

12. BUILDING BRIDGES WITH UNBELIEVERS

Rom 5:11

11 Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God-all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done in dying for our sins-making us friends of God. TLB

1 Timothy 2:5

5 For there is one God and one mediator (bridge) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:18

18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

A. BE BY TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO MAKE

John 1:41

41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

Be proactive to go where the people

John 4:4-7

4 Now he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town in Samaria. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Be proactive to people as they are

Luke 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

The deepest human need is self-worth: **affirmation** and **acceptance**.

John 4:42

42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

A great way to witness is to share your personal testimony:

It is a personal story of how you come to know Christ and what he has done for you.

A good testimony should be:

Positive

Share how good Jesus Christ is and not how bad other faiths are.

Concise and short

Do not add in technical or medical terms that the layman cannot grasp.

Christ-centred

Focus on what Christ has done

Here is a good 2 minutes testimony:

How was your life like before you believe? (30 sec)

For example, outlook in life, pains and disappointments, fear, etc.

What touched you to receive Christ? (60 sec)

How you were blessed after you believe? (30 sec)

B. REFUSE TO PUT ON A

1 Cor 9:22

22 ... I **don't act as though I know it all** and don't say they are foolish ... Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find **common ground** with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ. TLB

Invite people for friendly

Matthew 9:10

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples.

No one is too to be used of God.

Don't people are not interested.

Matthew 9:11

11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

1 Corinthians 5:11

11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who **calls himself** a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a **slanderer**, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

Prov 13:20

20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed. NKJV

Have house parties

You can organize **special** parties with a **view** to witnessing to your friends on any possible occasions like: Christmas, Easter, Birthdays, Anniversaries, New Year, Thanksgiving, or anything that will give the occasion.

Keep it small, perhaps only 12. Get two or three friends to plan with you. Draw up a guest list: close friends, colleagues, relatives.

Invite some specially selected Christian friends too. Make the ratio of Christians to non-Christians one to two or three.

VERY IMPORTANT. Tell the Christians ahead of time about their **responsibilities** so that they will not form a **clique** among themselves !!!

Print or write a simple invitation note/card:

For example: I am having a Thanksgiving Party in my house on the 1st of December, 2007, at 6.00 pm. I shall be glad if you could come.

Keep the refreshments very **simple**. You do not want to spend too much time in the kitchen, neglecting **prayer** and **hospitality**. The key is **personal** touch. It is better to have the refreshments after the message.

Plan to avoid **distractions**: Get people to babysit. Here is where your Care Group comes in handy. Remove the receiver from the **phone**.

Have an appropriate evangelistic film show (optional)

The seating must be *conducive* for the non-believers to get the best *view* and *sound*.

Use the specially selected films produced by the Billy Graham Evangelistic association. The CDs available from our church has also live testimonies from our own members.

Get one or two to share **personal testimonies**. Each testimony should not be more than five minutes.

Get someone with share clearly a simple **Gospel** message. He may use the **FIVE BLESSINGS OF THE CROSS** card.

Lead the person to receive Christ:

"Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for sending to us Jesus Christ to die for me. I receive Jesus into my life and thank you that because of what Christ did, I have complete forgiveness of all my sins. Help me to know you more and more each day. Amen"

Pass round a GUEST BOOK for names and addresses. This is less formal than using the WELCOME CARD. Later you can fill in the WELCOME CARDS and pass them to the Zone Pastor.

End **early** to allow enough time for interaction between Christians and non-Christians. This is the time to share more about Christ.

C. IDENTIFY YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS AND CONTACTS

People that you are in contact:

Relatives, friends, colleagues, school friends, neighbours, your hairdresser, repairmen, parents of kids - anyone you cross path with.

People in various and are

Crisis - sickness, examination, financial problem.

Changes and adjustments - new job, new home, new baby, new school, divorce.

Stress - finance, boss, work, projects and assignments.

Identify needs and hurts by

Being a good listener builds good relationship because people feel and .

D. DEMONSTRATE GOD'S

1 John 3:18-19

... let us stop just saying we love people; let us really love them, and show it by our actions. TLB

How do we demonstrate our love?

People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

Give practical

Sometimes, it is as simple as just being

A friend is somebody who walks in when everybody else walks out. Rick Warren.

Luke 5:17-26

18 Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus.

19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

1. They reached out despite

2. They reached out with strategies

3. They worked together as a

A small group of 4 from a Care group or from some close friends is a powerful **evangelistic** team.

4. They reached out despite the

Luke 16:9 "Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. In this way, your generosity stores up a reward for you in heaven." (NLT)

Philem1 6

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

E. GIVE TO THEIR FEELINGS AND THEIR FEARS

Rom 15:1

... we must bear the "burden" of being considerate of the doubts and fears of others ...
TLB

Avoid any by focussing on the of Christ.

John 4:20

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.

John 4:21-24

21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ... 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Don't assume you have to solve their problems

Never give up!

Gal. 6:9

"Let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up." (LB)

If the first attempt fails, follow up with **another** creative method of presenting the Gospel.

Keep **praying**. **Circumstances** may be more conducive for your friends to be receptive sometime later.

Therefore, you must **keep** in touch. **Phone** or **visit** them and **invite** them for various meetings of the church.

F. EXPECT GOD TO YOU AS YOU GO

As you go, the will follow

2 Kings 4:1-6

1 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."

3 Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

Acts 20:24

"The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me – to tell people the Good News about God's grace." (NCV)

1. Make a list and pray

2 Corinthians 4:4 ... the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving” to the gospel.

Pray for opportunities to **socialise** first. Example: hobbies, clubs, sports, etc. Pray for creative ideas to reach out.

2. Set the and strategies to reach out

Luke 14:23
“Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house *may be filled*.” (KJV)

Discuss in your Group creative ways to reach out.

Pray as a group and strategize as a team for creative ways to reach them:
Special parties, Bar b que, Roast lamb, etc.

Form teams of 3,4 or 5 people to reach out creatively.

3. Take care of new believer

Gal 4:19
... my dear children! I feel as if I am going through labor pains for you ... until Christ is fully developed in your lives. NLT

Survey has shown that a new convert will stay in a care group and church only if:

- He is followed through with a friendly, warm personal contact within the **first 24 hours**.
- He is visited - at home or at work - by a Christian he knows within the **first 7 days**.
- He is reminded and assisted to attend Care Group and church for **7 consecutive weeks**. (Only then will he come by himself.)
- He understands what he believes. Hence the Kingdom Keys is the first step.
- He can make 2 new friends within the **first 2 weeks** of coming to a Christian gathering.

Look out for new people in all our services and at the Dream Café

Look for new people **before, during** and **after** all the services. **Greet, Meet, Sit, Eat** with them.

Sit with them and talk about something of **common** interest to break the ice. Eg. Football winners, fashion, hobbies, etc.

1 Cor 9:22
... Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find **common** ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ. TLB

Introduce friends to them and **make sure** the other people will sit down and talk with the new comers.

Meet and talk with them for a few more **weeks, until** he has made friends with more people and feels at home with the people and has a sense of belonging.

Get them **involved** in one ministry. This helps them grow and have a sense of belonging.

Don't about what to say.

Matthew 10:19-20
... do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

See the way that Jesus used to choose his apostles. There are not from the best and brightest of the University of Jerusalem. They are not great orators.
But Jesus head to the beach – the market place and chose a rough ignorant fisherman. He chose an impetuous firebrand, James, son of thunder that called fire from heaven because the people refused overnight accommodation.

God chooses us not because of who we are but because of what He can make out of us.
Reinhard Bonnke