

## Build Bridges

### Lesson II: Good Neighbor Evangelism

#### Intro:

- → **last series, four introductory lessons: Personal Work and Personal Evangelism** — something congregation very interested in doing more actively
  - **Lesson 1: Be a good neighbor** — paradigm, view, perspective, way of thinking
    - live by the golden rule: have compassion for people, move to show mercy
    - “good neighbor” personal work
    - “good neighbor” evangelism
      - **compliment congregation**
        - “good neighbor” attitudes that exist
        - **personal work that is occurring:** encouragement, meals to sick
          - e.g., all the encouragement and help given me and my family
          - **illus.:** received two card in the mail last week, as have before, both totally made my day
  - **Lesson 2: Don’t worry, just do it!**
    - **sometimes we are afraid of rejection, afraid we’re not perfect**
      - **solution:** believe that the battle belongs to the Lord — its not about you, its about God
      - **don’t worry, just do it** — God already equipped you, know you can do it
      - e.g., **David and Goliath** — the battle belongs to the Lord
  - **Lesson 3: What works today, to bring people to Christ?**
    - **authority for this discussion:** apostolic examples, use expediencies to take the gospel to others
    - **recent history of expediencies** used by brethren:
      - gospel meeting, cottage meeting
    - **visitor’s meeting works today**
  - **Lesson 4: Good personal workers are good stewards!**
    - **careful to be good stewards** of our personal resources (time, energy, \$), spend some of them to build relationships and reach the lost
- → **this series, four lessons: Good Neighbor Evangelism** — first three lessons relate to the flow chart — **review chart** — **next series will get more into specifics**
  - **Lesson 1: A List of Prospects**
    - **last week:** names on flow chart, pray daily
  - **Lesson 2: Build Bridges** — **four steps**
    - **this week:** build bridges
  - **Lesson 3: Let the Traffic Flow, Share the Gospel** — **four steps**
    - **relate to the Visitor’s Meeting, above**
  - **Lesson 4: A Lesson You Can Share**
- **note regarding the series’ allegory: Build Bridges / Let the Traffic Flow**
  - ● **evangelism is:** reaching others with the message of Jesus Christ
  - ● **to reach them:** we need a bridge, to get to them - e.g., “don’t burn any bridges” (relationships)
  - ● **after we have a bridge:** we can let the traffic flow, communication of the gospel
  - ● **after the traffic flows:** they may obey Jesus and be saved

➤ #1 *Initial Contact* is the 1<sup>st</sup> step to *building a bridge*

➔ **Hopefully you already know the people on your list**

- don't have to start from scratch, like me - just moved
  - I don't know anyone on my flow chart, that live in this area
- people you already know, usually the best contacts

➔ **More info later, how to develop cold contacts**

- not dealing with now, since not applicable to most folks here, at this point
- later: learn how to make contact with strangers, to see if there's possible interest in the gospel

➔ **What's this mean to you?**

- use the contacts you've already developed, first, rather than starting from scratch

next: 2<sup>nd</sup> step, become better acquainted

➤ #2 *Become Better Acquainted* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> step to *building a bridge*

→ **Goal:**

- **become better acquainted** — don't try to do more than this, at this point
- have fun, enjoy getting to know people — don't put pressure on yourself

→ **Suggestions:** **what you can do to get to know them better** — **help you think about things applicable to you** — **training ourselves to be better neighbors**

- ● Ask questions about them; e.g., where they are from, where they went to school, interests, family background, etc.
- ● Look for common interests.
- ● Be patient - don't force the relationship.
- ● Don't hide your Christianity; let your light shine early in the relationship.
  - **Read - Matt. 5:14-16** light of world, let shine so that men glorify God
- ● Short, frequent contacts seem to be more effective than a few prolonged periods.
  - **Quote - Pr. 25:17** Let your foot **rarely be in your neighbor's house**, Or he will become weary of you and hate you.
- ● Listen for the other person's: desires, fears, aims, goals, burdens, needs.
  - **Read - Phil. 2:3-4** regard one another as more important than yourselves, look out for others' interests
- ● Be complimentary (in all honesty).
  - **Read - Acts 26:2-3** (as Paul before Agrippa) considered himself fortunate, expert

→ **Suggested activities:** **things you can do with them, to get to know them better** — **application, let light shine**

- **Around the neighborhood:**
  - ● Invite the neighbors in for dessert or dinner.
  - ● Game nights.
  - Recreational activities together.
  - ● Shopping.
  - Watching TV. go to movies.
  - Picnics or barbecues together.
- **At work & school:**
  - ● Eat lunch together.
  - Recreational activities together: golf, tennis, basketball, walking, etc.
  - Continued conversations while working.
  - ● Participate in their activities outside of work.
  - Business trips.
  - Attend meetings, seminars together.
  - ● Car pool.
  - After work activities.
  - Sports teams: bowling leagues, softball teams.

→ **What's this mean to you?**

- **What is important?** Do things with the prospects on your flow chart, to get to know them better, and to let them know you better.

thus far: **made original contact, become better acquainted**

next: **3<sup>rd</sup> step, serving them**

➤ #3 *Serving Them* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> step to *building a bridge*

→ Principles to remember at this stage: — a good neighbor, serves his neighbor — e.g., things did for us when we moved here - move, unpack, put stuff together, mow grass, fix meals, etc.

- Expect opportunities for service, and be alert for them.
- Your goal is his (or her) success in life.
- Love is shown more by deeds than by words.
  - **Read - 1 Jn 3:17-18** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us **not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.**
- Meet genuine, practical needs.
- Let them be of service to you as well, and be appreciative.

→ Suggested activities: — application, let light shine — e.g., things did for us when we moved here - move, unpack, put stuff together, mow grass, fix meals, etc.

● **Around the neighborhood:**

- ● Volunteer to help with kids; e.g., baby-sit, provide transportation.
- Take over desserts. — e.g., Mrs. Reynolds, across the street — be good neighbor
- Take meals over during times of crisis (sickness, death).
- Shovel sidewalk, mow lawn.
- ● Help them with their home projects.
- Help work on their car, computer, etc.
- Cards, gifts on special occasions.
- ● Be alert for emergencies.
- Ask them to help you.
- Help them move.
- **At work & school:**
- ● Volunteer to help them with their work.
- Offer to bring them coffee, mail, etc., if you are passing by.
- Be alert for opportunities to be a “sounding board.”
- Be alert for domestic needs: car, wife, children.
- ● Cards, gifts, cake, on special occasions.
- Look for opportunities to praise them and their work.
- Ask for help, advice.
- Be willing to take on menial tasks.
- ● Let them get the credit, or share the credit, when it is due.

→ What's this mean to you?

- love and concern is shown, more than spoken
  - **saying: People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.**
- at this point we are showing that Christ lives in us, serving them as Christ has served us

thus far: made original contact, become better acquainted, are serving them

next: friendship level

➤ #4 *Friendship is the 4<sup>th</sup> step to building a bridge*

→ Principles to remember at this stage: — **a good neighbor is a good friend**

- Work to **develop common interests**.
- **Deepen the relationship**: develop openness, honesty, trust, ease in communication.
- **Have good times, memorable times**, together.
- **Acceptance, not reformation**, is the concern at this stage.
  - not acceptance of sin
  - but not trying to teach and convert at this point

➤ → Suggested activities: — **a good neighbor, serves his neighbor** — **keep doing the same basic things, but spend more time together** — **application, let light shine**

- **Around the neighborhood**:
  - Continued conversations over coffee, meals.
  - Make use of the home - theirs or yours.
  - Special outings of longer duration.
  - Consider taking short vacations together.
  - Extended work projects around the house; e.g., putting up a fence, or painting the house.
  - Hobbies h. Recreation, exercise.
- **At work & school**:
  - Overnight trips where there may be extended times to not only work together, but to converse.
  - Seminars, training together.
  - Volunteer to team together on projects.
  - Pursue activities outside of work.
  - Invite over to your home.
  - Have dinner together with spouses and families.

→ **What's this mean to you? — Practical Advice, Suggestions, Application:**

- **Why is the “friendship level” important?** Jesus proved to be our friend, by dying on the cross, before He asked us to do anything. Often times, we must prove ourselves to be friends, before people are willing to hear our message - the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - **Quote - Jn. 15:13 (Jesus)** "Greater **love** has no one than this, that one **lay down his life for his friends.**"
- hopefully you are already friends with some people on your flow chart, and ready to move to the next stage, sharing the gospel

next: **summary / conclusion / inv.**

## Conclusion:

### ➤ → Summary:

- Most of the time, we must build a bridge before we reach people with the gospel.
- To build bridges:
  - Initial Contact
  - Become Better Acquainted
  - Serving Them
  - Friendship
- After a bridge is built, the traffic can flow — we can share the gospel. — next lesson

### → Inv.:

- Jesus build a bridge for man to take to heaven, eternal life - obey Him, baptized, wash away sins, added to church (Christ's kingdom)
- inv.

### Audio sermon notes:

- ➤ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.
- Sermon recorded 12/22/2006, Church of Christ, South Livingston Ave. In Lutz, FL, Allan McNabb, BibleStudyGuide.org.