

Let The Traffic Flow, Share The Gospel

Lesson III: 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 — **make list, pray for daily**
 - **Lesson 2:** Build Bridges — **four steps: Initial Contact, Become Better Acquainted, Serving Them, Friendship**
 - **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 *Sharing Your Faith is the 1st step to letting the traffic flow.* — relate to flow chart

→ Principles to remember at this stage:

- Identify yourself as a Christian, in the course of natural conversations.
- Let your light shine: Conduct yourself in such a way that people are aware of your faith.
 - **Read - Matt. 5:14-16** light of the world, let light shine, men glorify God
 - **illus.:** Beth, lady who used to live in our house, becoming friends while taking her mail to her work, had received an envelope from the church she attends, wanting money, Beth hands it to her and smiles, invites to church, tells her we'll never send her one of these, with a chuckle - light hearted way share faith with, well received
- Talk about the things you believe, as they relate to natural conversations — short, succinct, statements - honestly telling people what you believe.
 - **Read - 1 Pet. 3:15** ready to give an answer for the hope you have (eternal life)
 - **Read - Col. 4:5-6** wisdom toward outsiders, making most of every opportunity, gracious speech, seasoned with salt
 - Don't try to say everything at one time. Think of it as a building process.
 - Purpose at this point is not to convert, but to communicate your beliefs as others communicate their beliefs.
 - Ask questions — seek to understand first, then to be understood.
 - Speak in terms that are most easily understood. Avoid speaking in terms unbelievers don't understand — they've not been grounded in God's word.
 - **illus.:** if talk about a "Gospel Meeting," you'll have to explain the term
 - **illus.:** grounding a new Christian - class book, *What Shall We Do?*, concept of the church being the body of Christ difficult to comprehend when not grown up in the church
 - Be sensitive to their people's reactions. Place yourself in their shoes.
 - As you share your faith, seek wisdom from God through prayer.
 - **Quote - Ja. 1:5** But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

→ Suggested activities:

- In daily conversation, interject your beliefs that are based upon God's Word.
- Don't hesitate to speak of the special benefits and blessings of being a Christian.
- When appropriate, give God the glory as you discuss good things that you experience (but avoid excessive praise, for it can sound artificial and hypocritical).

→ Application:

- talking to people about our faith can be one of the most enjoyable and most liberating things we do, interacting with people in the world
 - **saying:** Be a good neighbor, share your faith!
 - **saying:** If someone can tell me what they think, I can tell them what I think. And most people are appreciate a kind interchange of ideas.
- sharing our faith (things we believe) with our friends is essential to leading them to Christ through His word
 - e.g., **Gary Palmer:**
 - e.g., **Roe and Tina Rives:** man who bought stuff from their hardware store, always doing things to help other people, they gave him some extra stuff for being a good customer, used it to help someone else, they wanted to know more about him and be like him — gospel preacher, converted to Christ

review: let the traffic flow (share the gospel) — share your faith **next:** witness of the body

➤ #2 *Witness of the Body* (introducing friends to other Christians) is the 2nd step to *letting the traffic flow*.— relate to flow chart

→ **Mistake we often make: neglect to involve our secular friends with other our Christian friends.**

- most powerful influence we have toward those outside Christ — our life, lives of other Christians
- **saying:** It takes a congregation.

→ **Principles to remember at this stage:**

- People may at first discount your individual faith and lifestyle, but the corporate example can be a powerful witness and influence.
- **Read - Jn 13:34-35** love one another, men know we are Jesus' disciples - ask us to help spiritually
- **Read - Jn. 17:20-21** (Jesus' prayer, believers, us) one in Christ, one as Christ's body, so the world may believe
- At this stage, then, you are wanting to introduce your friend(s) to the love and unity of other Christians — let them be around a bunch of Christians, and observe their shining lights.
- **Purpose is not to convert, or to “gang up”** on your friends, but to simply let them be around other Christians where they can see the faith of others demonstrated in their lives.

→ **Suggested activities:**

- Include Christians in your social, recreational and work activities with non-Christian friends.
- Have your prospects over for dinner and invite some Christian friends.
- Invite them to functions of the local church (regular assemblies, gospel meetings, etc.).
- Invite them to pot lucks or other social functions organized by members of the church.
- Invite them to home Bible studies with a mixture of Christians and non-Christians.
- Invite them to attend weekly Bible studies at work or school.
- Invite them to lunch or dinner where other Christians will be present

→ **Application:**

- after we share our faith with our friends, it helps to introduce them to other Christians who can also become their friends and share their faith — **power in numbers**
- **saying:** It takes a congregation, to convert and ground souls with God's word!

review: let the traffic flow (share the gospel) — share your faith, introduce your friends to other Christians

next: exposure to the gospel

➤ #3 *Exposure to the Gospel is the 3rd step to letting the traffic flow.*— relate to flow chart

→ Principles to remember at this stage:

- **Goal:**
 - expose your prospect to a full and clear explanation of the gospel
 - not so much to convert, but to create understanding of the gospel and its implications
- **If they are already firm believers in Jesus, but mistaken** in their understanding of the gospel
 - don't necessarily try to convert them from "their church" to "your church," but leading them closer to the Christ they love
 - Like Aquila and Priscilla, you seek only to help them learn the way of God more accurately concerning salvation and the Lord's church.
 - **Read - Ac 18:24-26** Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately
- **Primary responsibility:** Teach the gospel and to make sure the person has a proper understanding of what Christ has done for them.
 - The last stage of letting the traffic flow involves encouraging the prospect to obey the gospel.
- **Use other Christians** with whom they've become friends, to help
 - help explain, as Priscilla helped Aquila

→ Suggested activities:

- **discuss Spiritual things in more detail, engage in Spiritual conversation:**
 - **illus.: Rebecca Jones**, lady in T-ville, always talking to people about Spiritual things, asking if they want to study the Bible or come to church — a few responded and obeyed, many did not - kept us busy at times, with Bible classes
- **invite to church and Bible class:**
 - **PP - chart**, % people and why at a particular church
 - **illus.: Gerald Searcy**, neighbor invited him a number of times (hundreds), finally came, obey the gospel, family obeyed the gospel
 - **illus.: lady stopped by State Trooper**, invited to church, called wife, wife came and was converted, State Trooper came and was later converted
- **watch and listen, be ready to meet spiritual needs and help them study Bible questions that are bugging them:**
 - **illus.: Beth**, had questions on book of Revelation, a couple answered her questions and explained the gospel, responded to the invitation the first time she visited at church
 - **illus.: Eddy Kelly**, T-ville, father-in-law died and was looking for someone to do the funeral service, employer (church member) had introduced me to him years ago and told I'd probably do it, I did the service, few weeks later want to be saved and mentoined to employer who told him he should call me, we studied and he was baptized the next day
- **study the Bible with them:**
 - **illus.: Pam met a guy at the bowling alle**, invited to church, visited, came home with us, had questions about the church has was raised in, asked if he wanted to study the Bible, went through a simple lesson, baptized that night

→ Application:

- the power of God to salvatoin is the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17); therefore, we must expose people to the word to bring them to Christ
 - discuss Spiritual things, invite to church and Bible class, meet Spiritual needs, study the Bible
 - don't necessarily have to teach them, just bring them to someone who can teach them (Rebecca)

➤ #4 *Invitation* is the 4th step to *letting the traffic flow*.— relate to flow chart

→ Mistake we often make: not invite people to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- **Jesus' invitation:**

- **Read - Matt. 11:28-30** come, weary and heavy-laden, give rest, take yoke and learn, rest for your soul
- **Quote - Rev. 22:17** (Bride = Jesus) The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.
- **illus.:** gospel preacher told story, two brothers who hadn't obeyed the gospel and were in late teens, ask preacher to talk with them, asked why hadn't obeyed - no one ever asked us to
 - although had sat through many invitations at church, often need special invitation

→ **Suggestions:**

- **Do:**

- Ask if they have any questions, or what they think about the lesson?
- Ask if you can help answer questions they may have.
- Offer to help if they want to obey the Lord and be baptized.
 - Let them know you are always available, any time of the day, when they decide to obey Christ.
- After obedience to the gospel, follow up with a Bible studies designed to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Pe 3:17-18).

- **Don't:**

- Don't invite them to become a Christian till they understand what Jesus commands regarding salvation (Rom. 1:16-17).
- Don't pressure people or twist arms, simply help them understand God's word and obey, if they choose to do so.
- Don't give up, some people obey after years and years of exposure to the gospel.

- **Listen to their answers:**

- If a person doesn't want to obey the gospel immediately after an invitation, they'll probably give you a good idea why not. These are things you need to try to help them with in the future.

→ **Application:**

- after some has learn the gospel, they may tell you they want to be baptized
- if they don't simply ask them:
 - What do you think?
 - Would you like to obey the Lord and be baptized?
- If they don't want to obey at that time, listen to the answer and understand it, work on these things as time goes on.

Conclusion:

➤ → **Summary:**

- After we build a bridge, so that we can talk with people, we can let the traffic flow (share the gospel).
- To let the traffic flow (*share the gospel*):
 - Share Your Faith (*tell them what you believe in casual conversation*)
 - Witness of the Body (*introduce our friends to other Christians*)
 - Exposure to the Gospel (*provide an opportunity to learn the truth within God's word*)
 - Invitation (*ask if they would like to obey the gospel — believe, repent, confess Jesus, be baptized*)

→ **Inv.:**