

UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF CHRIST



Teacher – Steve Patton

Purpose of the Class

We are to be an evangelistic people. It is at the heart of who we are. Yet, in many congregations, evangelism is seen as the responsibility of the “evangelist” or, at best, a handful of members who meet to do “evangelism stuff.” Yet in the New Testament we see an entirely different mindset. “*They who were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.*” (Acts 8:4). The explosion of kingdom growth during the apostolic period can be attributed mainly to every member trying to play a role in bringing the lost to Christ. The purpose of this class is twofold. First, we want to regain the evangelistic mindset of first century Christians - disciples whose hearts rejoiced in the Gospel and wanted to share the good news with everyone. Motivation is essential to becoming a successful soul winner.

Lots of Christians care about souls but feel inadequate in reaching out to people. The second purpose of this class is to develop evangelism skills that will aid us in reaching out to the lost. We will work on how we treat guests in our services, how we follow up with visitors, how we invite people to services, how to approach people for bible studies, how to know *who* to approach, and we will learn to teach someone the Gospel. I plan to teach everyone who is interested how to use Ken Craig’s *The Big Picture*. It is an excellent approach that can be taught in one lesson or extended to two or more. We will learn to use some other tools, also.

When we finish the class we will continue our efforts by working together in eTeams and in other ways. I am excited about the possibilities. We have had great success here before and I want us to be successful again.

I plan to put the weekly handouts online. This will help those who will be away over December to keep up. Though you miss some of the class you will be able to rejoin after the break without problem. I do encourage all to not miss classes if at all possible. Be committed to this class and we will be blessed by the Lord in our work.

Lesson 2 - Evangelistic Opportunity in Tampa

Present growth trends in the church

- Declining for over 40 years. Once the fastest growing group in the U.S.
- 75% of most congregational growth comes from transfers from other congregations.
- A typical church has 8 baptisms a year: 6 children of church members and 2 others. Half of these drop out, leaving only 4 permanent new members.
- If this pattern continues the Lord's church would cease to exist in less than 40 years.

Obviously we are doing something wrong when it comes to evangelism.

The Potential for Growth of the Church in Tampa.

- What percentage of the people in Tampa would you say are lost?
- What percentage of those do you think are good prospects for the Gospel?

The Makeup of New Testament Churches Paul Established

- Were all the members of one nationality and race?
- Did all members come from the same cultural background?
- Were all members raised in God-fearing families?

The Makeup of our community

- Article: Sun Belt, Suburbs Get More Diverse (USA Today, by Haya El Nasser)
 - From 2000-2004 Tampa Bay had a 14% increase in African-Americans; 28.4% in Asians. I'm pretty sure that trend continues as well as other cultures growing, including Indian and Middle-Eastern.
 - A multi-cultural environment is an excellent source of prospects.
- The populous environment of an urban setting
 - The nature of an urban setting - Tampa Bay population: 2,975,225 with an estimated growth rate of almost 7% between 2010-2015.
 - A large pool in which to find prospects.
 - Paul's pattern in where he went to evangelize - Antioch of Syria, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, etc. - all major population centers. From there the gospel spread into surrounding regions. (Ephesus: Acts 19:10; Thessalonians: 1st Thess. 1:8)
 - Our location in an urban center is a great advantage for evangelism!
 - Large numbers not from Tampa. They are often disconnected and alone.
 - Majority are disconnected from a specific church or denomination.

- Your potential contact list (people you see on a recurring basis) is usually larger.
- The “Unchurched” population
 - About 45% of the population do not claim to be a member of a church, mosque or synagogue and do not claim to have attended a church in the past six months.
 - According to Gallup polls, 25% of the unchurched say they would visit a church if invited by a friend.
- All these factors are positives for evangelism.
- For Consideration:
 - Passages to read and consider: Matt. 28:19,20; Isaiah 2:2,3; 2nd Cor. 4:13; 2nd Timothy 2:2, 24-26.
 - Look up the meaning of these words:
 - Gospel -
 - Evangelism -
 - Evangelist -

Lesson 3 - The Best Prospects

There are lots of places to find prospects for teaching. In the course of our study we will examine how and where to find prospects. Today we want to begin by discussing the most obvious prospects - those that visit services. This is a good place for us to begin in learning how to influence those needing the gospel and how to work toward a study.

The best prospects are those that are already seeking spiritual guidance. You may find someone like that in your workplace, in your neighborhood or among other acquaintances. But the most obvious place to find them is in our own Sunday worship. Those who are visiting are those who are telling you “I am seeking.” (See John 12:20-22,32)

What is a Visitor to Services Telling You?

- The Uninvited Visitor
 - They are courageous seekers. They entering a building as a total stranger, knowing *no one* who is there. They probably have little idea what goes on in worship. Their expectations may be shaped by long past experiences in denominations. Or they may be visiting around testing the waters. Whatever their expectations, they are telling you “I have a strong need that has caused me to work up the courage to come today.” Such a person cannot be ignored.
- What Will Cause a Total Stranger to Visit *Our* Service?
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
- What do we need to do to increase the success of such visits?
 -
 -
 -
 -

- The Invited Visitor
 - If it is your guest you should plan what you will do when they arrive at the building. If they have kids find out the location of their classes. Consider beforehand who you want to introduce them to that may have a common interest or other ties.
 - The person who invited him/her should not only be at services but beat their guest to the building.
 - The member should introduce them to others.
 - They should make sure they get a guest booklet and that they fill it out.
 - They should sit with them during services and aid them during the worship so they feel more comfortable.
 - They should further introduce them to other members.

Let's Walk Through the Steps of a First Time Visitor

1. Outside the building
 - a. Appearance
 - b. Parking
2. Foyer
 - a. Warm Greeting
 - b. Information available (Guest Booklet)
 - c. Assistance with classes if necessary
 - d. Assistance with seating
3. Classes
 - a. Welcome by teacher and class members
 - b. Available class material
 - c. Accompany back to auditorium
 - d. Invite to sit with you
 - e. Show where restrooms are located

4. Worship

- a. Assistance with seating
- b. Talk about what we do in worship
- c. Talk with them after service
- d. Find out what you can about them (if a walk-in visitor)
- e. Introduce them to people you think may have common interests

There is a lot of work involved in helping produce a successful first time visit. It takes a lot of people to make this happen. We must learn to view our services (especially Sunday morning) as evangelistic opportunities. Our guests will be affected by what they see and how we conduct ourselves (1st Cor. 14:22-25).

My Worship Plan

How will I help with guests to our services?

1. Prayer
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.