

“Keeping the Saved Saved” and “Practical Local Evangelism”

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

The following material is about methods used to fulfill this command. It was developed by the Northwest Church of Christ in Lawton, OK, in 1976 and first used in our campaign work that began the same year. Since 1976 the elders have revised this material, as experience was gained in its use. Since 1976 the Northwest Church of Christ, under the leadership of the elders, has conducted annual, one-week-long campaigns in communities in Oklahoma, Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Arkansas, and Missouri. From these experiences and from the reports of individuals like you, we know it works. We hope it will be helpful to you.

POINT OF CONTACT:

If you would like to know more or would be interested in a free workshop at your congregation, please contact:

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NORTHWEST CHURCH OF CHRIST
LAWTON, OKLAHOMA
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I. Keeping the Saved Saved

When we start bringing in new Christians through the front door, we must do all we can to keep them from going right back out through the back door.

A. The Challenge of New Christians

New Christians are different from mature Christians.

Knowledge

Dress

Behavior

Friends

Do your new Christians...

Sit in worship by themselves?

Stand uncomfortably in the foyer while all the groups of friends visit with each other?

Associate primarily with their non-Christian friends?

Cling to denominational practices?

What do you do about it?

Are you uncomfortable with them so you...

Give them a dirty look when they sit in "your pew?"

Say hi and keep walking by them?

Ignore them while you ask your friends to lunch?

Snicker when they say something "funny" in Bible class?

Just let them slowly fade away until they stop coming?

Would you stay with any group who treated you this way?

Does the Bible teach us to behave this way?

B. To remain faithful, a new Christian must do all the following:

Make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.

Make at least one very good friend within 6 months.

Become active in the work of the church.

Learn and grow in the word of God.

C. New Christian Class (*not New Convert*)

Acts 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians (*not New Converts*) first in Antioch.

Advantages

Gives them a focal point and a reason for coming.

Grounds them in the fundamentals.

Disadvantages

Segregates them from the rest of the congregation.

The only people they meet are other immature new Christians.

D. New Christian Program

Must be designed so that all these goals can be met:

- Make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.
- Make at least one very good friend within 6 months.
- Become active in the work of the church.
- Learn and grow in the word of God.

There are many systems. We have seen and tried a number of them.
We have seen this one work well.

The new Christian rotates through 14 different families

- One family per month,
- For 14 months.

Each month, the family:

- Ensures the new Christian is at every Bible class and worship.
- Provides transportation if it is needed.
- Calls him to remind him to come to class and worship.
- Calls him if he does not attend.
- Takes him to class.
- Ensures his children are in the proper classes.
- Sits with him during class and worship.
- Introduces him to their friends.
- Introduces him to the elders, deacons and ministers.
- Takes him to lunch and dinner after worship.
- Teaches him one of the 14 fundamental lessons (See "Resources" section.)
- Gives him a building tour.
- Ensures he fills out a Talent Sheet and begins working.
- Become friends.

Additionally,

At least 2 of the elders should visit him within the first week to introduce themselves, welcome him, give him a welcome packet, and tell him about the new Christian program.

Plus, the visitation teams should visit him for 5 to 8 weeks so he will also meet a number of other members.

Program must be well coordinated and overseen to work.

E. The Challenge of Mature Christians

Have you ever wondered..

"What ever happened to Johnny and Janie? I haven't seen them for a while."

Have you ever looked at a directory that is 2 or 3 or 4 years old and noticed how many names are just gone?

Matthew 18:12-13

12 What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? 13 And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.

Anchor Team Program: Let no one fall through the cracks.

When a person misses 2 consecutive weeks and no one knows why:
Send personalized card(s) by individual members who are their friends.

After missing 3 consecutive weeks:
Add them to the visitation team list and visit them twice.

After 5 consecutive weeks:
Give their name to the elders for their follow-up who will visit them.

How to keep track of this?
Most people always sit in the same section so...

The first level is for each of us to just look around and see who is missing.
The second level is to break the auditorium into sections or "Anchor Teams" with an Anchor Team Captain who checks to see who is not in his normal seat.
Check with the attendance cards to provide a third level.
Check with the class attendance rolls to provide a fourth level.
Record info on spreadsheet and make available to elders each week. (OneDrive)

Then begin the card and visitation program.
The goal is to break the pattern of consecutive misses and restore faithfulness.

Record attendance on Excel spreadsheet on OneDrive.
Elders look at this every week and make determination who needs:
To get a card.
Go into visitation program.
Be visited or called by elders.
Receive elders' letters.
Post on the elders' bulletin board so all the members can see who is in danger.

II. Local Evangelism Methods

A. Several Guiding Principles.

Each member is responsible for evangelism and each of us has unique talents so there must be an opportunity for every single one of us to make valuable contributions.

The Biblical method of evangelism is to "preach Christ and Him crucified."

75-90% of all members of the church initially studied because of a personal relationship with someone in the church, (Andrew brought Peter to Jesus) and we each have relationships with people outside the church.

It generally takes at least 7 contacts for a person to respond to a request. Most people quit asking after making 4 contacts.

When visitors at worship service are asked to study the Bible, depending upon how they are asked, a great many of them say yes.

To remain faithful, each new member must immediately and continually learn (second half of the Great Commission), become active, make a least one friend he can sit and visit with, and make at least 5 good friends within 6 months.

B. Implementing These Principles: Quarterly “Special Events”

1. Members can use events to create excitement when asking people with whom they have a relationship to visit our services. Include a guest speaker, a Biblical topic of interest to the community, and a noon meal.
2. Ask each member to submit the names and addresses of the guests whom they would like to be invited.
3. Ask each member to personally invite each of their guests by giving them a brochure about the event and asking them to come.
4. The elders invite each of these guests by mailing them a brochure and a letter inviting them to the event.
5. Conduct a door-knocking by going to the home of each guest, giving them a brochure and inviting them to come.
6. Mail to each guest the publication “House to House, Heart to Heart.” (Keep copies in the tract rack.)
7. Repeat this process for each guest until they have been invited to at least 4 quarterly events, or they obey the Gospel, or they ask us to stop inviting them, whichever comes first.
8. When the guests arrive at the event, ensure the member who invited them sits with them, visits with them, eats the meal with them, and ensures they are asked to study the Bible.

People to Invite - My Guest List

People I know from work, school, civic clubs, arts organizations and sports teams.

People who help my children and grandchildren like their teachers, coaches and activity sponsors.

People who help me like my doctors, nurses, therapists, dentists, and their staffs.

People who help me like my insurance agent, lawyer, tax preparer, hair dresser or barber, plumber, electrician, and auto mechanic.

People who handle my lawn care and pest control.

People who live in each of the houses that border mine.

C. Implementing These Principles: Door-knocking

Many people say this no longer works.

We have done this every year since 1976.

We have found that:

1 of 40 people will schedule a Bible study.

1 of 3 of these people will actually show up to study.

1 of 2 of the people who study will obey the Gospel.

30 is the average number of people who obey the Gospel on a week-long campaign.

The campaign is designed to give the residents of the town the opportunity to learn and obey the Gospel plan of salvation and to provide an opportunity for us fulfill the commands of the Great Commission. We knock thousands of doors and teach studies during the day and have a Gospel meeting and teach studies in the evening.

We knock the residential doors and ask the residents to attend the Gospel meeting and do a home Bible study. The campaigners are assigned to teams of about 15 people each. Each team is responsible for knocking its assigned area and has a Team Captain who drives the team van and leads his team in all that it does. Each campaigner stays with his team for the entire campaign. The campaigners knock doors in two's, assigned and closely monitored by the Team Captain. When studies are set, the campaigners fill in a contact card which is turned into the Office Staff. The Office Staff then assigns teachers to teach these studies. In the evening during the Gospel meeting, the campaigners will be assigned to sit with guests and attempt to set up studies. If you would like more information about how we do this, go to our website.

Door-knocking is also very effective on a smaller scale of just going out on a Saturday.

III. Teaching the Gospel: The Gospel Chain

There are many methods. We have had great success with the Gospel Chain.

If you can do these three things, you can teach a study:

1. In the Bible, read the first Scripture in the Study Packet.
2. Ask the questions in the Study Packet.
3. Turn the Bible to the next Scripture in the Study Packet.

Church of Christ says :

Speak where the Bible speaks. Be silent where the Bible is silent.
So use the Bible.

The verses flow in orderly fashion and discuss:

Inspiration of the Scriptures
Who is Jesus?
Redemption through Obedience to the Gospel of Christ
Born Again of Water and the Spirit
Apostles Carry Out Jesus' Command
Entering Christ's Kingdom

In 1 to 2 hours, obedience to the Gospel including baptism for the remission of sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit is discussed in natural sequence and demands a decision RIGHT THEN.

For about another hour the scriptures then go on to teach:

Transformed Faithful Life
Christ's One Church
Acts of Worship
Remain Faithful

Teaching ability is of little importance.
Scriptures teach and convict honest hearts.
Simple, Short, Systematic, Scriptural.

IV. Resources

The Gospel Chain. Evangelism Workshop. All the material is on our website.
www.nwcoclawton.org Northwest Church of Christ, Lawton, OK

HomeMission www.homemission.org

“Saving Souls in the 21st Century” By James Sanderson. www.savingsoulstoday.com

“House to House, Heart to Heart” www.housetohouse.com

“Evangelizing Your Community” Practical steps congregations and individuals can take to improve their evangelistic outreach. By Dr. Stafford North

“Why They Left” Listening to those who have left Churches of Christ. By Flavil Yeakley Jr.

“The Great Commission Part II: Becoming the Hands of Christ”
By Steve Cummings and Glenn Newton

“Risen! The First 40 Days of Your Christian Life” By C. Philip Slate

“The Love of Christ” 14 fundamental lessons. By Richard Rogers and Bill Yasko

If you would like a workshop at your congregation, please contact us.

If you have friends or relatives at other congregations anywhere in the country who you think might be interested, please ask them to contact us.