

## How To Excel In Personal Evangelism

By Rob Whitacre

The churches of Christ in America are on a steady decline. Over the past three years, we have lost 225 congregations and 55,334 members. Those who seek RATIONALIZATION minimize our losses by pointing to similar declines among our denominational friends. Those who seek EXPLANATION (should we dare say excuses) cite increased distractions, entertainment, secularization, busyness, and muchness. While all of these things may be true, it does not change the numbers. The only way to address this crisis is by EVANGELIZATION! If churches of Christ are going to survive in America, we MUST return to our roots and once again train the saved to teach the lost.

Unfortunately, at least two generations have risen who know not evangelism. We have children who have grown up in homes and have never seen their parents conduct a personal Bible. Remaining still is a generation who remembers a time when churches grew. Christians carried around a film projector in the trunk of their car and showed their family, friends, and neighbors the Jewell Miller Bible study series. We “were” the fastest growing religious body in America. We excelled at soul winning! I believe those days can return if we train the saved. “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). Here are four proven Biblical things we can do to help turn things around.

**Invite people into our HOME:** “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they

ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42) Have we forgotten that our homes are a tool for bringing souls to Christ. The mat in front of too many Christian doors reads “Come Back Later” instead of “Welcome.” Open homes equal open hearts. Our first century brethren had open homes. They were eating together, praying together, and studying together (Acts 2:46; 20:20). We have found that over 90% of those we engage in Bible study from our home obey the Gospel.

**Extend Christian HOSPITALITY:** I am afraid that this Christian attribute is almost lost in modern America. Hospitality is defined as “love of strangers.” The Greek word is used in Hebrews 13:2, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” All Christians are commanded to display hospitality, and elders are to be proven in this qualification (1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:8). Our hospitality to others should never be the reason behind their Gospel obedience, but the lack thereof could be the reason they don’t obey.

**When the lost sit in our homes, HEARKEN:** Everyone wants to be heard. James said, “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (1:19). Spend a lot of time asking about their family, hobbies, past experiences, and things they enjoy. This is a time to find common ground and to develop friendship and trust. As you listen, take mental notes of things that may need emphasized during a study. Have they been divorced? Do they have any organized

religious background? Do they have family who are devout in any particular religion?

***When the lost say things for which we disagree, HESITATE:*** It is very IMPORANT as you listen to never chase rabbits. This is not the time to refute, reprove, rebuke, or instruct, regardless of what is said. Remember, you are building a relationship. Furthermore, don't answer all their questions. I know this is a strange suggestion and may even seem rude. Believe me, it has taken a long time to understand the power of hesitation. If we truly respect the power of the Word, we must stop telling everyone what we think and how we FEEL and start SHOWING them the truth. The quicker

we get someone into the Bible, the sooner God can begin working on their hearts. If someone says, "Why don't you use a piano in worship?" you need to say, "That is a great question, let me SHOW you!" This is an effective way to lead into a Bible study.

We literally have hundreds of thousands of untrained Christians in our pews. We still have enough soldiers to begin growing again. If a doctor found his patient hemorrhaging, he would act immediately to save his life. Congregations are hemorrhaging, and if we don't act now, we may need other countries to send missionaries here to reestablish the Lord's Church in America.

## Stick With It

Article Selected

"Footprints in the sands of time are never made by sitting down." Perseverance, endurance, and plain ole' stubborn tenacity are needed to hold on to our hope in the midst of difficulty. If our life's work will leave behind footprints in the sands of time, it will be because we have striven to go in a direction that is different from the well-traveled road taken by the world.

The Christian life is compared to many things in the word of God. Surrounded by "so great a cloud of witness", it is a race in which we must "lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us" and run with our eyes fixed upon Jesus, "the author and perfecter of faith" (Heb. 12:1-2). The Christian life is much like a race. But, it is not so much a sprint as it is a marathon. Speed is not required so much as stamina. Therefore, we have a great need for endurance.

Our ability to remain in the struggle – to keep on keeping on – is measured by the strength we receive from the Lord, not by the strength we receive from men. God is the one who gives perseverance and encouragement (Rm. 15:5). While it is true that God may use others as sources of encouragement to help us develop greater endurance, God is the only one who can provide the spiritual sustenance we need to finish the race.

One way God provides endurance is through

suffering. Most of us would prefer another method. But there are no short-cuts to endurance. Those who compete in marathons know the importance of training. A person doesn't just decide to run the grueling 26-mile course on the spur of the moment. Training is needed to gradually build up endurance to complete the course.

The trials and tribulations which come our way in this life have a way of helping us develop spiritual endurance. By turning to God for strength and learning from what we suffer, we can develop a stronger and deeper character, one that will see us through to the end of life's journey.

As we run the race, our perseverance is inspired by hope (1 Th. 1:3). The hope of heaven is a grand and glorious hope, one that will motivate and inspire us to endure whatever hardships or difficulties come our way. We fix our eyes on Jesus. He is our goal. To be with Him is our destiny. In the meantime, we must hold to the course that is set before us, never giving up but always keeping our trust in Him.



## Upcoming Events

Dec. 31—New Year's Eve fellowship at the building @ 7pm. Please bring games and finger foods.

Sunday, Jan. 2nd—Monthly potluck luncheon after morning service and 1 pm service.

Monday, Jan. 3rd—Teens Bible Basics @ 6:30pm at the building

Thursday, Jan. 6th—Teens Takeaway Thursday @ 6:30pm

## Prayer List

### Prayer Requests

Georgeann Savoie—who requested prayers on her behalf. She will be having neck surgery in the near future. Rieke Bass, who has a tear in her hip muscle. Richard Hill, who is in DeTar Navarro Hospital room 467.

A friend of the Cammocks, Crissy, who was baptized recently.

### Members

Jeff Cannady, Les Daltry, Scott DeDear, Ken and Sandra Marie, Ann Pantel, Veronica Serenil, Clark Withers, Dee Gilpatrick, Faye Henderson, Sandy Malone.

Midtown will be hosting our Ladies' Day on Saturday, February 5th, 2022. Our speaker will be the lovely Lakesha Garza from the Adams Street church of Christ. Registration & Breakfast will be from 8:30am-9:15am and lunch will be provided.

Sign up sheets for hosting Youth Devos, preparing communion, and opening & closing the building for 2022 are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Food Helpers for the month of December - Team B. There is a list of teams on the bulletin board.

## Service Roster

Week of December 26, 2021

### Sunday Morning

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran  
Scripture Reading..... Isaac Jobs  
Song Leader ..... Doug Jobs

Opening Prayer ..... Bryant Siegel  
Closing Prayer..... Isaac Jobs

### Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Mike Atkinson  
Cup..... Rick Bass  
Offering..... Ken Dorries  
Assist..... Fred Scherffius  
Assist..... Kirk FitzSimmons  
Assist..... Leon Morales

### Sunday Evening

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran  
Song Leader ..... Isaac Jobs

Opening Prayer ..... Rick Bass  
Closing Prayer..... Mark FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Ken Dorries & Rick Bass

### Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Ronnie Scherffius  
Song Leader ..... Will Burleson  
Devotional ..... Mark FitzSimmons

### Other

Usher..... Allen Clifton  
Prepare Communion ..... Randles

## Congregational News

### Birthdays

Kasi Jobs ..... Dec. 21  
Leita Reeves..... Dec. 22  
Rieke Bass..... Dec. 22  
Athena Scherffius ..... Dec. 22

If you have any prayer requests or upcoming events to be announced, please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030.

## Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons  
Ronnie Scherffius  
Ron White

## Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism  
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence  
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

## Our Preacher

Ronnie Scherffius

## Weekly Reading

*“The righteous shall never be removed; but the  
wicked shall not inhabit the earth.”*

*Proverbs 10:30*

## Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.  
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.  
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.  
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

## Attendance Records

Week of December 19, 2021

A.M. Bible Class.....61  
A.M. Worship.....73  
P.M. Worship.....53  
Wednesday Bible Class.....54  
Offering week of December 19, 2021.....\$3,353

## Supported Works

Mani Pagidipalli *India*  
John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*  
Anthony Scherffius *Southwest School of Bible Studies*

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**Weekly Communication!** To receive the *Midtown Messenger* and other congregational news to your inbox each week, please email [events.midtowncoc@gmail.com](mailto:events.midtowncoc@gmail.com).