

Rekindle the Fire Notes

Session 1: Loving Your Neighbor through Intentional Listening

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Worldviews create major obstacles:

1. We are losing our youth to the culture.
2. The culture is overwhelming believers with false teaching that goes against the Word of God.
3. Islam is rapidly moving through our country and has never assimilate into America or any country.
Specifically it has never taken on the values of the Bible in the past 1400 years!
4. We are declining in America as the church!

What is a Worldview?

It is the “lens” through which we interpret: •Who we are? •Why we are here? •What is right and wrong?
•What happens after death? •What gives life meaning?

We Also Face Major Dominate Worldviews:

Human Autonomy as Ultimate Authority

Assumption: Individuals define their own truth, morality, and identity without external(especially divine) constraints. "You do you" is the ethos.

Science and Technology as Saviors

Assumption: Human progress through tech solves all problems; no need for supernatural intervention.

Materialism and Hedonism as Life's Purpose

Assumption: Happiness = sensory pleasure and consumption; no eternal soul or afterlife accountability.

Equality as Sameness, Enforced by State/Corporate Power.

Assumption: All disparities are systemic injustices; equity trumps merit or biology.

Nature as Sacred, Humans as Parasites

Assumption: Earth is fragile; human flourishing is subordinate to ecology.

Every worldview, Christian and non- Christian, deals with at least three dominate questions:

- Where did we come from and why are we here?
- What is wrong with the world?
- How can we fix it?

A Biblical Christ-centered worldview answers three question!

1. We are God's creation, designed to govern the world and fellowship with Him. (Gen. 1:27-28).
2. We sinned against God and subjected the whole world to a curse (Genesis 3).
3. God Himself has redeemed the world through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Luke 19:10), and will one day restore creation to its former pristine state (Isaiah 65:17-25).

The Christian Worldview tells us to:

- Surrender to Jesus in repentance and faith. •To share this good news with all. •To be His life-long disciple.
- To share this good news with all. •To be the light of Jesus in a dark world.

When I share the Biblical Worldview, this is what I often hear from believers!

Pastor I'm not a theologian. I'm certainly not a Billy Graham.

My role is to live a Biblical life and worship God. I go to church every Sunday!

What does Jesus say we are to do?

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Witness-The Calling for all believers. A witness is every follower of Jesus.

A witness is someone who testifies to what they have seen, experienced, and believe about Jesus.

Biblical foundation:

- Acts 1:8 —“You will be my witnesses...”
- 1 Peter 3:15 —“Always be ready to give a reason for your hope.”

What a witness does:

- Shares personal testimony of what Jesus has done in their life yesterday and today.
- Lives in a way that reflects Jesus.
- Speaks about Jesus in everyday conversations.
- Represents Jesus in their workplace, home, and community.

Simple definition: A witness = every Christian telling others about Jesus through life and words.

2. Christian Evangelist (A specific gifted role)

An evangelist is someone especially gifted and called to proclaim the gospel clearly and effectively, often to large groups or unreached people.

Biblical foundation: •Ephesians 4:11 — “Christ gave...evangelists...”

This is where many people get confused:

- All Christians are witnesses.
- Some Christians are evangelists.

All Christians are still called to participate to evangelize.

Think of it like this:

Every Christian is a light, but some are spotlights.

Jesus never permits a believer to say: “I’m not an evangelist, so I don’t share my faith.”

Because: •All are witnesses (Acts 1:8). Every believer is commanded to share the Gospel directly.

Practical Illustration

- A witness is like someone in court saying: “Here’s what I saw and experienced.”
- An evangelist is like a skilled attorney presenting the case clearly and calling for a verdict.

Simple Takeaway

Witness = identity (every Christian).

Evangelist = gifting (what some ``Christians are especially called to do).

Identity vs. Calling

EASY STEPS FOR WITNESSING WITHOUT OTHERS KNOW THAT YOU'RE WITNESSING.

- Initiating a conversation permitting them to do most of the talking and you do most of the listening.
- How? Focus on them, their words, their dress, their tattoos, they emotions, their face.

How do you initiate a conversation with someone you barely know?

Three Observations:

- Observe their EMOTIONS.
- Observe distinguishing CHARACTERISTICS.
- Observe TONE OF VOICE.

Ask questions or make statements based on these three criteria.

1. That's an interesting tattoo, why did you choose that one?
2. You look tired and overwhelmed. Bet you could use two weeks on the beach.
3. You are very good at what you do. How have you learned to do that?
4. You must enjoy your life and work since I see such a bright smile.
5. You display a lot of confidence. You must have a lot of joy and inner peace.

What not to do: Make the conversation about you. Be overly empathetic. Be their problem solver.

What to do:

Let them do the majority of the talking and respond to what they say.

Review their feelings and content.

Identify what you observe and let them lead the conversation.

You are looking for Solomon's promise: Eternity is already in their hearts. See if they bring up spiritual matters.

The Top Five Needs Of People.

- Having Purpose. •To be Listened To •Hope Beyond This Life. •Meaningful Relationships
- Inner Peace

The Fundamentals of Effective Listening.

Listen to them.

Listen to the Holy Spirit.

When you listen, you will truly hear!!!!

Effective Listening contains three components.

Identifying and reflecting back the FEELINGS of the speaker.

Identifying and reflecting back the CONTENT of the speaker.

Identifying and listening to the HOLY SPIRIT while PRAYING under your breath.

Session 2: Loving Your Neighbor through Spirit led Conversations

We will demonstrate how to put these components to work.

Exercise: Groups of Two!

One is the listener, one the speaker.

Opening statement from listener: *You look like you're carrying a heavy burden today. The speaker come up with a brief discussion about problems they face without directly speaking to the problem.*

The listener then picks upon the feelings and content and reflects back to the speaker.

Key Idea:

Your Role in Effective Listening

To listen closely and reflect back both the FEELINGS and the CONTENT of the speaker!

An effective listener is an investigator looking for clues that reveal the truth.

Key Words or Clues to Listen For:

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| •I'm sad | •I feel so alone | •Why bother |
| •I'm happy | •I want to die | •I give up |
| •I'm hopeless | •I want to give up | •I'm bitter |
| •Life is difficult | •No use going on | •I'm resentful |
| •I'm angry | •What's the point | |

The Art of Asking Timely Questions.

- It focuses on what the speaker has already said.
- It takes into account the feelings of the speaker.
- It takes into account the content of the speaker.
- It takes into account the unspoken behavior of the speaker.
- It is a non-threatening means of giving the speaker freedom to respond.
- It is open ended inviting more conversation.

Examples of timely questions:

"You said you feel that your life is hopeless, and you want to give up.

"Would you like to find real hope?"

"You sound like you are ready to take a risk with your life to something meaningful.

"What would that look like?"

"You said you feel like dying. What happens after that?"

Timely Questions:

You are attempting to use their content and feelings to help them look deeper and more profoundly at their life and purpose!

Listen for Transitional Statements to the Gospel:

- I wish I knew my purpose! •Why was I born?
- Why won't God help me? •I'm afraid to die.
- What's the point? •I don't see a light at the end of the tunnel.

Your Challenge and Invitation

- Would you like an answer? •Would you like to know for sure?
- I found the answer and I'd be glad to tell you when you want to know.

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH: Until they want Jesus, you cannot give Him to them! **Your Role:**

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| •Be honest. | •Pick up on that need and follow it. | •Ask Jesus into their life. |
| •Listen Actively. | •Would you like to solve the issue?. | •Give them your name and number. |
| •Listen for the Holy Spirit. | •Share Jesus in you. | •Invite them into discipling. |
| •Ask good questions. | •Share the ARC. | |
| •Expect them to reveal a need. | | |

The New Challenge we are or will soon be facing in our communities.

There is a knock on your church door. You open the door and two, Muslims are standing there. They say to you: *"Last night Jesus came to us in a vision, called us to faith in Him, and told us to come to you because you would know what to do with us now to become disciples!"*

Would you know what to do?

Turn to your neighbor and tell them what you would do.

What questions ought we to ask Muslims? Utilize their feelings, content, and the Holy Spirit to begin a conversation. Focus on them, their goals, their hopes. If they want to talk about Allah and Muhammad listen and then ask:

Then Ask: When you die will you go to heaven?

My Response: I know I will go to heaven and that is why I live with this inner peace each day.

Ask: Will Allah accept you as you are?

My Response: I realize I can never be good enough to be accepted by God so I need a savior. May I tell you about my savior?

Ask: What do you have to do to be in Allah's favor?

My Response: The Bible tells me that Jesus has taken my place and his perfect life has opened the door to God and heaven.

Ask: Do you do everything the Quran commands?

My Response: I'm not perfect. God tells me I will never be perfect. However, God has provided the solution. Would you like me to share with you that solution that has brought me inner peace?

What are the major benefits to this approach?

- Keeps the door open to future conversation.
- It provides them with invitations and opportunities.
- It keeps you from declaring them right or wrong!
- It shows them personal respect.

If someone wants to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior follow these FOUR Simple Steps to Present the Gospel. **A.R.C.**

A=For **ALL** have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

R=REPENT and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Acts 2:38

C=If you **CONFESS** with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. Rom. 10:9

Prayer of Commitment A.B.C.D.

A-I Accept what the Bible says about my sin and repent.

B-I Believe that Jesus is the one and only Savior.

C-I Commit my life and eternity to Jesus.

D-I Decide today to be a life-long Disciple of Jesus Christ. **Sadly This is Huge and Mostly Ignored!** We target the brain. We must also target the Heart. We must also target the: Soul.

How? Utilizing The Most Effective Tool for Christian Discipling Ever Discovered.

Discipleship: The Process!

Invite believers and seekers each week to home church and public worship!

Keep asking if they don't come right away.

If they do come introduce them as many believers as possible.

This produces the highest return rate of an any approach.

If they cannot attend the home church make every attempt to meet with them, one on one, once a week around a tool for study. Use biblical wisdom.

Truths for New Christians

- Assurance of salvation (Hebrews 13:5)
- Knowledge of Jesus Christ (John 20:31, Romans 10:17)
- Forgiveness/confession of sins (Rom 5:6-9, 1 John 1:9)
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit in his/her life (John 14:25-26, Ephesians 5:18)
- Understanding his/her new identity in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Understanding his/her purpose in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Discipleship: The Process! Two Workable Tools.

21 Day Challenge (Gospel of John. Read one chapter per day with one question and one challenge.)

Discipleship First Steps. Ten interactive lessons on discipleship.

Both available as a download pdf free of charge at www.stpaulsevlutheran.org

BONUS: THE POWER OF HOME CHURCHES IN YOUR CHURCH

Home churches are the best tool for: reaching new people, discipling new believers, bearing one another's burdens.

HOW DOES A HOME CHURCH OPERATE?

Small setting (10-12 people).

Centered around fellowship and food.

Focused on the Bible.

Open for personal reflection and study.

Living out the 59 "One Another" New Testament passages.

Bearing one another's burdens.

Taking care of one another.

Effective Doorway for inviting believers and non-believers.