evangelistic goals needs to intentionally provide means for all of these stages of faith development. Practicing the proper attitudes toward our faith is the key to developing friendship, fellowship, communion and witness.

- Enthusiasm. If our attitude is enthusiastic, then others will catch our enthusiasm.
- Compassion. If our attitude is one of caring, then other men will gain compassion.
- Genuineness. If our attitude is seriousness about our spirituality, then other men will begin to be serious about their spirituality.
- Joy. If we have great joy in being a Christian, then other men will seek our joy.
- Openness. If we tell your faith stories, disclosing who we are, then other men will risk telling their stories.
- Prayerfulness. If we openly practice our prayer life, then other men will risk praying out loud.

Intentional practice of these attitudes toward our faith within a fellowship group will promote and develop new faith in others. These are the means by which we can exhibit these attitudes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Provide personal support. | 14. Use wisdom. |
| 2. Practice healing (body, mind, and spirit). | 15. Be compassionate. |
| 3. Follow the Holy Spirit. | 16. Be faithful. |
| 4. Share faith stories. | 17. Evaluate attitudes. |
| 5. Tithe. | 18. Practice excellence. |
| 6. Look to see God at work . | 19. Foster joy. |
| 7. Develop personal revitalization. | 20. Be enthusiastic. |
| 8. Celebrate spiritual happenings. | 21. Be open. |
| 9. Hold one another accountable in love. | 22. Promote self esteem. |
| 10. Do not kill a spiritually wounded man. | 23. Celebrate each other's gifts. |
| 11. Demonstrate Grace. | 24. Worship together. |
| 12. Show love. | 25. Study God's Word and how to apply it. |
| 13. Forgive. | |

Other Considerations for an Effective Evangelistic Men's Group

- Practice open communication, which invites disclosure about our thoughts and feelings. This provides the way for affirmation, with victories being celebrated. Such communication strengthens relationships and develops unity.
- Worship together, and be positive and excited about what God is doing and will do in and through men.
- Take care of one another, and provide for the needs of other men outside your group.

- Study the Bible together. Men need to be lifted up so they can see beyond themselves. Biblical principles help us realize that we are called by God to Holy work – a very special plan for us to accomplish.
- Meet regularly. Men need to meet regularly so they can be under-girded in their life's work. This under-girding is through Bible study, fellowship and prayer. Each week men need to come together and share what has been happening in their lives. They need to be accepted in a close fellowship that stays open to new men. These men need to be very intentional in inviting other men to their fellowship.
- Take initiative with outreach and evangelism. It does not happen automatically. If a men's group has but one committee it needs to be an evangelism committee. Planning for reaching out is fun. Seeing the results of God working through such planning is rewarding. Men need to expect God to make opportunities in their everyday world for other men to be invited to their fellowship. The men need to be very intentional in making that invitation. "If you are interested in coming to our group I will pick you up. Why don't you come with me?"
- Be open to new men, accepting them into the group. Evangelism occurs when one man is brought to the Lord and is incorporated into His body the church. Be very intentional about including other men. Men need to know men of your group. They need to be brought up to speed in the many relationships that are already established. It is vital that the new men feel important and appreciated. If they miss coming, then call them. If they have been away for a time, call them to say you missed them.
- Introduce new men to the pastor. The pastor is central to the inclusion of a new man into your church. It does not need to be a male pastor. What is needed is that the pastor knows them. The pastor needs to be connected to all members of the men's group.
- Introduce new men to the congregation. It becomes your responsibility to introduce this new man to everyone in the congregation. You become their advocate and friend. You are their sponsor for at least a year. Building on the relationship can last for a lifetime.
- Remember we are doing God's work. The Holy Spirit will guide you and those you are trying to meet. Men need to have the eyes to see that God is at work all around them.
- Pray for God to bring men to your fellowship. Prayer is primary.
- Trust God.

Evangelism happens because of a lot of intentional work. Evangelism takes courage, planning, patience, persistence and prayer.

Signs of a Vital Men's Group:

1. Vital worship.
2. Care for the men in your group.
3. Care for the community and the men in your community.
4. Participates in the ecumenical expressions of mission and ministry. Participates in denominational cooperative efforts.
5. Provides leadership that enlarges the vision of the role that men play in God's great Plan. God's perfect Plan; to redeem an imperfect world with imperfect men.
6. Uses the Bible as God's Word to men.

Appendix A

A Thirty-Day Experiment for A Deeper Walk⁵

If you want a deeper walk with our Lord, then try the following for 30 days. **Are you ready for putting God first in your life?** You will never be the same again. Are you ready? **Put God first in you life!** This will require **great self-discipline, self-control, and self-surrender. Are you ready for this?** Once your life has changed, you will never again want to go back to your old way of living. **Is your family ready for this?**

1. Meet everyday at the church for two hours. Try 5:00 AM to 7:00 AM (8-10 men) **(self-surrender)**.
2. Have breakfast and share in one another's lives. **(Fellowship)**
3. Pray together. **(communion)**
4. Do a kind deed everyday. If the person says thank you, it does not count. You have to do another one. This will teach you how to be **selfless**.
5. Tithe 10% of your gross earnings. It comes off the top before you pay any other bills. **(Self-denial)**
6. Work two hours a week at the church. **(Giving our time and talent)**
7. Spend time with God in prayer and read your Bible for one hour. **(Self-control)**
8. Listen in your prayer time. **Listen** for God to speak to you.
9. **Expect** God to reveal His activity in and around your life.
10. Come together and share what has been happening. **(Witness)**

This becomes a very exciting adventure.

⁵ From "The John Wesley Great Experiment" by Sam E. Teague, 1973, Tidings

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Bible Study Guides and Sources:

1. Presbyterian Men's Bible Study Series
Thirteen Bible Studies to aid congregations in this area of ministry are provided by Presbyterian Men's Ministries. Free downloads (in .pdf format) are available at:
<http://www.pcusa.org/men/biblestudy>
2. National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc.
<http://www.presbyterianmen.org>
3. Presbyterian Men's Ministries: <http://www.pcusa.org/men/index>
4. Neighborhood Bible Studies
56 Main Street • Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
800-369-0307 • 914-693-3273 • 914-693-4345 fax
email: info@neighborhoodbiblestudy.org
<http://www.neighborhoodbiblestudy.org>
5. InterVarsity Press – LifeGuide Bible Study Series
<http://www.gospelcom.net/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/studyguide/code=1100>
P.O. Box 1400
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