



THE EVANGELISM MODEL: AN OVERVIEW.

On the heart of campus staff everywhere is the vision to provide each of the 60 million college students of the world the opportunity to experience real life-change, through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The scope of our mission is something each of us has been exposed to from our first introduction to Campus Crusade for Christ: We hear our leaders talk about reaching the 60 million college students of the world; we see the numbers and goals prominently displayed during our conferences and retreats; we see the results of this vision in the changed lives of students around the world. And, when we talk with our fellow staff around the world, we realize that they too are dreaming the same vision, partnering with us to reach the 60 million students.

It's motivating to dream about reaching every student, yet it's overwhelming and confusing when we begin to consider the complexity of the task.

Over the years our leaders have effectively led in light of this vision. It is one thing to embrace the vision and another to have it lived out in the complexity of our ministry on campus. So the question is this: What does it mean for us to translate this vision into reality?

One of the greatest tools for answering this question is the "Evangelism Model" developed by Keith Davey. This tool seeks to help individuals think through their specific environments and move forward with an effective plan for getting to the scope of their ministry.

"The Evangelism Model" identifies the following three players in the process of students coming to Christ:

THE MASTER.

The Lord. He is the one that is at work in the lives of students leading them to Himself. For those that daily go on campus, it is so important to have the proper perspective on who the Lord is, on His work in the lives of individuals, and on who we are in the process of evangelism. To state it simply, we can be confident that He is building His church and that the gates of Hell will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18); He is at work in the lives of students, and we are invited to participate with Him.

THE MASSES.

Seeking to understand your target audience, or your chosen

group of students, is probably the most significant step you can take towards greater effectiveness in evangelism. Looking to understand who they are, what they think, their backgrounds, their worldviews, etc., will move you ahead significantly in sharing the gospel with them. We tend to do this instinctively. For example, we would never think of giving a "Sisterhood" talk to the guys in the fraternity, or a Christmas initiative to members of the Jewish Student Association. The first one would be laughable and the second inappropriate. While these may seem obvious, we regularly miss in terms of connecting with our audience. If we are committed to going after the scope of our campuses, we need to embrace the many cultures and communities represented, and craft the delivery of the gospel so that true communication, or two-way interaction, is taking place.

THE MESSENGER.

Throughout redemptive history the Lord has used people to accomplish His purposes in the lives of people. Who is it that the Lord uses? King David was not chosen based on his outward appearance. The Disciples were not educated men. The women that followed Jesus came from various moral and social backgrounds. The Lord is simply looking for men and women yielded to Him and willing to avail their lives for the purpose of the gospel.

In light of these three key players, "The Evangelism Model" goes on to identify and describe the following thought patterns and methodology needed for greater effectiveness:

THE MESSAGE.

We are called to communicate a never-changing message to a lost generation. It is critical that students and staff be grounded in the essence of the gospel, such as outlined in the Knowing God Personally booklet, so they can effectively communicate it. It is also a priority to orient our staff and students towards the lifelong pursuit of knowing the fullness of the gospel. The message is alive, active, and not chained by man, but is always advancing and will continue to advance until that final day.

THE MODES.

When you think about your evangelistic ministry or movement on campus, what comes to mind? I have asked this question of numerous staff and students and their answer is consistently related to the weekly meeting. The



weekly meeting is a key component to the health of the movement, but should it be in such a place of prominence, especially as we consider evangelism and the scope of the campus? As Ron Hutchcraft said at Staff Training in 1999, we live in a day and age where “most lost people will not come to a religious building to hear a religious speaker speak on a religious topic.” We should not always expect the lost to come to us, rather we need to be willing go to them and be a part of their world. We need to reorient our thinking and choose the environment that is most comfortable for them. The Modes of ministry challenge us to think through how students come to Christ, what environment is most effective, and for which students.

The Body Mode of evangelism is played out as students are brought to Christ through the body of believers in action, such as a lost student coming to Christ at the weekly meeting, an evangelistic talk, conference or retreat. These are often seekers or ones closest to the gospel.

The Natural Mode of evangelism is played out as students realize the power of natural relationships. Examples of this are students coming to Christ through their roommate, through a relationship on a team, in a class, at work, or through their living situation. The Natural Mode is a powerful method of introducing the message of Christ into an individual’s life or group situation. It is a true saying that our job is to release the message of the gospel into relationships so that it can run the networks of those relationships. This mode is more effective with students that are seekers than those that are hostile to the gospel.

The Ministry Mode of evangelism is played out in two ways: through coverage strategies and through strategies targeting a defined group on campus. Coverage efforts have a great way of creating a discussion about Christ in the market place of ideas on campus. The net is tossed widely to the entire campus seeking to uniquely connect with the larger student population. The “I Agree With” campaign has been used effectively to do this. I recall the “I Agree With Ryan Campaign” at the University of Oregon in the spring of 2000. The entire campus was at least aware of, if not connected to, the issues being raised through the wearing of “I Agree With Ryan” T-shirts, newspaper articles, editorials, and discussions in the amphitheater. The greatest aspect of this type of campaign is that it is useful in moving students away from indifference about spiritual things to having an opinion and interacting about spiritual topics.

The other type of Ministry Mode evangelism is when someone takes the gospel to an individual or group where relational connections are non-existent. Because a large number of non-Christians do not have a significant relationship with a Christian, this type of initiative evangelism will always remain critical to our mission. The Strategic Ministry Mode

efforts on campus are most effective when focusing on an entire group of students in a limited audience such as a team, a living group, or a people group.

It is interesting to consider the number of times we attempt to get students involved in the Ministry Mode of evangelism as outsiders. On the flip side, we are often not helping them to become effective in the Natural Mode of evangelism where they are insiders and can easily make transitions to the gospel.

A second thought to consider is how quickly a new believer is drawn away from the realm of friendships and natural relationships they were associated with as a non-believer. It is totally appropriate to pull away for a time if it involves a detrimental lifestyle but otherwise the person who has the greatest “in” with the gospel is the new believer.

THE MEANS.

One of the trademark qualities of an effective mechanic is a well-supplied toolbox. In the same way, there are numerous tools or ways of communicating the gospel effectively to students in various environments. Students and staff are typically well-versed in using the Four Laws Booklet and also in communicating their personal testimonies. These are effective tools and we should encourage students to master them. A student or staff person’s experience is enhanced as they are exposed to other means as well, such as the ability to reason apologetically or to look philosophically at the issues. The most powerful tool is the ability to use guided conversations leading to the presentation of the gospel.

THE METHODS.

This is an agricultural question. Just as there are stages or phases of preparing the soil for harvest, there are also phases similar in the spiritual journey of a non-believer. Is this a campus, a group on campus, or an individual that is hardened to the gospel and needs some spiritual plowing done? Does the seed of the gospel simply need to be sowed broadly? Does the message of the gospel need to be nurtured, promoting growth? Is it time to reap the harvest of students coming to know Christ? We need to understand the phase of our present harvest field in order to appropriately and effectively spread the gospel. Because the audience is varied and complex there is often a need for multiple approaches to the same audience.

SUMMARY.

What would it be like to truthfully say we have given every student the opportunity to interact with, and respond to, the message of Jesus, to be able to walk around campus at



the end of the school year and talk about what happened with the students in the Greek system or residence halls? with the commuters? the athletes? the freshman class? the graduate students? If we pursue knowing the many cultures on campus, and, in a sense, seek to learn their language and try to understand life from their worldview, then we will be moving effectively in the direction of true communication of the gospel.

The thoughts reflected in this article have impact for the fall as the movement leaders gather to plan and pray about the upcoming year. Here are some Questions to think through as you plan:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

1. How is the movement leading in prayer?
2. What is the view of God, individually and corporately?
3. What is the view of the overall redemptive plan of God and our role in it?
4. What is the view of who man is and man's spiritual condition?
5. What are the cultures and audiences represented on your campus or campuses?
6. How are you planning to seek understanding of your audience or campus?
7. In light of scope, how are the three modes of evangelism being used? Are they of equal value or should one play center stage?
8. If you took an aerial view of your campus at night and were to light up locations of effective evangelism, would there be lights across campus or just one at your weekly meeting?
9. Are you asking the lost to come to you or are you effectively going to them?
10. From an agricultural perspective, at what phase (or phases) is your campus (or campuses) at, and how can you best proceed?



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