

STRATEGY OF OUTREACH

INTRODUCTION:

1. This position paper is based on several assumptions:

a) that the discussion of other position papers such as "Doctrinal Priority" and "Functional Fellowship" have preceded its consideration.

b) that the scriptural and spiritual qualifications of a soul winner are taken for granted and remain imperative even though they are not mentioned in this paper.

c) that the spiritual prerequisites of an evangelistic church are also taken for granted.¹

2. Definition of Terms:

A definition of terms becomes necessary so that all those who consider this paper may be thinking the same thing.

a) Strategy:

Strategy has often been confused with method, but a careful study will show that strategy is much greater than a method and that the first usually includes the latter.

Webster defines strategy as, "employing plans or stratagems toward a goal." A strategy has a clearly defined goal, seeks to ascertain the circumstances which will need to be taken into account, and then selects the best method which, under the given circumstances, may be employed in achieving the goal.

In a sense strategy stands between the motivation and the goal and adopts the necessary method to span the gap between the two.

b) Outreach:

The term outreach, is closely related to the more biblical

term of evangelism but stresses more the horizontal expansion of the church. It takes for granted that the individual or the church has been divinely motivated and endued, and in obedience to the great commission expands the boundaries of God's Kingdom into enemy territory.

The two terms, outreach and evangelism, may be used interchangeably if we remember that evangelism is the broader term, including both, the vertical as well as the horizontal dimension in God's program of expansion.

A church which has stressed the vertical and neglected the horizontal dimension of its responsibility, may well stress the concept of outreach until a biblical balance has been achieved.

c) Evangelism:

Although the term, evangelism, is not used in the title of this position paper, it is so strongly implied that we need to agree on its definition.

Various definitions of evangelism have been given. Samuel Zwemer stuns us in saying, "Evangelism is a collision of souls. We may measure its effect by an equation, $mv = i$ or mass x velocity equals impact."² C.W. Fisher is equally thought provoking in saying, "Evangelism is really the outflow and the overflow of a spiritually vigorous church. Evangelism is the glow of an inner warmth and the go of an inner compulsion."³ Paul tells us that evangelism is a believer, constrained by the love of Christ, persuading men, (II Cor. 5:11, 14).

These and other definitions, however, do not analyze the actual process of soul winning. Soul winning is not a human encounter nor

an intellectual duel. Soul winning is a spiritual encounter in which the Spirit, who indwells the believer (I Cor. 6:19) through the instrumentality of the believer, has an encounter with "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). Here we wrestle not with flesh and blood but the Spirit that is in us contends "against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). Thus, neither the individual believer nor the church does the work, but both need to become available instruments which the Holy Spirit may use in His encounter for the souls of men.

In the light of the above we could change the title of this position paper, without doing violence to it, to read, "Evangelism Strategy."

I. SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELISM STRATEGY.

Any sustained and effective program of evangelism will require a Spirit-guided strategy. It is not so much our duty to "invent a plan, but to discover God's strategy" for evangelism.⁴ Therefore, we must diligently search the Scriptures to find those principles which must be inherent in any God-given strategy. We shall underscore the following:

1. The Principle of Guidance by the Spirit.

The pressure of the overwhelming responsibility for the salvation of souls has led many well meaning Christians to become promiscuous in their approach to people without being sensitive to the guidance of the Spirit. The book of Acts is careful to show how being filled with the Holy Ghost preceeded evangelistic results (Acts 2:4, 41; 4:31, 32; 5:8, 10).

We do well to note that Philip approached the Ethiopian because "the Spirit said unto Philip, 'Go near and join thyself

to this chariot'" (Acts 8:29).

Peter went to Cornelius, not only because he had a vision, but after the vision, "the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them" (Acts 10:19, 20).

In Paul's program of evangelism he was "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia," (Acts 16:6) and when he wanted to go unto Bithynia, "the Spirit suffered them not" (Acts 16:7). But he went "into Macedonia assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them" (Acts 16:10).

The risen Lord urged His disciples not to engage in evangelism before they had been "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4). This does not mean that the soul winner will be idle because the Spirit fails to guide. "The Spirit-filled life is eager but not silly."⁵ The Holy Spirit will express His concern for souls to each who seeks His guidance.

Campus Crusade would say, "A Spirit-filled life will result in a soul winning effort." Trueblood stirs us by saying, "Commitment is never real unless it leads to missions."⁶ Guidance by the Spirit does not stall evangelism. He directs it. There is an added dimension to the work of evangelism, whether on the street or in the pulpit, if one can say, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus... hath sent me..." (Acts 9:17). Thus anyone planning a strategy or becoming part of a strategy, needs the assurance of the Spirit's guidance.

2. The Principle of Personal Evangelism.

The modern trend in our day is towards mass production and big scale operation. Mass evangelism can also be employed as a successful method in a given strategy but only if it does not violate the biblical emphasis of a "face to face encounter."

Jesus spoke to the masses but His redemptive encounters were more with individuals. He dealt with one Samaritan woman (John 4). He reasoned with one Pharisee, Nicodemus (John 3). Although the crowd pressed him, he spoke to one paralytic, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 5:20). In the banquet chamber he addressed himself to one sinful woman, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke 7:48).

The record of the evangelistic career of the apostles is filled with the names of those with whom they dealt individually: the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8), Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), Cornelius (Acts 10), Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7), Lydia and the jailor in Philippi (Acts 16), Felix (Acts 24:25), Agrippa (Acts 26:28), etc.

In the day of population explosion, it still requires an individual mother to give birth to the individual child. No matter how far automation may take us, Scripture still underscores a "man-to-man encounter." In a day when mass evangelism is on the increase and the emphasis is on "Group Dynamics," a church needs to examine itself to see whether personal evangelism is neglected.

3. The Principle of Evangelism through the Local Church.

Some would show great enthusiasm for the universal Church

without ascribing corresponding importance to the local church. Today, as of old, the Son of Man is found "in the midst of the seven candlesticks" (Rev. 1:13; 2:1), the local churches. The Head of the Church has decreed that He will do the work for the universal Church through the instrumentality of the local church.

Kuiper says, "The Bible teaches plainly that evangelism is a task of the organized church."⁷ He goes on to say, "It may well be questioned whether there is a church anywhere which completely neglects evangelism...evangelism belongs not merely to the well being of the church, but to its very being. Evangelism is of the essence of the true church."⁸ This agrees with the often quoted words of Barth, "The church exists by missions as fire exists by burning."⁹

At the same time we hear G. Campbell Morgan say, "Evangelism apart from the church is impossible."¹⁰ He further underscores his conviction in the words, "Evangelism apart from the church is apart from Christ and is therefore no evangelism."¹¹

When Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18), Kuiper says, Jesus spoke of an organized church as implied by the fact that "He went on to assign to the apostles the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 16:19).¹² Jesus gives a similar authorization to the apostles in Matthew 18:18, where it is beyond question that he is speaking of a local congregation. Thus Jesus places the responsibility of evangelism into the setting of the local church.

The local church may do this in cooperation with other local churches and sponsor crusades as long as the image of the local

church as the soul winning institution is not lost. Care must be taken so that the loyalty of the members for the purpose of soul winning is not placed outside of the local congregation.

Through the years non-church related organizations have risen for the purpose of evangelism. Repeatedly these agencies have so captivated the "soul-burdened" members of the church that they came to look upon these agencies, outside of the church, as the soul winning institutions, while the church was assigned to maintenance responsibilities. Such organizations may temporarily do a good work but the local church is the God-appointed agency for evangelism and this image must remain dominant in the mind of every Christian.

4. The Principle of Evangelism by the "Church Scattered."

By "church gathered" we refer to the membership of the church when it gathers for its meetings in a building. While by "church scattered" we refer to what the church is between the meetings or, seven days a week. The true inwardness of the church is reflected, not in its building "but in the sending out of the seventy."¹³

Trueblood says, "...there is a general weakness which may be termed segregation, especially segregation from common life. Whether our religion is segregated from common life by being limited geographically (i.e., to a religious building)...,"¹⁴ is a serious question.

In the case of the "church scattered" representatives can be found in almost every walk of life. Where the path of the believer crosses the path of the unbeliever, the church will find the world where Jesus must be made known. Here lies the secret of the evangelistic success of the early church, "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:4).

The "church gathered" has the responsibility of mutual encouragement, instruction and training of its members, so that its people can be effective when they are scattered the rest of the week.

The "church scattered" can continue its course in service on the week. Thus the weary labourers from the harvest field of evangelism come back to the "church gathered" with a healthy appetite to feed upon the heavenly diet that shall be offered them. This principle may require that the church redefine the purpose and nature of its meetings so that the "church scattered" may be strong and effective.

5. The Principle of Evangelism outside of the Church Building.

It is necessary to underscore this principle in order to show that the "church scattered" is not going out primarily for the purpose of filling the church building or swelling the attendance at a meeting. A "church scattered" does not go out to bring the people to the church, but to bring Christ to the people. The "church scattered" does not only prepare the unbeliever for an encounter with Christ in a church building but actually places the claims of Christ upon the person he meets in everyday life. We must remember "the early church owned no buildings;"¹⁵ it went fishing where the fish were.

The church building is not a store in which the Christian functions only as a clerk, to serve the customer who comes. The church building is a place where salesmen meet and from where they go out to find the customer, to persuade him, and to deliver the goods to him. In the words of Trueblood, we would say, "the Christian building should be a 'launching pad.'"¹⁶

"When we think that religion is what goes on in a building of recognizable ecclesiastical architecture, the damage comes in the

perfectly natural human tendency to minimize religion in other places."¹⁷ It is to be expected that Spirit-guided evangelistic activity outside of the church building will motivate more of the unbelievers to come to the church. However, only if this is the case, and they come in sufficient numbers, should the church think of an evangelistic campaign in the church as a time of harvest.

6. The Principle of Pastoral Leadership in Evangelism.

Having recognized the local church as the God-appointed agency of evangelism, we must further acknowledge that the pastor is the alpha and omega of any evangelistic program in the local church.

First, he is to be an example of the believers, not only in ethics but also in his attitude to lost men and in the effort he puts forth to win them.¹⁸ Because of training and experience the pastor will often be the best equipped person to lead out in this encounter. No pastor can successfully lead his church in evangelism if he is reluctant to become personally involved in it.

"The pastor is important, not because he is wiser or better than are other men, but because he is so placed that he may be able to draw out and direct the powers of other men."¹⁹ By virtue of his office he will have both authority as well as influence, to challenge his members to follow him in evangelism. In evangelism "leadership is the pearl without price."²⁰ The pastor will be engaged in the equipping ministry,²¹ or "a particular ministry to lead his members into the universal ministry."²² Here the pastor actually becomes the "coach," whose primary concern is to see that all of his team members play well and play together.

"The Christian coach will be one who is more concerned therefore in developing others than in enhancing his own prestige."²³ Trueblood goes on to say, "The notion that the professional minister's main job is that of the conduct of public worship is something which we must destroy if we are to get ready for a larger and more fruitful team ministry."²⁴ Here we must remember Kenneth Strachan's theorem of group growth. "The growth of any group is in direct proportion to its ability to mobilize its entire membership in continuous evangelistic outreach."²⁵

7. The Principle of Every-Member Evangelism.

On this point Trueblood says, "In short, a person cannot be a Christian and avoid being an evangelist. Evangelism is not a professionalized job of a few gifted or trained men; but is, instead, the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs even in the most modest way, to the company of Jesus."²⁶ Such words are contrary to modern thinking. Trueblood continues with the words, "...the non-witnessing follower of Christ is a contradiction in terms."²⁷ This agrees with Jesus, who said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Here biblical discipleship cannot be divorced from a conscious soul winning effort. Every member who is richly fed during the church meetings but fails to engage in strenuous spiritual exercise between meetings will soon lose his appetite and suffer spiritual deterioration.

A church program where few perform and the majority are spectators is bound for defeat. "The matter of chief importance is the steady, continuous ministry of all of the members and the

chief function of the pastor is to help people get ready for this ministry."²⁸ Not the pastor who pulls the load of a sleeping unresponsive church but "an aroused laity will give us a redeemed continent."²⁹ "The only way in which this can be done is by the education of a gifted few whose chief vocation is the liberation of the ministerial and witnessing power of the many."³⁰

8. Principle of Evangelistic Preaching.

In spite of what we have said above, we must not forget that, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21b).

We can agree with Sweazey, that "this generation has discovered or rediscovered some other wonderfully effective evangelistic methods but it would be the sheerest folly to think that these have replaced evangelistic preaching. The minister, like the physician, does not give up all the other cures whenever a new one is developed."³¹ The history of evangelism is studded with repeated instances where evangelistic preaching resulted in a rich harvest of souls. We cannot overlook the effective evangelistic preaching of Moody, Finny, Billy Sunday and Billy Graham. The evangelistic note must always be a significant ingredient in a pulpit ministry. But for effective evangelistic preaching we must remember first, that much of the evangelistic preaching in past decades was done outside of the church building. Luther in his beginning years, Wesley in England, Moody in America, as well as Billy Sunday and Billy Graham, have preached more outside than inside of the church building. The preaching in market places and street corners,

as well as parks needs to be included in an evangelistic strategy. Furthermore, we need to remember that evangelistic preaching can only be effective to a degree that it is supported by an active person-to-person encounter of God's people with unbelievers.

Evangelistic campaigns in our churches are not obsolete. But when evangelistic activities by the church members outside of the church building and through the week are lacking, there is little hope for significant results in a church campaign.

9. The Principle of the Evangelistic Church Organizations.

No church will be fully evangelistic until every organization within the church has become evangelistic. Every agency of the church must have a redemptive purpose in order to justify its existence. Otherwise it will absorb time and talent on secondary issues.

We share the conviction of Robert Raines who says, "The small group is the medium through which God has evidently chosen to work in powerful and permanent ways to help people start growing and continue to grow in Christ."³² But at the same time we do well to heed the warning of Trueblood, who writes, "...it is possible that the prayer group, like the sanctuary, may involve a retreat from reality." A prayer group is dangerous and even harmful if the members are satisfied to indulge in their own delightful fellowship, making this fellowship essentially an end in itself."³³ Trueblood goes on to say, "A prayer group which does not make its members more effective apostles (sent ones to do evangelism), in their jobs and homes,is essentially a failure."³⁴ This we must also say of any structured or unstructured group in the church.

A goodly number of organizations within the church have lost the awareness of this their purpose, and consequently do not plan evangelistically or expect people to be saved in their group activity.³⁵

10. The Principle of Planning for Evangelism.

Spontaneous evangelism is certainly desirable but it cannot be sustained without a specific plan. God's teleological approach to creation and Christ's systematic ways in the tasks He performed, make careful planning imperative for evangelism. Jesus advocated that before a man build a tower he sit down and first count the cost. He further advised the king to first sit down to deliberate whether he is able to win the battle, before he goes to war (Luke 14:28-33). We recognize that evangelism is in order in season and out of season for the Spirit often moves at unexpected times and in unexpected ways. However, this does not absolve us from careful planning. No church has ever been successful in a consistent program of evangelism without careful plans. The setting up of an overall aim and intermediary goals and carefully choosing the best methods by which to achieve these are prerequisites for success.³⁶

In the past our churches have often planned evangelistic campaigns spasmodically and on short notice and consequently have often been disappointed. Our plans need to include a planned approach to plowing, planting and watering, as well as harvesting and preserving. Hitherto our evangelists have assisted our churches primarily with harvesting, but today somebody will have to

help us in our local churches to project plans for evangelism that begin with plowing the fallow ground and end with laying the gained prospects as trophies at the feet of the Saviour.

11. The Principle of Training for Evangelism.

Our late Brother A.H. Lush used to say, "In the work of the Kingdom it is not sufficient for a brother just to have a good heart; he needs to be trained for the task." In general our Conference has recognized this need as is evidenced by our several institutions of learning. Some efforts to train are also expended in our local churches. However, we need to ask whether our training has been appropriately related to a strategy of evangelism and whether it has included showing the individual who was being trained, just where he would fit into the strategy and just how to do a specific task. In our training we have strongly stressed the apprehension of the message which needs to be conveyed, but we have been less successful in underscoring the art of effective communication.

Here our membership needs more than just a general principle. They need tools and guidance to do the specific task. This we have done in the area of Christian Education for our Sunday School, Mid-Week Classes, and DVBS, and also in music. But we have really not begun to do this in the framework of an overall strategy of evangelism. Here we need to become more zealous, devoted and explicit.

12. The Principle of Seeking the Lost.

The Son of Man did not only come to save, but "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). The seeking implies more

than a geographic location of the lost sheep, for Jesus sees Nathanael under the fig tree even before Philip called him (John 1:48). Nevertheless, "Philip findeth Nathanael" (John 1:45).

Paul's approach to seeking was, "I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22).

Speaking of His disciples, Jesus says, "The world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14).

Obviously there is a gulf between the soul winner and the soul to be won. How shall the bridge for communication be built across this gulf? The initiative lies with the church and the Christian. Too often the believer has expected the unbeliever to build the bridge for understanding the Gospel from where he is, without realizing that the believer must put forth every effort to understand the unbeliever and win his confidence as he communicates to him the Gospel of the Saviour.

The church is not of the world but Jesus sent the church into the world. He did not expect the world to come to the church.

Mueller speaks of three levels of communication in evangelism: pre-evangelism, evangelism, and postevangelism.³⁷ The church has neglected to consider the first as essential and consequently seldom trained for it.

In missions we stress the need of acculturation on the part of the missionary. In evangelism at home we plead for the Christian to love and understand the lost until he becomes a follower "of us, and of the Lord" (I Thess. 1:6).

II. ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF EVANGELISM STRATEGY.

Out of the biblical principles which we have underscored above, it becomes evident that an evangelism strategy needs to include the following qualities:

1. It must recapture the biblical image of the local church.

Howard Heinrichs says that the church of 67 was, "A School of Evangelism," while the church of 1967 is an "Evangelistic Centre." This agrees with McGavran's charge that many churches today seek to perfect the members apart from involving them in discipling (discipling is used by McGavran as a synonym for evangelism). The making of members into better Christians is not an end in itself, for being better members includes being better soul winners. Soul winning in turn will contribute much to the perfection of the one who is involved in the winning. Therefore the church does not only emphasize in-service training but also in-service growing. The image of the church thus changes from a hospital to a training centre. The church meetings are not the occasions where the church seeks to save its life but where it teaches the members to loose their lives for the Gospel's sake. The church does not have the purpose of merely preserving life but investing life. The church shows its members how "to become" in order "to do."

2. It must be continuous.

Evangelism is in order "in season and out of season." A church cannot crowd its evangelistic responsibility into a two-week period. It is true that a program of evangelism in the local church must include the breaking up of fallow ground, the planting, and watering.

However, no matter what phase of the overall evangelism program is being stressed, the church must never loose the awareness of the fact that its program is evangelistic. A time of harvest in the form of an evangelistic campaign must always be viewed as only one aspect of the overall evangelism strategy.

3. It must provide a biblical balance between spontaneity and organizational structure.

Spontaneous soul winning must not be bound but guided by a church program. The same Spirit who leads the individual Christian to engage in soul winning outside of the church context, also leads the individual member when called upon to do evangelism within a church structure. For a local church to stifle spontaneity in evangelism is tragic but spontaneity cannot be sustained over any length of time unless it functions within the framework of an organized church. Neither must spontaneity in soul winning result in a disorderly approach, for "let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:14).

4. It must provide opportunity for group dynamics.

In evangelism we need to keep in mind three steps in our progressive contact with a prospect: First is the person-to-person encounter which is basic to all the other steps. Second, the use of group dynamics which results from the formation of small cells of believers to reinforce the person-to-person contact. In such groups the prospect is introduced into the meaningful context of Christian fellowship. Third, the church experience where the prospect is encouraged to witness a church gathered.

In the past our evangelism strategy has emphasized the person-to-person encounter and church experience and often neglected to use group dynamics. But group dynamics becomes exceedingly important when we remember that for a non-church going person, the gap between a person-to-person contact and a church service experience is a big hurdle. The formal structure of the service, the professional salesmanship from the pulpit, and the great number of people present, may strike a non-church goer rather strange at his first visit and may not contribute to his openness to the Gospel.

If, however, such a prospect, after a person-to-person contact, is introduced to a Christian atmosphere in a more informal group situation and there gains some friends, it becomes easier for him to move from the group situation with his newly gained friends into the experience of a church service.

For such a purpose we need not necessarily form new groups but rather harness the existing groups in our churches for evangelism, i.e., Sunday School Classes, Women's Missionary Societies, Young People's Groups, Men's Fellowship, etc. These existing groups need to become aware that soul winning is not only the work of the individual person, or the responsibility of the church as a whole, but an essential part of the program of their particular group.

On the other hand, for specific instances it may be desirable to form a special group. At other times the church may want to use the group dynamics of organizations outside of the church, i.e., C.B.M.C., Inter-Varsity, Youth for Christ, Gideons, etc.

As a rule, however, existing groups within the church can be guided more easily and provide better continuity.

5. It must provide opportunity for evangelistic preaching.

It is reasonable to expect that an active "church scattered" will bring prospects to the "church gathered." After a person-to-person contact and an experience within the atmosphere of Christian fellowship, an unbeliever may be motivated to participate in a church meeting. Here dynamic evangelistic preaching may be employed for the desired goal.

Active planning for evangelistic preaching outside of the church sanctuary, in some parks, on street corners, or significant institutions in the community, must not be neglected. Evangelistic preaching should not be restricted to the "professional ministry" but members of the church should also be encouraged to do this wherever opportunities present themselves. Evangelistic preaching is still a significant biblical method for soul winning.

6. It must remain flexible in methods.

Methods must be one of the most flexible aspects of an evangelism strategy. No two persons can be approached exactly alike and one can hardly expect the same context or environment for soul winning in any two cases. We need the leading of the Spirit, not only to do evangelism, but also in how to do it.

"The insistence that all real Christians must undergo an experience of change in a uniform pattern is neither biblical nor true to life. Conversion is not synonymous with 'a sawdust trail,' nor the arena crusade, though God has used both to bring it about.

It is almost certainly wrong to depict conversions as mere conformity. If a convert is made to feel that it is required of him to conform uncritically to a carefully outlined program of events, it is likely that he is being misled about the nature of conversion. The attempt to dragoon people into conformity with a single pattern of spiritual experience disregards the diverse means by which the Spirit of God actually works."³⁸

Although there may be certain methods which have proven rather successful in evangelism such as Campus Crusade or Navigators, we can never look for an assembly line production in evangelism. The method must be as varied as the particular person or a given circumstance may require. One of the discussion papers will elaborate upon this.

7. It must have biblical goals.

The church has been called upon to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, but this does not mean that one local church in its evangelism strategy does not need to recognize its limitations. It is necessary for a local congregation to prayerfully and specifically define its responsibility in terms of geographic areas and social contact or in terms of people for whom it feels primarily responsible. A church that will not be both specific and realistic here, will not be successful in its evangelism effort.

The area of responsibility should be in proportion to the church's evangelistic potential in terms of talent, facilities, and finances. The church needs to be diligent to do all it can for a lost world but it also needs to focus all it can upon a given

area of responsibility. The church growth must be a constant concern regardless of the size of the church. Consequently growth goals become highly desirable. Such goals are essential for the church as a whole as well as for each existing agency. Goals of this nature can be set for each year with intermediary goals for either each quarter or each month. This will require some careful study of both church and community but it will be highly rewarding. A church that has no goals can hardly expect to do its best in evangelism. Neither will such a church be able to measure its evangelistic effectiveness. It is indeed regrettable that so many churches seek to be evangelistic without carefully set objectives.

III. A PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR AN EVANGELISM STRATEGY.

The following may be used by groups or churches to hammer out a specific evangelism strategy for a given situation.

1. Characteristics of the proposed program.

- a) It must be in harmony with the biblical principles and essential qualities set forth above.
- b) It must be designed for use by the individual local church but also, where desirable, for use by a group of churches.
- c) It must make it possible, where desirable, for several churches to do the planning, promoting, preparing, advertising, and training together. But the actual work of evangelism should be done in the context of the local church.
- d) It must include the various phases of an evangelism strategy and thus be continuous.

2. Content of the proposed program.

- a) Period of preparation (about six weeks).

- (i) Preparing the church.
 - (aa) Studying the evangelistic potential of the church.
 - (bb) Planning the strategy with the various church committees.
 - (cc) Conduct self-evaluation clinics.
- (ii) Preparing the community.
 - (aa) Defining the geographic as well as social area of responsibility of the church.
 - (bb) Making a thorough study of the community to get as much information as possible on such matters as cultural background of the people, population distribution, sources of income for the majority of the people, special living habits, special community interests, and age distribution of the people.
 - (cc) Study how the church can best relate itself to its community.
- (iii) Preparing the required literature.
 - (aa) Literature to be used in communicative calls.³⁹
 - (bb) Literature to be used in prospect calls. Here repeat calls may require different literature that will lead the prospect to a final commitment to Christ.
 - (cc) Literature to be used for advertising.
 - (dd) Letter from pastor introducing the church to the individual homes in the community and clarifying the purpose of the visitation program.
 - (ee) Literature for the spiritual edification of the church people involved in the program.

- (iv) Preparing for a climaxing church campaign.
 - (aa) Engage the necessary personnel for the campaign.
 - (bb) Set dates for the campaign.
 - (cc) Get a principle commitment of members to support the campaign during those days.
 - (dd) Clear the calendar of all other engagements for the days of the campaign.
- b) Period of inspiration (about thirteen weeks).
 - (i) Motivating the members.
 - (aa) Church Growth Clinics.
 - (bb) Other similar teaching.
 - (ii) Enlisting the members for the particular part in the evangelistic program for which they are best suited.
 - (iii) Introducing members to the Prayer Cell ministry.
 - (iv) Training the members.
 - (aa) A four lesson training-in-service program on witnessing.
 - (bb) A four lesson training-in-service program on soul winning.
 - (cc) A four lesson training-in-service program on visitation.
 - (v) Training the agencies of the church.
 - (aa) Teaching all the organizations within the church how they can best relate themselves to the salvation of souls.
- c) Period of Implementation (about thirteen weeks).
 - (i) Visit all homes in a geographical or a socially defined area with a communicative call.

- (ii) Prepare an appropriate file of all prospects.
- (iii) Devise an appropriate calling program for each prospect.
- (iv) Make a conscious effort to introduce non-church going people to existing church groups and appropriate church activities.
- (v) Establish rapport with the community as a whole by projecting a positive image of the church at every appropriate occasion and in every institution of the community.

d) Period of Mobilization of Seasonal Opportunities for Evangelism.
(about six or thirteen weeks as indicated below.)

The duration of this period will depend on when the program begins. If the beginning of the year is chosen, then thirteen weeks could be reserved for evangelistic opportunity during the summer months. If, however, the church begins this program in the fall of the year, it may want to reserve at least six weeks for special evangelistic opportunities during Christmas and New Year.

- (i) Summer months (about thirteen weeks).
 - (aa) Take prospects on outings.
 - (bb) Have prospects as guests in Christian Camps.
 - (cc) Plan your vacation with a non-church going family with the aim of being a witness to them.
 - (dd) Use appropriate methods of witnessing while travelling and away from home.
- (ii) Christmas and New Year (about six weeks).
 - (aa) Invite prospects into homes for special occasions

- which will include a witnessing opportunity.
- (bb) Invite prospects to specially designed church activities.
- (cc) Offer Christian interpretation of the events.
- (iii) Special events in the life of prospects.
 - (aa) Send appropriate birthday greetings.
 - (bb) Send appropriate anniversary greetings.
 - (cc) Extend congratulations for special achievements.
 - (dd) Express Christian concern in times of disappointments, illness or sorrow.
- e) Period of Consummation (six to eight weeks).
 - (i) Plan opportunities for individual encounters with prospects for the purpose of securing commitments to Christ.
 - (ii) Plan special occasions for consummation in the church.
 - (iii) Plan a climaxing church campaign of about eight to ten days.
- f) Period of follow-up (length of time will vary with respective convert).
 - (i) Use of Navigators' approach.
- g) Period of careful evaluation and planning of the strategy for the next year (Time element may vary but it should follow very shortly after the church campaign has ended and the follow-up program has been set in motion). This will give continuity to the evangelism strategy of the church.

May God grant that our churches may not only be evangelical but become thoroughly evangelistic.

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Richard C. Halverson, Methods of Personal Evangelism, (Christianity Today, 1014 Washington Building, Washington, D.C., 20005, Vol. XI, No. 2, October 28, 1966), pp. 25-29 stresses the important quality of "Fellowship" as a prerequisite for an Evangelistic Church.
- ²Quoted by Leighton Ford, The Christian Persuader, (Harper and Row, New York, 1966), p. 13. Ford explains, "If we let mass stand for the truth of the Gospel, then the impact of our Gospel on the world will be in direct proportion to the velocity--the urgency--with which it is delivered."
- ³Quoted by Mendell Taylor, Exploring Evangelism, (Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, Mo., 1964), p. 22.
- ⁴Ford, op cit, p. 43.
- ⁵Ibid, p. 42.
- ⁶Elton Trueblood, The Company of the Committed, (Harper and Row, New York, 1961), p. 26.
- ⁷R.B. Kuiper, God-Centered Evangelism, (Baker, Grand Rapids, 1963), p. 203.
- ⁸Ibid, p. 107.
- ⁹Quoted by Sam Shoemaker, Extraordinary Living for Ordinary Men, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1966), p. 145.
- ¹⁰G. Campbell Morgan, Evangelism, (Fleming H. Revell, Westwood, N.J., 1964), p. 25. No doubt Morgan would allow for the exception as in the case of Philip in Acts 8.
- ¹¹Ibid, p. 26.
- ¹²Kuiper, op cit, p. 104.
- ¹³Trueblood, op cit, p. 45.
- ¹⁴Ibid, p. 9.
- ¹⁵Ibid, p. 29.
- ¹⁶Ibid, p. 73.
- ¹⁷Ibid, p. 9.
- ¹⁸Samuel Southard, Pastoral Evangelism, (Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1962), p. 171.
- ¹⁹Trueblood, The Incendiary Fellowship, (Harper and Row, N.Y., 1967), p. 36.
- ²⁰Eli Lilly, The Little Church on the Circle, (Indianapolis: Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, 1957), p. 321, quoted by Trueblood, op cit, p. 35.

- 21 Trueblood, op cit, p. 42.
- 22 Trueblood and Mullen both elaborate on the concept of the Universal Ministry which refers to the participation of every member. Ford speaks of "the fallacy of the misplaced comma" in Eph. 4:12, op cit, p. 48.
- 23 Trueblood, op cit, p. 43.
- 24 Ibid, p. 45.
- 25 Evangelism-in-Depth according to PERT, Latin America Mission, Bogota, New Jersey, U.S.A., 07603, last page.
- 26 Trueblood, Company of the Committed, op cit, p. 55.
- 27 Ibid, p. 56.
- 28 Trueblood, The Incendiary Fellowship, op cit, p. 45.
- 29 A.C. Archibald, New Testament Evangelism, (Judson Press, Phil., 1946), p. 53.
- 30 Trueblood, Company of the Committed, op cit, p. 63.
- 31 George E. Sweazey, Effective Evangelism, (Harper and Row, New York, 1946), pp. 20, 27.
- 32 Quoted by Mullen, op cit, p. 60.
- 33 Trueblood, The Company of the Committed, op cit, p. 75.
- 34 Ibid
- 35 J.C. Masee, Evangelism in the Local Church, (Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 23-39 has a good chapter on "Evangelize the Church Organizations."
- 36 M.R. Douglas, How to Build an Evangelistic Church, (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1963), has a good emphasis on this point.
- 37 C.S. Mueller, The Strategy of Evangelism, (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1965), pp. 63-78.
- 38 F.C. Peters, Debate on Conversion: Yes, (Ferment '67, September, Vol. I, No. 1, Ryerson Press, Toronto, Ontario), pp. 6,7.
- 39 In a communicative call the church goes into all of the homes of a defined geographic area with the primary purpose of communicating a blessing at each visit and establish the desired rapport with all people. Such a call substitutes for a survey call but obtaining information is not the primary purpose, but the secondary.