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Developing and Implementing A
Lifestyle Evangelism Culture

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March 27, 2006

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Concordia Seminary
Saint Louis, Missouri

Developing and Implementing A
Lifestyle Evangelism Culture

A Major Applied Project Submitted to
the Department of D. Min. Studies
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By
Rev. Ronald A. Bogs

Westfield, Texas
March 27, 2006

ABSTRACT

LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM INSTRUCTION. I will develop instructional materials, including bulletin inserts and a workbook, in order to educate and encourage a mind-set and lifestyle in which congregational members will naturally share their faith in Jesus through their everyday lives.

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In memory of my sainted father, Dan Bogs:

A man who understood *Lifestyle Evangelism* in that he never knew a stranger.

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CHAPTER ONE
THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to educate as many members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, Texas, near Spring, Texas (a Houston suburb), as possible in the ways of witnessing; to teach that everyone is a witness; to change the attitudes of the members to being more aware of the unchurched and more open to bringing them to church; to teach the members to be aware of opportunities for witnessing; and to insure ongoing improvement in the lives of the members so that they are confident and aware of the challenge to bear witness of one's faith to those who are unchurched and unbelievers.

The Intent of This Project

For the most part, people do not think of themselves as “evangelists,” let alone “witnesses,” and when the word *evangelism*, or even *witnessing*, is heard, it turns people off or away.¹ The fact of the matter is that all Christians are “witnesses,” and really all Christians are “evangelists.” The question to address, then, is how can one change the misunderstanding

¹Christians sometimes feel guilty because they do not witness, perhaps using excuses such as they are too busy or feel inadequate because they do not know what to say or believe they will say the wrong thing (see responses in Appendix Two); often, Christians also believe that non-Christians do not want to be confronted with having to talk about religious issues.

and attitude of these people and make witnessing and evangelism a natural way of life (lifestyle)?

This project is intended to help the Christian understand that just as being a “witness” is something Christians do whether they are conscious of it or not, so “evangelism” is not a program but is both the communication of the good news of Jesus and a way of life. Thus, the title *Lifestyle Evangelism* is meant to capture the idea that the way Christians live is a witness of their faith and that their faith is in Jesus about whom the good news tells.

The challenge, although not unique, is that there are people in and around Spring, Texas, who do not know the Lord, nor do they have any affiliation with the body of Christ; therefore, how do the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield go about bringing them to Christ and to the Church? In particular, I will focus on helping the members of the congregation to understand that the “Great Commission” is not some statement or command having to do with people far away, perhaps even out on the mission field in a foreign country. I will focus on helping the members of the congregation understand that, just because they do not know the people to whom they witness personally, they must not disregard this command as something not pertaining to them; Jesus died for all people. I will focus on the fact that there are people the members know, even family and friends, close or not, who are not Christian, who do not know Jesus or have a personal relationship with Him. Jesus reminds Christians in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) that their neighbor is anyone in need. My focus is especially on the unchurched and unbelieving family and friends because they are in need of knowing Jesus and being brought to faith. These are the people in particular to whom Christians are witnesses and evangelists. My goal, then, is to

show the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church that all Christians should work to make a conscious effort, to live a life, even to live a “lifestyle” that is conducive to reaching all of these people loved by God with the good news.

The opportunity present at St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, Texas, is to develop a *Lifestyle Evangelism* mind-set (or even a *Lifestyle Evangelism culture*). A *Lifestyle Evangelism* mind-set is one in which a person is constantly mindful (conscious) of the fact that what s/he says or does reflects what it means to be a Christian. Thus, a person with a *Lifestyle Evangelism* mind-set is one who lives in such a way that what s/he does or says reflects the faith in his/her heart. This mind-set does not preclude those activities in one’s life which God commands and that are valuable in and of themselves, even though they have no direct connection to evangelism (See *Luther’s Small Catechism*, Table of Duties), but does include activities which focus on the needs of others rather than on one’s own needs. Further, this mind-set seeks to understand the people one is trying to reach and how best to reach them. The challenge and opportunity is to develop this mind set within all the members of the congregation.

The unknown variable in this project is the effect, if any, that the history of the congregation as a whole and each individual member will have on this project. It is my contention that, although one’s personal past might affect one’s individual approach to a lifestyle of evangelism and might even be on one’s mind, the past and history of the congregation as a whole will not affect one’s individual lifestyle of evangelism. Thus, this project will not focus on past successes or failures, nor will it focus on trends; rather, it will

focus on bearing fruits of faith and doing the good works which God has prepared in advance for His people to do.

Other variables in this project include the understanding of what a Christian's role is according to the Great Commission and the misunderstanding of "evangelism" and "witnessing." Again, it is my contention that, although most people believe that the Great Commission was given by Jesus to His Church, they are not personally involved in the Great Commission, or at least they do not believe themselves to be personally involved.² This misunderstanding may produce feelings of guilt. In order to keep the guilt feelings to a minimum, they believe that learning evangelism is something which is beyond their ability, so they are exempt from any involvement. Likewise, it is my contention that many people misunderstand the terms "evangelism" and "witnessing," thinking that these terms are too confrontational³ and thus excuse themselves from any participation.⁴ Thus, the educational process will need to work on re-education as well as changing attitudes.

²This contention is based on the responses to the pre-instructional survey (see Appendix Two).

³Such people may believe that one should never discuss religion or politics with friends and family, let alone with perfect strangers. Others may see it as confrontational because they know the person to whom they should speak is a non-believer.

⁴This contention is based on the fact that some evangelism and witnessing programs distinguish between "evangelism" as knocking on doors and being confrontational and "witnessing" as an everyday event. These distinctions will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

The Goal of This Project

The goal of this project is to develop and foster ideas and attitudes which contribute to a practice of *Lifestyle Evangelism* so that a Christian's conscious and intentional witness becomes a natural, spontaneous witness that will be a natural part of the lives of the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church. This task will be accomplished through witness and evangelism training in order that the participants may be ready to give an answer for the hope of salvation that is in them, knowing that, when the opportunity arises, the Holy Spirit will give them the words to speak.

Evidence of this change in mind-set will be evidenced in the attitude of the members of the congregation, especially toward guests and in initiating opportunities for interaction between themselves and the community. A byproduct of this change may include, but is not limited to, an increase in the number of congregational activities carried out for the specific purpose of bringing one's unchurched family and friends to the church campus. Although a behavioral change may occur, this change will not be assessed as a part of this process. This change may also lead to an increased awareness of the members to opportunities for evangelism in all aspects of their lives.

A broader application of this project may be a change in culture, although this aspect is not a specific goal. The Christian culture of which the congregation is a part has a mental attitude of evangelism and witnessing as a high priority; but practically speaking, the same attitude makes evangelism and witnessing a low or even no priority. There are many reasons for this irony, including but not limited to social cultural norms, such as tolerance for other people's political as well as religious views. Today's multi-cultural society says that one's

spiritual life is personal and one's family and friends have varying religious backgrounds. Christians do not even want to think about any of their loved ones being excluded from heaven; others within the society rationalize that everyone is going to heaven because 1) all believe in the same God, but they just express their beliefs differently (or call the same god by different names); 2) it does not matter what one believes as long as s/he is sincere in their faith; and 3) God is a God of love, and He would not send anyone anyplace but heaven.

Thus, the cultural change that is sought is one in which it is all right, even imperative, to be about living a Christian life. Living a Christian life makes it easier for one to cultivate opportunities among family, friends and loved ones so that Christians are able to share the message of the hope they have in Jesus. It is the message of hope in Jesus, who alone is the way to eternal life, contrary to what society says and believes, which moves one to live such a Christian life. More than being afraid of what other people think about them, Christians will want to be afraid of what will happen to their families, friends and loved ones who do not have faith in Jesus and therefore are not in a saving relationship with Him.

Foundational Thoughts Involved in This Project

One of the main concerns I have found in many congregations is evangelism. "Do you do evangelism?" "How do you do evangelism?" "What do you do in the way of evangelism?" are frequently the questions calling committees ask me. Just the word *evangelism* often brings people to their knees in fear. What can Christians do? Is there any way to help congregations and members of congregations be better equipped to, less frightened of, even more conscientious at witnessing?

Although there are many good things that can and have come from the various “Evangelism Programs” of the past, each has its own shortcomings⁵. While *Evangelism Explosion*⁶ has the positive effect that it disciplines a person to learn Scripture and to learn an outline of what to say by giving illustrations and Bible passages as proof texts, it also has the negative effect in that it is confrontational. In my many years of knocking on doors, doing surveys of the community (through Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ) and the like, I have found that very few people are brought into the church through any type of confrontational evangelism. The majority of people who come into a congregation, who join that congregation and who become active members of that congregation, are those who have had the opportunity to hear the message of salvation through which the Holy Spirit works faith (cf. Acts). These people usually have this opportunity presented through a relationship with a friend who lives the faith s/he has and who is able, when the opportunity arises, to give a defense for the hope (1 Peter 3:15) in Jesus that s/he has.

Research conducted by the Institute of American Church Growth (Pasadena, CA) on why people have come to Christ and the Church provides astonishing support of the *oikos* strategy of growth and outreach. Over 10,000 lay people were asked the question, “What was responsible for your coming to Christ and this church?” Here are the results of why they are now Christians and members of their church: Special Need: 2%; Walk-in: 3%; Pastor: 6%; Visitation: 1%; Sunday School: 5%; Evangelistic Crusade: ½ of 1%; Program: 3%; Friend/Relative: 79%.⁷

⁵See the beginning of chapter three, “The Inception of this Project” for more detail.

⁶Kennedy, D. James, *Evangelism Explosion*. Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL, 1970.

⁷Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn, *Growth A New Vision for the Sunday School* (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1980), p. 76.

The very heart of Lutheran faith and doctrine is the doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, in Jesus alone. Lutherans believe that they are saved by faith apart from works; unfortunately, their misinterpretation or misapplication of doctrine often works against their evangelistic efforts.⁸ When I think about Lutheran doctrine and put what I believe into practice, I believe Lutheran doctrine is less amenable to the approach known as confrontational evangelism than it is to that presented here as *Lifestyle Evangelism*. Because of the Lutheran understanding of justification by grace through faith and understanding that good works are a natural result of faith, I believe Lutheran doctrine works best in practice when a *Lifestyle Evangelism* approach is used. In other words, because people are saved by grace through faith, it is natural that they will respond to that faith. Their response of faith is living a life of faith which gives one an opportunity to be asked and to give a defense for the hope that one has in Christ Jesus. This approach, then, though not by any means natural, at least according to sinful human nature, does become natural according to one's redeemed nature. The crux of *Lifestyle Evangelism*, then, is an educational process in which one's natural response to faith begins to become an automatic response as well. In other words, one's automatic response of faith will be live life in such a way that others not only notice one's life, but also ask questions concerning one's life. Also, Christians are taught how to live their faith and how to give a defense, that is, to use words effectively and correctly when asked to give a reason why they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

⁸Because we are saved by God's grace through faith, unfortunately we very often find ourselves sitting on our grace, not sharing our faith because we do not have to do anything.

Summary of the Goal of the Project

My goal is to bring to the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, Texas, a natural and spontaneous approach to the Great Commission and then to move this natural and spontaneous approach to be highly intentional. In other words, through an educational process, the members of the congregation will learn how to make *Lifestyle Evangelism* a natural and spontaneous part of their life and will be taught how to make sure that, as they keep this work ever before them, it becomes highly intentional. To facilitate this process, the members need to answer some important questions: What do they understand about evangelism? Do they believe evangelism is something only the pastor can do? Do they feel intimidated by the thought of being an evangelist or a witness? Do they feel uneducated or under-educated in Christian teaching and thus incapable of sharing that teaching with others? Are they afraid someone will ask a question of which they do not know the answer? Chapter four will cover these questions, the rationale for these questions as well as the responses from the congregation, a summary of those responses and the reaction of what needs to be emphasized in the training process.

Project Design

The members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, TX will be asked to participate in a ten-question survey designed to determine the knowledge and attitude of the members. This survey will be included in the monthly newsletter as well as administered on one Sunday morning following the worship service.

The results of this first survey, along with personal experience and knowledge of evangelism and witnessing, will be used to develop an educational tool, which will include a workbook and some lecture. The lecture will include materials adapted from this study which will complement the materials from the workbook, for example, defining “evangelism” and “witnessing” according to the understanding shown by the participants.

After this material has been taught, a second survey, which is the same as the first survey, except with an added question to determine if the respondent has or has not taken the course, will be given. The responses from the first survey will be compared with those from the second survey in order to ascertain if the educational and attitudinal goals have been accomplished.

Along with this second survey, several personal one-on-one interviews, with several members who attended the instructional sessions, will also be conducted in order to get a more accurate evaluation of the materials which were presented.

During this time period, a series of bulletin inserts will be included, one each Sunday, which will further educate the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church; thus, not only will those who are taking the course of instruction receive such materials, but those who read the bulletin inserts will also receive some instruction in this area of evangelism and witnessing.

And finally, this material will be adapted in the form of a witness workshop, a one-day workshop for further education. The intent is to provide as many opportunities as possible for evangelism and witness education.

What Is Taken Seriously in This Project

This project is not intended to be another evangelism program. What distinguishes this project's approach from many other evangelism programs is that it takes seriously the reality that people are dying and going to hell (Christians need to take the Law seriously). This issue of people's dying and going to hell has surfaced in a national way twice now in as many years with the destruction of the World Trade Center and the space shuttle *Columbia*. People are being led to believe that all who perished went to heaven. Unfortunately, the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, Texas, live in the world and are taught by the world and the culture day in and day out whereas they are in church (and influenced by the church) only one, two, or maybe three hours a week. Thus, people's religion becomes the Oprah Winfrey religion when she suggests that her god is not like that. Her god is tolerant. It has been observed by this author that, if Christians speak against this concept, they are regarded by non-Christians and the liberal media as intolerant bigots, narrow-minded right-wingers or Bible-beating sticks-in-the muds, even insensitive louts, etc. If Christians fail to speak out, then they demonstrate that they believe the same as the rest of society, that it does not matter what one believes or in whom one believes but simply that one must have a sincere belief in something. If Christians fail to speak out, then they are guilty of being a part of one's eternal judgement. This project will move them also to take the Word of God seriously by helping the members of the congregation to understand the following: 1) The power for conversion is the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel; 2) Christians are witnesses of Jesus' life, death and resurrection; 3) It is important that Christians are filled with the Word because, only as they are in the Word and filled with the Word, will they then

respond by overflowing and sharing that Word with others; and 4) Living Christ-filled lives gives Christians the opportunity to share their faith.

A Biblical Model

In the Gospel of John, Christians are shown the great evangelistic approach of giving a defense of one's faith through the evangelist Philip, who simply offered the invitation, "Come and see" (John 1:46). Philip did not attempt to argue anyone to faith. When he spoke to Nathanael about seeing Jesus, whom he believed to be the Christ, he did not try to argue Nathanael into coming to see Jesus. He simply invited him, "Come and see." Likewise, Christians are given an excellent example of how they are to be in their Christian lives as a response to the Gospel. When Christians see Jesus in His Word, when they hear Jesus through worship, they invite others as well to "come and see." Come and see Jesus. See Him in His Word. See Him in Worship. See Him in Christians. Thus, as members of the body of Christ, they can invite others to "come and see Jesus."

Personal Experience

Because of my experience with many different evangelism and witnessing programs⁹, I believe that this approach is different. What I attempt to do in this project is to utilize beneficial aspects of some of these programs while omitting aspects of them that are problematic to Lutheran theology and practice. This approach is not simply a "feel good"

⁹See the beginning of chapter three, "The Inception of this Project" for more detail.

approach of faith, life, evangelism and witnessing. This approach is not for the moment¹⁰, but is an approach which emphasizes a way of life, a lifestyle and a culture. This approach emphasizes growing church membership as a response of one's relationship with Jesus. This approach is one of growing and remaining in one's faith instead of having a superficial religiosity. Again, the goal is to educate the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Houston, Texas, in their own Christian faith and life, in their becoming highly intentional in what they do, in their being more conscientious in what they do, in learning to be natural and automatic in their witness, and in their enjoying their witness of the Lord because it will be a natural thing to them. Thus, many will be excited to participate and watch God's kingdom grow and remain strong.

As is often the way with those who live the Christian faith, there are rewards on both sides. This lifestyle brings the reward of watching the Holy Spirit work faith in the heart of one's family or friend through the means of grace which are shared. And this lifestyle brings with it the reward for the Christian's being strengthened and kept in his/her own faith as s/he lives a life of faith.

¹⁰Contemporary, use this approach today and use something different or "better" tomorrow.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

For many years it was the belief of this writer that God needs Christians to do His work. It has been suggested that God needs Christians to be His arms or God needs Christians to be His legs. God needs Christian to do for Him. Christians are important because God needs them. He needs them to evangelize. Although not completely devastated, I was both frightened and excited to learn that God does not need Christians to do His work. God does not need them to evangelize. God does not need them for anything. As a matter of fact, the reason God created people was so that He could love them and could do everything for them. Humans were created by God to be loved by Him. Just as parents do not give birth to a child in order to be served by him/her, but in order to love him/her, care for him/her, and bring him/her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, so God created humans. Unfortunately, because of the fall into sin in the Garden of Eden, humans have messed up God's perfect creation and now they have to live with it. Because of sin, human will is bound to evil, and so sin continues to abound in the world. Sin moves one to refuse and reject God's good gifts and blessings, His love and salvation. And yet, God continues to love everyone. God's great love is seen in the giving of His Son and His life for all people. God's great love is seen in His

desire that all people are saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Because of God's great love for the world, because of what He has done for all people, because He has called everyone out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9), because He gives everyone faith, strengthens and keeps everyone in faith, because of all that He has done, does and continues to do for all people, Christians want to tell others. And because of His great love for the whole world, He gives Christians His blessing in reaching out to share His Good News with others, not because Christians have to, but because they want to.

This chapter is an introduction to the theology of this Major Applied Project. One needs the information of this chapter in order to witness and evangelize. Another way to look at this is that one needs a good foundation in order to build a sturdy structure. This chapter is the foundation for what is to be built, what words one might have or use in witnessing the Good News to others. Some foundational questions this project will answer are, "What are the underlying Scripture passages for evangelism and for what will be called *Lifestyle Evangelism*?" "What does Scripture mean by evangelism?" "What does evangelism look like?"

Beginning at the Beginning

The dominant culture in the United States of America has become increasingly secular and antithetical to Christianity¹. There are many in this country who do not attend church and who do not know the stories of the Bible. At the same time there are others who

¹Ham, Ken, *Why Won't They Listen, The Power of Creation Evangelism*. Master Books, Inc., Green Forest, AR, July 2002, p. 66-67.

do know the stories of the Bible and yet who do not believe them. As Christians approach these two groups of people, it is important to know what is their background is in order to know where to begin speaking with them. If Christians are speaking to someone who knows the stories of the Bible, then they can begin with the Gospel message. However, if they are speaking to someone who does not know the Bible, then they will need to begin at the foundation so that person understands what they are talking about when they talk about sin and grace, because, without the fall into sin, there is no need for a Savior.

Thus, the first foundational issue for witnessing the Good News, or what will be called *Lifestyle Evangelism*, begins in Genesis chapter one. There, readers are introduced to their God and Creator. He laid out for the reader His creation of the world and the order in which He created the world and all things. As the Lord completed each part of His creation on each day, He declared, "It is good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). And ultimately, after His creation of humans, He declared His creation to be "very good!" (Genesis 1:31). Unfortunately, just a few verses later, what God had created as very good suffered from the human fall into sin which brought death, which, in turn, brought God's "very good" creation into chaos once more. It is not as if God did not expect these events to happen, He is, after all, all knowing. Therefore, God immediately stepped in and promised that He would send a Savior, someone who would "fix" what was broken, the relationship between Him and His creation.

Christians begin with Genesis chapter one because it sets the foundation for the rest of the Bible. In Genesis chapters one and two, the reader is told of God's creation. In Genesis chapter three, they are told of the break in the perfect relationship between God and His

creation, they are told of humanity's fall into sin and God's immediate promise to send someone to restore the broken relationship between Himself and His creation, God's promise to send a Savior. In these first three chapters, as well as in all the first chapters of Genesis, the reader is shown that the God of the Bible is a God who is Creator as well as Preserver. He created everything and continues to this day to take care of everything. Christians see this care today in the fact that God rains down His blessings to the just and the unjust, rich and poor, alike. God continually and daily provides for all the needs of His creation. No matter what humanity's relationship to God, He continues to provide according to what He knows is best for humanity.

Again, Christians begin with Genesis chapter one because, if God's Word from the very beginning is not true, then they will become suspicious of the rest of His Word. If God's Word is not true, then Christians become suspicious and even untrusting when it tells them of Jesus as their Savior, and they then have no assurance of their own eternal salvation. If God's Word is not true from the very beginning, if there was no fall into sin, why in the world would Jesus submit Himself to suffering and dying on a cross for all people? Genesis chapter one is the foundation of our faith.

Thus, I begin this project on evangelism at the beginning of the Word of the Lord, which He has given to us. Christians can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. They can believe that Jesus is God in flesh (incarnate), that He took on human flesh and blood and became one of them, one with them, one like them, except without sin. Christians can believe that, because of His great love for them, He took all their sins upon Himself and suffered and died the eternal death and suffered

the penalty of hell for them in their place. And they can believe that death and the grave had no hold over Him, but that He rose from the dead, victorious over sin, death and the power of the devil.

The Imperative

Most evangelism programs begin with the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), and although they will begin with this Scripture text as a backdrop, it is not where I will begin for the sake of this training. Christians are taught that, before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples the Great Commission. This Great Commission thus becomes an imperative and a law. A law motivation can be an effective motivational tool; however, a Gospel motivation, although it may take longer to take effect, is a better motivational tool. The law is an effective motivational tool because it works with a negative response. In other words, if one breaks a law, one must suffer certain consequences. Thus, to keep from having to suffer certain consequences, a person will refrain from what the law tells him/her to refrain. The law is best for motivating one to know what is right and wrong, what one might and might not do. The law is best for motivating when there are consequences involved. However, this law motivation, because it is a negative motivation, may lead one to despair, as one is unable to fulfil the demands of the law. The Gospel is the best motivation for effecting positive change because it is a positive motivation. The positive motivation of the Gospel is what effects a change in one's attitude and behavior. With that in mind, some have worked to explain the Great Commission in a Gospel way, saying that at His ascension, Jesus gave His disciples the gift of His authority. His command (Law) was to make disciples. His gift

(Gospel) was His authority, especially the authority to forgive sins. This is a gift because Jesus had just won the forgiveness of all sins through his death and resurrection. His promise was to be with them. His gift, command and promise are still ours today.² Christians have God's authority; they have His promise; they are to evangelize. Jesus also told His apostles to take the message of salvation and to be His witnesses, not only in Jerusalem, but also in *all* Judea and Samaria and *to the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:7-8).

The real beginning of what I am calling *Lifestyle Evangelism* is what happened when persecution came upon the Christians in Jerusalem. The reader is told that they then went out of Jerusalem, and as they went, they were His evangelists (εὐαγγελιζόμεν) (Acts 8:1). The Christians who left Jerusalem, wherever they went, evangelized their faith; they spread the Gospel message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus alone. Later, Peter encouraged the disciples, the Christians, to be faithful apologists (ἀπολογία) (1 Peter 3:13-16).

Therefore, Christians are *always* to “be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (v. 15); this witnessing is to be one's *lifestyle*, that one lives his/her life in such a way that people cannot help but recognize the hope that s/he has and to ask what that hope is or what the source of that hope is. Not always is this question verbal, not always is it asked aloud. Sometimes the question is a look or simply an interest. Sometimes the question is in the form of a different question, such as one simply asking for more information about a particular congregation. Christians will want to be open and mindful of the nonverbal questions as well as the verbal questions.

²Although the indication from the text in Matthew is that Jesus was commissioning only the eleven apostles, this passage has been understood by the Church as God's command to all Christians (More on this truth in the Biblical Imperative section below).

Yet, the early Christians were not alone. Jesus promised (Matthew 10:17-20), “. . . but when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say” (v. 19). Jesus’ promise is to His apostles, to His disciples, and to current-day Christians. Although they may not be under the same stress of persecution as Jesus’ apostles and disciples were, they may continue to become stressed by what they will say. Jesus’ words are to all Christians; they are not to be worried or concerned about what they are to say. For when the time comes, when the opportunity presents itself, He will give them the words to say. And where do they get those words? The Holy Spirit gives them the words as they make regular (every day and every Sunday) and diligent use of the means of grace. The more one uses the means of grace regularly and diligently, the more prepared the Holy Spirit can make him/her.

Earlier, Jesus had given His Church the Office of the Keys (John 20:22-23; Matthew 18:18) for the orderly preaching of the Gospel and administering of the Sacraments. Although the Holy Spirit works when and where He pleases, it is through these means that the Holy Spirit works faith, strengthens faith and keeps faith in believers. It is through these means that the Holy Spirit gives, preserves and sustains faith. This process is God’s usual way of working with believers, that is, God works faith in them through these means of grace so that, apart from these means, there is no salvation. Because of free will, that is one’s ability to refuse and reject the gifts which God has given to him/her, s/he is reminded of the importance of making regular and diligent use of these means in his/her own personal life for strengthening and keeping in faith and for being prepared to share the faith that s/he has with others. It is imperative that what one shares is the Gospel through which He comes to restore

the broken relationship between Him and all people. Through the Word, the Holy Spirit works faith. This faith responds with the desire to be baptized. At the same time, Lutherans understand that baptism also works faith. Later, after instruction, there comes the desire for the Lord's Supper.

Thus, Scripture is clear that Christians, as a part of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9-10), are to be active in bearing witness of their faith, that is, they are always ready to give the reason for the hope that they have in eternal salvation. Although witnessing is not something which comes naturally to them, it is natural for them to share their joys and sorrows with their family and friends. It is, therefore, also natural for Christians to want to help others who are hurt or in danger. Although it took persecution to get some of the Christians out of Jerusalem, perhaps Christians today may be encouraged to give a defense of the hope that they have without such persecution. Thus, I am suggesting a learning process to prepare Christians for a conscious witness and a more direct evangelism every day, at every opportunity.

The goal is to reach a point where one is both *natural and intentional, spontaneous and conscious*. One might take a self-defense class in order to be prepared for any unexpected attack on oneself. A part of such a class might be to practice a certain move over and over until that move becomes second nature, spontaneous. Likewise, the goal of lifestyle evangelism is to make witnessing the Good News second nature and spontaneous. This goal is for those who might be introverted as well as extroverted. Certainly an extroverted person could easily strike up a conversation with another person, yet never get to the point of sharing the Gospel. Likewise, it could be just as easy for an introverted person within the context of

their own conversational style. In both cases this style of witnessing might be called conversational evangelism.

Evangelism

Evangelism is the big word Christians use in their churches to talk about the “Great Commission” given in Matthew 28:19-20. Very often they are taught that this word *evangelism* means “Good News.” And they are taught that they are to evangelize, that is to share the “Good News” with others.³ What actually, then, does this word *evangelism* mean, and from where does it originate?

The Old Testament uses the word בשר, *bsr*, meaning “to proclaim Good News.” “In view of 1 Kgs. 1:42 the basic sense might seem to be simply ‘to deliver a message,’ but the stem itself contains the element of joy, so that announcing a victory is a common use and the messenger views himself as the bearer of good tidings (2 Sam. 4:10).”⁴ Over time, this word took a more religious usage with declaration of victory for the Lord or a proclamation of a word or message from the Lord. The prophet was the one who came to declare a good message from the Lord to the people. This Good News even included an expectation of the coming righteousness. “All these themes—eschatological expectation, the embracing of the

³Personally, I have heard many sermons “encourage” me with the imperative to share my faith with others because we are taught to do so in the “Great Commission.” And, although I cannot document that others have the same experience as I, I do know that pastors still encourage Christians in our churches today to share the Good News.

⁴Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1985, p. 267.

Gentiles, and the links with salvation, righteousness, and peace (Pss. 95:1; 40:9; Is. 52:7)—point forward to the NT.”⁵

The Greek world uses the word προεὐαγγελίζομαι, *euangelizomai*, which is used to indicate the bringing of news. This news was often the message of victory in war or some other joyous event. In secular Greek, the idea was connected with an idea of fate or luck. “The ideas of victory and liberation provide links with the NT, but the NT knows nothing of luck, and Jesus, unlike the divine man, is himself the content of the message.”⁶

The New Testament uses the word εὐαγγελίζω, *euangelizo*, in particular “to communicate good news concerning something (in the NT a particular reference to the gospel message about Jesus).”⁷ And the New Testament uses the word εὐαγγέλιον, *euangelion*, in particular to the content of the Good News, especially as a reference to the gospel about Jesus.

Taking these meanings, the word *evangelism*, then, is a word which indicates the bringing of news, even Good News, and in particular, a word of Good News concerning the message of Jesus Christ. This news is Good News, exceedingly Good News, because the ultimate implications of this news is that it has a far-reaching effect even on one’s eternal destiny. Even *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines the term *evangelism* as the zealous

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Johannes P. Louw, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*, New York: United Bible Societies, 1989, p. 412.

preaching of the gospel, especially through missionary work. Thus, evangelism has become a key term to indicate what God's people are to be about as a response of faith.

Witness

Another word I want to look at for my purposes is the word *witness*. This word is often used interchangeably with the word *evangelism*, but with a slightly different meaning or more likely, an intended meaning. Today, the word *evangelism* is often used with the intended meaning that one is to go out intentionally and to share, orally, the faith and hope that one has in Jesus Christ as his/her Savior. Today, the word *witness* is often used with the intended meaning that one is to go out intentionally and share, by acts of kindness, by friendly gestures, by living a Christian life, and as opportunities arise, even by speaking about the faith and hope one has in Jesus Christ as his/her Savior. For the sake of clarity in this discussion, I will use these words in this sense, that *evangelism* is more confrontational while *witness* is more casual.

But what does the word *witness* actually mean? “The root would seem to be *smer*, ‘to bear in mind,’ ‘to be concerned.’ However, the earliest meaning of the term *martys* is that one would confirm his witness by putting forth his wealth, his reputation, and even his life to indicate his conviction. The *martys* would thus be one who remembers and can tell about something, i.e., a witness. The verb *martyreín* means ‘to be a witness,’ *martyria* means ‘bearing witness’ or ‘the witness borne,’ and *martyrion* means ‘witness’ as proof.”⁸ Thus, a martyr, μάρτυς, is a person who witnesses or who testifies to witnessing a certain event. This

⁸Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1985, p. 564-565.

person provides information concerning what s/he heard or saw. The content of the witness is just as important as the one doing the witnessing and about whom or what the witness is speaking. In other words, one might be a true witness giving evidence of his/her faith in Jesus.

As the *American Heritage Dictionary* defines the word *witness* as it is used today outside the Biblical usage, one understands that a witness may be a “legal witness to facts,” a “witness to facts, truths, and views,” or as a witness in respect to oaths, treaties, etc. A legal witness can be punished severely for a false witness. Today, 1) a person may be a witness in a court as in giving an eyewitness account of what s/he saw; 2) a person may give a witness of his/her point of view concerning any number of issues; 3) a person may be a witness to an oath or for any number of legal matters.

The word *witness*, then, gives the implication that it is a less confrontational sharing of information. One may be a witness in the telling of facts or providing information. One may be a witness in speaking his/her own point of view concerning any number of issues. And one may be a witness in acknowledging the giving of an oath or for any number of other legal matters, including the uniting in marriage of two parties.

Ultimately, *Lifestyle Evangelism* blends these two words, *evangelism* and *witness*, to show that Christians are to live their lives as witnesses, even to be ready to give a defense of their faith in their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thus, they are to be ready to defend the Good News, that is, the “evangel.”

The Biblical Mandate/Imperative

As Lutherans, Christians believe the Bible is the Word of God. It is authoritative, and it does what it says. God's Word is truth, and what He speaks in His Word is truth. God is a righteous and just God. Christians believe what He tells them in His Word, and what He tells them is that, apart from faith in Jesus Christ alone, there is no salvation (Acts 4:12); thus, because without Christ and faith in Him people will be lost, it is imperative that the message, that is the Good News of Jesus, be shared with all people. And God does not want anyone to be lost because He is passionate in His love for all people, which is why He created them and why He gave His Son and His life them.

God is a just and righteous God, working faith when and where He pleases, "in those who hear the gospel."⁹ He pleases to work faith through means, particularly through the means of grace, the Word (the message of the Gospel that is given in the Bible) and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper). Faith is given by the Holy Spirit who works through the Word of God (Romans 10:17), which means that it is the Word of God which must be proclaimed in order for one to come to faith.

Many Christians were raised with the understanding that Matthew 28:19-20 is the Great Commission. This passage was preached time and again as the motivation for their going out and sharing their faith with others. In recent times, some have taken another look at this text. Although the text indicates that this message was given to the eleven, this passage

⁹Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 40:3. Augsburg Confession, Article V. Concerning the Office of Preaching.

has been understood by the church to be a command to the Church.¹⁰ When Jesus greeted His disciples in the room on Easter evening, He gave them the office of the keys (John 21:22-23). Through these words, God has given the Church the authority, His authority, to share the Good News with all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:7-8). Thus, Christians have the “right” and the “power” to share the Good News with others. Again, although the indication from the text in Matthew is that Jesus was commissioning only the eleven apostles, when Jesus appears to the disciples following the meeting with the two on the road to Emmaus, the reader is told that not only were the disciples there, but others were also assembled there with them (Luke 24:33). Another passage of evidence for the commission being given, not just to the apostles but to all, is the account of Jesus’ sending out the seventy-two in Luke 10:1-12, 17-20, in which He gives them power and authority as they relate their experiences on their return.

Sainted pastor, Rev. Louie Pabor, in a mission festival sermon¹¹, spoke of Matthew 28:19-20 as the Great Promise because, not only does God give a command to carry the Gospel message to the world, but He also gives His promise that He will be with those carrying that message, even to the ends of the earth. And with the command and the promise is also the fact that God is giving His authority to carry out this loving task.

Although Matthew 28:19-20 contains a command that was originally given to the eleven, Christians cannot dismiss their duty and privilege in carrying out that message to

¹⁰*Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, **Of the Means of Grace**, p. 11, Statement 22, (Adopted 1932).

¹¹Preached at King of Kings Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas ca. 1986.

others. As was noted earlier, the disciples failed to take the message from Jerusalem; yet, when persecution came, the other Christians scattered abroad and carried the message to others, and the message and the Word were efficacious so that the church grew.

In the book of Acts, the reader is reminded time and again of the growth of the church. Acts 2:41-47 describes the actions of the early church as the believers continued to study the Word and worship together. The reader is told that “the Lord added to their numbers daily those who were being saved.” Acts 4:4 relates that “many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.” Acts 6:7 tells the reader that “the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.” As the Word of the Lord spread, the Church “was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in fear of the Lord” (Acts 9:31). As one reads through Acts, s/he finds families and large groups coming to faith together. Paul tells his readers that the reason for all these people coming to faith is that the Holy Spirit worked through the means of the Word of God. It is the Gospel in the Word of God which works faith. As family and friends share the Word of God, the Holy Spirit works faith.

The Good News must be shared with others because, apart from Jesus Christ and faith in Him, there is no salvation. The following do not save one: being a member of any particular group or organization; associating with believers; being the child of someone who goes to church; or attending a particular church (Christian or otherwise). Nor does sincerity in one’s beliefs or any amount of activity on one’s behalf to any particular group or organization or any association have bearing on the salvation of one’s soul (especially if that sincerity or

activity is in a non-Christian faith or religion). It is only faith in Jesus Christ alone which brings eternal salvation.

The foundation for Christian faith is Jesus Christ, and it is grounded in the authenticity of the Word of God, beginning with a literal understanding of the Creation, the Fall into Sin, and the Promise of a Savior in Genesis 1-11. Christians today live in a world that has done everything it can to rid itself of the Word of God, from teaching the theory of evolution to teaching what was once considered the purely objective method of historical criticism, to despising God and His Word. Unfortunately, in some church bodies, in an attempt to accommodate the world, especially in the area of science, too much has been compromised.¹² The Bible, which never changes, is questioned and God, who never changes, is questioned. Instead, man, who is constantly changing, and his ideas, which are constantly being revised and rewritten, should be questioned. In reality, the temptation from the Garden of Eden still lingers today. Humanity still strives to be like gods, and, in so doing, neither God nor His Word is trusted.

“What is truth?” is the question Pilate asked Jesus and is the question still asked today. Truth is Jesus Christ, sitting right there before Pilate. Truth is that, apart from Jesus Christ, there is no truth. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). If Genesis is not true, the rest of the Bible is not true. Humans may err as they have time and again. Science may err as it has many times over. But the Word of God is truth and does not err. Rather than questioning His Word, Christians would do well to question humanity and science. Christians

¹²Ham, Ken, *Why Won't They Listen, The Power of Creation Evangelism*. Master Books, Inc., Green Forest, AR, July 2002. And, Answers in Genesis Conference, September 26-28, Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston, TX.

have a message, they have the greatest news of all, they have the Good News. And they are to share that news with those who do not have it.

God has given the Church to *evangelize*, that is, to share the Good News with all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:7-8); again, Christians have the right, the duty, the obligation, the privilege to share the Good News with others. Not just pastors are to be sharing the Good News with others (1 Peter 2:9-10), but evangelism is a right, duty, responsibility and privilege of all believers. Also, neither depth of faith nor longevity of faith make it easy to carry out one's rightful Christian responsibility and privilege. Rather, the sharing of the Good News with others works best as a part of one's nature or, in other words, through a *Lifestyle Evangelism* approach (Matthew 10:17-20; 1 Peter 3:13-16; 1 Peter 2:9-10), which means that Christians are to live their faith by their witness. Thus, the definition I will be working with throughout this paper is that *Lifestyle Evangelism* is living one's faith by one's witness.

The Priesthood of All Believers

The work of evangelism is everyone's work, not the work of the pastor only. It is the work of all believers. Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19-20 may be just the eleven or it may be for all Christians. It does not matter if Matthew 28:19-20 is given to the eleven or to the whole Church because God has given, through other passages, the duty, the privilege, the responsibility, to share His message with others. He does not need anyone to do so, but Christians need to do so as a response of faith. This is not what God needs, but what Christians need. In order to help one to get a better idea and have a better understanding of

his/her role as a Christian in this work of sharing his/her faith with others, s/he will need to understand the Lutheran distinction between the Priest and priesthood of all believers as explained in the following paragraphs.

Christ has given to His Church the authority to preach the Gospel, to administer the Sacraments and to forgive and retain sins (Matthew 18:18; John 20:22-23). This authority has been given to the Church, that is to all believers or as Peter describes them, to the “royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). No longer does one need to go to a temple priest as a mediator, but following Christ’s resurrection every believer may go directly to God. Also, this authority has been given to the Church which is the body of believers, thus all believers now are called priests and exercise the priestly functions. This authority has been given through the Office of the Keys.

The Church publicly exercises this authority, under the command of Christ, by calling qualified men to be pastors to carry out the Office of the Keys publicly on behalf of the congregation in the name of Christ (Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 2 Corinthians 2:10).¹³ The authority of this office flows from God, through the congregation, which rightly calls the pastor to exercise such authority in their midst. The authority of this office is to preach the gospel rightly, administer the sacraments, and forgive and retain sins. These men who are called out of the priesthood of all believers are called pastors.

While God’s will is that all people have faith (even though some refuse and resist such calling) and while God calls many people to serve in various vocations, God has not

¹³*Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 1991, Questions 269-278, p. 220-224.

called all people to serve in the Office of Holy Ministry to exercise the Office of the Keys. God has called only some men to this public service. This calling of some men into the office of public service, the Office of Holy Ministry is filled by those we rightly call pastors. However, to those God has called to faith, He has also called to works of service, especially to works of service according to his or her own station in his/her life. Luther outlined some of these duties in his Small Catechism.

Under the heading of *Table of Duties*, Luther outlines, first, the duties of bishops, pastors and preachers (1 Timothy 3:2-4; 3:6; Titus 1:9), and then, what the hearers owe their pastors (1 Corinthians 9:14; Galatians 6:6-7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17). He lays out Christians' duty to civil government (Romans 13:1-4) and their duty as citizens (Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:5-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14). Finally, he gives instructions to individuals according to their own station in life, i.e., to husbands (1 Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19); to wives (Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:5-6); to parents (Ephesians 6:4); to children (Ephesians 6:1-3); to workers of all kinds (Ephesians 6:5-8); to employees and supervisors (Ephesians 6:9); to youth (1 Peter 5:5-6); to widows (1 Timothy 5:5-6); and to everyone (Romans 13:9; 1 Timothy 2:1).¹⁴ According to these words of instruction, Christians are reminded that, to each person according to his or her station in life, God gives works of service for the sake of good order, peace and harmony, and a life lived according to the plans and purposes of God. These passages serve to admonish all Christians concerning their duties and responsibilities to God and to one another. Peter expresses this by telling his readers that they are "chosen people, a royal priesthood. . ." (1 Peter 2:9). Thus, the

¹⁴Ibid., *Table of Duties*, p. 33-38.

readers might rightly express that these believers are acting in accord with their being members of the priesthood of all believers.

Elsewhere in the Small Catechism, under the Third Commandment, is the question, “40. What does God require of us in the Third Commandment?” with the response given, “A. We should hold preaching and the Word of God sacred. B. We should gladly hear it, learn it, and meditate on it. C. We should honor and support the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. D. *We should diligently spread the Word of God*” (Emphasis mine)¹⁵. And as a proof passage we are given, “131 Mark 16:15 He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation.’”¹⁶

Elsewhere in Scripture, the Lord encourages and gives Christians instructions in carrying out their various duties and responsibilities (See also Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3; 1 Peter 2:13ff; 3:1ff.). Accordingly, Christians are to live lives of faith, that is, to live according to the commands and purposes of God and, in doing such, to witness the faith in one’s heart, thus to live what I am describing as *Lifestyle Evangelism*. This witnessing is not to be confused with social evangelism, that is, that by being socially responsible, taking care of people’s physical needs that Christians are witnessing the Gospel. Instead, living lives of faith leads to a verbal proclamation of the Gospel.

Chapter Summary: The Theological Basis for Lifestyle Evangelism

The basic tenets behind *Lifestyle Evangelism*, then, are these:

¹⁵Ibid., p. 70.

¹⁶Ibid.

After His resurrection, Jesus gave the office of the keys (John 20:22-23) to His church¹⁷. Before He ascended into heaven, Jesus gave the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). With these gifts, Jesus gives His authority as well as His promise to be with all people as they go about living their lives. As Christians live their lives, a natural part of that living is that they share their faith with others. At appropriate times in one's life, as a person is given faith, baptism is administered and the teaching continues (as it does in one's own life and in faith life). Accordingly, God has called each believer to faith also through His means of grace, that is, through Holy Baptism for those who were baptized as babies and children and given faith and brought into His Kingdom in this way. For those God calls to faith later, for some, as older children and adults, the Holy Spirit first works through the Word (heard or read) to give faith. Thus, all believers are a part of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9). God's first calling then is a call to faith, to believe in Jesus alone for one's salvation, but the call does not end there.

The calling of the believer to faith is similar to God's calling the Children of Israel out of all the nations of the world. When God called Abram, whom He later renamed Abraham, He called him and said to him, "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:2-3). In other words, to Abraham and to his descendants, through the line of the Children of Israel, the Savior of the world would be born. The Children of Israel were chosen to be the nation with this blessing, and as such, they were not to keep this blessing to

¹⁷Ibid., p. 220.

themselves but were to be lights shining through the darkness for the world. They were to live lives of *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

When the reader gets to the book of Acts, s/he is told in account after account of people being given faith and becoming a part of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the book of Acts, the reader is given many descriptions of the church's growing (Acts 2:41-47; 4:4; 6:7; 9:31), and in each of the descriptions what gives faith is the Word of the Lord that is shared with others.

As Christians, filled with the gifts of God and filled with the Holy Spirit, one's response of faith is to overflow and share his/her faith with others. The best illustration I like to use is the one with a cup and a pitcher. God is like a never-emptying pitcher. People are like empty cups. Every time they make use of the means of grace—hearing the Word read and proclaimed, personal reading of the Word, remembering one's Baptism, participating in the Lord's Supper, confessing one's sins and being given absolution—the Lord fills him/her, his/her cups, from His never-emptying pitcher. A person could come and be filled and then go away and not return to be given any more gifts, but just as a cup of water will eventually become dry as the water evaporates, one could eventually lose any gifts s/he has been given. One could return time and again, never letting his/her cup fill up, demanding more each time so that s/he is never filled with the Lord's gifts. Or one could make regular and diligent (every Sunday and every day) use of the means of grace and be filled until s/he is overflowing and the gifts God gives to him/her spill out from him/her onto others. In other words, one's faith overflows as s/he shares it with others. This devolvement is also a response of faith, that is, doing the good works which God has for one to do (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14).

James complements Paul in his epistle by suggesting that there is a great connection between faith and works, that these two go together, hand in hand, with faith bringing and showing itself in works of faith. Thus, as Christians, one's response of faith is that s/he shares his/her faith with others, or if one does not do so, s/he must ask him/herself, is do I really have faith?

Thus, Christians are to bring a message. They are to bring a message of hope (certainty) based on their faith (in the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of the living God) through love (the act of doing good to others, even and especially to those who hate them). Jesus' explanation to the disciples was that they were not to worry about what they would say (Matt. 10:17-19), but it would be given to them by the Holy Spirit. This same message is for Christians today. They are not to worry about what they will say, but what they will say will be given to them by the Holy Spirit. This fact does not negate any preparation on the part of the Christian; rather, according to the Third Commandment, Christians are to make regular¹⁸ and diligent¹⁹ use of the means of grace by reading, hearing, studying, worshiping, praying, etc. It is through this regular and diligent use of these means that the Lord fills Christians' hearts and minds with the words that the Holy Spirit will use when the time comes. And they are not to be concerned about whether or not they make a "good" witness, at least whether or not their witness is a good witness in their own minds. God can and does take their witness (good or bad in their own opinion) and uses it for the best, to His

¹⁸Which I define as meaning every day and every Sunday.

¹⁹Which I define as meaning often as possible.

glory. Thus, there is no need to second guess oneself and wonder if s/he should have said something else or not said something at all.

Finally, Christians should always be ready to give a defense for the hope that is in them (1 Peter 3:15). *Lifestyle Evangelism* is not a confrontational, “in one’s face,” program. Instead, *Lifestyle Evangelism* is a way of life. It might be considered a bold yet humble approach to sharing one’s faith. It is rejoicing in one’s salvation, by God’s grace, through faith (given as a gift from God through His means of grace) in Jesus. It is responding to all God’s good gifts and blessings by doing the good works which He has planned in advance for Christians to do. It is confessing and being given the greatest gift of all, the forgiveness of sins, which always brings life and salvation with it. It is living a life of faith so that others see that there is something different, something special, about Christians so that they will ask, What is it that is so different about you? What do you believe? Then, one will be able to respond by giving an answer for the hope that is in him/her. That progression is *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROJECT IN PERSPECTIVE - THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The Inception of the Project

This study is really not a new study; rather, it is over twenty years in the making. I began my studies of evangelism and witnessing during my Director of Christian Education (D.C.E.) internship at Trinity Lutheran Church, Perry, Iowa, from 1980-81. There I learned Dr. James Kennedy's program, *Evangelism Explosion*¹ (hereafter, this title will be abbreviated as EE). After going through the EE program, I had an inner burning, I needed to know, "Do my parents know Jesus as their Savior?" "Do my siblings know Jesus as their Savior?" "What about the rest of my family and friends? Do they know?" I wanted to ask everyone the two questions, "Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you *know for certain* that if you died today you would go to heaven?" And, "Suppose you were to die tonight and stand before God and he were to say to you, 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' What would you say?"² Such is the theology and the way with EE.

¹Kennedy, D. James, *Evangelism Explosion*. Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL, 1970.

²*Ibid.*, 16.

I have since read many books, as well as attended many seminars, on evangelism and witnessing. While serving as a D.C.E. at King of Kings Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas, from 1984-88, along with teaching the “Lutheran” version of *Evangelism Explosion*, *Dialog Evangelism*,³ I “baptized Lutheran”⁴ and taught many people *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples*.⁵ I have read many books on witnessing and evangelism (see bibliography) and always do so with a critical eye, determining the context and the message and comparing it to a proper understanding of justification by grace through faith alone and the gift of faith through the means of grace.

This chapter takes the reader on a trip through my reading and experiences, pointing out what has been helpful and what has not been helpful, a trip which will help the reader to understand what frames, shapes and what is at the heart of what I am proposing. In so doing, I will provide the historical context for this project as well as a survey of relevant recent literature in the area of Christian evangelism training.

Kennedy’s *Evangelism Explosion*

As I mentioned earlier, for the most part, it all started on my DCE internship, where I learned EE.

³Beisenthal, W. Leroy. *Dialog Evangelism*. The Board for Evangelism, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, St. Louis, MO.

⁴This term is used to indicate that although something is not of Lutheran theology, with some instruction it can still be useful for teaching.

⁵Arn, Win and Arn, Charles, *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples*. Church Growth Press, Pasadena, CA, 1982.

D. James Kennedy's book, *Evangelism Explosion*, was one of the most influential on evangelism in the latter half of the twentieth century in America. Kennedy was definitely a pioneer in giving good instructions in how to share one's faith. This program of training and enlisting trainees very well fits its description of "on-the-job" training. The diagnostic questions as well as the memorization of the outline, Bible passages and illustrations equips the average "witness" to be able to fill the role as an evangelist. In other words, there may be times that one is asked to give an answer for the faith that is in him/her, and Kennedy lays out an excellent program for learning how to do just that. However, there are some difficulties that Lutherans have with this tool, in particular with the decision theology. W. Leroy Beisenthal in his book, *Dialog Evangelism*, works well to adapt Kennedy's material to Lutheran theology and practice, and makes Kennedy's *Evangelism Explosion* a workable tool for Lutherans (see below).

The highlights of Kennedy's book are the outline, the memorization of proof passages of the Bible, the numerous illustrations to help to see the proof texts "in action," and the many other helpful suggestions for training, tracking and witnessing. Other highlights include on the job training. EE expects that this training is not done in a sterile environment and that the participants are not just practicing on one another, but there are actual calls made by participants to people in the field. These calls are unannounced visits. Another highlight is that EE encourages the presenter to "earn the right to ask questions," and to "ask permission to share the gospel." These are important considerations which work well to keep the prospect open to allowing the Christian to share and willing to listen to what s/he has to say.

Kennedy's outline works well at beginning with the gospel, moving to the law, which gives the reason for the need for the gospel, and then explaining in depth the Good News of the giving of Jesus' life for the sinner. Faith is described not just as a head knowledge nor as an intellectual assent, but as a complete trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. The difficulty is that there is an expectation that, with the right message presented in a right way, the "prospect" should be able to make an intellectual decision of faith.

There is much good in EE, including the organization involved, the encouragement of prayer partners, the discipline of memorization (of the outline as well as proof Bible texts and illustrations), the encouragement of follow-up. EE helps dispel the excuse of "I don't know what to say" by giving a person the words to say.

The main objection I have to EE today is, first and foremost, the decision theology, that is, that one can somehow on his/her make a decision to believe in Jesus. The second major objection I have is that EE holds the presupposition that the person to whom one is speaking understands certain Christian concepts. In other words, EE really is for speaking to others who are at least acquainted with the Christian faith. There is the assumption that the one being approached has a spiritual life and has some hope in some eternal existence. Unfortunately, in our pluralistic culture today, fewer and fewer people have such a basic Biblical background.⁶

What will be carried over from EE into *Lifestyle Evangelism* (LE) is the importance of study and learning in order to be ready to give a defense of one's faith and the hope one

⁶Ham, Ken, *Why Won't They Listen, The Power of Creation Evangelism*. Master Books, Inc., Green Forest, AR, July 2002.

has in Christ Jesus. It is very important to read the Word of God daily, as well as to have personal and family devotions, whether in Bible Class, Bible Study and/or worship and even to memorize portions of Scripture so that one will have words to use to speak. One may even use the Apostles' Creed as a starting point of sharing one's faith. And although it is not used explicitly, I recognize the importance of good organization, structure and record keeping in tracking guests who visit on Sunday mornings and working with members and their friends in order to connect them to Christ and bring them into the life of the congregation.

Lutheran Adaptations of Kennedy's *Evangelism Explosion*

Because of the theological and practical concerns with Kennedy's EE program, several Lutherans have developed adaptations or revisions of the standard EE text. These adaptations focus on the objections expressed above.

Donald Ginkel's *Making Disciples*⁷

I have utilized a workbook, *Making Disciples*, by Donald Ginkel. This is the workbook for Kennedy's *Evangelism Explosion*, but it is not just a workbook but an excellent resource in and of itself. Ginkel outlines each lesson with the appropriate reading assignment, worksheets to complete, assignments to memorize, and presentations to be made. He also includes an extensive "Gospel Presentation" as well as illustrations and much more. Unfortunately, Ginkel does little to correct the decision theology of EE. Instead, he merely incorporates this theology into the questions in his workbook.

⁷Ginkel, Donald F., *Making Disciples; A Guide on How to*. Copyrighted by Donald F. Ginkel, 1978.

Richard Korthals' *Agape Evangelism*⁸

When I returned to class for my final year of study at Concordia College (now Concordia University), River Forest, IL, a new book was on the market, *Agape Evangelism* by Richard Korthals. Since Korthals was the dean of students at Concordia my freshman year, and because of my new interest in evangelism, I felt obliged to purchase a copy.

Agape Evangelism (hereafter, this title will be abbreviated as AE) is a great companion to EE and *Dialog Evangelism* (see below). It is obvious that Korthals was influenced by Kennedy, but what is so helpful about this book is that it works to correct the decision theology of EE. Korthals explains in a simple yet straightforward way how faith is not something one can decide, but how faith is given to them. It is God the Holy Spirit who works, or gives, faith. Although there are many similarities between AE and EE, I also appreciated the new illustrations and new ways of explaining the gospel message in this resource. The only thing I did not get from Korthals was the organizational information which EE presented rather meticulously. However, since I already had that information, I really did not need it again.

One can see how the importance of good theology and a right understanding of how one is brought to faith and given faith is carried over from AE into LE. It is not the person who chooses Jesus or makes a decision for Him, but it is He who has chosen the person and gives him/her faith.

⁸Korthals, Richard G., *Agape Evangelism; Roots that Reach Out*. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL, 1980.

W. Leroy Biesenthal's *Dialog Evangelism*⁹

During my last year back at Concordia College, I also had the opportunity to hear Rev. W. Leroy Biesenthal present his material from *Dialog Evangelism* (hereafter, this title will be abbreviated as DE) during a weekend clinic. Biesenthal adapts what Kennedy makes useful and helpful to Lutheran doctrine. Most Christians do not have any difficulty with the idea of sharing their faith but with the practical point, "What do I say?" Kennedy gave Christians something to say. Instead of working for a decision for Jesus, Beisenthal gives Lutherans a prayer of thanks for the work of faith accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace.

Similar to EE, DE gives a great deal of information on organization. DE gives an outline as well as diagnostic questions, Bible passages to memorize, illustrations and the like. What is also helpful in the DE material is that it gives three sets of questions so that one could go through the whole program three times and grow with each encounter.

One can see, again, the importance of good theology and a right understanding of how one is brought to faith and given faith is carried over from DE into LE. As with AE, DE reminds one that it is not the person who chooses Jesus or makes a decision for Him, but it is He who has chosen the person and gives him/her faith.

⁹Beisenthal, W. Leroy. *Dialog Evangelism*. The Board for Evangelism, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, St. Louis, MO, No date given.

W. Leroy Biesenthal's *Witness Workshop*¹⁰

After graduating from college, my first assignment was to teach sixth grade at Holy Cross Lutheran School, North Miami, FL. There, I became acquainted with the Witness Workshop concept. W. Leroy Biesenthal, writer of *Dialog Evangelism*, put together a seminar or workshop in which the concept of everyone is a witness was taught. This seminar or workshop was designed to last either one day or two days, or for a weekend. It was not a miniature of the DE course, but was designed as a way to encourage participants to be more conscious of their actions in their daily life. One's actions can be wonderful witnesses of one's faith. I was teaching in a school in which my class alone was made up of only 25% who were members of the congregation and 75% of those who had basically no church lives. For all intents and purposes, this was a private school. As the fire of evangelism breathed inside me, I had the opportunity to attend a Witness Workshop (hereafter this will be abbreviated as WW).

Although this resource was made available in the late 1970's or early 1980's, it is still very much worthwhile. As a matter of fact, I have taken, adapted and used much of it for putting on my own Witness Workshops. What has been extremely helpful is the distinction that is made between being a witness and being an evangelist.¹¹ This workshop brings the definition that only about ten percent of Christians are actually evangelists, or have the gift of

¹⁰*Witness Workshop [Guidelines on How to Conduct a Witness Workshop]*. The Board for Evangelism, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, St. Louis, MO, No date given.

¹¹I say what “has been” extremely helpful because, as I continue in my studies and development of *Lifestyle Evangelism*, I believe that there is little distinction and that Christians are evangelists and witnesses because there is no distinction (more on this later).

evangelism, yet 100% are witnesses. Thus, the question arises, how does one become more efficient, how does one become more conscientious in his/her daily life of making a good Christian witness? That problem is what this workshop addresses.

Through a study of God's Word, interwoven with practical daily examples of opportunities for being witnesses, this workshop encourages the participants in their witness endeavors. No matter how great or seemingly how small, from wearing Christian jewelry to speaking Christian words of response, all Christians are witnesses. This workshop is a great introduction into the whole area of evangelism and witness. Although the material is dated, there are many helpful suggestions in the area of organization and implementation. And it does give suggestions for how to start a conversation and how to speak the Good News to others.

What will be carried over from the WW into LE is the importance of always being conscious of the witness one is making, especially through one's words and actions. When one wears the name "Christian", s/he will want to be careful what his/her speech and actions say about what it means to be a Christian. Likewise, one will want to take care in what s/he wears, what s/he displays at the office, his/her vehicle, on his/her person (jewelry, etc.), what s/he watches on television or at the movies and how these items are discussed. I consider these suggestions to be the whole area of being conscious of one living as a witness.

Resources from the Church Growth Institute

The Church Growth Institute in Pasadena, CA., is interested in and has directed the research and development of many of the church growth resources available today. Drs. Win

and Charles Arn have conducted many seminars and training sessions for clergy and laity throughout America.

Win and Charles Arns' *The Master's Plan*¹²

Two years after arriving in North Miami, I received and accepted a call to be the Director of Christian Education and Evangelism at King of Kings Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas. In 1984, I continued my interest in evangelism, but this time in a new direction. The congregation, as well as many congregations in the district, were working through materials from the Church Growth Institute in Pasadena, CA. In particular, I was introduced to and taught a class based on the book entitled *The Master's Plan* (hereafter, this title will be abbreviated as TMP), by Win and Charles Arn..

Win and Charles Arn lay out an exceptional plan for “making disciples.” Their plan is to make every Christian become a conscientious witness. If every Christian became as conscientious at being a witness for the Lord (a part of the priesthood of all believers) as they suggest, churches would be full on Sunday mornings.

What I have found of most value in this book are the statistics on what brings people to church in the first place. And because Lutherans understand that the Word of God is the means through which He gives faith, one of the main things one needs to do is to get the unchurched to a place where they may hear that message, whether that be from him/her, from the Bible itself, or from a pastor on a Sunday morning. Most people, 79-80%, come to church

¹²Arn, Win and Charles, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*. Church Growth Press, Pasadena, CA, 1982.

for the first time because they were invited by a friend or relative.¹³ And while Win and Charles Arn would suggest that programing is what will keep them in church, I would suggest that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, working through the means of grace, which gives faith and stirs a response of fellowship and a regular worship habit.

One difficulty with this resource is the problem of “decision theology,” that is, that one can choose Jesus as his/her Savior. Another difficulty with this resource is a confusion of the means of grace. According to TMP, the means of grace is people, or what they call the *oikos* relationships. As TMP traces the growth of the church through the book of Acts, their conclusion is that it is families who are brought to faith. What they miss is that the means in which or through which these families are brought to faith is the Word of God.

Arn, Arn, and Nyquist’s *Who Cares About Love?*¹⁴

But, along with TMP, I was also influenced by a second book, *Who Cares About Love?*, by Win and Charles Arn and Carroll Nyquist. In this book, the authors present a convincing argument that churches should be places of love. Members should love one another and should seek ways to love those outside Christ and the church. The challenge that is presented by this book is that loving others does not become a way to manipulate others. Research shows that there are particular times in a person’s life when s/he are more vulnerable, or as the book states, more receptive. Yes, Christians should have care and concern, especially toward people who are in vulnerable stages of their lives; however, they

¹³Ibid., 43.

¹⁴Arn, Win, Carroll Nyquist, and Charles Arn, *Who Cares About Love?* Church Growth Press, Pasadena, CA, 1986.

must never use that vulnerability as a means to manipulate people (even if it is for their own good).

This book, along with the previous TMP, builds a nice argument for *Lifestyle Evangelism*, that is, that Christians are to live lives of faith and always be ready to give and answer in defense of the hope they have in Christ.

What will be carried over from TMP and *Who Cares About Love?* into LE the importance of relationships in sharing and bringing people to Christ and into membership into the local congregation. Christians are to love their neighbor as themselves, and this love is to be unconditional. Likewise, what greater love can there be than to want to bring one's unbelieving friends into a relationship with Jesus. To accomplish that new life, one brings them into contact with the means of grace and then watches God work through that means to give faith. Sometimes witnessing takes a lifetime.

Recent Lutheran Resources for Evangelism

There are many resources on the market from both Lutheran and non-Lutheran sources. Even today, there continue to be new resources making it into the marketplace, and some from a Lutheran understanding of theology.

Lyle Muller's *Dialog Evangelism 2*¹⁵

In 1988, I entered Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to begin work in the Master of Divinity Program. During my last year, I was introduced to the latest version of DE, *Dialog Evangelism 2* (hereafter, this title will be abbreviated as DE2, by Lyle Muller).

Muller brings Lutherans an update of Dialog Evangelism, helping them to be able to better communicate with an ever-changing world. The main difference between DE and DE2 is the diagnostic questions. The new questions do not presume one's spiritual position. The first question asks, "Do you consider yourself to be a Christian?" and the second question, "How does a person become a Christian?" Now, although the first question does ask about one's spiritual orientation, the second question does presume that one would naturally want to be a Christian. DE2 does provide organizational materials as well as helpful illustrations and the like. It has condensed the training from seventeen chapters to eight weeks. Much like DE, it continues to give structure to one's witness through an outline. Unfortunately, also like DE, it still speaks to those who already have some contact with the Christian faith.

What will be carried over from DE2 into LE is the importance of making sure one is using the same definitions of words so that s/he is communicating and being understood in his/her communication. Thus, one may need to define certain terms in order to communicate concepts correctly.

¹⁵Muller, Lyle, ed. *Dialog Evangelism 2*. Board of Evangelism Services, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, St. Louis, No Date Given.

Patrick Keifert's *Welcoming the Stranger*¹⁶

Serving as a parish pastor, in my second parish, I came across another resource, *Welcoming the Stranger*, by Patrick Keifert.

Keifert works to answer the questions: What is worship? Is worship only for the members? Can worship be a place of evangelism? He reminds Christians that the setting of the worship service can be a place of evangelism. A worship context that promotes evangelism of guests and visitors is one which is nonthreatening, and it is nonthreatening when one knows what is happening, that is, when the service is laid out as a guide to what will happen next. Worship that evangelizes is worship that is permeated with the word of God (my words), for where the Word of God is, there is the means of grace and the working of the Holy Spirit.

What will be carried over from *Welcoming the Stranger* into LE the importance of the Word of God and good theology permeating worship, as well as an intentional effort at hospitality to visitors in worship. And not only do individuals within a congregation need to live as *Lifestyle Evangelists*, but churches would do well to make sure that they are places of evangelism.

¹⁶Keifert, Patrick R., *Welcoming the Stranger: A Public Theology of Worship and Evangelism*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN, 1992.

Robert Kolb's *Speaking the Gospel Today*¹⁷

While working on my Doctor of Ministry degree, I had the opportunity to read an excellent book on the theology of evangelism, *Speaking the Gospel Today*, by Robert Kolb.

Kolb tells his readers that one's god is not necessarily who one *says* he is, but is truly the one in whom s/he trust, in whom s/he invests his/her time, talents and treasure. This concept is not necessarily grasped by many people. I believe one of the devil's great victories is that he gets people to verbalize that God, their church, their faith, etc. is number one in their lives, and then they go on living what truly is their god, and these two are not always the same.

Kolb reminds his readers that a person who does not know that s/he is a sinner will not be interested in hearing about a Savior because, if s/he is not a sinner, s/he will not perceive his/her need for a Savior. Only when one realizes the depths of his/her sin will one be open to hearing about a Savior from such sin. Thus, evangelism first leads one to see one's sin, namely, how the god s/he worships is a god of his/her own making, in his/her own image and likeness. In answer to why s/he has never had a need for repentance, it is because one, as ones own god, would never condemn oneself.

Kolb continues by telling his readers that people of our world, our day and age, seek to meet certain, contemporary, at this moment, felt needs more than "insuring release from eternal torment."¹⁸ Hell is not something people take seriously in the world today, and many

¹⁷Kolb, Robert, *Speaking the Gospel Today; A Theology of Evangelism*. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 1984.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 125.

believe this world is hell; therefore they do not bother about whether or not they are going to hell. Instead, they are concerned about their present situation and each new situation as it presents itself in this life.

Kolb explains that many of the books which people read today call for a decision for Jesus. He does an excellent job, not only outlining a good Lutheran, Christian understanding of evangelism, but in being apologetic toward those of a decision theology mindset.

What will be carried over from *Speaking the Gospel Today* into LE, again, the importance of good theology and a right understanding of how one is brought to faith and given faith. It is not one who chooses Jesus or makes a decision for Him, but it is He who has chosen one and gives him/her faith.

Kent R. Hunter's *Confessions of a Church Growth Enthusiast*¹⁹

Kent Hunter, president of the Church Growth Center, Carunna, Indiana and a pastor of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, begins by reminding the reader that, in order to reach out in mission, one must have something worth providing. In other words, one must confess something in order to want to share that message with someone else. He then reminds the reader, “The Church Growth Movement reflects a body of teaching, a systematic and coordinated body of information, that continues to grow and expand as advocates seek ways to remove roadblocks that would hinder the Gospel from getting out and as they learn to communicate more effectively the Gospel in ways that are culturally sensitive.”²⁰ What he

¹⁹Hunter, Kent R., *Confessions of a Church Growth Enthusiast*. Church Growth Center, Corunna, Indiana, 1997.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 31.

fails to identify is what that body of confesses. Also, he implies that the Gospel has no power of its own, but that something needs to be added, namely a human element, for God to be able to do the work He has to do through His Word. And he fails to see the connection between what one believes (doctrine) and how one lives (practice); instead, he disconnects these things.

Although Hunter has been a part of the Lutheran Church Growth movement for many years, in this book, he attempts to take a hard look at the Church Growth Movement from an Evangelical, Confessional Lutheran stance. Unfortunately, he has been so engulfed in the movement that he does not look critically enough.

Klemet I. Preus' *The Fire and the Staff, Lutheran Theology in Practice*²¹

Unlike Hunter above, Klemet Preus in his book, *The Fire and the Staff*, ties doctrine and practice together so that they are interwoven. "Doctrine affects practice and practice affects doctrine. The two are so intimately woven together that when you change one, you will inevitably change the other, sometimes without realizing what has happened."²² Many of the presuppositions which have gone into this project are mentioned by Preus, reminding one that there are reasons why churches practice certain rites and ceremonies and even administer sacraments; these reasons are that they have certain beliefs. Therefore, outreach, witnessing and evangelism is done a certain way because of Lutheran beliefs.

²¹Preus, Klemet I., *The Fire and the Staff, Lutheran Theology in Practice*. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 2004.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 14.

Preus traces the flawed doctrine of the Church Growth Movement from the influence of the evangelical movement in the early part of this country's history, coming in through the revivalist movements. It is especially their denial of original sin which leads people to think that one has a free will and so one can make a decision for Jesus. Thus, there is the denial of means of grace, Word and Sacrament ministry.

Preus echoes what I have been working on with this project, that is, that one witnesses best, one evangelizes best, one shares the message of his/her Savior best, on a one-to-one, friend-to-friend basis. Thus, one's witness has meaning and is the privilege of being a member of the priesthood of all believers. It does not mean that the Holy Spirit works through the person, but through the means of the Word as spoken by that person. Also, one is given faith and strengthened in faith through the means of the Word being echoed in the liturgy of the worship service and being preached when the friend comes to worship and Bible class.

Ken Ham's *Answers in Genesis*

In 2002, I accepted the call to my third parish, where I am currently serving. Almost immediately after arriving on the scene, I was sent information from a group called, "Answers in Genesis." They were having a seminar, and I was invited.²³ I was so delighted with the program and what I had seen and heard, that I purchased as many of the resources as I could afford and convinced my congregation to purchase the video Bible Study for use in our Adult Bible Class.

²³Answers in Genesis Conference, September 26-28, 2002, Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston, TX.

Answers in Genesis is an organization²⁴ that is working to restore the foundational faith in Biblical integrity. Ken Ham, who is one of the main authors, speakers, and founder of this organization, does an excellent work at helping to see the world through Biblical “glasses” as he calls them.²⁵ He reminds his readers that human beings are fallible, but God’s Word is not. Who does one believe, God, who was there at creation and His Word, or human beings and science, which is ever-changing and was not there at creation? When asking a question, he will preface it with these words, “According to the Bible and not your opinion,” which give credence to the Bible. He explains how creationists have the same facts as evolutionists, yet they explain the facts in different ways, and when all is said and done, the creationist’s way is the more logical and reasonable.

In the area of evangelism in particular, Ham explains the difference in evangelism. No longer are Christians evangelizing to a Christian world or a world that is even familiar with the Bible or stories in the Bible. He distinguishes between preaching to Jews, those who have some type of Biblical background and are familiar with these Biblical stories, and preaching to Greeks, those who have no Biblical background. Christians come across many such “Jews” in the world today, that is, people who have at least some Biblical background and knowledge and simply have a misunderstanding of who Jesus is and what He came to do. Christians also come across many such “Greeks” in the world today, that is, people who have

²⁴Information available at the organization’s website:
<http://www.answersingenesis.org>.

²⁵He used this language during his seminar to express what he identifies as a Christian world view in his books. The idea is that, when there is a discrepancy between what science says and what the Bible says, the problem is always with science, not the Bible.

little or no Biblical background, who do not know Adam and Eve, or who do not know the Old Testament patriarchs. When Christians begin any type of verbal sharing of the Good News, they may need to begin by defining terms and explaining concepts.

Ham's influence will be seen in my insistence on a firm grounding of Scripture as the Word of God, beginning at Genesis one, and on the importance of distinguishing between whether one is speaking with Jews or Greeks. If one is speaking with "Jews," then his/her message may presume some Biblical background. If one is speaking with "Greeks," then s/he may need to begin with an understanding of God, who He is and why all people need Him.

Ken Ham's *Why Won't They Listen*²⁶

One of Ken Ham's books, *Why Won't They Listen*, also published with the title *Creation Evangelism for the New Millennium*, serves as a summary of much of the work of Ken Ham and the Answers in Genesis organization. Ham laments the effects of the teaching of the theory of evolution which has done much to tear down the faith of the many Christians. He calls his readers to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, from its very beginning, Genesis chapter one, rather than to believe that science has all the answers. His answer is a return to a confident stance that the Bible is the Word of God, beginning with Genesis chapter one, all the way through the end of Revelation.

In this book and in many other books published by the Answers in Genesis organization, issues which work to undermine the foundational beliefs and practices of Christianity are addressed, such as pornography, homosexual behavior, abortion, racism,

²⁶Ham, Ken, *Why Won't They Listen, The Power of Creation Evangelism*. Master Books, Inc., Green Forest, AR, July 2002.

euthanasia and family break-ups. These are all tied into the deterioration of the faith in the Bible as the Word of God.

His answer is to remind his readers that science is to be understood under the Word of God, not over or beside or in place of the Word of God. He points out that scientific methods are not as accurate as the public is led to believe, (especially carbon-14 dating), and that the public is often not presented with evidence of the false claims of previous findings. He makes a great case for the Bible as the only standard for true evangelism.

Recent Influential Works on Evangelism Practice

Research continues to be done in the area of outreach and evangelism. Some have done research which looks at the characteristics of growing churches and try to identify what makes a church grow. Some books continue to encourage the individual approach of reaching out to others. And one book uses the Biblical model of outreach which is reaching out not simply to individuals, but to families.

Christian A. Schwarz's *Natural Church Development*²⁷

In the highly influential book, *Natural Church Development*, Christian Schwarz presents the practical conclusions he has drawn from his comprehensive study of what causes churches to grow. He outlines eight characteristics of growing churches and explains how each characteristic is not separate but must be integrated with the other seven. He reminds his

²⁷Schwarz, Christian A., *Natural Church Development, A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. ChurchSmart Resources, St. Charles, IL, 2000.

readers that it is God who provides all the gifts, talents and abilities in any and every congregation to do the work of God's mission.

Schwarz reminds us, "A church, regardless of how orthodox its dogma and view of Scripture, can hardly expect to experience growth, as long as its members do not learn to live their faith with contagious enthusiasm and to share it with others."²⁸ Although I would contend that doctrine is important, at least in the final analysis of whether the church is Christian or not, Schwarz is saying what I believe to be one of the most important principles of this project, that the individual contagiously and enthusiastically lives a Christian life and shares that life with others.

Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg's *Becoming a Contagious Christian*²⁹

Like Schwarz, Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg, pastors at Willow Creek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois, reminded the reader of the importance of being "contagious" in one's Christian faith and life. To be a "contagious" Christian is to be a Christian who is excited about his/her faith, so much so that they want everyone around them to "catch" what they have, their faith. They state in their book, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*; "Trips to the health club, muffler shop, or your workplace become, in your mind, thinly-veiled excursions into the realm of divine possibility. You'll start asking yourself, 'Just what might God be up to in *this* situation?'"³⁰ I believe Hybels and Mittelberg are describing what

²⁸Ibid., 27.

²⁹Hybels, Bill and Mittelberg, Mark, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994.

³⁰Ibid., 28.

Lutherans would label a “priesthood of all believers” attitude. This attitude, which all believers should have, is the attitude of living life in such a way that one’s faith shows forth in every situation; thus, one has the possibility of letting his/her faith show through his/her words and actions.

“There’s a common misconception that the most vital and meaningful approach to evangelism involves making contact with people Christians do not know. But exactly the opposite is true. It is the people Christians *do* know who have already developed a measure of trust in them and their motives, and are therefore most in range of influence.”³¹ Having gone through many evangelism programs, I am convinced that, although one should be prepared to give witness of the hope s/he has in any and all situations and ways, the most effective approach is the one with those one knows.

Unfortunately, Hybels and Mittelberg fail to recognize and confess “means of grace,” theology or “Word and Sacrament” ministry. For Hybels and Mittelberg, as well as others in the evangelical movement, people have become the means of grace. This idea comes from a denial of original sin and the thought that one has free will and can therefore make a decision for Jesus.

Ben Freudenburg’s *The Family Friendly Church*³²

Ben Freudenburg, in his book, *The Family Friendly Church*, understands the whole New Testament concept of the fact that it was families who came into the church together.

³¹Ibid., 108.

³²Freudenburg, Ben with Lawrence, Rich, *The Family Friendly Church*. Group, Loveland, Colorado, 1998.

This family approach follows the whole person-to-person approach to reaching out to bring people into the church. Families are so separated in the world today that the church does not need to separate them more. Churches would do well to help the families to be together, including educational opportunities for helping families be families. In chapter thirteen, he reminds the reader of a famous saying, “It takes a village to raise a child,” but he quickly reminds the reader that it takes a family to raise a child. Certainly, that family would include one’s church family. Therefore, the Biblical model is shown through people’s caring for and witnessing to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and even into the community and neighborhood. Thus, Fruedenburg models the early church in which families became a part of the church as whole families, not simply individuals by themselves.

Summary

Over the years I have read many books and participated in many programs in the field of evangelism and witnessing. Although some books and programs have presuppositions with which I cannot agree, there may be some principles with which I agree, and those principles are the ones which I want to integrate into my own approach. The beginning point in most approaches is that the Good News needs to be shared so that everyone has the opportunity to hear and believe. Some approaches are very confrontational, and others, less so. In reviewing all these approaches, I believe I can use some of the concepts from each. I can use the structure of the confrontational approaches, which will give structure to this new approach. And I can use the concept of the personal approaches from the non-confrontational programs, that is, I can use the idea of reaching people personally by being enthusiastic and contagious,

by bearing witness through my words and actions of the faith I have so others want to “catch” that faith, too. And most of all, I will want to use every means possible to bring the unchurched into contact with the means of grace so that the Holy Spirit may work His work of giving, strengthening and keeping one in faith.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT DEVELOPED - INITIAL FIELD RESEARCH FOR THE *LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM* COURSE

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop and foster ideas and attitudes which contribute to a practice of lifestyle evangelism so that a natural, spontaneous witness will be a natural part of the lives of the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Spring, Texas. This purpose will be accomplished through witness and evangelism education in order that the participants of such training may be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in them, knowing that when the opportunity arises the Holy Spirit will give them the words to speak. Evidence of this change in mind-set will be recognized in the attitudes and actions of the members of the congregation, especially toward guests and in initiating opportunities for interaction between the congregation and the community. Finally, evidence will be seen in an increased awareness of opportunities for evangelism in all aspects of one's life.

In this chapter, the reader will be introduced to the survey instrument which is used to assess the education and attitude of the congregation before the educational process begins so that a comparison with a second administration of the survey will determine any improvement.

The Process

The first thing undertaken in this project was to survey the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in order to ascertain where they were with respect to their understanding of the Great Commission, “evangelism,” “witnessing,” and *Lifestyle Evangelism*. Being cognizant of what they understand was helpful in developing the curriculum that would best be used to encourage those areas where they had a right, proper and Biblical understanding, to correct those areas where their understanding was a bit off course, and to teach new concepts where there was no understanding.

After ascertaining where the members were in their understanding of these concepts, I developed a curriculum which was taught. This curriculum consisted of a ten-lesson workbook (see Appendix Three) which was taught during morning Bible class from March 14 to May 11, 2004.

Next, after administering the curriculum, I administered the survey for a second time to the members of my congregation to ascertain if their perceptions and attitudes were changes as a result of their experience with the curriculum. Also, this information would be used to refine the curriculum and make it better for further instruction.

Survey Introduction

The survey instrument consisted of open-ended questions on a page with space to write answers and was administered to the entire congregation before the educational process began. Following the instructional period, it was then administered a second time in order to ascertain any change in their understanding. These questions were administered following the

completion of the educational process with one further question, “Did you attend the educational classes?” This last question will determine the control group. Those who did not attend the classes should give similar answers to the questions as they answered before the educational classes began, and those who attended the classes should give more well-defined answers than before the educational classes began.

The survey instrument was presented to the 118 who were present for worship following worship on Sunday morning, June 29, 2003, after which 50 were turned in with nine being blank (that is, 41 usable surveys were returned). The instrument was also included in the monthly newsletter of which 200 sent, and the deadline for returning the completed survey was posted as July 6, 2003. By Sunday, July 6, 2003, along with the forty-one usable surveys from June 29, 2003, two more surveys were turned in for a total of 43 completed surveys. This is a 36% return rate (43 out of 118). The following week, nine more surveys were turned in, making a grand total of 52 surveys completed and returned. This is a 44% return rate (52 out of 118). Considering that St. Matthew Lutheran Church’s average Sunday worship attendance is 120 (about 36-38%), I believe this to be a good return for the first survey.¹

The questions were designed to be open-ended to attempt correlating the answers according to some patterns of similar answers. In other words, the questions were written with the understanding that the response would be from people who had Christian instruction.

¹From an online *Google* search on “Community survey response rate,” it was indicated that 10% - 30% was a typical response return rate. For more information see: <http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=59445>.

The Survey Questions

The ten survey questions are as follows. Following each question is an explanation of the rationale for the question.

Question 1. What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

Since Matthew 28:19-20 (this text was not printed on the survey) is understood by most as God's mandate for evangelizing, my first question is to ascertain one's perspective of this text. This question will help shape the educational materials by showing what corrections or encouragements need to be taught in regards to a proper understanding of the text of the Great Commission.

Question 2. What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

This question will give insight into how members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church view their own participation in the Great Commission. It will reveal if they believe they are actually participating, or if they believe they are not participating, why they are not. This insight will help give shape in developing the educational materials, encouraging them to practice what they already know and educating them in what else they can accomplish. This question will help ascertain if one is conscious of the witness s/he makes, verbal or non-verbal. This question will give insight as to whether or not the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church are conscious of their lives as witnesses, which will shape the educational materials in teaching ways in which they actually witness.

Question 3. What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

This question carries the assumption that Christians believe the Great Commission is something that should be accomplished and that most individuals believe they are hindered in accomplishing it. This question will give insight into why the members believe they fail to carry out the Great Commission, such as fear which might arise from a lack of training in knowing what to say, and how to say it, or in saying the wrong thing. Or they may have a misconception of what the Great Commission means, which may give credence to any excuse for not participating in carrying out the Great Commission. As each one is addressed in the teaching process, these insights will help them to overcome the fear that many feel when faced with sharing their faith and reason for it with others.

Question 4. Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

This question will bring out one's understanding of his/her role and/or God's role in the Great Commission. This question will give insight into whether one believes the Great Commission is important (that people need to hear the Good News or that all are saved regardless of what one believes) and whether one believes that God is serious in His judgment of sinners (thus the need for people to believe in Jesus or not). These insights will give shape to the educational materials in teaching about God's role, the Christians role, the truth of God's Word, and God's serious judgment against unbelief.

Question 5. What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

Because I wanted to know how the participants understood the term “priesthood of all believers,” it was not defined on the survey. This question will give insight into whether or not the members have a Lutheran understanding of their lives as witnesses. Do the members understand what it means to be a member of the priesthood of believers versus being a member of the clergy? The answer to this question will give a clue as to how much emphasis to make in the educational materials in teaching a good, right and proper Lutheran understanding of their lives as witnesses.

Question 6. In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc., how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

All people are called to faith. All people are called to vocation and some men are called to be pastors. No matter what one’s vocational calling, s/he is to live his/her life to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:23-32), thus bearing witness of his/her faith. This question will give insight into whether one believes that s/he is being a witness, and if s/he is, what type of witness s/he is making. If s/he does not believe her/himself to be witness, this answer might give insight into why s/he does not believe s/he is being a witness. The responses to this question will give insight into shaping the educational material to teach the idea that all Christians do and say is a witness of their faith.

Question 7. In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

The heart of this question is the fact that a Christian’s church life grounds his/her faith, which then shows forth in his/her daily life. This question will bring insight into

whether or not one compartmentalizes one's life. Is one making regular and diligent use of the means of grace, being given and strengthened in his/her faith through worship and Bible class, so that s/he is better prepared to give a defense of his/her faith in his/her daily life? Is one a Christian at church only, or in connection with the previous question, is one a Christian in all areas of one's life so that the fact that one is a Christian permeates his/her life? The responses to this question, as well as that of the previous question, will also give insight into shaping the educational material to teach that Christians are witnesses everywhere, everyday, not only on Sunday or at church.

Question 8. When you hear the word *evangelism*, what comes to mind?

This question will give insight into any positive or negative attitudes with regard to evangelism, as well as any misunderstanding of the meaning of the term. Does this term exclusively mean the verbal sharing of one's faith, or does it mean more? This response will help shape the educational material to focus on correcting any misunderstanding and encouraging any proper understanding so that members see themselves as evangelists in a positive light.

Question 9. When you hear the word *witness*, what comes to mind?

This question, along with the previous question, will also give insight into any positive or negative attitudes with regard to witnessing. Does the person understand this term to be different from evangelism? Are there any attitudes that are different in regard to this term? This response will help shape the educational material to focus on correct terms and definitions. It will also aid in shaping attitudes along with a proper understanding so that

members understand that their participation in the means of Grace (Word and Sacraments) gives them the subject of their witness and the God-given strength and ability to witness.

Question 10. When you hear the term *Lifestyle Evangelism*, what comes to mind?

This question will give some insight into the use of this term, which is probably a new term. What attitudes might be suggested? What meanings might be thought of without any knowledge of the definitions of this term will be revealed in the educational process? This response will help shape the educational material, especially in regard to making sure that any positive presuppositions can be reinforced and enhanced.

Summary of Actual Responses

What I am presenting here is a summary of the results which I received after the first administration of the instrument. The actual responses of the participants are reported verbatim in Appendix Two.

Question 1. What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

For the most part, the answers to this question suggested a law understanding, that Matthew 28:19-20 is a mandate, a commandment, that is, that Christians should be doing something. In particular, these responses indicate that Christians should be sharing their faith with others, through telling others about Jesus; through Holy Baptism; through sharing the Word of God, the Gospel; through their contact with others; through teaching others the Word of God; through living by example; and through inviting others to church. There were a couple responses that added God's promise that He will be with His people always. There

seemed to be no question that this Scripture text was intended for all believers; in other words, those who answered this question understood this “Great Commission” as being to all God’s people. On the positive side, many responses gave an appropriate understanding that the way in which disciples are made is through means, namely, through the means of grace, the Word (the Bible) and the sacraments (especially Holy Baptism).

Question 2. What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

The thread of theme that runs through the responses to this question are that one attempts, in a flawed way (due to his/her sinful nature), to carry out the Great Commission by living as a Christian witness, helping others in need, sharing or speaking his/her faith with others, inviting others to worship to hear the message of salvation, and providing financial support for mission work.

Question 3. What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

While several survey participants provided no response at all to this question, those who did provide answers can be summarized into two categories: 1) the acknowledgment of one’s own sin, which keeps one from fulfilling what is believed to be the law of God to share one’s faith with others; 2) lack of confidence either because of one’s own lack of Bible knowledge or because of one’s own inabilities. For the most part, the respondents to the first three questions understand that God gives them the duty, the right, and the privilege to carry out the Great Commission, and they do not accomplish it because of their own inadequacies.

Question 4. Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

Over ninety-five percent of those who answered this question answered in the affirmative, namely, yes, one's participation is important. Why? Because God wants all people to be saved; because God commands it; because God promises to be with everyone always; because a Christian's own faith must be shared with others [I see this as an answer which comes as a response of faith, that is doing the good works which God has prepared in advance for him/her to do (Eph. 2:10)].

Question 5. What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

Although almost a fourth of the respondents gave no response, the responses which were received included an understanding that being a part of the priesthood of all believers means that one is a child of God, is a part of God's family, and has a part in the eternal inheritance in heaven. Some respondents included a response of faith, adding that it is important to be about the business of sharing one's faith as a part of the priesthood of all believers so others might become a part of the priesthood as well. And finally, some did confess that being a member of the priesthood of all believers is a Christian's purely by God's grace. From the number of "no responses," I believe that there will need to be some time spent on this concept in the educational material.

Question 6. In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc., how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

The answers to this question included such things as reading the Bible, devotions and prayer which work on one's own spiritual well-being so that one might be able to do the other

things listed, such as being patient and understanding, doing what is right, living according to the Word and commands of God, living a life of faith as well as actually verbally sharing one's faith with others. There was even the mention of doing one's best at his/her work (job) as a witness of faith.

Question 7. In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

Answers to this question included the understanding that regular church and Bible class attendance is important. Also important is the caring and support of each other as members of the church, the care and support of the pastor, the volunteering to be of service when and where needed, whether serving on boards and committees, teaching Sunday School or Vacation Bible School or singing in choir and the like.

Question 8. When you hear the word *evangelism*, what comes to mind?

Although one person said, "intimidation, uncertainty, inadequacy (all due to my not trusting in the Holy Spirit)," for the most part this word brings to mind the understanding that Christians are to go out and tell others the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus, their Savior. Christians are to reach out to others and to witness to them. Christians are to talk to others about God and invite them to worship. There were a couple of responses which simply mentioned Billy Graham, perhaps simply listing him as an example of an evangelist. Finally, there were a couple responses which mentioned that evangelism is missionary work.

Question 9. When you hear the word *witness*, what comes to mind?

For the most part, the answers to this question included the understanding that “witnessing” is not necessarily something said so much as it is the life Christians live. Christians are witnesses of their faith through their actions, through their living the Christian faith and life. Some respondents did acknowledge that witness does, at times, encompass the act of verbally sharing their faith with others. Again, for the most part, the answer given was that of being an example.

Question 10. When you hear the term *lifestyle evangelism*, what comes to mind?

About one fourth of the respondents either did not respond or responded that they did not know what it was. The remainder responded that they understood “lifestyle evangelism” to mean the natural sharing of one’s faith through their everyday life, meaning leading by example, letting their “light shine,” showing the Gospel by example, and living a life that allows others to see God in them.²

²Although most of the respondents fell within a certain pattern of responses for the questions, respondent number five is a special case study. For respondent number five the first question is the wrong question because it does not ask what Scripture means to an individual because Scripture interprets Scripture; thus, the better question might have been, “How do you understand Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:19-20?” For respondent number five, Matthew 28:19-20, what is called the Great Commission, is understood to be given to the Office of Holy Ministry because only the apostles were there at the giving of the Great Commission. Thus, for respondent number five, for one to accomplish the Great Commission, one must be an ordained minister. Evangelism is something which is given to the church to do through the Office of Holy Ministry. The support one gives to his/her clergy, pastor, minister is how an individual participates in the Great Commission. Respondent number five does understand the concept of the priesthood of all believers and believes it is important that one live a right Christian life through making use of the means of grace, and in so doing, s/he will witness faith according to his/her station.

Respondent number five brings certain challenges which will also need to be included in the training material. One such challenge is a clearer understanding of the Great

Summary of Areas of Needed Concentration

The responses from the congregation indicated that the following areas need concentration in the instruction instrument.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 1. What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

A specific purpose/goal behind *Lifestyle Evangelism* is to help people change their whole understanding that evangelism is not a law or a command but is a response of faith. Thus, although there were many good answers to what Matthew 28:19-20 means to each individual, I believe one need is to educate everyone to understand what Jesus means when He gives these words. That is, there is a need for Christians who were surveyed to understand that, as they go about living their lives, they teach by example and sometimes verbally, they make disciples, they bring people to the Lord's house and to the waters of Holy Baptism, and they continue in the learning process.

Areas of Need Revealed by Questions 2. What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

As for the matter of what one is doing now in relation to Matthew 28:19-20, I believe that people are doing more than they think or can imagine. Here, Christians must also confess that there are times that their witness is not necessarily a good witness, but that it is nevertheless a witness. This realization brings the opportunity to help educate them to the importance of being aware of their thoughts, words and actions and what effect they have on others. Christians do not live in a vacuum. What they think, say, and do does have an effect

Commission. Another challenge is to work through passages of Scripture which direct one's responsibility as a member of the priesthood of believers in a more direct manner.

on others, whether it is a positive or negative, great or minimal effect. Although one may have the freedom to live as s/he wishes, even to eat meat sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8), there may be times when s/he will want to be careful of what s/he is doing for the sake of his/her unbelieving friend.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 3. What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

Sin, the devil and even one's own sinful flesh are constantly at work to hinder one's accomplishing God's work. Thus, it is important to teach the importance of confession and absolution and that God never goes back on His promise to be with His children always, even to the end of the world. Here, it might be brought up that sins of omission hinder accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20 more than sins of commission. How often it is that one fails to do what is supposed to be done, rather than do what is not supposed to be doing. The other matter is to teach that one does not have to have all the answers. It is all right to tell someone that one does not know something and that one will find out and get back to him/her. Also, it is important to teach and reiterate the importance of one's own personal faith life, meaning being in the Word, having devotions and attending church to be given the means of Grace.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 4. Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

Is it important that lay persons participate in Matthew 28:19-20 or not? Certainly God can do everything Himself. He does not need anyone to do anything, and one would never presume that He cannot. Yet, God has chosen all believers and has given them the ability to

respond to His good gifts and blessings by participating in the Great Commission. This participation is not something God needs from anyone, but it is something everyone needs to do for Him. Like everything that they do, Christians participate in Matthew 28:19-20 as a response of faith. God does not *need* first fruits, tithes and offerings. God does not *need* worship or hymns of praise. God does not *need* to hear pray; He already knows what is in people's hearts and minds. God does not *need* anything from anyone; rather, He gives everything to everyone. Yet, He has chosen Christians to be His instruments in bringing the message of Jesus Christ and salvation to all people; when Christians respond to Him by doing so, they are in His service. This fact underscores that God has chosen to bring His Gospel message to the world through the means of grace delivered by His people. Thus, He has chosen to be dependent on Christians to carry out His mission in the world. In this sense, then, Christians are needed.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 5. What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

One of the important areas of teaching will be this area of understanding that all Christians are a part of the priesthood of all believers. This area allows one to come to understand that, even if Matthew 28:19-20 were given only to the eleven, all Christians are still a part of the body of Christ and are to live lives as though they were attached to it.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 6. In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc., how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

Another important area, especially dealing with the understanding of *Lifestyle Evangelism*, is the area of daily life. God's will is that all people are saved (even though some refuse and reject it). God has called all people to their own specific vocation, and in that vocation, they are to be workers for the Lord Himself. God has also called some men to the Office of Holy Ministry. Thus, it is important that each one lives his/her faith according to his/her station, whether at home, at work, at school or at play. In other words, one does not have to be called to the Office of Holy Ministry in order to share his/her faith in Jesus.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 7. In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

An important connection that will need to be made is that the different aspects of one's life are all connected. One cannot compartmentalize one's life. One's church life, church attendance, Bible class attendance, service on boards and committees, as one is able to serve, is a reflection of one's faith in Jesus. One's faith in Jesus is reflected in one's church life in the building up of each other as brothers and sisters of Christ.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 8. When you hear the word *evangelism*, what comes to mind?

It will be important to take the intimidation out of this word *evangelism*. A right definition will need to be taught, stating that evangelism is simply the "good message" which is shared or confessed with another individual.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 9. When you hear the word *witness*, what comes to mind?

The understanding that one is a witness only in the sense of telling what one saw will need to be expanded. A Christian is a witness of Jesus, not with one's natural eyes, but through the revealed knowledge of Holy Scripture. Also, one is a witness, not only by speaking what s/he saw, but by how one reacts to what is seen or heard. In other words, one's actions tell what s/he believes. One's actions speak what is in his/her mind and heart.

Areas of Need Revealed by Question 10. When you hear the term *Lifestyle Evangelism*, what comes to mind?

As the curriculum is titled *Lifestyle Evangelism*, the challenge will be to teach that "lifestyle evangelism" is the way one lives as a witness of one's faith. Further, the challenge will be to teach that one's faith in Jesus is a direct result of one hearing the Good News.

I believe that those who answered the survey showed quite well that they understand what *Lifestyle Evangelism* means and how they demonstrate their faith in Jesus at church. Perhaps here the challenge will be to educate more fully those who did not answer the survey.

Process Interrupted

Although only one respondent said that evangelism was "intimidation, uncertainty, inadequacy (all due to my not trusting in the Holy Spirit)," from my previous work in the area of evangelism, it was always noted that there was some fear associated with this work. In order to ascertain if there was such fear among the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, I offered a second, "Addendum Survey"; the survey and results are in Appendix Five. This survey was distributed, completed and returned Sunday, January 18, 2004. It was

distributed to the 42 present at Adult Bible Class and 121 present at worship. The total respondents was 66 (42 from Bible Class, a 100% participation [42 out of 42], and 21 from worship, a 17% participation [21 out of 121]).

My presuppositions are that people do not verbally share their faith for various reasons, such as the following: they are either too busy, too afraid because they do not know what to say or might say the wrong thing, they believe everyone is saved anyway, or for some other reason. To ascertain if my presuppositions were correct, I asked two questions. The first question asked how often one actively shared or communicated one's faith to others verbally. The choices listed were daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, hardly ever, and never. And I should preface these results by saying that, even when asked, I did not define to whom one was sharing his/her faith (e.g., to other believers, to members of their own family, or to unbelievers). Thus, 38% listed that they share their faith verbally on a daily basis. Another 42% listed that they share their faith verbally on a weekly basis. Only 20% listed that they share their faith verbally on a monthly basis or less. Because the question did not ask to identify the person who was being witnessed to, I believe the majority of the answers given allude to the sharing of one's faith to one's family, friends, in Bible class, etc.

It was to this last 20% (14 respondents) that I asked for a response to the second question. The second question asked why one did not actively communicate his/her faith. Was it for one of the following reasons? Because they were too busy; because they were afraid because they did not know what to say; because they were afraid because they might say the wrong thing; because everyone is saved; or for some other reason. Then, a blank was left to list such reason. The responses were 100% listed that they actively shared their faith

monthly or less because they were afraid they would say the wrong thing or they did not know what to say.³ A telling response was the one response that said they did not want to offend someone. This response gives evidence of how the attitude of the culture finds its way into the church, i.e., if one lives in a tolerant culture, then one will want to be tolerant of another's faith.

Summary of Areas of Needed Concentration

The difference between “evangelism” and “witness” has often been expressed as the difference between giving a “verbal” testimony and giving a testimony by “example.” Understanding that “evangelism” is the “Good News,” this difference works well. Concerning this area of teaching, I want to be sure to encourage the participants in their daily lives to be witnesses of the evangel, that is the Good News.

According to the responses, it would appear that seventy-five percent already have a good understanding of the concept of “lifestyle evangelism.” This insight works well as a foundation for the educational process. I will want to concentrate on making sure that, not only do the participants understand the meaning behind the concept, but that they will put that meaning into practice, a loving response to a loving God; in other words, they will begin living *lifestyle evangelism*.

³There was over 100% listed for the fourteen respondents because some respondents checked more than one answer as to why they did not actively verbally communicate their faith.

Implementation of the Instructional Course on *Lifestyle Evangelism*

The findings from the initial survey helped to shape the content and focus of an instructional course designed to guide members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Spring, Texas, in the theology and practice of Lifestyle Evangelism. This instructional course serves as the heart of this project.

Course Description

Having the experience of attending evangelism training, evangelism seminars, witness conferences, along with reading many books, articles and materials in the area of evangelism and witnessing, I designed this course to incorporate the best material for evangelism training from all these sources. Viewing this course as a stool with four legs, the first leg of this course was to make sure that the material, the lessons, the practical application flowed out of Lutheran doctrine. The second leg of this course was that this would take the best from previous experiences mentioned above. The third leg of this course was that it would be more practical, that is, it would be a course which would be easily implemented in one's daily life. The fourth leg of the course was that it would approximately respond to the needs which were discovered through the initial survey of members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church (that is, the course would address areas of misunderstanding or inability that surfaced in the survey).

Course Description

The following is a short description of the chapters of this course; the complete study (participant workbook) is in Appendix Three.

Beginning Sunday, March 14, 2004, the workbook designed for this project (*Lifestyle Evangelism*) was taught. The class continued to meet during the regular Sunday morning Bible Class hour (from 8:45 to 9:45 am). Those who normally attended the Bible Class were present. No one joined this Bible Class specifically because this class was being held, and no one absented him/herself because this class was specifically being held. An average of 44 people attended each session, and the class was taught for a span of 10 weeks, until Sunday, May 16, 2004. Nine members had perfect attendance; nine members had ninety percent attendance, and ten members had eighty percent attendance. For actual attendance each week see Table 1 below.

Table 1. Actual Sunday Bible Class Attendance for 2004

Date	March 14	March 21	March 28	April 4	April 11
Attendance	49	47	45	38	45
Date	April 18	April 25	May 2	May 9	May 16
Attendance	44	49	45	53	30

Influence of the Initial Survey on Course Content

From the pre-teaching surveys, it was apparent that the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Spring, Texas, were fairly knowledgeable of the Bible and especially of Lutheran doctrine. The areas of concern which needed to be addressed appeared to be a better understanding of a gospel approach to witnessing, of the priesthood of all believers, and specifically of how God works through the means of grace. Also, an area of

concern was the need to define terms which will impact one's fear factor in *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

Course Design

The course was divided into ten sessions. Session one was *Introduction Part One: The Great Commission* and session two was *Introduction Part Two: The State of Affairs*. The first session explored what the Bible says about evangelism and witnessing, including what Christians understand and misunderstand. The second session explored what previous methods or programs have been tried, along with some evaluation of these methods, and then laid out the objectives of the course.

Session three, *The Best Place to Start*, goes back to the book of Acts and the first Christian church. This chapter chronicles the growth of the first Christian church through the means of grace, especially through the preaching of the Gospel. Session three emphasizes the fact that it is God the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace which caused the first Christian church to grow.

Session four, *A Lutheran Understanding*, addresses the heart of the difference between this course and others from non-Lutheran sources. *Luther's Small Catechism* is presented as a wonderful tool for use in *Lifestyle Evangelism*. This session presents the importance of understanding the means of grace and explores the understanding of giving a defense of one's faith and hope in Christ according his/her station in life.

Sessions five through eight are titled *Practice Determined by Doctrine, Parts One, Two, Three, and Four*. These four sessions expound the tie between what one believes and

how that belief influences how one acts. Session five explores the two parts of worship: God's giving and our response; the importance of worship and how the worship service can promote evangelism; and the importance of one's devotional life. Session six explores the importance of God's Word as a means of grace and how God gives His gifts through His Word; and how we might better use His Word. Session seven explores the importance of Holy Baptism as a means of grace, how God gives His gifts through Holy Baptism, and how one might make better use of one's baptism as one lives as a *lifestyle evangelist*. Session eight explores the importance of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace; how God gives His gifts through the Lord's Supper; and how one might make better use of the Lord's Supper as one lives as a *Lifestyle Evangelist*.

Session nine pulls the four previous sessions together under the title *What Does This Practice Look Like?* In this session, the participants are challenged to put what they have learned into practice, to examine some of the things they are already doing to invite guests and visitors to church as well as how they are being evangelists in their own personal lives, to seek to refine their consciousness in witnessing through these avenues, and to seek ways to be more conscious about living as a witness of the hope one has in Christ Jesus.

Finally, session ten, *Using What is Good, with Discerning Eyes and Hearts*, addresses additional issues important to the subject of *Lifestyle Evangelism*. In this last session, participants explore other aspects of the congregation which might work toward making a more conscious effort at living lives of faith and determine how the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, Spring, Texas actively encourage or discourage guests from participation in the congregation.

Conclusion

This project began with developing a survey to measure attitudes and understanding of the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church concerning witnessing and evangelism. After the survey was administered and the findings assessed, an educational workbook titled *Lifestyle Evangelism* was developed and taught. Along with the course of instruction, bulletin inserts titled *Lifestyle Evangelism Is. . .* were also published in order to aid in the education of the whole congregation. After the course instruction was completed, a second survey was administered. In the next chapter, I will look at the post-instruction surveys and interviews and assess any change in the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PROJECT EVALUATED - FOLLOW-UP FIELD RESEARCH ON THE *LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM* COURSE

The purpose of this project was to educate as many members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church as possible in the ways of witnessing; to teach that everyone is a witness; to change the attitudes of the members to being more aware of the unchurched and more open to bringing them to church; to teach the members to be aware of opportunities for witnessing; and to insure ongoing improvement in confidence and in being aware of the challenge to bear witness of one's faith to those who are unchurched and unbelievers in the lives of the members. Some of the objectives, therefore, are empirically measurable, and some are not.

Furthermore, one of the underlying purposes was to define and develop an outreach attitude based on Lutheran doctrine; in other words, how does Lutheran doctrine guide a congregation's outreach practice? And, as the shepherd of the congregation, I hoped to lead my flock to grow spiritually. Thus, I wanted to see if I was correct in my estimation of how I am to lead my congregation in terms of evangelism and witnessing, that is, if my ideas about evangelism and how it can be taught would really be effective.

The culmination of this project did not result in the expectation that I had going into it. For many years, I have read and studied many evangelism and witnessing programs, techniques, Bible studies, and I have attended workshops, retreats and the like in order to

learn how to be successful at the art of bringing people into the Church and to faith in Christ (See Chapter Three where I have outlined my experiences in this area). As was stated in Chapter One, at one time, I believed that God needed anyone to do this work for Him. And I have witnessed what appears to be great evangelism success (usually counted according to the number of members joining), efforts by others who then put forth their learning, usually in the form of books and/or workbooks, so that others might have similar successes. I was sure that I had the answer to how evangelism could move from something which seemed confrontational to something approaching friendly conversation.

For many years, I had dreamed of one day taking all the knowledge and wisdom I had at my disposal and perfecting a unique way of reaching out to others with the Good News of salvation. I was sure I had the right answers, the right angle, the right twist to be successful. One day, I found myself in a new congregation, one ripe for outreach and evangelism. I had read many of the books, and now all I had to do was to put this knowledge into a teachable format and the rest, as they say, would be history. Unfortunately, my thoughts were not substantiated by the reality I experienced, as discussed in Chapter Three, “The Project in Perspective - The Historical Context and Literature Review.”

Thus, this chapter brings together the results of the before and after surveys that were administered to the congregation and the information from the interviews in the hope of evaluating how well the goals were accomplished. Although only one of the goals is measurable and will be discussed empirically (statistically), the other goals must be discussed subjectively (or inferentially).

The Methodology

Surveys

Two surveys were given. The first survey was issued before I began any instruction (Appendix One). As was stated in Chapter Four, the survey instrument was presented following worship on Sunday morning, June 29, 2003, after which 50 were turned in with nine being blank (that is, 41 usable surveys were returned). The instrument was also included in the monthly newsletter, and the deadline was posted as July 6. By Sunday, July 6, two more surveys were turned in for a total of 43 completed surveys. The following week, nine more surveys were turned in, making a grand total of 52 surveys completed and returned. This total was from an average Sunday worship attendance of 120. Following the course of instruction in the *Lifestyle Evangelism* workbook developed for this project (Appendix Three), I reissued the survey. I gave the survey on two Sundays, June 6 and 20, 2004. I also put the survey in the June newsletter and gave a deadline of June 20 for their return, by which time I received a total of 23 copies. The same questions were asked as the first survey with the exception of one added question, "Did you attend the educational classes?" Of the twenty-three respondents to the second survey, fourteen had taken the class, and nine had not. There was no attempt made to track whether those who took the first survey answered the second survey, which was done for the sake of anonymity. Also, I was not interested in tracking or trying to track individual change, but the attitude of the group as a whole. Thus, instead of looking at specifics, my goal was to see if the attitudes and understanding of the group had changed.

My rationale for this approach was that I would use the same questions asked at the beginning in order to ascertain if the group's attitudes have been affected through the instructional materials. Any future reshaping of the educational material will be in response to these answers in order to address any negative perception of my parishioners regarding evangelism and witness or to reinforce their positive perceptions and understanding.

Class

Beginning Sunday, March 14, 2004, I taught the workbook designed for this project (*Lifestyle Evangelism*, see Appendix Three). I taught the class during the regular Sunday morning Bible Class hour (from 8:45 to 9:45 AM). Those who normally attended the Bible Class were present. No one joined this Bible Class specifically because this class was being held and no one absented him/herself because this class was specifically being held. An average of 44 people attended each of the ten sessions, and the class was taught for a span of 10 weeks, until Sunday, May 16, 2004.

Interviews

After the class was completed and after the second surveys were gathered, I spent some time doing personal interviews. I chose five people, some of whom I knew had experience with other evangelism programs and who I knew had the time to be interviewed. These five interviews were conducted within four weeks of the completion of the instruction period. These interviews were conducted over the period of three days, from June 14-16, 2004. Each interview lasted about 30 to 45 minutes. The responses to these interviews are provided in Appendix Ten. Although this study is not specifically geared toward individuals,

the purpose of these interviews was to get a more thorough evaluation of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course (Appendix Three) itself and its effectiveness on some of the individuals who took the class. The responses of these participants may serve as a gauge for the effectiveness of the class on all participants.

The Findings of the Post-instruction Survey

Presented here is a summary of the results received from the second administration of the survey instrument (after the instruction class on *Lifestyle Evangelism*). The actual completed results of this survey are in Appendix Eight. After each question, I will summarize the responses in the post-instruction survey. Then, I will compare these responses to those in the pre-instruction survey. Finally, from this comparison, I will evaluate how the instruction course on *Lifestyle Evangelism* appears to have impacted the participants in this area.

Question 1. What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

Summary of responses:

The post-instruction responses included the understanding that Christians “have received God’s gifts by being baptized”; Christians, therefore, are to remember their baptism, regularly attend worship, and share their faith and hope with others, remembering that the Lord promises to be with them always during this process. “If this was the center of the explosion, then we should be on the leading edge or shockwave covering the world.”

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

The difference in the answer to this question between those who took the class and those who did not, compared to those who did, might be summarized as the difference between “have to” and “get to.” The answers of those who took the pre-class surveys and of those who did not take the class reflected an implied tone that this text is giving orders to Christians. The answers of those who took the class had an implied tone that this going out was a natural response of faith given through God’s means of grace as one makes regular and diligent use of these means.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The difference in the answers to this question between the pre-teaching survey and the post-teaching survey might be summarized as the difference between a law understanding or mandate and a Gospel response. Before the educational process, it was the understanding of those being surveyed that God mandated that Christians should evangelize. After the educational process, the participants grew to have a Gospel understanding that one’s witness to the world of the Good News is a response of that same Good News working in his/her heart. One respondent stated, “Attending worship regularly and share my faith and hope with others and also the promise of our Lord that He is with us always.” In this regard, the course had a positive impact on the participants.

Question 2. What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

Summary of responses:

Carrying on with the implied tone of the first question, the answers to this second question show a maturity of faith in understanding that Christians are doing Matthew 28:19-20 as they are first filled by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace so that, as they go about their everyday lives, they live in such a way that they are always ready to give a defense of their faith and hope in Jesus Christ. Thus, the respondents are beginning to understand how one lives as a Christian is a part of what leads to accomplishing what Matthew 28:19-20 indicates.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

The answers to this question between the pre-teaching and the post-teaching surveys indicate a change from a law understanding or mandate to a Gospel response of faith. The Gospel response of faith is that of living one's life as a witness for Christ and even going beyond simply giving an example by one's life, but also when the opportunity arises, through a verbal witness.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The response to the pre-teaching survey and the post-teaching survey are very similar. The pre-teaching survey responses suggest that the participants already had some understanding that one attempts, in a flawed way (due to his/her sinful nature), to carry out the Great Commission by living as a Christian witness. The post teaching survey results show an expanded understanding to include that of a verbal witness of the Good News of Jesus.

The course underscored the prior understanding of those being surveyed and expanded their understanding.

Question 3. What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

Summary of responses:

Answers to this question indicated that the maturity of faith is shown as survey responses indicate that one's sinful human nature often gets in the way of a good defense of one's faith and hope. Responses include admitting that even Christians tend to pick and choose with whom they want to share their faith, and often they fail to pray for the help of the Holy Spirit in the process. Lastly, there is, as there always should be, a confession of one's inadequacies, which is why s/he first comes to be filled through the means of grace.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

The pre-teaching survey indicated an admission of one's own sinful nature in governing one's witnessing habits. The post-teaching survey indicated a greater understanding of one's nature and the need to remedy such nature through the means of grace.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

Although there is still a healthy admission that one's human nature gets in the way of his/her carrying out the Great Commission, there was a shift in the understanding of the ability to carry out the Great Commission. In the pre-teaching survey, it was admitted that one reason for not accomplishing the Great Commission was one's own lack of Bible

knowledge or one's own inabilities. In the post-teaching survey, it was recognized that, in order for one to overcome his/her inadequacies, s/he first comes to be filled with God's gifts, especially with His Holy Spirit, through the means of grace. Thus, along with one's being better prepared for the response of faith of carrying out the Great Commission is the example one gives as a witness in making regular and diligent use of the means of grace. The course, then, led the participants to be conscious of their need for the means of grace in order to overcome any hindrance to accomplishing Matthew 8:9-20.

Question 4. Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

Summary of responses:

Everyone answered that his/her participation in Matthew 18:19-20 is important. The reasons respondents gave for their participation being important include the following: because of God's command, because of the importance of the message, because of the importance of others' hearing the message and being given faith as well.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

At first glance there does not appear to be much difference between the pre-teaching survey and the post-teaching survey. Both surveys suggest that those who took the survey believe that their participation in the Great Commission is important. The difference between the surveys is in the understanding of participation. The subtle focus shift was from the first survey responses having a focus on one's own responsibility. (i.e., because God *commands* us to do it or because my own faith must be shared, etc.) to the second survey responses having a focus on what *God does* through the message delivered through the Christian, (i.e., because

of the importance of the message and because of the importance of others' hearing the message, etc.).

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

Although there were no responses suggesting that God does not need them to do evangelism because He can do all things on His own, there is a change of attitude moving from evangelism being something *one* has to do to being something that *God* works in and through us. This change takes the focus off one's self and his/her own shortcomings and failures and puts the focus on the Lord who can do all things and who works faith when and where He pleases.

As an observation, since the beginning of this endeavor (including the teaching in the formal classroom setting as well as the bulletin inserts, etc.), there are several members who are actively inviting the unchurched as well as other church members and friends.

Accordingly, the congregation has grown through adult instruction class as well as through youth confirmation class in baptizing two young people and bringing their aunt back to worship. Certainly this objective has been accomplished.

Question 5. What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

Summary of responses:

The majority of responses indicated an understanding that being a believer in Jesus makes one part of the priesthood of all believers. These respondents also recognize that, as a part of the priesthood of all believers, it is one's honor and privilege to share in the

responsibilities and duties of being about the business of always being prepared to give an answer for the hope s/he has in Christ Jesus.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

There was a decided difference in the responses to this question on this second survey from the first survey. In the first survey, almost one fourth gave no response. In the second survey, everyone responded. Even from the responses of those who took the survey but did not take the formal class, there was an indication of a better understanding of the priesthood of all believers; this change could certainly be attributed to their reading the bulletin inserts as well as listening to the preached word.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

From the first survey, it was assessed that there would need to be some time spent on understanding the priesthood of believers concept, which is why the teaching included instruction in it. The second survey demonstrates that the participants have attained that understanding.

Question 6. In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc., how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

Summary of responses:

The responses were good responses, but more general than specific. Responses ranged from being a Christian example, to reading the Bible, to showing love and concern for others, to praying for others, to attending church, and to leading by example.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

Unfortunately, the responses were not much different.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

If there is one question with which I am most disappointed, it would be this question and the responses. What I was hoping for were specific answers according to one's station in life. In other words, if it were a husband and father answering, I was hoping for some specific answers like, "As a husband and father, I demonstrate my faith in Jesus by leading family devotions, making sure everyone is up and ready for church and Sunday School/Bible class on Sunday mornings, leading the family in prayer." Although the responses were not unacceptable responses, they do indicate that more teaching is necessary.

Question 7. In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

Summary of responses:

Responses included the fact that attending church and Bible class was one of the most important ways one demonstrates his/her faith in Jesus. Some included the fact that Christians also demonstrate their faith through giving their first fruits as well as giving their time and talents, serving on boards, committees, and so forth.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

Although the pre-teaching responses sounded similar to the post-teaching responses, the subtle difference is in understanding the core of demonstrating one's faith. Works of service were listed in the pre-teaching survey as ways one demonstrates his/her faith along

with being in worship and Bible class. In the post-teaching survey, the change in focus is subtle, but it is there, namely, that works of service have their beginning, middle and end in the Holy Spirit's working these works of service in and through Christians. One must note that faith is demonstrated especially in the giving of one's first fruits, as well as time and talents. Here one understands Jesus' words that "where your treasure is there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21) means that one's faith flows from a believing heart.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The message was heard loud and clear concerning how one demonstrates one's faith, that is, that one demonstrates his/her faith as one is motivated by the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace. The focus of one's attention from self to God is certainly a key in one's demonstration of faith. One "gets it right" when God is doing the work of evangelism through people, rather than people doing the work by their own power.

Question 8. When you hear the word *evangelism*, what comes to mind?

Summary of responses:

Although most of the responses to this question spoke about evangelism being the sharing of the Good News about Jesus in rather unspecific ways, some responses indicated an understanding of the fact that evangelism means "Good News."

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

Progress has been made from the first survey responses that indicated an understanding of evangelism to be a sharing process, to this second survey, in which the

responses indicate an understanding that evangelism is the “good message,” as it is defined in the lexicon.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The participants have been learning. They have been learning the word definitions which are important to understand how God wants His people to be, that is, God wants them to live lives of faith, demonstrating through those lives the faith they have in Jesus as their Savior.

Question 9. When you hear the word *witness*, what comes to mind?

Summary of responses:

In the first survey, the answers indicated witnessing was not so much something said as the life one leads. In the second survey, for the most part, the answers intimated that “witnessing” is a showing of one’s faith through one’s actions, but there was more to witnessing than just living. Witness includes telling an account of what happened through the work of Christ, giving a testimony of God’s salvation, telling others of how God has helped them and what He means to Christians.

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

There is a slight shift or added dimension in the understanding of this word from the pre-teaching survey to the second survey. In the first survey, for the most part, the answers to this question included the understanding that “witnessing” is not necessarily something said so much as it is the life one lives. Christians are witnesses of their faith through their actions,

through their living the Christian faith and life. For the most part, the answer given was that of being an example. In this second survey, being an example was included and expounded upon by moving to a better understanding that being a witness includes the verbal sharing of the Evangel, that is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The answers given indicate that the participants have been learning and growing in their understanding of what *Lifestyle Evangelism* means. *Lifestyle Evangelism* is living life as a Christian, always being ready to give an answer for the hope one has in Jesus, and that answer is a verbal communication of the saving work of Christ.

Question 10. When you hear the term “lifestyle evangelism,” what comes to mind?

Summary of responses:

The responses to this question indicated an understanding that “lifestyle evangelism” is a living of one’s faith, which flows out of one’s being filled with faith through making regular use of the means of grace. Of all the responses, the one I found most interesting is, “Lifestyle evangelism is the culmination of faith and lifestyle being integrated.”

Comparison of post-instruction responses with pre-instruction responses:

The first difference between the pre-instruction and post-instruction responses is the fact that only one person did not answer this question and only one person indicated that s/he did not know. In the pre-instruction survey one-fourth of the respondents either did not answer or indicated they did not know. The second difference is that the remainder of the

responses indicated that the participants did learn what was taught in the class. This learning was indicated by such responses as: “Filling ourselves with God’s word and the sacraments to the point where we overflow, and God’s grace then spills over onto other people in our lives,” and “The culmination of faith and lifestyle being integrated.”

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants:

The nine respondents who responded that they did not attend the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class answered this question, and answered it well. Of those who did attend, two did not have an answer to this question. Yet, the Good News is that those who answered indicated that they understood what “lifestyle evangelism” is. This learning was indicated by such responses as: “Living a Christian life in thought, word, and deed,” and “Demonstrating in your daily life the importance of being a Christian.” This learning may certainly be attributed to the bulletin inserts on *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

The Findings of the Post-instruction Interviews

Presented here is a summary of the information received from the face-to-face interviews conducted with members who had attended the instruction class on *Lifestyle Evangelism*. The actual completed results are in Appendix Ten.

Five interviews were conducted within four weeks of the completion of the instruction period. These interviews were conducted over the period of three days, from June 14 to 16, 2004. Each interview lasted about 30 to 45 minutes. Although this study is not specifically geared toward individuals, the purpose of these interviews was to get a more thorough evaluation of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course and its effectiveness from some of the

individuals who took the class. These individuals who were interviewed may serve as representatives of the whole group of people who attended the class.

All those interviewed had taken some other evangelism training. Each rated this course as very different or somewhat different from the course they had previously taken.

The interviewees indicated that, overall, this course was better than other courses they had taken because it gave a more thorough understanding of evangelism, emphasizing that the Holy Spirit is the one who empowers Christians to evangelize.

The interviewees also indicated that this course was worse than other courses they had taken because there were no life application examples. One person noted that s/he did not like losing the distinction between evangelist and witness.

In answer to the question of what one would change in this course, one suggested adding more examples of situations that may occur as one witnesses, perhaps using role play and the like. The others who were interviewed offered no recommendations.

When asked if the person learned anything new, one responded that he did not learn anything new, but her/his confidence had been bolstered. One stated that s/he learned that Baptism was not simply water, but God's name being put on her/him. And one indicated that s/he learned that being a witness and an evangelist "run into each other," in other words, that one is a witness of the evangel, the Good News, making one an evangelist.

All of the respondents answered that they feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness of Christ in their lives. And all of the respondents answered that they will increase their sharing the Gospel to others now that they have taken the class. Finally, some of those interviewed suggested that the course should be taught once a year.

Evaluation of impact of *Lifestyle Evangelism* course on participants.

All of the responses from the five people interviewed indicated that the participants gained a better understanding of the importance of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ through their everyday lives. They also affirmed the need to keep their knowledge and faith life stronger by participating in worship and being given the means of grace regularly.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PROJECT ASSESSED ACCORDING TO ITS OBJECTIVES

In order to properly evaluate this project, I will review the original objectives of this project. After stating each of the objectives in its entirety, the pertinent data corresponding to it will be given in order to evaluate whether the objective was accomplished, partially accomplished, or not accomplished or what needs to be changed in order to accomplish the objective. An analysis of the findings of the pre-instruction survey was presented in chapter four. From these findings the *Lifestyle Evangelism* instructional course was refined. Following this instruction, another survey was administered, and an analysis of its findings is provided in chapter five. In additions, several one-on-one interviews with participants were conducted, with analysis of these also given in chapter five. The overall summary results of this process are now being presented in evaluation of this project.

The First Objective

1. To educate as many as members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church as possible in the way of *Lifestyle Evangelism*. By the end of twelve months, twenty-five percent of the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church will have completed the education process in *Lifestyle Evangelism*. This education will come from the development and adaptation of materials with which I am familiar and which have been used in the

past. (This accomplishment will be seen through keeping attendance records of those who have been through the education process.)

Evaluation of the Accomplishment of this Objective

Out of 258 communicant members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, 46 people completed the formal educational process, accounting for eighteen percent of the congregation. However, an informal part of the education process entailed weekly bulletin announcements, newsletter articles and sermons; unfortunately, there is no way to calculate the percentage of those who read and/or responded to those announcements. Thus, although the goal of twenty-five percent completing the educational materials has not been met according to the formal education, the second survey revealed that nine people were affected by factors other than the class material. The fact that the nine people responded even though they had not taken the formal education reveals that the other informal materials did spark their enthusiasm. Thus, I am convinced that both formal and informal learning is going on in this congregation. I also learned that many of my parishioners are already aware, in varying degrees, of their role in *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

Why the goal of twenty-five percent? St. Matthew Lutheran Church is a small congregation, yet one in which, compared to the overall average in Synod, there is a large attendance at Adult Bible Class. The goal of twenty-five percent (64 persons) seemed easily attainable because the average Sunday Adult Bible Class attendance is 45 persons. The Sunday Adult Bible Class attendance averaged 44 persons, which was 19 persons short of the goal. No new participants were attracted to the class because of this special project. As a

matter of fact, the usual Bible Class attendees were present. Although attendance did not increase, it also did not decrease, and I must infer that I did not “turn them off” to *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

Recommendations to Improve the Accomplishment of this Objective

The numeric goal of educating twenty-five percent of the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church as possible in the way of *Lifestyle Evangelism* was not accomplished. In order to accomplish the goal of twenty-five percent completing the formal educational process, it would require teaching the course at least one more time or maybe even two more times. Another possibility is teaching the course at another time besides Adult Bible Class. For the purposes of this project, because the average Bible class attendance in the previous churches in which I have served in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod is between five and eight percent, the eighteen percent having completed the course is certainly a useable sample for this study.

The Second Objective

2. To recognize that everyone is a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church who have completed the education process will be conscious of the fact that, whether for good or for bad, what they say or do can be a witness of their faith. (This conscious witnessing will be seen by their being more cognizant of what they say, as well as what they do, in their everyday lives. It will also be seen through conversations about their interactions with other people with whom they share the Gospel.)

Evaluation of the Accomplishment of this Objective

Going into this project, it was my belief that most people have been taught that there is a difference between an evangelist and a witness.¹ I believe that, in other evangelism and witnessing literature that attempted to help people who were hesitant in verbally sharing their faith, a distinction was made between one being an evangelist or one being a witness. In other evangelism and witnessing literature, an evangelist was defined as one who verbally and even confrontationally shared his/her faith. A witness was defined in more relaxed terms, as simply sharing one's faith in non-confrontational and even non-verbal ways. According to the pre-instruction surveys, most people showed that they understand evangelism by saying the following for example: "telling others and encouraging them," "telling others about Christ," "sharing God's word," "telling others of my Savior," "telling others about Jesus," and the like. With regard to witnessing, they understood it to mean, "setting an example," "my actions as others see me," "someone is watching," "showing others about Christ Jesus," and so forth. As was presented earlier in Chapter Two, it is my contention that all Christians are to witness the Evangel; thus, my objective was to find what is the understanding of the members and then, if that understanding was different from my own, to move them to understand and believe, as well as to articulate the definition I taught (See Chapter Two, "The Imperative"). In the surveys, questions eight, nine, and ten address this definition directly.

A second aspect of this process is the practical aspect. Certainly I may be able to teach the concepts, but how will I know if they are being acted on; in other words, I can teach the

¹For a detailed discussion of this matter see "Evangelist" and "Witness" in Chapter One and "The Intent of This Project" in Chapter Two.

theoretical and theological, but how do I know if it is being put into practical use? I do not have complete knowledge of what goes on in the lives of the individual members of the congregation. And it is difficult to measure the practical application of theories and theology, especially when I do not see them all the time. However, although I cannot track the lives of the members, I believe that their answers to the survey questions may reveal, even if incompletely, if they are practicing what is being taught. In the pre-instruction survey, most members did not understand what I meant by *Lifestyle Evangelism*, but in the post-instructional surveys, even in the answer of those who had not taken the instruction class, they understood *Lifestyle Evangelism* to be a holistic approach to living life as a witness of the Good News of Christ. Respondents to the second survey gave comments describing this kind of evangelism with such phrases as “filling ourselves with God’s word and sacraments to the point where we overflow, and God’s grace then spills over onto other people in our lives,” and “the Bible and its teachings; our Lutheran doctrine following (based on) the Bible and to live our lives in such a way as to please God everyday,” and “the culmination of faith and lifestyle being integrated.” These responses indicate at least a cognitive understanding that *Lifestyle Evangelism* is a more comprehensive approach to sharing the evangel in many ways besides a formal visitation, as was discussed in Chapter Two, “Witness.”

In comparing the pre-instruction survey answers with the post-instruction survey answers as well as with the answers of those not involved in the class instruction, I believe that, in some cases, I did not do well in my instruction, and in other cases, the members already knew what I was attempting to teach. The answers from the pre-instruction survey indicated a more legalistic understanding of Matthew 28:19-20, i.e., “all telling others,” “to

enlarge the church,” “helping spread the word of the Lord to all peoples,” “it is a command to tell others the Gospel,” “it means to be active in witness work and evangelizing,” “I am responsible in some way for sharing the gospel.” In the post-instruction survey, I received similar responses: “As a Christian this is what I am to do. God commands it,” and “We are to share our faith with others.” There was some good news in that some responses indicated that they heard the message of what it means to carry out the Great Commission: “It means you should remember you are baptized, and you should always try to be as good a Christian as you can,” and “That I have received God’s gifts by being baptized, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, faith.”

Many of the responses to the pre-instruction and post-instruction survey questions indicated a rather legalistic understanding of witnessing in defining what Christians call “The Great Commission.” Other answers indicated an actual knowledge of the concepts I wanted to put forth in the instructional sessions. The responses before and after indicated an understanding that all Christians are witnesses of the Evangel through their actions as well as their words. An important part of their lives is to make regular and diligent use of the means of grace so that they are filled in order to spill out on to others the answer they have for the hope they have in Jesus. In the pre-instruction survey, people responded with the following: “Try to be a living example of a Christian,” “I try to live my life as I believe and have faith in God,” “regular church attendance and trying to behave in a Christian way toward others,” “Bible study to be able to better understand,” and going to church and sharing my faith with others. In the post-instruction survey responses varied, as follows: “Attending church, studying His Word to equip myself to be an effective witness in sharing the message to

others,” with the distinction between one’s trying and one’s response of faith. These variations indicate some movement toward an understanding of the importance of one’s own spiritual well being and how that influences one’s response of faith in sharing the Good News with others through his/her words and actions.

Although it was not the purpose of this project to track changes of development in the individual member, it is significant in tracking the congregation’s attitudes. It is important to assess how many members express commitment to the task of the “Great Commission.” Because I was challenged to help the members think of their own part as witness of the Good News of Christ, I touched on the topic of the priesthood of all believers, the understanding of which was tested in question five of the survey. To be a member of the priesthood of all believers means that one is a redeemed child of God; as Paul says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10). Christians are redeemed children of God, “*created in Christ Jesus for good works;*” in other words, to be the people God would have Christians to be includes being witnesses of the Good News. In the pre-instruction survey, many members did not fully understand what it means to be a member of the priesthood of all believers, which was indicated by the fact that about one-fourth did not answer the question, and those who did answer gave responses such as “comfort,” “responsibility,” “good thoughts,” “joy,” “comforting,” “to have a happy presence,” and so forth. In the post-instruction survey, there is evidence that, not only through the class, but also through the bulletin inserts as well as through other preaching and

teaching, many better understand what it means to be a member of the priesthood of all believers. One response in particular from those who participated in the classroom instruction which seems to sum up all of the responses is: “I’m so grateful to be a child of God; to have been born into a Christian family and I think God put me here to spread His message.” But several responses of those who did not take the instruction class indicate an understanding of the priesthood of all believers, even if it is not as complete an evangelical understanding as the previous statement: “It is our duty to ‘minister’ to all peoples. This is a blessing we have from God!”

Pre-instruction and post-instruction responses, including post-instruction responses to the questions concerning one’s own church life and demonstrating faith through one’s church life, indicate that the members of St. Matthew have a good understanding of the importance of Word and Sacrament ministry (even if some are not participating as much as others in such ministry). Pre-instruction responses like “church attendance,” “going to church, supporting others,” “receiving gifts through means of grace,” and post-instruction responses such as “by attending church regularly and by studying God’s Word daily,” and “attending bible class, bible study, Vacation Bible School, work day at church,” indicate an awareness that one’s life is a witness to others.

Of course, these responses do not negate Lutheran doctrine that it is not the pastor or the people or the program which gives faith, but it is the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace, which are the Word, the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper).²

²Although not stated as such, Drs. Win and Charles Arn in *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples* teaches that people are the means through which the Lord gives faith (the means of grace).

Thus, any outreach effort is not evaluated as successful or not by the number of people making “a decision for Jesus,” but by the response of faith, or the fidelity of living lives of faith, of those involved. It is interesting that the word *success* is found only eleven times in the Bible, and all are in the Old Testament. The word *success* is used to mean “prosper” or “have an advantage.” Still, a definition of this “prosper” or “have an advantage” varies, but it is unrelated to any outreach effort (unless you count wiping out your enemies as outreach). On the other hand, the word *faithful* is found seventy-eight times in the Old and New Testament and means to be trustworthy, that is, to do what is expected. As Lutheran doctrine teaches, although people spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by word and action, God is still the one who grants success and faithfulness, without which the coming to faith does not occur.³ “Witnesses” or “evangelists,” therefore, cannot claim success for “bringing one to faith.”

God’s definition of the success He grants, even though He only asks that Christians are faithful, does not necessarily mean success in any way in which humans count success.

As Harstad says in his commentary on Joshua:

The success of the crucified and risen Christ—like Joshua’s (limited) success—shows that there can be a big difference between what God and the world consider to be success. Jesus highlights this in Mt 16:24-26, as he expounds the theology of the cross. The terms “prosper” and “succeed” in Josh 1:8 need to be understood according to God’s use of those words. Failure in the world’s eyes may actually be prosperity and success in God’s eyes, and what God calls failure may be considered prosperity and success by the world. A prosperous, successful man in Jesus’ parable is declared a fool by God in Lk 12:20. A sickly beggar whose friends are dogs is a success as angels carry him to Abraham’s side in heaven in Lk 16:22, while a wealthy man in hell is a

³Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 40:3. Augsburg Confession, Article V. Concerning the Office of Preaching.

failure (Lk 16:23). Believing or rejecting “Moses and the Prophets” (Lk 16:29) marks the difference in God’s eyes between success and failure.⁴

When most Christians think of success in evangelism, they, due to their sinful nature, usually think in terms of numbers of people. It is a pity that Christians do not always think in terms of success as strengthening and deepening one’s faith. Thus, although an evangelism program may not seem like a success in bringing in numerous people into one congregation, the evangelism education process, that is the study of God’s Word in the process, brings great success in the faith life of the individuals. At the same time, I will contend that, as one grows in faith, one will naturally be more open to sharing that faith as a result of that faith so that others might hear the evangel as well and be brought into the Kingdom of Heaven. As is stated in the Augsburg Confession:

To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, *who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel* [emphasis added]. And the Gospel teaches that we have a gracious God, not by our own merits but by the merit of Christ, when we believe this.⁵

Thus, Christians believe that it is the Holy Spirit, working through the means of grace, who gives faith, when and where He pleases, in those who hear the Gospel. Why are some evangelism efforts numerically successful and others not? Because the Holy Spirit works when and where He pleases in those who hear the Gospel.

⁴Harstad, Adolph L. *Joshua, Concordia Commentary*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, © 2004.

⁵Tappert, Theodore G. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2000, © 1959.

I believe the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church understood the concept that everyone is a witness before going into this project. My attempt was to refine their cognitive knowledge to understand that the very lives they live makes a witness of their faith, as was discussed in Chapter Two, “The Priesthood of All Believers.” And the difference between having this instruction and not having this instruction is shown in the following responses; in the second survey, someone who did not attend the class responded, “This I don’t understand, being that I’m not a priest.” On the other hand, someone who attended the class responded, “It is a gift from God given to me through the death and resurrection of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I do not have to ‘go through’ a papacy to God.” These responses show the vast difference in understanding of the priesthood of believers. The first response indicates an understanding that it is the clergy who are the ones who share the Evangel; the second one shows an understanding that Christians are all witnesses to the saving work of Jesus Christ. I wanted to move them to acknowledge that Christians do not do as they ought, that is, they do not live lives of faith as they ought. Thus, they confess their sins and move from feelings of guilt over not doing as they ought to thinking in terms of rejoicing. I believe, therefore, that even though Christians do rejoice in what they are doing, that joy did not translate into the response of faith for which I was looking, as briefly stated at the beginning of this chapter, namely, an invitation extended to unchurched family and friends, which would bring an increase in guests at worship and Bible Class and new members through these efforts. At the same time, this finding does not discount the spiritual growth in the faith life of the members and the possibility of such measurable growth in the future. Changes in understanding and

attitude of the group do not occur overnight. Sometimes, people do not see the results of their efforts for some time.

Recommendations to Improve the Accomplishment of this Objective

The goal of recognizing that everyone is a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is an ongoing educational process. The questions offered in the survey in order to evaluate the second objective of this project appear to be good questions for the purpose of measuring where the individuals are before and after taking the class. The results of these evaluations will determine the need for and the changes that will need to be made in order to further the education that everyone will recognize that s/he is a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Third Objective

3. To change one's attitude to be one of caring for and reaching out to the unchurched.

The members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church who have completed the educational process will demonstrate a positive attitude toward the unchurched.

Evaluation of the Accomplishment of this Objective

When asked if their participation in Matthew 18:19-20 was important, the majority of responses before and after the instructional class were positive. Thus, there is a cognitive understanding of the importance of witnessing the Good News to the unchurched, but that cognitive understanding does not necessarily translate into a positive attitude toward the same. In other words, the members may understand the importance but not necessarily have the desire to carry out the act. With that statement made, there has been an increase in

membership of nine persons through adult instruction class following the teaching of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course. Previous classes consisted of two to six members, and subsequent classes have only consisted of two to three members. This dramatic increase came as a result of members inviting their family and friends who were not yet members of this congregation.⁶ Since that class has completed the adult instruction class, and since the congregation has moved on from the teaching of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course, there has been a decrease in activity in the adult instruction course, again with the largest class being a class of three. In other words, this teaching is something that needs to be continually put before the members in order to have a positive numerical effect. The other side of this scenario, however, is the effect the teaching of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course has had on the spiritual well being of those who took the course, that is, that they have had a renewal in their own spiritual faith life. This change is seen in the active participation of these members, through being involved in the business of the congregations by serving on the various boards and committees. Although this goal was not originally articulated, it is certainly a fortunate by-product!

Although this finding may not be an indication that there has been some change in the attitude, there is an indication in a change of cognitive knowledge concerning what a Christian's attitude should be toward the unchurched. This response to the understanding of one's being a part of the priesthood of all believers indicates that more and more members understand the concept of being a redeemed child of God. As redeemed children of God,

⁶This result could have been due to the Hawthorne effect mentioned at the end of this chapter.

Christians do the good works God has for them to do, including living lives of faith that witness the message of the Good News. In the pre-instruction survey, there were many blank responses, but in the post-instruction survey, even among those not taking the formal instruction class, the responses indicated a better understanding of this concept; responses such as “it is a great responsibility, and I fall short of going out in the world and boldly stating my feelings and beliefs,” and “God loves everyone and has commissioned His priesthood to share His promise with all,” indicate that change.

Additionally, before going into this project, I believed that one of the reasons Christians do not fervently work to bring in the unchurched is the fact that they do not necessarily believe what the Bible says about there being one way to heaven. Another reason is that they allow their fear of what others think about their actions to overpower their care and concern for those people so much that they fail to share the Gospel with the others. A second short ten-question survey⁷, in which members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church were asked specifically if the reason they did not witness was because they believed everyone was saved, indicated that no one had this misconception; the members knew that there is only one way to heaven. As for the second reason, fear, I believed that, if I could move the members through an educational process from a misunderstanding of witnessing and evangelism, to one of understanding and living a life of what I have called *Lifestyle Evangelism*, this enlightened understanding would bring down the barriers that would prevent people from

⁷ As mentioned in Chapter Four, “Process Interrupted,” I offered a second, “Addendum Survey”; the survey and results are in Appendix Five. This survey was distributed, completed and returned Sunday, January 18, 2004. It was distributed to the 42 present at Adult Bible Class and 121 present at worship. The total respondents was 66, 42 from Bible Class and 21 from worship.

freely witnessing the Good News to others, inviting them to worship and Bible class and the like. What I found was that, although there was an immediate cognitive understanding of *Lifestyle Evangelism*, there was not necessarily an immediate or complete change in actions. Perhaps more practical instruction is needed in order to empower the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church to have misconceptions or feelings of fear no longer. Such a change will take some time.

Recommendations to Improve the Accomplishment of this Objective

In order to better evaluate the accomplishment of the third objective of this project, the pre-teaching and post-teaching questions need to focus more on how a person refers to those who participate in worship—either as strangers, visitors or guests, etc. Also, the questions might ask specifically if one has invited someone to worship. Finally, a question might be asked as to the urgency of the salvation of others and how that understanding stirs up one's enthusiasm to share the Good News despite fear.

The Fourth Objective

4. The participants of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class demonstrate a greater awareness of opportunities to witness. The members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church will, as a part of the education process, identify and invite their unchurched family and friends to the various events, activities, Bible study (classes), and worship offered by St. Matthew. An ongoing effort will be made through bulletin and newsletter articles, as well as through preaching and teaching of the importance of being “guest aware,” that is, being sensitive to guests who are with us. (This change will be evidenced through a

deeper level of care and concern for those outside the Christian church and further evidenced through an attitude of empathy and a desire to work to bring others to Christ and His church. This paradigm shift will become evident through participant interviews as indicated by their responses to the question concerning their willingness to increase their sharing of the Gospel to others [see question nine, Appendix Ten].)

Evaluation of the Accomplishment of this Objective

The pre-instruction survey and the post-instruction survey responses indicate that this objective was not something that needed to be taught to this particular group. Most responses indicated that the members knew of the need, even if it was a more legalistic knowledge, to witness to others. Responses, especially to questions five and six, included, “. . . telling others,” “helping to spread the word of the Lord to all peoples,” “it is a command to tell the Gospel,” “contact all people,” “we should tell others of Jesus,” “spread the Word to friends, neighbors, and strangers.”

Before one can change, there must be an acknowledgment of something that needs to be changed. Concerning one’s attitude toward witnessing, in order for people to change their attitude, they must first recognize what their attitude is. In the pre-instruction and post-instruction surveys, the answers to the questions of what hinders one’s accomplishment of Matthew 28:19-20 was the realization that one’s conduct hinders one’s witnessing the Good News of salvation. Unfortunately, simply an acknowledgment of one’s behavior in this area does not necessarily translate into a change in one’s awareness of his/her own witnessing in his/her life. The responses of the members, especially to questions five and six (Appendix

Eight), indicate that they recognize their behavior and their neglect in being aware of witness opportunities. Although they have this recognition, they also recognize that nothing is being done to change that behavior. Finally, they recognize that being more aware that it is not only what one says but also what one does that affects people and their attitude toward Christians.

To help the members of St. Matthew become aware that everyone is a witness, even while doing what may be considered the mundane aspects of their vocation, the question was asked concerning how one demonstrates his/her faith according to his/her station in life and according to his/her calling to his/her specific vocation. The pre-instruction survey answers (Appendix Two) suggests that there was some understanding that, no matter what people do in life, they are to do all to the glory of God, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Some responses that reflect this awareness include “by example,” “serving others,” “by trying my best to do my job best,” “showing your concern and care for others,” by trying to lead a Godly life and provide an example,” “by what I say and showing love to others,” and “by the way I live.” In the post-instruction survey (Appendix Eight), even the responses from those who had not taken the instructional course show an understanding that, no matter what Christians do in life, they are to do all to the glory of God. Therefore, there is no appreciable difference in the responses to this question in the pre- and post-instructional surveys. Perhaps I underestimated the knowledge and understanding of the members going into this project; and the fact is that they already had a good understanding of what it means to be *Lifestyle Evangelists* or at least the understanding that one’s life shows one’s faith.

Recommendations to Improve the Accomplishment of this Objective

In order to better accomplish the fourth goal of this project at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, a question might ask for a specific listing of unchurched family and friends. Another question may ask how many unchurched family and friends have been invited. These specific changes in the pre-teaching and post-teaching surveys will make it easier to measure the fact that they are conscious of family and friends who need the Good News and that they have invited them to hear the Good News. This measurement pinpoints specific people, which more accurately shows the accomplishment of this goal rather than inferring its accomplishment from observations. Care must be taken that the numbers are not confused with growth in faith and understanding.

As for observations, it may be seen from the last adult instruction class as well as from the youth confirmation class that people are inviting their unchurched as well as other churched family and friends to worship and to be a part of the congregation. Because of sinful nature and forgetfulness, etc., this teaching, either formally in class or informally through bulletin inserts and preaching, will need to be an ongoing project.

The goal of insuring ongoing improvement will be accomplished as the information in this project becomes a regular part of the educational process of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield. The beginning of this improvement was observed when the congregation felt confident enough to host a “Witness Workshop” on October 23, 2004, in which much of this material was adapted and used. Obviously, changes will have to be made in the materials, based upon the feedback from those who repeat the course and from new participants.

Evaluation Summary

In conclusion, I have gained several insights into the practice of evangelism as a result of my research, my writing this paper, and my experience as a parish pastor. The following is a summary of my findings from this project.

1. Evangelism must be grounded in sound theology.

When outreach is not means of grace outreach, it turns into something other than orthodox spiritual growth, usually interpreted as numerical growth. In other words, when social gatherings for the sake of gathering a large number of people is considered outreach and the Evangel is not proclaimed, evangelism does not take place, but only social interaction. This social interaction can be accomplished by joining any number of civic organizations. Outreach through the means of grace, a proper distinction and proclamation of law and Gospel alone, brings people to faith and orthodox spiritual growth.

Certainly Lutherans can use many different evangelism or witnessing programs, but what do those practices and programs do to Lutheran theology? Whenever Lutherans evaluate any evangelism or witnessing program, they will want to use what they can from other programs, that is, what is not in contradiction with what they believe and teach. Certainly there may be parts that they would not and should not use, such as any suggestion that they are to do their part in their own coming to faith. When Lutheran evangelism and witnessing programs emphasize people as the means of grace, as Drs. Charles and Win Arn suggest in *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples*, then people become the emphasis, or as Drs. Charles and Win Arn call it, the *oikos* network, or the means of grace, for growing the

church. Although they do not call this practice a means of grace, they are describing it as such: “Webs of *common kinship* (the larger family), *common friendship* (friends and neighbors) and *common associates* (special interests, work relationships, and recreation) are still the paths most people follow in becoming Christians today.”⁸ Perhaps the church may grow, numerically, but not necessarily in faith; in other words, it may become a wonderful social gathering of religious and civilly good people, but it omits the cross and thus misses salvation.

An example of this practice is Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. Joel Osteen preaches what he has called “motivational Christianity.” He preaches the power of positive thinking, and people flock to his church. However, he fails to bring to bear the cross. He has even stated that he downplays talking about people’s failures (I would say sins) because people are tired of hearing about their failures. People want to hear about positive things. Thus, his congregation is filled with people who are good people, doing good things, but are they saved? And unfortunately, when these same people are approached with the law and the Gospel, they do not want any part of them because they are not the “positive” message these people want to hear.

The point, again, is that doctrine should be the Christian’s guide in all things, including and especially in their evangelism and witnessing practice, i.e., in what they have been describing as living as *lifestyle evangelist*. For example, because Lutherans do not believe in “decision” theology, that is that one makes a “decision for Jesus,” they do not ask

⁸Arn, Win and Arn, Charles. *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples*, Church Growth Press, Pasadena, CA, ©1982.

for a “decision” at the end of one’s presentation as described by Dr. Kennedy in *Evangelism Explosion*, as was discussed in Chapter Three, “The Inception of the Project.” In *Dialog Evangelism*, Leroy Beisenthal worked to rewrite *Evangelism Explosion* more according to Lutheran doctrine and changed the “decision” for Jesus to a prayer of thanks for one’s being given faith, again, as was discussed in Chapter Three, “The Inception of the Project.”

Certainly, because Lutherans believe the Holy Spirit gives faith through means, this approach would be a better one. Thus, Lutherans use only those parts of each program that are supported by Lutheran doctrine.

Certainly, Christians will want to continue to share the Gospel; as the Evangel is shared with others and as the Holy Spirit works faith through that Evangel, congregations will grow, numerically. One would never suggest, of him or herself, that this growth is simply a social gathering of religious and civilly good people, the difference being that those given faith by the Holy Spirit and those growing in faith give evidence of such growth through lives lived in response to the gifts God gives them. However, those who are simply civilly good people or who gather for social reasons also give evidence of their lack of spiritual growth through lives lived working to earn God’s free grace and favor. This difference is expressed in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke 18:10ff). Those living lives in response to the gifts of God humbly and readily confess their sins and give God the glory, like the publican. Those who live lives working to earn God’s favor rarely see their sins nor any need to confess; instead, they look down on those who are humble, like the Pharisee does. Of course, although only God can see in one’s heart, one’s attitude tends to be openly visible in actions.

If Lutheran theology tells one that God works through means, namely the means of Grace, the Word, Holy Baptism, the Lord's Supper, then how does that belief direct and drive his/her witness and evangelism outreach? Perhaps that outreach may not seem like a success, at least not according to the numbers of people, but one can rest assured that the Lord grants faith, strengthens of faith and the keeps one in faith as His Words and promises declare: His Word will not return void.

2. Evangelism must be grounded in the proclamation of God's Law and Gospel.

Secondly, my faith has been renewed to the importance of Law/Gospel preaching. I might even suggest that churches whose ministers preach "feel-good" sermons, which are actually law sermons, attract many people. Human nature leads one to enjoy hearing the law, and one likes to think that s/he can somehow gain eternal life through his/her active obedience to the law. Thus, according to human nature, one likes "feel-good" churches. On the contrary, churches where the Word of God is proclaimed with the law being preached in its severity and the Gospel preached in its sweetness are not always the churches to which people flock.⁹ Unfortunately, the churches that preach the law in all its severity are often targeted as intolerant, unloving and the like because, just as God does not tolerate sin and deviant sinful behavior, neither do they. However, just as God offers and gives His mercy and forgiveness, so do Christians.

⁹The "megachurch" of Houston, Texas, Lakewood Church recently moved into the refurbished Compaq sports arena. They state that their average weekend worship is 30,000. Their goal, now in a larger arena, is 100,000. Yet, as Alan Wolfe, director of The Boisi Center for Religion & Public Life at Boston College, sees it, bigger comes at a price: "The cost is they do water down the doctrines and they water down the demands they put on people." From the *Houston Chronicle*, Sunday, July 10, 2005, Section A, page 16.

A pastor can motivate his congregation through the preaching of the law. And the law is a good motivational tool, at least for a while. At the same time, this type of motivation, a law motivation, leads to work righteousness, or despair, if one is not able to accomplish what one is supposed to accomplish. On the other hand, the pastor who motivates his congregation with the gospel may not see immediate, or huge results, (i.e., numbers of people attending worship services). But he will observe spiritual growth among his members as well as Christians desiring to reach out to others as a response of their own faith. To that end, *Lifestyle Evangelism* is designed to motivate Christians to reach out as a response to the message of salvation, by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ alone. The pastor, in his role as preacher of the Gospel, becomes a powerful agent of God's work of motivating Christians to witness of that Gospel message.

3. The positive behavior of the congregational members which immediately followed the implementation of the project may not be permanent.

As time has moved beyond the initiation of this project as well as the classroom instruction, bulletin announcements, and the like, it appears the congregation has settled back into its former routine. During the inception of this project as well as during the time of teaching and bulletin announcements, there was a rather profound increase in activity among the members of the congregation. As a matter of fact, the Adult Instruction class (the class of doctrinal instruction for people wishing to join the congregation) was the largest since I arrived and even since that class. There were twelve in that particular class. Previous classes numbered two to six, and subsequent classes numbered two to three. This increase might be explained in one of two ways. First, this increase might be explained by understanding that

people do need a constant reminder that they are to be about the business of doing “the good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph. 2:10), including living lives of *Lifestyle Evangelism*. Or this increase could simply have been “The Hawthorne Effect” taking place. In his book *Handbook for Doctor of Ministry Projects*, Richard E. Davies explains “The Hawthorne Effect” as:

In 1939, Roethlisberger and Dickenson published the results of an extensive research study on management and the worker. One of the frustrating things they found was that every change seemed to increase the group productivity. For example, adequate lighting increased productivity, but so did reducing the lighting. They concluded that paying attention to people leads them to change their behavior (Mosteller, 1968, p. 115). This may not sound surprising, but it has serious implications for D. Min. research.

Most likely, the members of your church want you to succeed in getting the D. Min. If you implement a special program, organize a special committee, or start a special class in your church as part of your D. Min. Research, the people who are asked to participate will probably respond atypically. They will probably devote more effort than normal to their participation. You may conclude that your project was a total success and be disappointed later in your ministry when a repetition of the project doesn't work as well as it did during the research period.¹⁰

This result shows the need for continual teaching and preaching and the need for continual reminders and encouragement. As a good teacher understands, one must teach and re-teach, so the preacher must preach and re-preach.

And finally, I continue to be reminded of the Preacher's words in Ecclesiastes, that what is important is not the externals, not the fluff, but the internals, the heart and the message, even the Word of God. What is important is not how much one knows or even what one might say. Instead the Preacher says:

¹⁰ Davies, Richard E. *Handbook For Doctor of Ministry Projects*. University Press of America, Inc. ©1984.

⁹Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. ¹⁰The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth. ¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. ¹²My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. ¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. (Ecclesiastes 12:9-13)

In the end, one finds comfort in the fact that the whole of the matter is to fear God and keep His commandments, the whole of the matter is to be faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10), the whole of the matter is in God's gracious, omnipotent hands. Thanks be to God.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS - NOW WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITH THIS INFORMATION?

Looking Ahead

The findings from this project research will now be used to improve the ongoing effort to cultivate a lifestyle of evangelism among the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Spring, Texas. This information will be used to help others become better equipped to witness spontaneously yet intentionally within the context of one's vocation through what is called *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

Perhaps one will recall the cliché, "Hindsight is twenty-twenty." Well, maybe hindsight is not necessarily twenty-twenty, but it does give one a better understanding of what has been so s/he can make adjustments for what might be. In this chapter, the focus will be on what has been accomplished and on how what was achieved might be made better. Beginning with suggesting a format of sorts, perhaps it might be viewed as a curriculum format for teaching a way of life in which evangelism is a natural part or at least a format for a calendar year in teaching lifestyle evangelism. And lastly, several suggestions will be offered of other areas which might be studied and incorporated into the teaching of lifestyle evangelism.

Suggested Format (or Curriculum Calendar)

One possible approach to the teaching of evangelism as a way of life is to incorporate the teaching in as many areas of congregational life as possible and over as long a time as possible. Certainly, the concept of a lifestyle of evangelism means that it is not a program but a way of life. Since it is a way of life, then *Lifestyle Evangelism* is demonstrated best by working to incorporate its learning into one's whole life.

During student teaching, this writer's cooperating teacher repeatedly told him that the best way to teach was to teach and re-teach, that is, to repeat. Of course, his repeating this advice was what helped to ingrain this concept or teaching in a personal way. With this concept in mind and with the concept of *Lifestyle Evangelism* being not a program but a way of life, then lifestyle evangelism is something which should best be taught and re-taught. Along with the concept of teaching and re-teaching is the understanding that, the more one hears something and the more senses one uses in the education process, the more s/he will remember. Thus, it makes sense to read, hear, see, (and if possible, smell and taste) the concepts of *Lifestyle Evangelism* in order to better remember them. Therefore, this process will use as many means as possible to present the concepts.

In this document, the reader has been introduced to two of the means for presenting the concepts of lifestyle evangelism. The first means was the *Lifestyle Evangelism* Course (Appendix Two), and the second means was the *Lifestyle Evangelism* Is bulletin inserts (Appendix Four). One means not included in this report, but a project currently being worked on, is a one-day Witness Workshop in which some of these concepts might be reiterated. The Witness Workshop will include two Bible Studies working with the texts from chapter two of

this report and use some of the ideas from other resources mentioned in chapter three of this report.

One curriculum outline then would be as follows:¹ Begin bulletin inserts (see Appendix Six) the first Sunday of January. Begin teaching the *Lifestyle Evangelism* Course (Appendix Three) in February. Follow the *Lifestyle Evangelism* Course with one of the evangelism courses (mentioned in chapter three) which teaches what to say. And finally, hold a Witness Workshop in September.

Certainly, this process is not the final product of the theory and practice of evangelism and witnessing. As a Christian grows and matures in his/her own faith and faith life and walks with the Lord, s/he is encouraged through his/her making regular and diligent use the means of grace to be better at living lives that show his/her faith. At the same time, as one reads other resources, as one hears about other concepts, as one traverses through life, s/he grows and matures and learns how to be better able to give a defense for the hope s/he has, that is, to show his/her sanctification. With this fact in mind, the following suggestions are presented as a by-product of this course and areas that might be explored to expand and deepen what has already been learned.

First Suggestion

Although a shallow level of this issue was broached in the addendum survey in Appendix Three, still a deeper study on “Why Do People Not Participate in Evangelism?”

¹Please note that although this is a curriculum outline, the *Lifestyle Evangelism* Course is not intended to be a program, and this outline is intended not to be a program, but a way of shaping lives.

could prove helpful. For the purposes of this study, the presupposition is to repeat the often repeated “truism” that people do not share their faith because they are afraid, because they do not know what to say, and because they might say the wrong thing.

For purposes of this study, the words *evangelism*, *witness*, *proselytize*, and *disciple* carry the same meaning. The point of this exercise would be to ascertain whether or not people actively participate in sharing their faith, and if people do not, then why not?

First, do people actively participate in sharing their faith? Is this something which is done on a regular basis, i.e., once a day, or more; once a week, or more; once a month, or more; once a year, or more; or never?

Second, if a person does not actively participate in sharing his/her faith, why not? Is it because of time constraints? Is it because of fear? If it is because of fear, then what is one afraid of? Does one not actively participate in sharing his/her faith because s/he is afraid s/he would say the wrong thing? Is it because s/he believes s/he might not know what to say? Or is it perhaps that s/he believes it does not matter what one believes as long as one is sincere in his/her faith (in other words, that sharing one’s faith is not important because all people are saved anyway)?

If the answer to the second question (“Why or why not?”) is that one does not share his/her faith because s/he does not believe it is necessary, then why does one have this belief? Does this belief follow logically in order to justify one’s not sharing his/her faith because of his/her fear? Is this belief from some other source legitimate? Is it because one is afraid to share his/her faith, and in order not to feel guilty about such fear, s/he decides to change

his/her belief paradigm to be that everyone is saved anyway so s/he really does not need to be concerned about sharing his/her faith?

This type of study could prove helpful in answering and allaying any fears anyone might have with sharing his/her faith.

Second Suggestion

One of the suggestions which was given through the various surveys and interviews following the teaching of the *Lifestyle Evangelism* course was the desire for examples and situations, such as role playing, and what to say. Thus, some situational examples might be added to each session, or a whole new session might be added dealing with what to say. Perhaps the best way to build a library of examples and situations would be to read the Bible more and to actively participate in life, making one's own examples.

Perhaps one might poll his congregation for personal examples and situations and use the data as a springboard for examples and situations to be included.

Third Suggestion

A more thorough study could be done on the role of the congregation in *Lifestyle Evangelism*, i.e., especially in terms of Word and Sacrament ministry, Word and Sacrament worship, liturgical worship and the evangelism and witness accomplished by such worship. What is the relationship between what one believes and how one worships? What is the relationship between what one believes and how one witnesses, or evangelizes, etc.? This study would take one to the roots of Lutheranism-that one worships according to what one believes, and that one believes according to how one worships. Does this follow through in

that one evangelizes according to what one believes, and one believes according to how one evangelizes? How does doctrine and practice relate? Certainly this understanding or study would touch the subject of style and substance.

I firmly believe that doctrine should be what guides practice. For this reason, what is at the heart of this project is a Lutheran understanding of evangelism. Just as doctrine should determine how Lutherans worship and what they believe and teach, so it should help them determine how they reach out and proclaim the Good News to others. I certainly believe that I have not exhausted this subject and that more study could be done. My present study does not afford the time nor the space for this topic.

Fourth Suggestion

A study could be done on the implications of using this *Lifestyle Evangelism* approach in church planting. Although many districts work to plant new congregations, this responsibility was, for many years in the Lutheran Church, a result of an initiation from the local congregation. How would a *Lifestyle Evangelism* approach help facilitate the planting of new congregations? Certainly with the understanding that one shares one's faith as one lives, this approach would serve well because it would be a natural extension of lay people's sharing their faith and lives with others so that the need for new congregations would become apparent. Again, my present study does not afford the time nor the space for this topic.

Final Reflections

I firmly believe that there is a distinct connection between doctrine and practice. For very many years, I have been involved in many different evangelism and witnessing

programs, training events, conferences, and in reading much material in this area. Too often the materials, training, books and programs have been lacked in a proper understanding of the use of the means of grace at best and are heterodox at worst. Too often these materials were “baptized” Lutheran and were taught anyway. My objective was to take the commendable, even doctrinally sound, parts of the materials, training, books and so forth, and design something that flows from Lutheran doctrine. I believe that what I have designed, although not perfect, is a tool that gets to the heart of the matter, the importance of being filled with the gifts God has to give so that the believer overflows in response to his/her faith. Again, going back to the illustration in chapter two, of the cup and the pitcher, the cup is not filling itself but is being filled by the pitcher. The cup is filled to the point that it must overflow and spill out onto others. Thus, this activity is not a “have to,” but a “get to”; not a law, but a gospel; not a work, but a response of faith. And this change in understanding and attitude removes the stress and the guilt associated with sins of omission and commission.

God gives! God gives His Word which creates and nurtures faith. God gives strengthening of faith through His means of grace. God gives His Holy Spirit who works a response of faith. God gives the workers. God gives the harvest field. God gives the harvest. God gives to all believers what they need to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. To God be the glory.

Appendix One

Initial Survey

Thank you for taking part in this survey. You may answer the questions as briefly or as extensively as you like. Please answer the following ten questions and return this survey to the box in the narthex, or give it to Pastor, or leave it in the church office. Although you may notice that there is a number attached to this survey this is for control and tracking purposes only.

1) What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

2) What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

3) What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

4) Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

5) What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

6) In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, life/husband, employer/employee, etc. how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

7) In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

8) When you hear the word “evangelism,” what comes to mind?

9) When you hear the word “witness,” what comes to mind?

10) When you hear the term “lifestyle evangelism,” what comes to mind?

Appendix Two

The following are the results of the first survey.

- 1) WHAT DOES MATTHEW 28:19-20 MEAN TO YOU?
 - R1. not to be concerned about your faith only, but of all telling others
 - R2. saved via baptism
 - R3. to enlarge the church
 - R4. helping to spread the word of the Lord to all peoples (respectively)
 - R5. wrong question
 - R6. it is a command to tell others the Gospel
 - R7. it means we should be active in witness work and evangelizing
 - R8. share the gospel
 - R9. teach and preach to every nation and God will be with you in paradise
 - R10. be an example
 - R11. God is with us always
 - R12. I am responsible in some way for sharing the gospel
 - R13. basis of faith
 - R14. I have a commandment to witness
 - R15. encouragement
 - R16. a command from God or instruction of something we should do in our time on earth
 - R17. I should strive to reach people who do not know Christ and teach them about Him
 - R18. it means teaching others about God and that he is a wonderful person
 - R19. with the help of God you have the power to fellowship and guide your neighbors
 - R20. all of us are needed to bring God's Word to others
 - R21. No response
 - R22. bring God's message to mankind
 - R23. helps me believe
 - R24. that Jesus is always there when you need him and we should share our faith
 - R25. go tell about gospel
 - R26. spreading God's word to others and knowing that God is always with us
 - R27. share the word of God
 - R28. contact all people
 - R29. we should tell others of Jesus
 - R30. Jesus is our Savior
 - R31. been witness of God's gifts to men - let it show
 - R32. to spread the word of God
 - R33. spread God's word and he will be there to help you
 - R34. make all believers of God
 - R35. spread the Gospel
 - R36. saving word of God
 - R37. we should go out and tell others about Christ and He will be with us always
 - R38. go and witness to others - bringing others to Christ

- R39. teach everyone about Christ
- R40. that we teach others the word of God
- R41. No response
- R42. God will always be with me
- R43. my job description as a Christian, the reason I am here, affirmation of the Trinity and need for baptism
- R44. grace and faith
- R45. we should teach others about God and to be baptized and keep the commandments
- R46. living as a Christian by example every day
- R47. we should go out into the world and spread the Gospel and teach the people God's command
- R48. inviting all that I can to come to church and hopefully learning the word of God
- R49. spread joy we know to others
- R50. be baptized and obey God's teachings and He will be with you always
- R51. we are to share the Gospel with as many people on Earth as possible
- R52. Tell others about God and live by the commandments

2) WHAT DO YOU DO NOW THAT RELATES TO YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF MATTHEW 28:19-20?

- R1. try to encourage others to come to church and try to answer their questions
- R2. No response
- R3. try to be a living example of a Christian
- R4. being an example to others and being a ???? to them
- R5. support our pastor(s), pray for them
- R6. try to mention my belief to others when appropriate
- R7. not much, except that we should all be out there spreading the word
- R8. sharing my faith
- R9. I try to live my life as I believe and have faith in God
- R10. try live a Christian life
- R11. No response
- R12. regular church attendance and trying to behave in a Christian way toward others
- R13. attend church
- R14. pray for God's guidance in daily life
- R15. read passages
- R16. witness to people around me
- R17. try to live my life in a way that would please God and in a way that others could tell I am a Christian
- R18. go and spread the word of God
- R19. I strive to be the best example of a Christian
- R20. only through mission offerings
- R21. No response
- R22. try to act according to message
- R23. No response

- R24. pray, demonstrate to others my faith
- R25. tell about gospel
- R26. helping others when needed
- R27. Bible study to be able to better understand
- R28. follow directions
- R29. bring friends to church
- R30. we are all saved by faith
- R31. attend church, do choir and other things for church
- R32. going to church and sharing my faith with others
- R33. study God's word
- R34. No response
- R35. believe
- R36. keeping the word of God and using it
- R37. try to set good example: worship and invite others to do so
- R38. try and live a Godly life as a witness to others
- R39. try to get people to come to church
- R40. I share the gospel when I have the opportunity
- R41. No response
- R42. try to be a good witness and remember my baptism daily
- R43. witnessing by living a good Christian life (though flawed) and discussing Christ when given the opportunity
- R44. pray
- R45. I believe in God and I let people know I'm a Christian
- R46. I belong to a singing group and we entertain at nursing homes
- R47. we invite people to our church
- R48. I bring my grandchildren to church
- R49. when possible - remind others of this Joy
- R50. by living what I have been taught
- R51. provide financial support to LCMS World Missions and individual missionaries
- R52. invite others to church and Bible class

3) WHAT DO YOU DO NOW THAT HINDERS YOUR ACCOMPLISHING MATTHEW 28:19-20?

- R1. not always attending church regularly
- R2. No response
- R3. too busy
- R4. No response
- R5. Matthew 28:19-20 given to the 11 and do not attempt to usurp the office
- R6. fear of ridicule/rejection
- R7. I am not nearly aggressive enough in spreading the word
- R8. not baptizing - putting earthly things first
- R9. I don't tell others about Jesus very much
- R10. hide my faith

R11. No response
R12. sometimes neglect prayer life
R13. sin
R14. sin
R15. sin
R16. none
R17. I am a sinner
R18. I don't go to church often enough
R19. No response
R20. No response
R21. No response
R22. always do wrong
R23. No response
R24. No response
R25. No response
R26. No response
R27. pass up opportunities to discuss religion
R28. sometimes do not want to go to church
R29. don't feel comfortable
R30. No response
R31. too wrapped up in care for 94-year-old mom, stocks?, tennis?, golf
R32. not practicing it during the week
R33. not reading the Bible often enough
R34. poor time management
R35. sin
R36. my health
R37. sometimes not being equipped with Bible knowledge and not speaking up
R38. always room for improvement
R39. time
R40. I don't always feel that I set a good example
R41. homebound mostly
R42. not always show a good example
R43. not seeing every opportunity, not trusting in the Lord, shyness
R44. share the Good News
R45. I don't tell enough people about God
R46. age hinders travel by myself
R47. by not taking advantage of every opportunity
R48. not understanding enough to teach others
R49. probably don't spend as much time as I should
R50. it is impossible for me to live exactly by the ten commandments
R51. I fail to earn enough income to allow me to provide even greater financial support
R52. not motivated enough

4) IS YOUR PARTICIPATION IN MATTHEW 28:19-20 IMPORTANT? WHY OR WHY NOT?

- R1. yes, want all to be saved
- R2. No response
- R3. yes, if we set the right example, other people will want some of the peace that you show
- R4. to help spread word of God
- R5. no, given to the 11 and pastors
- R6. yes, it is a command from God and it is everyone's command
- R7. yes, everyone should do what they can
- R8. yes, because it is my response to God's gifts
- R9. everyone is important in their love of God to tell others about Jesus
- R10. yes, God is with me
- R11. No response
- R12. yes
- R13. yes
- R14. yes, because God has commanded me to
- R15. No response
- R16. yes, He says he is with us always
- R17. yes, as a Christian I want to spread God's message
- R18. yes, it's important because it's a command from God
- R19. yes, this is a sharing of the Word
- R20. should be - God's command
- R21. No response
- R22. hope and assurance
- R23. yes
- R24. yes, because I could help bring others to faith
- R25. yes
- R26. yes
- R27. yes - many people want a door opened for them but don't know how to ask
- R28. honor all
- R29. yes- so everyone will know about Jesus
- R30. No response
- R31. many are on the road to perdition - need our witness and prayers
- R32. yes, because you should share your knowledge of God
- R33. yes
- R34. yes
- R35. yes
- R36. it means we are saved through Jesus
- R37. yes so others will be saved
- R38. yes, we all are to be witnesses for Christ
- R39. yes, because that is what Jesus teaches
- R40. yes, I am a tool that God wants to use
- R41. No response

- R42. yes, so others see God's love and forgiveness in me
- R43. it is commanded. What could be more important?
- R44. yes, God's command
- R45. yes, but I don't do enough
- R46. keeps my spirit high
- R47. yes, God wants everyone to participate in his work
- R48. yes, even one lost sheep is important
- R49. spread the Word and encourage all people to have faith in Christ
- R50. yes, because I believe in Jesus Christ, my Savior
- R51. yes, because God commanded it
- R52. yes, because of love for others.

5) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS?

- R1. am part of God's flock
- R2. part of God's family
- R3. Christian
- R4. to be available to others in need and that inquire
- R5. a gift from God
- R6. ?
- R7. responsibility
- R8. knowing that I'll be in heaven with all believers - past and present
- R9. it means very much to me. It is the number one thing in my life
- R10. forgiveness and life eternal
- R11. I am a child of God
- R12. comfort
- R13. door to salvation
- R14. salvation
- R15. No response
- R16. No response
- R17. see answer in #4 (yes, as a Christian I want to spread God's message)
- R18. it means being a part of something special
- R19. I am a team member of the Believers group
- R20. one of church membership
- R21. n/a
- R22. individuals that take this message to heart
- R23. No response
- R24. No response
- R25. No response
- R26. No response
- R27. means eternal salvation
- R28. good thoughts
- R29. that I will go to heaven to be with Jesus

- R30. No response
- R31. sanctified believers
- R32. to be a believer
- R33. that I can share the good news
- R34. comforting
- R35. salvation
- R36. joy
- R37. I am grateful to be saved and go to heaven and be with my loved ones when I die
- R38. eternal life
- R39. I am saved
- R40. it means I should be able to teach God's will
- R41. No response
- R42. it means I am forgiven
- R43. an awesome responsibility that I am not sure I keep well due to my sinful nature
- R44. God's child
- R45. No response
- R46. to have a happy presence
- R47. it means a lot because we are to support and help one another
- R48. that I'm given this chance to help teach my children
- R49. faith in Christ
- R50. to be saved from damnation when this world is over
- R51. all believers are "priests"
- R52. that God chose me to be one of His children

6) IN YOUR DAILY LIFE, ACCORDING TO YOUR STATION AS MOTHER/FATHER, SISTER/BROTHER, WIFE/HUSBAND, EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE, ETC., HOW DO YOU DEMONSTRATE YOUR FAITH IN JESUS?

- R1. being patient, understanding and prayerful
- R2. doing what's right according to commandments
- R3. by trying to live a life that you do not have to apologize for
- R4. helping others, spreading the word
- R5. leading where led, and submitting where placed
- R6. help others pray for others
- R7. by trying not to worry about things
- R8. to try to remember that my actions should represent my Lord
- R9. I pray daily
- R10. by example
- R11. love
- R12. serving others
- R13. try to lead a God-pleasing life
- R14. lead/teach my family in prayer/church attendance
- R15. encouraging prayer and belief
- R16. witnessing and trusting God

- R17. I pray that my actions and words will reflect my belief
- R18. by trying my best to do my job best
- R19. mentor to unbelievers or weak in faith
- R20. try to be a good example through actions
- R21. demonstrate the duties of the station
- R22. showing your concern and care for others
- R23. yes
- R24. when others have a problem, I let them know that I keep them in my prayers
- R25. No response
- R26. No response
- R27. prayer - discussion
- R28. No response
- R29. pray and read the Bible
- R30. No response
- R31. do church witness to family, friends and others
- R32. by prayer and worship
- R33. tell others
- R34. by trying to lead a Godly life and provide an example
- R35. live by example
- R36. praying
- R37. devotions, prayer, reading Bible, proclaim Christ to my loved ones
- R38. try to live a Godly life and show by example
- R39. try to set a Christian example
- R40. I pray with others; I share experiences I've had when I felt God spoke to me
- R41. prayer, devotions
- R42. I stand firm in my beliefs when questioned and tell people to have a blessed day
- R43. I lead in prayer, teach, try to not get in the way of God's love showing through me, Bible study, act as a husband
- R44. studying His word, being happy
- R45. I pray, help others, do my best to be a better person
- R46. by example
- R47. by what I say and showing love to others
- R48. I talk to my children whenever possible
- R49. let others know I pray for them, that they too should also pray and that Jesus answers prayer
- R50. by the way I live
- R51. by living my life according to His commands
- R52. set a good example, live life so others see God in me

7) IN YOUR CHURCH LIFE, HOW DO YOU DEMONSTRATE YOUR FAITH IN JESUS?

- R1. by living honest Christian life
- R2. church attendance

- R3. support of church, pastor, members
- R4. going to church, supporting others
- R5. receiving gifts through means of grace
- R6. works of service, pray for others, attend Bible class
- R7. I serve, I believe
- R8. being involved in worshiping, receiving His gifts
- R9. singing, praying to God with my fellow believers in church
- R10. be faithful to the Word
- R11. love one another
- R12. regular attendance
- R13. No response
- R14. prayer, worship, service
- R15. participate in service
- R16. when struggles occur or when someone needs understanding, Holy Spirit speaks through me
- R17. regular attendance
- R18. by praying to God when I need help
- R19. teach Sunday school and participate
- R20. help in any areas I can according to ability
- R21. belief in the word of God
- R22. come to worship and Sunday School
- R23. by praying
- R24. volunteer to help, attend church regularly
- R25. attend weekly Bible and worship
- R26. by believing and trusting
- R27. regular church worship
- R28. No response
- R29. teach Sunday school, go to church
- R30. I know I am saved
- R31. speak about sermon, show concern for sick
- R32. by going to church and taking communion
- R33. get involved
- R34. by being as active and supportive as possible
- R35. attending church
- R36. by praying and singing
- R37. attending Bible class, worship, volunteering
- R38. try to be faithful in attendance
- R39. be faithful
- R40. I attend and worship
- R41. faithful attendance
- R42. I try to be friendly and help where my talents allow, and my gender
- R43. VBS, elders, Bible class, showing love and compassion to others, prayer, devotions
- R44. attending church, Bible study, etc.

- R45. I attend church 98% of the time, but I could do more to tell about God
- R46. working and attending when health allows
- R47. by attending church and Bible class and the Lord's Supper regularly and do what jobs we can in the church
- R48. I attend church as much as possible, try to live a Christian life
- R49. offer support and prayers and whatever I can do, like listen
- R50. by supporting the church
- R51. same as #6 (by living my life according to His commands)
- R52. sing in choir, go to Bible class and church (worship service) regularly

8) WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD *EVANGELISM*, WHAT COMES TO MIND?

- R1. telling others and encouraging them
- R2. spreading the gospel
- R3. reaching out
- R4. tents
- R5. something given to the church to do through the OHM
- R6. telling others about Christ
- R7. spreading the word
- R8. sharing the gospel
- R9. that we should go out and tell others about Jesus
- R10. be an example in daily life
- R11. church work
- R12. sharing God's word
- R13. bring others to the faith
- R14. outreach and tending to spiritual needs of church family
- R15. No response
- R16. preaching the Word of God
- R17. preaching God's Word
- R18. someone who spreads the Word of God
- R19. uneasiness - not comfortable with unfamiliar area
- R20. telling others of my Savior
- R21. Billy Graham
- R22. tell the good news
- R23. No response
- R24. reaching out to others - bringing them to church
- R25. go tell about the gospel
- R26. spreading the good news of our salvation
- R27. No response
- R28. No response
- R29. telling others about Jesus
- R30. the word of God in His teaching
- R31. Matthew 28:19-20 - how to approach the unbeliever, up hold the weak
- R32. someone who tells the Word to others

- R33. spreading God's word
- R34. trying to encourage others to join in worshipping God
- R35. spread the gospel
- R36. getting people to come to Jesus
- R37. to tell others of Christ
- R38. witnessing to others
- R39. teach
- R40. sharing the gospel
- R41. No response
- R42. telling others about Christ Jesus
- R43. intimidation, uncertainty, inadequacy (all due to my not trusting in the Spirit)
- R44. spread the Word
- R45. go and teach others about God
- R46. talking and showing my love for God
- R47. spreading God's Word and bring others to church
- R48. people going to other countries to teach the word of God
- R49. preaching and teaching
- R50. preaching
- R51. Billy Graham
- R52. talk to others about God and invite them to worship, missionary work

9) WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD *WITNESS*, WHAT COMES TO MIND?

- R1. showing or living a Christian life
- R2. personal involvement
- R3. setting example
- R4. spreading the word of God to others
- R5. someone who sees or hears something
- R6. sharing my faith with others
- R7. demonstrating the word
- R8. sharing my personal life in the gospel
- R9. that it is our job to witness for the Lord
- R10. same (be an example in daily life)
- R11. share God's word
- R12. one who testifies truthfully
- R13. speak out for God
- R14. proclaiming God's word in action and by word of mouth
- R15. trying to lead a good life
- R16. telling someone the word of God or trusting in God
- R17. living my faith
- R18. someone who makes sure others spread the word of God
- R19. I have seen
- R20. my actions as others see me
- R21. someone who sees an event

- R22. tells others the effect of the message
- R23. some one is watching
- R24. spreading the word
- R25. tell about Jesus
- R26. to tell others about Christ
- R27. No response
- R28. No response
- R29. showing others what it is to be a Christian
- R30. you tell others about Jesus
- R31. tell how God has blessed me - baptism
- R32. someone who sees these things to the truth
- R33. stand up for what you believe
- R34. more specific than answer above (trying to encourage others to join in worshipping God)
- R35. living the word
- R36. strong faith
- R37. setting good example while telling others of Him
- R38. talking to others about Christ
- R39. No response
- R40. sharing my experience of learning God's word and what He's done for me
- R41. No response
- R42. showing others about Christ Jesus and telling them
- R43. sharing God's love and blessings in your own life
- R44. testify
- R45. spreading the word of God and doing my best to be an example to people
- R46. (?) do not be afraid to talk about prayers answers
- R47. to testify
- R48. No response
- R49. spread the Word of God that we believe to others
- R50. that I believe what is taught in church
- R51. telling others about Christ
- R52. same as above (talk to others about God and invite them to worship. Missionary work.)

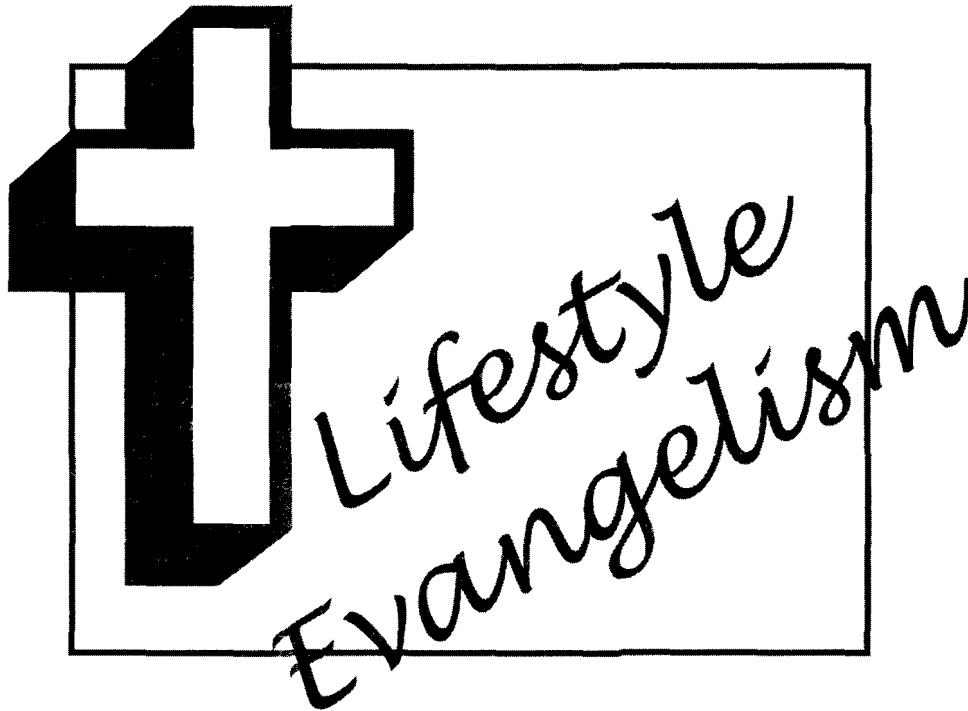
10) WHEN YOU HEAR THE TERM "LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM," WHAT COMES TO MIND?

- R1. concerned about others to be saved
- R2. without sin
- R3. being an example of a Christian in your daily life, not something extra, just a normal part of your personality
- R4. missionaries
- R5. church growth - "BIG RED FLAG"
- R6. bringing up Christ in situations naturally. Not forcing the issue
- R7. nothing comes to mind
- R8. showing the gospel through my actions

- R9. I don't know
- R10. same (be an example in daily life)
- R11. No response
- R12. No response
- R13. way you conduct your life
- R14. reflecting God's word in how I live
- R15. No response
- R16. No response
- R17. No response
- R18. preach, some one who delivers the word of God daily
- R19. No response
- R20. my everyday life
- R21. n/a
- R22. live and spread the good news
- R23. No response
- R24. showing your Christianity in your daily life
- R25. living the word of God
- R26. No response
- R27. practice what you're are taught in church
- R28. No response
- R29. show people the right way to live in your own lifestyle
- R30. No response
- R31. letting your light shine as a reflection from J.C.
- R32. telling the word in your daily life
- R33. how you use your life to spread the news to others
- R34. leading by example
- R35. spreading the word for our lifetime
- R36. prayer, faith and understanding
- R37. live our lives in a way to be evangelistic
- R38. living a Godly life by example to others
- R39. No response
- R40. setting a good example
- R41. I wish I could answer these as my mother was in younger years. For many years, she taught high school Sunday School. She knew the Bible so well that pastors asked HER if they had certain facts right in Bible Classes. Her great love was studying prophecies in OT and fulfillment in NT. All this with 8th grade education. She has forgotten more than I will ever know. - D. Kriegel
- R42. being a missionary or working a job in the field
- R43. not sure, maybe reinforcing what we need to be doing anyway
- R44. missionary
- R45. living my life to help others hear the word of God and live it
- R46. same as above (do not be afraid to talk about prayers answered)
- R47. by how you live

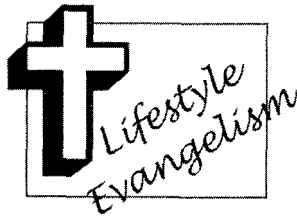
- R48. people who committed their life to traveling the world to teach the word of God
- R49. the way you live
- R50. my daily devotion to God
- R51. telling others about your lifestyle?
- R52. live a life that others see God in me

Appendix Three



Growing Your Church God's Way
A Biblical, Lutheran Model for Growing Your Church

A course designed for the Major Applied Project
by doctoral candidate Rev. Ronald A. Bogs
for St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield

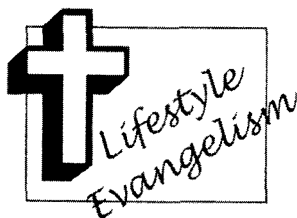


Lifestyle Evangelism

Growing Your Church God's Way

A Biblical, Lutheran Model for Growing Your Church

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Introduction Part One: The Great Commission

Why are we concerned about evangelism and witnessing?

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore what the Bible says about evangelism and witnessing
- Explore what we misunderstand about evangelism and witnessing
- Explore what we understand about evangelism and witnessing

Getting into the Lesson

Most of us have grown up understanding Matthew 28:19-20 to be the “Great Commission.” These two verses, for many, have been the foundation verses for many Christians in the never-ending pursuit of sharing the message of Jesus Christ with others. In this lesson we will look at the Bible to see if only these verses talk about our sharing the message of Jesus with others. We will also look at the similarities between evangelism and witnessing.

The Great Commission and More

1. Look up Matthew 28:16-20. Who was part of this occasion? What did they do at this place? When Jesus was worshiped, what was the mind-set of some who were there? When Jesus gave His “Great Commission,” what did He actually give?

(Jesus and the eleven; they came to worship Jesus; some doubted; Jesus gave a promise, He gave authority, He gave instructions.)

2. Look up Acts 11:19-21. Who is present on this occasion? What were they doing? What was happening as a result? Who was doing the work?

(Those escaping the persecution in Jerusalem were present. They were spreading the message, the good news about Jesus as they were being scattered. People were believing because the Lord was working faith.)

3. Look up 1 Peter 3:15. Actually, it would be helpful if you scan all of 1 Peter. Peter lays out helpful instruction concerning how we are to be God’s people according to our own station in life. Although Peter’s words are not the “Great Commission,” what does he tell us is important?

(We are to be ready at all times to give a defense for the faith we have in Jesus.)

4. Look up Matthew 10:32-33. These are the words of Jesus to His disciples before He sent them out. The word “acknowledges” literally means to speak out in a public square. Compare Jesus’ words to those of Peter in 1 Peter 3:15. What is important?

[4]

(We are always to be ready to confess our faith in Jesus because, as we confess our faith in Jesus, He will confess His work on our behalf, and conversely, if we do not confess, neither will Jesus confess.)

5. Look up Matthew 10:19-20. In light of what is expected of us, compare Jesus’ instructions in these verses. What is to be our attitude concerning being prepared to give an answer for the hope we have and not being afraid to speak out about that same hope?

(We are not to worry ourselves about what we are to say because, at the right time, the Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak in answer about the hope we have in our confessing our faith in Jesus.)

6. Look up Luke 10:1-24, especially verse 16. Not only did Jesus send out the twelve apostles, He also sent out 72 others. Compare these verses with 1 Peter 2:9. Also, compare these words to Ephesians 4:17-6:20. Although the “Great Commission” may have been given directly to the eleven apostles, do you think that God’s intention was that only they were to be the ones to share the message of Jesus with others? Why or why not?

(God has given each of us the task to share the message of Jesus with others through our lives.)

Evangelist Versus Witness

1. People have many different understandings of what an evangelist is. List below some of the words or descriptions that come to mind when you hear the word *evangelist* or *evangelism*. After you have made your list, tell whether these are positive or negative things. Why?

(Answers will vary.)

In Ephesians 4:10, Paul writes that God gave “some to be evangelists.” Since some are evangelists, that implies that not all are evangelists. Since some are evangelists, how many are “some”? Through a process of discovering spiritual gifts, the experts tell us that the “some” is about 10%.

This process of discovering spiritual gifts is accomplished by persons working through a spiritual gifts inventory, written and based on the spiritual gifts as written about in the New Testament Epistles. The idea behind this inventory is that by responding to various questions concerning one’s interests, their spiritual gifts could be discovered. Thus, according to this process, about 10% show a propensity to evangelism.

Information gleaned from *Witness Workshop (Guidelines on How to Conduct a Witness Workshop)*. The Board for Evangelism, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, St. Louis, MO.

2. People who are considered to be experts in the field have suggested that 10% of people have the gift of evangelism. The word *evangelism* literally means good message. An evangelist, then, must be someone who shares the good message, in particular, the good message about which we are speaking is the message of Jesus, His life, suffering, death and resurrection for us. What do you think they mean?

(10% of all Christians have the gifts from God to be an evangelist, to share the good news with others.)

3. Writing to young pastor Timothy in 2 Timothy 5:2, Paul urges Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist.” Putting these two Bible passages together, we would say that some have the gift of evangelism and others may be able to learn to do the work of an evangelist. Putting these two passages together, then, how many people are evangelists?

(All are evangelists, whether they know it or not, whether they have the gift or are to simply do the work.)

4. People also have many different understandings of what a witness is. List below some of the words or descriptions that come to mind when you hear the word *witness*. After you have made your list, tell whether these are positive or negative things. Why?

(Answers will vary.)

5. The definition of a witness is 1) someone who has seen something that has happened (i.e., an eyewitness); 2) one who furnishes evidence (i.e., one who states what s/he has seen); 3) one who authenticates something as fact (i.e., to sign or countersign to one’s authenticity). According to these definitions, how are Christians witnesses?

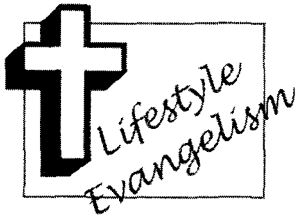
(A Christian, by faith, has seen Jesus; shares what they have seen with others; authenticates their witness through the words of Holy Scripture.)

Summing It Up

[6]

What have you learned in this lesson about evangelism and witnessing? Is there something you previously misunderstood that you now understand or understand better? Is there any change in your attitude about either evangelism or witnessing?

Session Notes



Session 2

[7]

Introduction Part Two: The State of Affairs

What has been tried - the Sociological Approach to Church Growth

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore previous methods/programs of evangelism and look at what was good about each.
- Explore what went wrong with each of the previous methods/programs.
- Set out the objectives of this course.

Getting into the Lesson

Many people have undertaken to write programs to help people to share their faith with others. Perhaps you have been involved in one or more of these programs. In this session we will look at some of the programs with which you may have been involved and undertake the task of evaluating them. Then, we will take the best of these programs and see how they fit into our Lifestyle Evangelism Model in the next few sessions.

1. List or name the evangelism or witnessing programs, if any, in which you have been involved with in the past. Then, list or name any other evangelism or witnessing program of which you know.

(Answers will vary.)

2. What is your impression of the programs which you listed above, positive and/or negative.

(Answers will vary.)

Previous Methods/Programs:

Below are listed four methods/models/programs of evangelism that have been developed and used by many people in many different denominations. As you think about each model and read the description, and as you are familiar with each model, answer the questions about each.

Evangelism Explosion

This program was developed by Dr. D. James Kennedy, minister of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and first published in 1970. This program provides an extensive multi-week setting, requiring a commitment to learn an outline, illustrations

and Bible passages. This program made much use of on-the-job training with groups of three going out and making actual calls. The visit included a time for chit-chat, two “diagnostic questions,” a presentation of the Gospel message, a request for a decision for Jesus, a prayer, and later follow up and membership into the local congregation.

1. From this description what would you say is good about this program?

(It helps to develop a discipline of learning a message and how to share that message.)

2. From this description and from your Lutheran, Christian background, what would you say is not so good, especially as we understand Law, Gospel and conversion?

(It is not focused on the Holy Spirit working through the Word to work faith and then acknowledging that it is not we who are making a decision for Jesus, but the Holy Spirit who is giving faith.)

Dialog Evangelism

This program was developed by Dr. LeRoy Biesenthal more as a response to a call from Lutherans to make the Evangelism Explosion program a Lutheran program. This program, then, is very similar to Dr. Kennedy’s program, except that there are some different illustrations that are used and instead of a decision for Jesus, a prayer of thanks for faith is offered, if appropriate.

1. Again, from this description what would you say is good about this program?

(It helps to develop a discipline of learning a message and how to share that message.)

2. Again, from this description and from your Lutheran, Christian background, what would you say is not so good, especially as we understand Law, Gospel and conversion?

(It does not always take into account where the person is and how to answer only the question that one may have. It also does not take into account the troubles with confrontation in trying to share one’s faith.)

Witness Workshop

Witness Workshops were developed by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the 1980s. The basic idea behind the Witness Workshop was to give some guidelines to help Lutheran Christians know how to witness. The major differences between the Witness Workshops and the Evangelism training programs were:

- Witness Workshops were designed as a one-day or weekend program;
- Witness Workshops were not designed to give any rote memory in the area of a presentation;
- Witness Workshops did not include making calls;

- Witness Workshops dealt mostly with helping Christians get a better understanding that they are witnesses, whether they are aware of this or not, and to help them to become better aware and more conscientious about being a good witness.

1. Again, from this description what would you say is good about this program?

(It focused on non-confrontation. It focused on simply being conscientious in living one's life as a witness.)

2. Again, from this description and from your Lutheran, Christian background, what would you say is not so good, especially as we understand Law, Gospel and conversion?

(It did little to prepare one for knowing what to say, although it did give helps in this area.)

Church Growth Seminars

The Church Growth Seminars began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. These seminars were designed to help congregations as a whole, as well as the individuals in the congregation become better equipped for growing their church in the place where they were. Although it may be said that these principles were developed according to social models, there is an underlining theology to these principles. The goal of these principles was to make one's congregation a place where people will want to come to hear the good news of Jesus. Principles to consider included making sure the facilities were adequate and up to date, having enough parking places, and being visitor friendly. Other principles included changing many of the local and denominational rites and ceremonies, and practices in order to excite people who attended the worship service. The sacraments of the church were downplayed as being a stumbling block to the visitor who would find such things as close(d) communion too intolerant. The key principle to church growth was the members of the congregation. It was vital that the members of the congregation were active in sharing their faith with their family, friends, and coworkers. The emphasis was placed on meeting felt needs and being "user friendly" rather than on what message was being presented.

1. And finally, again, from this description what would you say is good about this program?

(It was helpful in making sure that the externals were in place for when someone did come to visit a local congregation. It encouraged members who saw their congregation "grow" in numbers.)

2. And finally, again, from this description and from your Lutheran, Christian background, what would you say is not so good, especially as we understand Law, Gospel and conversion?

(It made little or no use of the means of grace; instead, it substituted people as the means of grace instead of Word and Sacrament. It also worked to change the theology of those congregations who did change their practices so as to reflect some other denominational theology until such time as that is what their theology became. It corrupted the true mission of the Church.)

Principles For This Course

[10]

Keeping in mind the models we have just looked at, we are going to move into looking at a Biblical model of how the early church grew, and then we will move to translate that model to our world today. The following are some of our principles in learning *Lifestyle Evangelism*:

1. God gives faith through His *Means of Grace* (Word and Sacraments).
2. The Word of God, which works and gives faith is that Word which He alone gives and which He helps us to understand (Scripture interprets Scripture).
3. Through the water and the Word, in particular God's name (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), that is, through Holy Baptism, God gives faith, forgiveness, life and salvation.
4. Through the bread and wine and the Word, God gives body and blood, forgiveness of sins, faith, strengthening of faith, life and salvation.
5. What we believe determines how we worship because how we worship flows out of what we believe.
6. Conversely, how we worship affects what we believe because, as we worship, so we will believe.
7. God calls all people to faith. He calls many to vocation. To whatever vocation He has called each one of us, we are to bear witness of the faith and hope that we have through that vocation.
8. We are to be ready at all times to give an answer for the hope that we have (that is, to give a witness of our faith in Jesus).
9. We are not to worry about what we are to say when we are to give an answer for the hope that we have because, at the proper time, the Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak.
10. The Holy Spirit works through the words we have learned as we make regular (daily) and diligent (as often as possible) use of His means of grace (Word and Sacrament).
11. Sanctuary size, a good sound system, enough parking places, clean facilities are all important but are never more important than the message, God's Word of Jesus Christ.

Witnessing from a Full Cup An Illustration

The fact of the matter is, as Christians, filled with the gifts of God and filled with the Holy Spirit, we cannot help but overflow and share our faith with others. The best illustration I like to use is the one with a cup and a pitcher (and remember, please do not overdo this illustration, or you will destroy it). God is like a never-emptying pitcher. We are like empty cups. Every time we make use of the means of grace—hearing the Word read and proclaimed, reading the Word on our own, remembering our Baptism, participating in the Lord's Supper, confessing our sins and being given absolution, the Lord fills us, His cups, from His never-emptying pitcher. We could come and be filled and then go away and not return to be given any more gifts, but just as a cup of water will eventually become dry as the water evaporates, we could eventually lose any gifts we have been given. We could return time and again, even with the larger cup of expectations, demanding more each time so that we are never filled with our Lord's gifts. Or we could make regular and diligent (every Sunday and every day) use of the means of grace and be filled until we are overflowing and the gifts God gives to us spill out from us onto others. In other words, our faith overflows as we share it with others. This devolvement is also a response of faith, that is, doing the good works which God has for us to do (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14).

Summing It Up

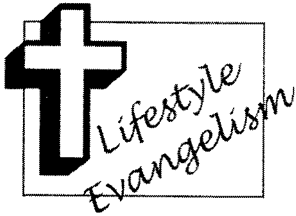
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How does God give the gifts He has to give (i.e., faith, forgiveness, life, eternal life, salvation, etc.)? What are the *means* that He uses to give us the gifts He has to give? Does He put them out into the world and they are ours to take? Does He give them through other people?

God's usual way of working with us, His people, is *mediately*, that is through means, not *immediately*, which would be to directly show Himself to us. Thus, God's usual way of giving us His good gifts and blessings is through His means of Grace, the Bible, and the Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. If God usually works with us in this way, think about how it is that we are given faith, strengthened in faith and kept in faith. Then, think about what God's way means for the purposes of spreading the good news of Jesus with others.

Finally, think about how we might best be used in God's plan of salvation for the world. Since we do not convert others, only God does, what is our role in God's plan? Since God works through means, what is our role in connection with these means?

Session Notes



The Best Place to Start

The Biblical Model of Church Growth - see the book of Acts - the Church grew (through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God).

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore how the church grew in its earliest days, following Jesus ascension.
- Distinguish between what is and what is not a “means of grace,” that is, how God gives faith, forgiveness, life and salvation.
- Explore the possibilities for today.

Getting Into the Lesson

The book of Acts records the accounts of the first Christians and Christian congregations. As you read through the descriptions in the book of Acts, you will learn how God does great things even in spite of the sinners He has as helpers. In this session, you will look at some of the descriptions of the growth of the early Christian church. As you read these descriptions, discern how it is that God grew His Church in the early days and then think about how He grows His Church today.

1. Read Acts 2:38-41. What two means of grace are present in this account, and what was the result?

(Word and Baptism; the Lord added about three thousand who were given faith and saved.)

2. Read Acts 2:41-47. What means of grace is present in this account, and what was the result?

(The Apostles' teaching, that is the Word; the Lord added to their number daily.)

3. Read Acts 4:4: What means of grace is present, and what is the result?

(The message, the Word; about 5000 believed.)

4. Read Acts 5:12-16: How were the words of Paul and Barnabas substantiated as true? What means of grace, then, are implied, and what is the result?

(The words of Paul and Barnabas were substantiated through the signs and wonders that accompanied their words. The people heard the Word which moved them to come and hear more; the Lord added to their numbers.)

5. Read Acts 6:7. What means of grace is present, and what is the result?

(The Word of God; number of disciples increased.)

6. Read Acts 9:31. What means of grace is implied, and what is the result?

(The Holy Spirit, working through Word of God; the church grew in numbers.)

7. Read Acts 11:19-21; What means of grace is present, and what is the result? Also, note who is spreading the message.

(The good news about the Lord Jesus, that is Word of God; a great number of people believed. The message was being spread by those who were scattered from the persecution, not the apostles.)

8. Read Acts 13:48. What means of grace is present, and what is the result?

(The word of the Lord; all who were appointed for eternal life believed.)

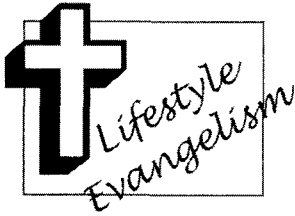
9. Read Acts 16:4,5. What means of grace is present, and what is the result?

(The decision, based on the word of God; the churches were strengthened in faith and grew daily in numbers.)

Summing It Up

As we make our way through the book of Acts, we notice several things. First, it is the Holy Spirit who is working through regular people to spread the good news about Jesus. Second, it is the Word of the Lord (and the Sacraments) through which the Holy Spirit is working. Third, it is the Holy Spirit who is giving faith. Fourth, it is the Holy Spirit who is bringing growth into the church. And finally, all these happenings are a regular part of the lives of the people; as they live, they do the good works which God has prepared in advance for them to do.

Session Notes



A Lutheran Understanding

The Means of Grace: Word and Sacrament Catechetical Teaching

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore how *Luther's Small Catechism* can be useful in giving an answer for the hope that we have in Jesus.
- Understand the importance of the means of grace.
- Explore our giving a defense for the hope we have in Christ according to our station in life.

Getting Into the Lesson

In this lesson, we will come to gain a greater appreciation for our Catechism as we look at some of the questions and answers which will give us a better understanding of the *Means of Grace* as well as our own privilege, duty and responsibility in living lives of *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

1. Read the following two questions and answers from *Luther's Small Catechism* concerning Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Then, answer what is so important about Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

249. If Christ has already won forgiveness and salvation for us and gives us all this by grace alone, why do we still need Baptism?

Christ has indeed won full forgiveness and salvation for the whole human race with His perfect life, suffering, death, and resurrection. He distributes this same forgiveness in Baptism. (Baptism is a means of grace.) (Cf. 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5–7)

296. What is the benefit offered in this sacrament?

A. The chief blessing of the Sacrament is the forgiveness of sins which Christ's body and blood have won for us on the cross. (The Lord's Supper is a means of grace.) (Cf. Matt. 26:28; 1 Peter 1:18–19; Col. 1:22; 1 John 1:7)
(continued on next page)

(Cont.)

B. Together with forgiveness, God gives all other blessings as well, that is, “life and salvation.”

“We must never regard the sacrament as a harmful thing from which we should flee, but as a pure, wholesome, soothing medicine which aids and quickens us in both soul and body. For where the soul is healed, the body has benefitted also” (Large Catechism V 68).

“We are talking about the presence of the living Christ, knowing that ‘death no longer has dominion over Him’ [Rom. 6:9]” (Apology X 4). (Cf. Rom. 6:8–9; Rom. 8:31–32)

C. In the Sacrament Christ gives victory over sin and hell and strength for the new life in Him. (Cf. Rom. 8:10; 1 Peter 2:24)

D. As Christians partake of this sacrament together, they make a solemn public confession of Christ and of unity in the truth of His Gospel. (Cf. 1 Cor. 10:17; 1 Cor. 11:26) Note: See also Heb. 12:22–24.

(These are the means through which our Lord distributes His gifts and blessings, faith, forgiveness, strengthening of faith, life and salvation.)

Catechetical Teaching

The Ten Commandments shows us our sins. The Apostles’ Creed shows us our Savior. The Lord’s Prayer shows us how to be in a relationship and conversation with our Lord. Holy Baptism shows us the way to enter into the Holy Christian Church. Confession and Absolution and the Office of the Keys show us the rhythm and flow of worship. The Lord’s Supper gives us the opportunity to feast on the Lord and to participate in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins. Read through the following questions from *Luther’s Small Catechism*, and then answer the questions which follow.

157. Why do you need the Holy Spirit to begin and sustain this faith in you?

By nature I am spiritually blind, dead, and an enemy of God, as the Scriptures teach; therefore, “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.” (Cf. 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:8–9; 1 Cor. 12:3)

158. What has the Holy Spirit done to bring you to faith?

The Holy Spirit “has called me by the Gospel,” that is, He has invited and drawn me by the Gospel to partake of the spiritual blessings that are mine in Christ. (Cf. Rom. 1:16; 2 Thess. 2:14; Rev. 22:17; Bible narratives: Invitation to the wedding banquet of the king’s son (Matt. 22:1–10). Invitation to the great banquet (Luke 14:16–17).)

159. How do the Scriptures describe this gracious work of the Spirit in you?

The Scriptures teach that by the Gospel the Holy Spirit “enlightened me with His gifts,” that is, He gave me the saving knowledge of Jesus, my Savior, so that I trust, rejoice, and find comfort in Him. (Cf. 1 Peter 2:9; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Peter 1:8; Rom. 15:13; Bible narratives: The Samaritans were filled with great joy when Philip preached Christ to them (Acts 8:5–8). The jailer at Philippi and his whole family were filled with joy because they had come to believe (Acts 16:25–34).)

160. What is this work of the Holy Spirit called?

It is called conversion (being turned) or regeneration (new birth). (Cf. Ps. 51:13; John 3:5–6)

161. Why do you say that the Holy Spirit has done this by the Gospel?

The Gospel is the means by which the Holy Spirit offers us all the blessings of Christ and creates faith in us.

Note: The written and spoken Word of the Gospel and the sacraments are the means of grace. (Cf. John 17:20; Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 4:15; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; John 20:22–23; Matt. 26:27–28)

162. Besides faith, what else does the Holy Spirit create in you by the Gospel?

The Holy Spirit sanctifies me in the true faith, that is, by faith He works a renewal of my whole life—in spirit, will, attitude, and desires—so that I now strive to overcome sin and do good works (sanctification in the narrow sense). (Cf. Ps. 51:10; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:22–23; Eph. 2:10; Eph. 5:18–20)

163. What are good works in God's sight?

In God's sight a good work is everything that a child of God does, speaks, or thinks in faith according to the Ten Commandments, for the glory of God, and for the benefit of his or her neighbor. (Cf. Heb. 11:6; John 15:5; Matt. 15:9; John 14:15; 1 Cor. 10:31; Gal. 5:13; Bible narratives: The widow's offering (Mark 12:41–44). The expensive perfume poured on Jesus' head (Mark 14:3–9). Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38–42).)

164. What do the Scriptures teach about the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to His church. They teach that

- A. the Holy Spirit through the Word and sacraments freely gives to all Christians the most precious gifts: faith in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life;
- B. in apostolic times the Holy Spirit also gave some Christians the gift to perform miraculous signs and wonders (for example, healings, speaking in tongues, raising the dead).

The Scriptures do not teach, however, that God will necessarily give all Christians in every time and place special miraculous gifts. The Holy Spirit bestows His blessings according to His good pleasure. (Cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20–22; Bible narrative: Special signs connected with the apostles personally (Acts 5:12–16; 8:14–19; 19:11–12, 20; 20:7–12).)

Note: In popular English, the word charismatic describes a dynamic person, highly emotional worship, or claims of special miraculous gifts. But the Greek word charisma means simply "gift" and refers, for example, to Christ's whole work of salvation (Rom. 5:15–16), to eternal life (Rom. 6:23), and to being married or single (1 Cor. 7:7).

165. Finally, what also does the Holy Spirit do for you?

The Holy Spirit by the Gospel keeps me in the true faith. (Cf. Phil. 1:6; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:13)

166. Whom else does the Holy Spirit regenerate and renew?

The Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." (Cf. Eph. 3:6)

167. Does the Holy Spirit want to do this in the lives of all people?

God the Holy Spirit earnestly wants to convert all people and bring them to salvation through the Gospel. (Cf. Ezek. 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9)

168. Then, why are not all people saved?

Many reject the Word and resist the Holy Spirit; therefore they remain in unbelief and under God's judgment by their own fault. (Cf. Matt. 23:37; Acts 7:51; Bible narratives: The invited guests refused to come (Matt. 22:1–10). The guests refused to accept the invitation (Luke 14:16–24).)

Questions

1. What is your nature before being given faith by the Holy Spirit, and what would this mean if unchanged?

(Spiritually blind, dead and an enemy of God, meaning that we would be lost eternally without His help.)

2. What does the Holy Spirit use to give faith? What else does the Holy Spirit give besides faith? And what is this work called that the Holy Spirit performs?

(The means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments. He also gives forgiveness, life and salvation. His work is called conversion or regeneration.)

3. The Holy Spirit calls us to faith. After we are called to faith, is anything required or expected of us, and if so, what? What are these called? What things fit into this category?

(Yes, we are expected to respond with works of service, doing those things which the Lord has prepared in advance for us to do. These things are called good works. Good works are those things which are motivated by the Holy Spirit, done in and through us by the Holy Spirit and give glory to God.)

4. What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit? What are *not* the gifts of the Holy Spirit? What else does the Holy Spirit do for you?

(Faith, forgiveness, life, and salvation. Anything that is contrary to what the Word of God says He gives. The Holy Spirit continues to work to keep me in faith.)

5. Why are some people not saved?

(They refuse the good gifts and blessings God has to give.)

Table of Duties

[19]

In **Section 3** of *Luther's Small Catechism*, **Table of Duties**, "Certain passages of scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities," are given. Below are listed the position and Bible references concerning each position. Read through these Bible passages and then answer the questions that follow.

To Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers:
1 Tim. 3:2-4; 1 Tim. 3:6; Titus 1:9

To Parents:
Eph. 6:4

What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors:
1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17

To Children:
Eph. 6:1-3

Of Civil Government:
Rom. 13:1-4

To Workers of All Kinds:
Eph. 6:5-8

Of Citizens:
Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:5-7; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14

To Employers and Supervisors:
Eph. 6:9

To Husbands:
1 Peter 3:7; Col. 3:19

To Youth:
1 Peter 5:5-6

To Wives:
Eph. 5:22; 1 Peter 3:5-6

To Widows:
1 Tim. 5:5-6

To Everyone:
Rom. 13:9; 1 Tim. 2:1

Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well shall fare.

Questions

1. According to these passages of Scripture, how might we summarize our duty?

(Our duty is to live lives according to the will of God, especially doing the good works which He has for us to do.)

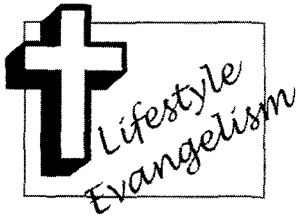
2. As we live lives according to our duty, what is the (implied) result?

(The result is that we bear witness of our faith and give glory to God.)

Summing It Up

In this session, we come to understand the importance of the Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We also come to understand our nature, that is that we are spiritually blind, dead and enemies of God and left on our own we would be eternally condemned. We are reminded that it is God who comes to us, seeking us and calling us to faith. It is God who gives us faith and He gives us faith through His Word and His Sacraments. We also understand that God continues to strengthen and keep us in faith through these same means of grace. Thus, it is important, even imperative that we make regular (daily, weekly) and diligent use of these means so that we may be strengthened in our faith, so that we might then be better able to give a defense of our hope in Christ our Savior. This is our response to God's good gifts and blessings, that is that we live lives of faith. As we live lives of faith, others see what it means to be a Christian. As others observe our lives, as they ask, we are then able to give a defense for the hope we have in Christ Jesus.

Session Notes



Practice as Determined by Doctrine, Part One

We practice what we preach: What does this mean in the area of *worship*?
Sacramental versus Sacrificial.
Distinguishing between worship and evangelism.

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore the two parts of worship, God's giving and our response.
- Explore the importance of worship and how worship is evangelism.
- Explore the importance of a devotional life at home, both personal and family.

Getting Into the Lesson

As we go about living our lives according to our calling to faith and according to our station in life, when the opportunity arises for us to give an answer for the hope that we have, what is the answer we are to give? Just as our Lord gives us faith and strengthens and keeps us in faith through His means of grace, so He uses these means to give us the words which the Holy Spirit uses to give an answer for the hope we have. We are given these words through our worship and family devotional life. In this session, we will come to see the importance of our making regular and diligent use of the means of grace, hearing and reading the Word, remembering our Baptism and participating in the Lord's Supper.

Worship

When we worship, two important things are happening. First and foremost is that the Lord is coming to us to give us His good gifts and blessings, known as the *sacramental* part of worship. We know that we worship a God who, really, does not need anything from us; rather, He is a God who provides for all our needs (Unlike an idol which requires great amounts of attention, since an idol is nothing but what humans make it.) The second part of worship is our response to God's good gifts and blessings, known as the *sacrificial* part of worship.

1. As you think about your worship service, identify those parts which are *sacramental* and those parts which are *sacrificial*.

(*Sacramental includes: the liturgy, the reading of the lessons, the sermon, the Lord's Supper. Sacrificial includes: hymns, prayers, offerings.*)

2. As you think about your worship service, identify where in the Bible many parts of the service have their origin. In other words, the invocation is based on Matthew 18:20. From where are the other parts of the worship service taken? [22]

(The Invocation: Matthew 18:20; The Introit: one of the Psalms; The Kyrie and Hymn of Praise: Mark 10:46-52; Luke 2:14; The Salutation: Ruth 2:14; The Lessons: from the Old and New Testaments; The Sermon: based on a text from the Word of God; The Benediction: Numbers 6:24-26.)

3. Understanding that the Word of God is one of the means of grace, explain what is important in a worship service and how that would make a worship service evangelistic. Conversely, what would a worship service be like that would not be evangelistic?

(What is important in worship is the Word of God. The Liturgy, which is permeated with the Word of God, is evangelistic because it is through this Word that the Holy Spirit gives and works faith, strengthen faith, and gives forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. A worship service with little or no Word of God would be non-evangelistic.)

4. In education methods classes one learning to be a teacher is taught that the way to teach is by repetition, in other words, in order to help students learn, it is important that they hear the lesson over and over again. According to this understanding of teaching, what is important in worship, thinking in evangelistic terms and thinking in terms of helping Christians to be able to give an answer for the hope that we have in Christ Jesus? Also, what is important in family worship, i.e. family devotions?

(Worship, which is repetitive, that is, using the same liturgy every week, gives the worshipers an opportunity to hear and rehear the same things so that they come to know these things by heart. This memory, in turn, gives them the Holy Spirit's words to use to help give an answer for the hope they have in Christ Jesus.)

5. Think about other ways and opportunities you have or could have in filling your mind with those means of grace, those words of God through which the Holy Spirit might work in order to help you give an answer for the hope you have. What are some ways you are now filling your mind with the Lord's Words and other ways you might try?

(Personal reading of the Bible, reading of devotional materials, especially Portals of Prayer, having family devotions, etc.)

We Practice What We Preach

[23]

Perhaps you have heard the old saying that we should “practice what we preach.” Today the expression is “If you talk the talk, then walk the walk.” That statement means that we should live like we believe what we are telling other people, especially in regards to our life of faith. If we say we are Christians, if others know we are Christians, then what they see is our living a life of what it means to be a Christian. Therefore, are we practicing what we preach, or do our lives give a different message from what we are speaking?

1. How is your faith expressed in your everyday life? In other words, how do you live your faith? Does your faith speak of the importance of the means of grace? If your faith does speak of the importance of the means of grace, then are you making regular and diligent use of these means?

(Yes, our Lutheran Christian faith says the means of grace are those means through which our Lord works to give, strengthen and keeps us in faith; thus, our lives of faith would be lived as such as we would be making regular [daily] and diligent [as often as possible] use of these means.)

2. By letting others know that we are Christians, we are making a witness. But what is our witness saying? Think about this in regards to the area of time in your life. God gives us 24 hours a day, 168 hours a week. How do we spend that time? Do we give of that time to the Lord, or do we use it all for ourselves. Take the time to track how much time you spend doing the various things that you do; then, look at your chart and see what truly is important to you, according to the time allotted.

(This task may be difficult, but it will give you an answer of what truly is important in your life, or at least, what is important enough for our time.)

3. Next, take the time to think about what gifts, talents and abilities you have. Perhaps you have a hobby in which you use your hands for making things. Now, think about if or how you use or might use these gifts, talents and abilities in service to God and His church. Think about how this use of gifts, talents and abilities bears witness of your faith and the importance of God in your life.

(This task, too, may be difficult as well, but it should give you an indication of how you witness.)

4. Finally, take some time to think about your stewardship capabilities. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” In other words, by looking at where you spend your money, you will get an indication of what is important to you. You should not be surprised because it is the same as we have just been discussing with our time and our talents.

(This exercise may take some hard, honest searching, but it will give you an indication of what is important in your life and what witness you are making as such.)

5. Now that you have done the difficult work of looking at your witness of time, talents and treasure, are there any changes you need to make? It is only as we acknowledge where we are, confess how we always fall short, and look to God for guidance that we can move in the direction He would have us to go. Think about where you are and where you would like to be; then, make some notes for yourself and pray that the Lord would help you to accomplish these things as only He can. [24]

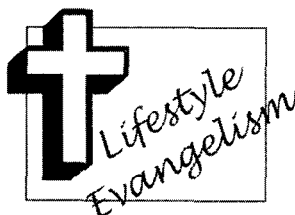
(Answers may vary.)

Summing It Up

In this session we have learned how we live what we believe and how we believe what we live. We have especially seen the truth in regards to our worship attendance and life. We Lutheran Christians believe that God works through means, namely through the means of grace, the Word (the Bible) and the sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper). Because these means are the way God comes to us to give us strength and keep us in faith, it is important that we make regular and diligent use of these means. Because God comes to give us all His good gifts and blessings in these ways, it is imperative that our worship life be permeated with these means. Thus, as we worship, we reply to God in the very words which He has given us to say, and then we respond, in all aspects of our lives, to what He gives to us by living lives which reflect the faith and hope that we have.

Our worship life is important, because as we worship, as we are give God's good gifts and blessings through His means of grace, both in our public worship and in our private worship and devotional life, we are then better able and better prepared to give a defense of our hope in Christ Jesus our Savior. So, we are beginning to see the ebb and flow of the importance of in reach, that is the importance of our own spiritual well being, in relation to outreach, that is that only as we are given, strengthened and kept in faith, will we then reach out and share our faith with others, through our actions and words.

Session Notes



Practice as Determined by Doctrine, Part Two

We practice what we preach: What does this mean in the area of the *Word*?

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore the importance of the Word as a means of grace.
- Explore how God gives His gifts through His Word.
- Explore ways we might make better use of His Word.

Getting Into the Lesson

Very often, when we talk about means of grace, the first means mentioned is the Word. The Word of God, that is, the Bible or Holy Scripture, as it is called, is one of the means, that is, one of the ways that God has of coming to us to give us His good gifts and blessings, including but not limited to faith, forgiveness, strengthening of faith, keeping us in faith, life in this world, even eternal life in the world to come, heaven. In this session we want to take a closer look at the importance of this means of grace, the Word.

1. The Bible is a means of grace because, through the Bible, God comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings. In particular, God's Word is that which tells us the truth concerning our Savior, Jesus Christ. Look up Hebrews 1:1-2; Luke 24:27; John 20:31; Ephesians 2:20; and 1 John 1:1 and tell what these verses tell us about God's Word.

(God's Word tells us the truth about Jesus.)

2. How do we know the Bible is true? Is the Bible simply one book among many other books? How are we to correctly understand the Bible? Look up one or more of the following verses to help you answer these questions: Psalm 119:73; Matthew 13:19; 22:37; Mark 8:38; John 1:18; 5:39; 10:35; 14:26; Acts 10:43; 17:11; 24:14; Romans 3:4; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Colossians 2:8; 2 Timothy 3:15, 16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; 3:15-16.

(God tells us His Word is truth. The Bible is not like other books but is a book with power. We correctly understand the Bible when we let it speak for itself.)

3. In understanding the Bible as God's Word, when we read His Word, we will want to keep in mind two distinct parts of the Bible. According to John 1:17, what are these two distinct parts?

(Law and Gospel.)

4. What does God teach in the Law? For help see Mark 12:30-31; John 5:45; Romans 3:20.

(God teaches us that we sin in thought, word and deed.)

5. What, then, is the purpose of the Law? For help see Psalm 119:9, 105; Romans 2:14-15; 3:20; 7:7; 1 Timothy 1:9; 1 John 4:9, 11.

(To curb us from sinning, to mirror our sins to us, to guide us in our lives to keep from sinning.)

6. What does God teach in the Gospel? For help see John 3:16; 6:23; Romans 1:16; Colossians 1:6.

(The Gospel tells us the good news of Jesus' life, suffering, death and resurrection for our sins.)

7. What, then, is the purpose of the Gospel? For help see John 3:16; Romans 1:16; 10:4; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 1:13-14.

(The Gospel offers forgiveness of sins.)

8. Perhaps you have heard the phrase, "God's Word does what it says." What does this statement mean?

(When God's Word says we are forgiven, then we are forgiven.)

9. The Word of God is a means of grace because through this means the Holy Spirit works faith in your heart. How does this conversion happen? For help see Romans 1:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Revelation 22:17;

(The Holy Spirit moves in us to believe the Word and to confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord.)

10. Summarize the importance of this means of grace.

(Through the Word of God, the Holy Spirit works faith, gives forgiveness, strengthens and keeps us in faith.)

11. What is the connection between the Word and giving a defense for the hope we have?

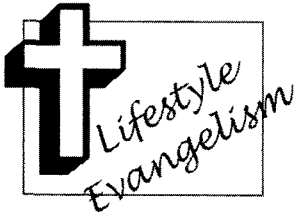
(The Word is one more means our Lord has of filling us with Himself in order that He might be able, at the right time, to drawn on what is in us in order to given an answer for the hope we have.)

Summing It Up

[27]

In this session, we have learned that the Bible is the Word of God and is a word that is different from any other word. It is a Word with power to do what it says. When the Word says we are forgiven, we are forgiven. When the Holy Spirit works through the Word to work faith, faith is given. The sharing of the Word is important in our daily lives because it is through this Word that others will be given faith as well.

Session Notes



Practice as Determined by Doctrine, Part Three

We practice what we preach: What does this mean in the area of *Holy Baptism*?

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore the importance of Holy Baptism as a means of grace.
- Explore how God gives His gifts through Holy Baptism.
- Explore how we might make better use of our Baptism as we live as *lifestyle evangelists*.

Getting Into the Lesson

Very often when we talk about means of grace, the second means mentioned are the sacraments. The Sacraments include both Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are two more of the ways that God comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings, including but not limited to faith, forgiveness, strengthening of faith, keeping us in faith, life in this world and even eternal life in the world to come, heaven. In this session, we want to take a closer look at the importance of this means of grace, Holy Baptism.

The Nature of Baptism

Luther's Small Catechism talks about Holy Baptism under four distinct headings. The first heading is the Nature of Baptism. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. What is baptism? Who gave us baptism? In whose name should one be baptized? Who should be baptized? What distinction should be made in baptizing?

(Baptism is water and God's name, given to us by God Himself. One is to be baptized in God's name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All, young and old, infants included, are to be baptized. The only distinction is that children who are old enough may be instructed first and then baptized.)

The Blessings of Baptism

Luther's Small Catechism talks about Holy Baptism under four distinct headings. The second heading is the Blessings of Baptism. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. What are the blessings of Holy Baptism? To whom are these blessings given?

[29]

(The blessings of Holy Baptism are forgiveness of sins, rescue from death and the devil, eternal salvation and faith. These blessings are given to all who believe.)

2. Is it possible for an unbaptized person to be saved? Does baptism guarantee salvation, even to an unbeliever? What then condemns?

(Yes, it is only unbelief that condemns; thus, even a baptized unbeliever is condemned. What condemns is refusal of baptism, which is gift refusal.)

The Power of Baptism

Luther's Small Catechism talks about Holy Baptism under four distinct headings. The third heading is the Power of Baptism. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. What is the power of Holy Baptism?

(The power of Holy Baptism is the Word of God.)

What Baptism Indicates

Luther's Small Catechism talks about Holy Baptism under four distinct headings. The fourth heading is What Baptism Indicates. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. Describe what is happening in Holy Baptism.

(The Old Adam, the Old sinful nature, is drowned, killed, and the new man is raised up to new life.)

2. Once one is baptized, what then is important concerning one's baptism?

(One is to remember daily one's baptism and thus recall that one is a member of the body of Christ, a forgiven sinner with the joy of beginning anew each morning.)

What Is Important

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1. How then is Baptism a means of grace? Why, then, is it important?

(Baptism is that means through which the Holy Spirit gives faith, strengthens it and keeps us in faith. It is important because we need this constant reminder that, when we fail, we can begin anew.)

2. What reminds us of our baptism?

(We are reminded of our baptism when we deal with water. We are reminded of our baptism when we say or hear the Trinitarian invocation.)

3. What is the connection between Holy Baptism and giving an answer for the hope we have?

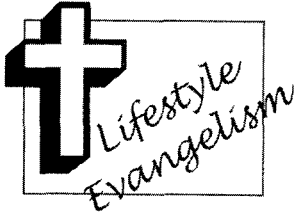
(Holy Baptism is one more means our Lord has of filling us with Himself in order that He might be able, at the right time, to draw on what is in us in order to give an answer for the hope we have in Jesus Christ.)

Summing It Up

In this session we have come to understand the importance of Holy Baptism. It is through Holy Baptism that we become members of the body of Christ. It is in remembering our baptism that we are reminded of the good gifts and blessings our Lord constantly bestows on us. Thus, when we have begun a new day and it gets to be nine or ten in the morning and we have “messed up” too many times, we can remember our baptism and be reminded that we can start over!

Here again, as with the means of the Word, it is only as we are filled (in reach) that we will then reach out (outreach) and share the message of salvation with others, through our actions and words. As the Word shapes our character and our lives, so Holy Baptism shapes us as well.

Session Notes



Practice as Determined by Doctrine, Part Four

We practice what we preach: What does this mean in the area of *the Lord's Supper*?

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore the importance of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace.
- Explore how God gives His gifts through His Holy Supper.
- Explore how we might make better use of the Lord's Supper as we live as *lifestyle evangelists*.

Getting Into the Lesson

Very often, when we talk about means of grace, the second means mentioned are the sacraments. The Sacraments include both Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are two more of the ways that God comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings, including but not limited to faith, forgiveness, strengthening of faith, keeping us in faith, life in this world and even eternal life in the world to come, heaven. In this session, we want to take a closer look at the importance of this means of grace, the Lord's Supper.

The Nature of the Sacrament of the Altar

Luther's Small Catechism talks about the Sacrament of the Altar under four distinct headings. The first heading is the Nature of the Sacrament of the Altar. Review this information in your Catechism and answer the following questions.

1. What is the Lord's Supper? Who gave us the Lord's Supper? What does Christ give in His Supper? How are these given?

(The Lord's Supper is that means which Jesus gave us on the night of His betrayal. In this supper, Christ gives us His body and blood, in, with, and under the bread and wine. These are given in a supernatural way, called a "mystery.")

The Benefit of the Sacrament of the Altar

[32]

Luther's Small Catechism talks about the Sacrament of the Altar under four distinct headings. The second heading is the Benefit of the Sacrament of the Altar. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. What are the blessings of the Lord's Supper? To whom are these blessings given?

(The blessings of the Lord's Supper are the body and blood of the Lord, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. These blessings are given to all who believe.)

The Power of the Sacrament of the Altar

Luther's Small Catechism talks about the Sacrament of the Altar under four distinct headings. The third heading is the Power of Sacrament of the Altar. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. What is the power of the Lord's Supper?

(The power of the Lord's Supper is the Word of God.)

How to Receive This Sacrament Worthily

Luther's Small Catechism talks about the Sacrament of the Altar under four distinct headings. The fourth heading is How to Receive This Sacrament Worthily. Review this information in your Catechism, and answer the following questions.

1. Why is worthy reception of this sacrament so important? Who is worthy, or how does one go about making himself/herself worthy?

(Worthy reception is important because unworthy reception may be spiritually devastating. One is worthy who believes the words and promises given. One is worthy who confesses his/her reception of the body and blood of Christ in the meal.)

2. How does one examine oneself?

(We examine ourselves by making sure we are sorry for our sins, by believing in Jesus as the Christ and by trusting that we are being given His body and blood in the meal, and by planning, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to amend our lives.)

What Is Important

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1. How then is the Lord's Supper a means of grace? Why, then, is this sacrament important?

(The Lord's Supper is a means through which the Holy Spirit gives and strengthens faith and keeps us in faith. It is important because we need this constant reminder that, when we fail, we can begin anew.)

2. The Lord's Supper is also a confession of one's faith. With this in mind, why is it important that one knows and understands what is happening before approaching the Lord's Table?

(One cannot have two confessions; therefore, it is important in making a right confession to know what is the confession of the table to which one is attending.)

3. What is the connection between the Lord's Supper and giving an answer for the hope we have?

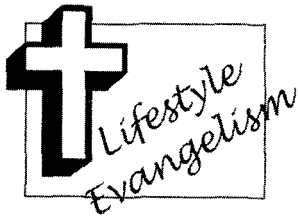
(The Lord's Supper is one more means our Lord has of filling us with Himself in order that He might be able, at the right time, to draw on what is in us in order to give an answer for the hope we have.)

Summing It Up

In this session we have come to understand the importance of the Lord's Supper. It is through the Lord's Supper that our Lord comes to us to give us His body and blood and forgiveness and life. It is through the Lord's Supper that we participate in Christ's death and resurrection. Through our participation in the Lord's Supper, His death becomes our death and His life becomes our life. It is vital that we understand the confession that we make when approaching the Lord's table, always discerning the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

Once again, as with the means of the Word and Holy Baptism, it is only as we are filled (in reach) that we will then reach out (outreach) and share the message of salvation with others, through our actions and words. As the Word and Holy Baptism shapes our character and our lives, so the Lord's Supper shapes us as well. As we come to the Lord's Table, as we are given His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, how can we not want to share that same forgiveness and faith with others?

Session Notes



What Does this Practice Look Like?

How does a Lutheran Church go about growing?

Goals

In this session we will:

- Look at some of the things we have learned and seek to put them into practice.
- Examine some of the things we are already doing and seek to refine our consciousness in witnessing through these avenues.
- Seek ways to be more conscious about living as witnesses of the hope that we have in Christ Jesus.

Getting Into the Lesson

What does a church, a congregation, look like that is practicing *Lifestyle Evangelism*? The following is a list of thoughts, comments and questions intended to engage you thinking about our purpose for existence and how we might better serve our Lord in this place. This list is presented in an order of priority, with the most important thoughts, comments and questions being presented first, all the way to the last of the important priorities. Read each statement and then answer the questions which pertain to that statement.

We, you and I, the members of Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, must be in the Word. We must commit ourselves and do it. We cannot and will not reach out until we have been reached. Remember the illustration of the cup and the pitcher? God is like a [never-emptying] pitcher and we are like a cup. When we read His Word, remember our Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and worship, He fills us. We can come sporadically and what we have will evaporate between visits. We can come each time with a larger cup and never be filled. Or we can be filled to the point of overflowing, at which point, and only at which point we will spill over and share with those around us.

1. Why is it so important that we are individually in the Word?

(We will not overflow unless we are filled.)

We will recognize that although worship is not evangelism per say, it may be evangelistic. Worship is worship and is for the people of God. Worship is sacramental (God giving to us) and sacrificial (our response of prayer, praise and thanksgiving). Worship is one way of accomplishing number one above.

2. What is important about worship, and how can worship be evangelistic?

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(Worship is important for our spiritual well-being, so that we are filled and so that we have an opportunity to respond to God's good gifts and blessings. Worship may be evangelistic only as the Word of God permeates such worship.)

We will recognize that evangelism is not a program but is a way of life. At the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gave us the great promise that, as we live our lives on this earth, He will be with us and will give us His authority to make disciples of all people, baptizing and teaching them. Also, when we read through the book of Acts, we find that the church grew as the people heard the Word of God from family and friends.

3. How best is God's Word spread?

(Through our living lives of faith.)

We will recognize that our family and all families are important because they are the first places we learn. What do we learn? We learn about Jesus, about life, about managing (stewarding) all God's good gifts and blessings.

4. Why are families so important?

(They are our first teachers.)

We will recognize that our managing our time, our talents, and our treasure is a reflection of our faith and values. What does how you spend your time, talents and treasure say about your faith and values? Not, what do you say are your priorities, but what does your life shows as important to you. Managing our time, talents and treasure is not a one or the other proposition, but it is an all-inclusive managing. We might ask ourselves, are we volunteering to serve on boards and committees, or are we waiting to be asked? Are we giving back to God in service to Him according to the gifts, talents and abilities He has so graciously given to us?

5. How is stewardship a form of evangelism?

(We are stewards according to our acknowledgment of the faith we have in us.)

We will recognize that our response of time, talents and treasure to the Lord also reflects our congregation's faith and values.

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6. What does our mission offering say about what is important?

(Our mission offering shows if sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ is a priority for our congregation as a whole.)

We will recognize that our children are important ("suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not"). One major focus stands out, namely, our focus on children and serving families with children.

7. How can we make sure that we are focused on our children and on families with children?

(Answers will vary.)

We will recognize that our day care and school are important and are an untapped field, white for the harvest. What are we doing, what can we be doing in the area of reaching out to the families whose children are here every day of the week and especially to those families who do not know Jesus and who do not have a relationship with Him?

8. What can we do to reach out better to those in need?

(Answers will vary.)

We will examine such things as how our meetings reflect our priorities. Do we meet just to meet? Or do we meet for a purpose? Perhaps if our meeting times are filled with more fellowship time than meeting time, then we need to have more fellowship opportunities instead of more meeting times.

9. What do our meetings have to do with evangelism?

(Do we in our meetings work around an idea of reaching out to others, and when we talk to others about our meetings, are our discussions positive?)

We will examine other things, such as how our budgeting and managing (stewardship or stewarding) reflect our faith, our theology, our mission and vision.

10. How do these work together?

(Answers will vary.)

We will examine such things as what does our constitution say about what we believe, and what is of value to us? How does our constitution help or how does it hinder our service to our Lord as well as to our community, nation and world?

11. How do these work together?

(Answers will vary.)

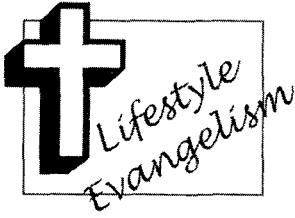
We will want to ask and answer such questions as, What will we change? What will we keep the same? What do we want to eliminate? What can we make better for the year 2003 and beyond?

Summing It Up

In this session we have looked at many ways in which our faith life affects the way we live as well as the effect we have on those with whom we have contact at church, during meetings, and in the space of each day. It is the intent of this course that you will see more and more how all these parts of your life work together to bring you to the place, to help you have the opportunity, and to give you the words to speak so that when you have the opportunity you may be able to give an answer for the hope that you have of eternal life.

Our faith effects our lives. When the terrorist attacked 9/11/02 there was an immediate change of behavior noticed in the lives of many Americans. Unfortunately, because there was not a change of heart as well, that behavior soon reverted back to the way it was before 9/11. It is only as there is a change of heart, and in the case of a Christian, the change of heart worked by the giving of faith by the Holy Spirit through the means of Grace, that one will have a change of behavior. Thus, a Christian, one who has been given faith, forgiveness and life, will be different in all aspects of his/her life. This change will witness one's faith, that is one can see that another is a Christian and has faith through his/her actions and one's faith will be witnessed through this behavior, that is, the Christian will not help but show for the faith that is in his/her heart. It will only be natural.

Session Notes



Using What is Good with Discerning Eyes and Hearts

What principles from sociology might we use and not use and how do we know the difference? (Letting our Doctrine determine our practice).
Parking lot size; Sanctuary size - filling 80% of capacity; Good care of grounds and facilities; Friend-to-friend evangelism.

Goals

In this session we will:

- Explore other important aspects of our congregation which might work toward making a more conscious effort at living lives of faith.
- Explore those things we can do as a congregation to actively encourage guests in their participation of our services.
- Explore any of those things which may discourage guests from active participation in our services and seek ways to remove such obstacles.

Getting Into the Lesson

In this session we will discuss some of the practical issues from a congregational level which we might address that will help us to do a better job of providing opportunities so that we might be better able to give an answer for the hope we have.

1. When you come to worship on Sunday mornings, what is the first impression you get when you drive up? What suggestions would you make to help us make a better impression?

(Answers will vary.)

2. When you walk into the sanctuary, what is the first thing you notice? Is it something that is important to notice, especially in regards to our purpose for coming to worship or not? What suggestions would you make to bring into focus that on which we should be focusing?

(Answers will vary.)

3. As you think about the purpose of worship as well as the importance of the means of grace in worship, would you say that we are accomplishing these purposes in our worship service? What suggestions would you make to help us to accomplish the purpose of worship more readily?

(Answers will vary.)

4. When a guests comes to worship with us, what would you suppose his/her reaction is to our worship facilities, our service and the like? How might we make it better for our guests?

(Answers will vary.)

5. If a guest entered worship and sat near you, what are some things you could do to help that person or persons in his/her worship experience? [39]

(Answers will vary.)

6. Certainly you have family and friends about whose well-being you are concerned. What suggestions have you found useful in the past few sessions that you will use to help in your witness to them?

(Answers will vary.)

7. Concerning your own spiritual life, what are some things you might do differently, change or try, in getting yourself prepared to be able to give an answer for the hope that you have of eternal life in Christ Jesus?

(Answers will vary.)

8. Has this course made you more or less self-conscious about your witnessing, and, at the same time, has it given you great confidence or shattered your confidence in witnessing?

(Answers will vary.)

9. Any other questions or suggestions.

(Answers will vary.)

Summing It Up

In this session we have attempted to pull the pieces together and to bring to a summary some of the things we have been talking about over the past few weeks.

Session Notes

Appendix Four

Addendum Survey

Addendum Survey

1. I actively share or communicate my faith to others verbally:

- a. daily.
- b. weekly.
- c. monthly.
- d. yearly.
- e. hardly ever.
- f. never.

If your answer to #1 was either c, d, e, or f, please answer question #2

2. Why do you not actively verbally communicate your faith?
Because:

- a. I am too busy.
- b. I am too afraid (scared) because:
 - 1. I do not know what to say.
 - 2. I might say the wrong thing.
- d. everyone is saved anyway, no matter what they believe.
- e. other _____

Appendix Five

Addendum Survey

Total Respondents:

Bible Class - 42; Worship - 24; Total - 66

1. I actively share or communicate my faith to others verbally:

a. daily.

Bible Class - 13; Worship - 12; Total - 25

b. weekly.

Bible Class - 19; Worship - 9; Total - 28

c. monthly.

Bible Class - 1; Worship - 3; Total - 4

d. yearly.

Bible Class - 5; Worship - 0; Total - 5

e. hardly ever.

Bible Class - 4; Worship - 0; Total - 4

f. never.

Bible Class - 0; Worship - 1; Total - 1

If your answer to #1 was either c, d, e, or f, please answer question #2

2. Why do you not actively verbally communicate your faith? Because:

a. I am too busy.

Bible Class - 1; Worship - 0; Total - 1

b. I am too afraid (scared) because:

1. I do not know what to say.

Bible Class - 4; Worship - 2; Total - 6

2. I might say the wrong thing.

Bible Class - 5; Worship - 5; Total - 10

d. everyone is saved anyway, no matter what they believe.

Bible Class - 0; Worship - 0; Total - 0

e. other _____

Bible Class - 5; Worship - 1; Total - 6

Worship:

I don't want to offend.

Bible Class:

1. If the opportunity arises, I do not see others outside of my family daily.

2. Around few people.

3. Don't have the opportunity to meet with non-believers.

4. Not around too many other people, only my Christian friends and neighbors.

5. No written response given.

Appendix Six

The following are the bulletin inserts of which there are fifty-two, one for each Sunday of the Church Year.

Lifestyle Evangelism is a life-living process.

In order to better equip you for a *lifestyle of evangelism*, I want to give you a few tips to better your living efforts. This week I want to set the ground work by clarifying some of the terms I will be using.

Evangelist: (1) someone with the *gift* of evangelism, that is the ability and urge to profess boldly and verbally the good news of Christ. (2) the good news of Jesus (His birth, life, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension and protection of us).

Witness: (1) (noun) anyone who sees an event. We are all witnesses, by faith, of Christ's life, death and resurrection. (2) (verb) one who professes what Christ and her/his faith means to her/him, good or bad, by thoughts, words and actions.

Lifestyle Evangelism: living one's life with a consciousness that what one thinks, says, and does is a witness of what s/he believes.

One tip is prayer: Few things can be accomplished without prayer. If there is someone in your family or circle of influence who is not a Christian, begin praying for that person. Pray for that person by name and for specific concerns they may have. Ask the Lord to help you in your efforts, that He may work through you and that praise and glory may be given to His Holy Name.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . **Natural.**

When you get a new car, purchase a new house, or hear some exciting news, you do not park your new car in a garage so no one can see it, not tell anyone where you live so they will not come and see your new house, and not tell anyone your good news so they cannot rejoice with you. No, instead, when you get a new car, you drive it around, hoping someone will see you in your new car. When you purchase a new house you invite everyone over, perhaps for a housewarming party, so that everyone can see it. When you have some good news you cannot wait to go and tell everyone so that all may rejoice with you.

Such is our Christian faith. Where older, perhaps more mature, Christians, are not as excited about their faith, the new Christian, is excited and cannot wait to tell others the good news of Jesus and his/her faith in Him and his/her assurance of eternal life. The new Christian, in particular, wants to tell his/her friends so that they may have the same sure and certain hope (certainty) of eternal life s/he has and certainly s/he wants his/her friends to be in heaven with him/her.

When you awaken in the morning, you naturally get yourself ready to greet the day. Before you sit down for a meal, you naturally wash your hands. When you sit down at the table for a meal, you naturally give thanks to the Lord in prayer. When you meet someone new, you naturally shake that person's hand and tell him/her you are glad to meet him/her. There are many things in life which are natural or which come naturally. Such is our Christian faith and the witness we make. When others see us, who wear the name Christian, they naturally come to the conclusion that we are a typical Christian. When others ask us about the hope that we have as Christians, we naturally give an answer for the hope we have Jesus is our Savior, because we cannot help but do so. It is just the natural thing to do.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Conscious.

There are some things in life which come naturally and easily. There are other things in life which are not natural and which are not easy. There are some things which we might call "second nature." Yet, if we think about many of these things which are "second nature," we will have to admit that it was not always so. Think about learning to walk. When we first learn to walk, we have to think long and hard about what we are doing. After we have grown and learned to walk, it comes naturally to us. Think about typing, playing a musical instrument, riding a bicycle and so forth. These things which are natural and "second nature" were not always so. There was a time when we first learned to type, to play a musical instrument, to ride a bicycle, when it took much mental energy to concentrate in order to accomplish the task.

Much the same may be said of our *Lifestyle Evangelism*. Living a life conscious of the fact that all we (think), say and do reflects the faith that is in our hearts may be difficult at first. It may take some concentration on our part to remind ourselves of the witness we are making. Many times, Jesus spoke of the fact that it is out of one's heart that one thinks, speaks and does. Thus, what we think, what we say, what we do does reflect what is in our heart, in faith or not in faith.

One helpful hint in become more conscious of this fact would be to put the Christian symbol of the fish on your car. Then, you will need to remind yourself, as you cut-off the driver behind you, that you have just made a negative witness of your Christian faith. As you become more conscious of your witness, with the Lord's help, you will be more courteous in your driving and also in your daily life and routine. Then, you will become more conscious of making a positive witness which will lead to opportunities to give an answer for the hope you have in Jesus your Savior.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Spontaneous.

You no doubt know about reflexes. When the doctor strikes you on the knee it kicks forward. For (very ticklish) people, just to talk about tickling them makes them laugh and wiggle. When someone startles you, you jump in surprise.

Some reflexes come naturally; others are learned. It is a natural reflex to kick your leg when your knee is hit. It is natural to jump when you are startled. Some reflexes do not come naturally and actually have to be learned. When you were a child your parents taught you to say “Yes ma’am,” and “No ma’am,” and “Yes sir,” and “No sir.” They had to teach you to say, “Please,” when you wanted something and to say, “Thank you,” when you received something. These words do not come naturally, but are taught. Yet, at some point they are almost natural, that is, after we have used them for many years.

Much the same way is our spontaneous Christian witness. The reason we call it *Lifestyle Evangelism* is because our witness of the good news (evangel) may take a while to learn. It may even take years of practice. Yet, the goal is that, at some point, it will be almost natural.

At this time in your life it might be more difficult to speak of your faith and even to give an answer for the hope you have in Jesus. But with patience and practice, putting your mind to it, it will become easier and easier until it becomes a natural part of your thinking, speaking and doing. Thus, when the opportunity presents itself, as God gives the opportunity, your *Lifestyle Evangelism* reflexes will “kick in,” and you will be able to give a natural answer for the hope you have. This natural witness will not seem fake or forced, but natural because it will, by this time, be a natural part of who you are and how you live.

What an awesome gift God gives, and what an awesome privilege to be a part of His giving His gifts to others as He works in and through us to give the reason we have hope in Him. To Him be the glory.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Witnessing from a Full Cup.

The fact of the matter is that, as Christians filled with the gifts of God and filled with the Holy Spirit, we cannot help but overflow and share our faith with others. But we must first be filled in order to be able to overflow.

The best illustration I like to use is the one with a cup and a pitcher (and remember, please do not overdo this illustration, or you will destroy it). God is like a never-emptying pitcher. We are like empty cups. Every time we make use of the means of grace, hearing the Word read and proclaimed, reading the Word on our own, remembering our Baptism, participating in the Lord's Supper, confessing our sins and being given absolution-whenever we do these things, the Lord fills us, our cups, from His never-emptying pitcher.

We could come and be filled and then go away and not return to be given any more gifts, but just as a cup of water will eventually become dry as the water evaporates, we could eventually lose any gifts we have been given. We could return time and again, yet with a larger cup each time so that we are never filled with our Lord's gifts. Or we could make regular and diligent (every Sunday and every day) use of the means of grace and be filled and filled some more until we are overflowing and the gifts God gives to us spill out from us onto others. In other words, our faith overflows as we share it with others. This devolvement is also a response of faith, that is, doing the good works which God has for us to do (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14).

Thus, we see the importance of our own participation in the means of grace as a witness to others of what is important in our own lives and as a means through which our Lord comes to fill us, to give us His good gifts and blessings. Through such grace (God's grace), then, we are strengthened and kept in faith and are better able to give an answer for the hope we have in Jesus our Savior.

Lifestyle Evangelism is Foundational.

The foundation of *Lifestyle Evangelism* begins in Genesis Chapter One. There, we are introduced to our God and Creator. He lays out for us His creation of the world and the order in which He created the world and all things. As the Lord completed each part of His creation on each day, He declared, "It is good." And ultimately, after His creation of humans, He declared His creation to be "very good!" Unfortunately, just a few verses later, what God had created as very good suffered from the human fall into sin, which brought death, and, in turn, brought God's "very good" creation into chaos once more. It is not as if God did not expect these events to happen; He is, after all, all knowing. Therefore, God immediately stepped in and promised that He would send a Savior, someone who would "fix" what was broken, the relationship between His creation and Him.

We begin with Genesis Chapter One because, if God's Word from the very beginning is not true, we cannot trust the rest of His Word. If God's Word is not true, we cannot trust Jesus as our Savior, and we have no assurance of our own eternal salvation. If God's Word is not true from the very beginning, why in the world would Jesus submit Himself to suffering and dying on a cross for us? Unless Genesis Chapter One is true, nothing else is true as well.

Thus, we begin *Lifestyle Evangelism* at the beginning of the Word of the Lord which He has given to us. Because Genesis Chapter One is true, we can be sure that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are also true. We can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. We can believe that Jesus is God in flesh (incarnate), that He took on human flesh and blood and became one of us, one with us, one like us, except without sin. We can believe that, because of His great love for us, He took all our sins upon Himself and suffered and died the eternal death, and suffered the penalty of hell for us, in our place. And we can believe that death and the grave had no hold over Him, but that He rose from the dead, victorious over sin, death and the power of the devil. We can give an answer for the hope we have in Jesus our Savior.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Relational.

Not too many years ago, a report stated that most automobile accidents happen within ten miles of one's home. At first, that statistic sounds startling. However, as you take the time to think about that statistic, you might begin to realize that, of course most accidents happen within ten miles of one's home, because, logically, you are within ten miles of your home whenever you drive away from you home; thus, you spend more time driving close to home than you do driving farther from home.

With that said, I want to make a second "startling" observation. Most of the people with whom you have contact are your family and friends. As you have read these "Lifestyle Evangelism" tips, you may have noticed that I use the term "circle of influence." I use this term in reference to your family and friends because, if there is anyone over whom you might have any influence, it will be those family and friends who know you and who respect your opinions and judgement.

Because your family and friends are closest too you, it is reasonable and logical that these people are the ones with whom you will be able give a first witness of your faith through your words and actions. This witness is non-confrontational and non-threatening because it amounts to living your faith in such a way that they ask what is your hope; then, you are able and happy to give an answer for the hope you have to the people you care about most.

Thus, *Lifestyle Evangelism* is relational. Our relationships with family and friends is important and even more important are our relationships with our unchurched family and friends. These relationships are important because, as we are able, it is through our relationships with unchurched family and friends that we have opportunity to show our faith naturally as we are always ready to give an answer for the hope of eternal life that we have in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Being Friendly.

There are basically two extremes in evangelism. The one extreme is to isolate yourself from society so that you never have contact with anyone, especially with anyone who is not a Christian. Leaning near this extreme would be to seek to isolate yourself so that your only friends are those who are fellow Christians, thus defending yourself from any contact with non-Christians or unbelievers so that you do not have to “deal” with “those sort of people.”

A second extreme in evangelism would be the confrontational extreme. This extreme looks at sharing the *evangel*, that is the good news, with others whether they want to hear it or not. This extreme is one which prides itself on confrontation, argumentation and winning theological arguments at all costs.

Certainly there must be a better way. The better way is to develop friendships and relationships with all sorts and kinds of people, to realize that God calls all people to faith and to look for opportunities to issue God’s call to others.

Because no one can be argued into faith and because no one can be convinced to believe, it is best to cultivate friendships and let it be known that you are a Christian as you live as a Christian. Let your speech and actions show for the faith that is in your heart and then be ready to give the reason you believe the way you do.

And the opportunity to give an answer will come. Unfortunately, or fortunately, the opportunity will usually come during a time of crisis, either for you or for your friend. As you friend sees how you handle any given crisis situation, s/he will recognize a Christian response to such a crisis. When s/he is confronted with a crisis situation, s/he may call on you to give an answer as to how you responded to such a crisis situation, at which time you will have the opportunity to give an answer for the hope that you have, especially in your Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Truthful (Part 1).

What may be true for you may not be true for me and what may be true for me may not be true for you. However, how do you and I know what is true? We know what is true because we feel something is right for us. What I feel must be true for me and what you feel must be true for you; after all, feelings are not wrong, are they?

Many people think this way in our world today. Gone are the days of thinking and knowing. Gone are the days of empirical data. Today our feelings validate our reality. Then, how does one share *the* truth of *evangel*, that is the good news, in such an environment?

Sometimes, and probably more and more today, in order to share the good news of the Bible with someone, we will need to take the time to understand his/her definitions and understanding of what certain words mean. The second step will be to set some ground work, especially in the area of how we understand the Bible, that is that it *is* God's Word. Even more, we may need to go back and explain how the Bible has its foundation in Genesis 1-11, that these chapters are important and how they must be true in order to understand what sin is, why God needed to send a Savior, and how that Savior saved us from sin.

We may need to take the time to explain how God does not contradict Himself. If He has made a certain pronouncement (even promise) in His Word, we know that His Word is true. If we have a feeling that is contrary to His Word, then it is not His Word which is false, but it is our feeling which is wrong because it is not in alignment with God's Word. Thus, we see that it is imperative that, when we believe we have been given some message from God, that we test the spirits to see if the message is from God or not. And we will know, because God does not contradict Himself, that if the message we think we have has been given from God is contradictory to the rest of God's Word, then the message is not from God. And how do we test the spirits? We check them against the rest of God's Word and we might even ask them to reveal themselves to us.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Truthful (Part 2).

Although we might lament the fact that we do not base our beliefs on empirical data, this lack may not completely be a bad thing. Our difficulty with science is that science is not always correct. As Christians, we have the same empirical data as science has, and yet we may come up with completely different conclusions.

The theory of evolution is one such example. The theory of evolution is an unproven theory which states, among other things, that human beings have evolved from lesser beings. Now, if you follow science, you may have noticed that this theory has changed from time to time, from textbook to textbook. As new research disproves parts of the theory, new parts are added. The one question to ask someone who *understands* and believes this theory would be, "Were you there?" If not, then how can you know?

As Christians, we have the Bible. Now, the Bible is not a science book, but it is God's Word to us. God was there at creation. He had all the events recorded for us. His version of creation has never changed. All the rest of His writings are true and the facts and data of science fit very easily and well into this explanation of the beginning of the world.

As we understand that the Bible is true and is God's Word, then we understand why things are the way they are in our world today. We live in a sin-filled world. Sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden. Because of sin, there is death and dying. But God immediately stepped in and promised to send a Savior, a Messiah.

When we get to the New Testament, we can believe it as well because, just as God was faithful in telling us the truth in the Old Testament, He continues to be faithful and to tell us the truth in the New Testament. The only other option would be that God is a liar, we are still in our sin, and we are doomed to eternal death.

Thanks be to God that He has given us faith through and in His Word (and through the waters of Holy Baptism) and that He continues to keep us and strengthen us in His Word.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Truthful (Part 3).

When Jesus was on trial before Pilate, He said, “Everyone on the side of truth listens to me” (John 19:37b). Pilate asked, “What is truth?” (John 19:38). As we discuss truth in our society today, it is important to go back to the *Truth*. Earlier, during His earthly walk, Jesus, speaking to Thomas and His disciples said, “I am the way and the *truth* and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6a) (emphasis added). If we ever wonder what happened to truth, the fact of the matter is that, apart from Jesus, there is and can be no truth.

Truth, Jesus Himself, was standing before Pilate, and Pilate did not recognize Him. Jesus is Truth (the Truth). Apart from Jesus, we cannot recognize truth. Truth has become relative (for some) in our society; yet, if you see who it is who is having trouble with truth, you may recognize that those who are having trouble with truth are those who have set themselves apart from the truth. Thus, if one does not know or believe in Jesus, then s/he will not know nor believe in truth; thus, truth, for that person, will be relative. Truth will be what they “feel” it to be.

Even earlier in the Gospel of John, when speaking to the Jews, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the *truth*, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31b-32) (emphasis added). Here again we see the importance of faith in Jesus, especially when it comes to knowing, understanding and believing the truth. Apart from Jesus, there is no truth, only relativity. But, if we hold to His teachings, we are His disciples, and we do know the truth, and that truth frees us from uncertainty.

The freedom of the truth is freedom from sin and its eternal judgement. The freedom of the truth is freedom to trust and believe. The freedom of the truth is a peace which passes all understanding. Yes, we know the truth because we know Jesus. What a joy and privilege to be able to give an answer of that truth to others who do not know Jesus, the Truth.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Truthful (Part 4).

Because we live in a society where truth has become relative (for some), we have had to devise ways to get others to believe us and even to trust us. As children, to our explanation of truth, we added, "I promise," or "Cross my heart and hope to die (and we may even add, 'stick a needle in my eye')." As adults we get a bit more sophisticated and say something like, "Well, to be honest with you," or "To be totally honest with you." Our hope is that, by adding these words, we will emphasize our honesty and make others believe the words we are saying. Yet, "To be honest with you," when I hear such explanations to what one has to say, I think to myself, "Has this person not been honest with me before?"

Speaking to the crowds during the sermon on the mountain, Jesus said, "Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one" (Matthew 5:37). As is often the case, Jesus' Words come crashing down on our own words and lives even accusing and convicting us.

The point is that our *Lifestyle Evangelism* shows itself in letting our "Yes" be "Yes," and our "No," "No," and not giving any further explanation except to live our "Yes" and "No" so that it shows forth in our lives. As we let our "Yes" be "Yes," and our "No," "No," others will see and understand what it means to be a Christian, what it means to live lives of truthfulness and honesty. Ultimately, we may be able to point them back to the One who is the Truth, Jesus Himself, as we will have opportunity to give an answer which states that, because of our faith in Jesus, we must speak with truthfulness. Thus, there is no doubt that, when we speak (without adding any explanation concerning the truthfulness or honesty of which we are about to speak), the one hearing and listening can know for certain that our words are true because our Lord and Savior is Truth, and He expects nothing less from each one of us, His dear children.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Prayerful Evangelism.

With the lord begin your task;
Jesus will direct it.
For his aid and counsel ask;
Jesus will perfect it.
Ev'ry morn with Jesus rise,
And when day is ended,
In his name then close your eyes;
Be to him commended.

(Lutheran Worship, Hymn #483)

This song serves well to remind us of the importance of prayer in living a *Lifestyle of Evangelism*.

Prayer is one of the most important parts of our own lives and should be the beginning of our giving witness of the *evangel* (good news). When we pray, we are often reminded always to pray, "Thy will be done." The fascinating part about praying for God to bring to faith an unchurched family member or friend is that this is God's will. Thus, when it comes to praying for someone to be brought to faith, we do not need to ask if it is God's will because it has always been.

When we pray, we are setting the foundation for our being able to have an opportunity to give an answer for the hope we have in Christ our Savior. When we pray for our unchurched family members and friends, we pray that God would show Himself to them through the signs He gives of Himself in the world, through their conscience, and through His Word. We also pray that the Lord would give us the opportunity as well as the words to speak (when He gives us that opportunity) to give an answer for the hope that we have.

Until the time that we have such an opportunity to share our hope, we continue to pray for God's protection of and blessings upon those who do not know Jesus as their Savior. We also pray for our witness, that our words and actions might give a good, positive witness for Christ's sake.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Speaking the Truth in Love.

Many people remember Jack Nicholson's line from *A Few Good Men*, "You want the truth? You can't handle the truth." Too often we think that of others in our world today cannot handle the truth. No one can handle the truth anymore. Perhaps that is one of the reasons we have moved not to know what the truth is in our world today.

As Christians, we know the truth. Jesus is *the* truth. As Christians, we can and must speak the truth, God's Word. However, we must speak the truth in love. As Christians we are to build each other up in the body of Christ (1 Thess. 5:11). We are to do the good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10). Yet, we are not to do these tasks while compromising the truth.

And the truth is that there is sin, and there is forgiveness. There is sin in the world because we live in a fallen world. Bad things happen to good people because of sin. Good things happen to sinful people because our Lord is gracious, compassionate and merciful. There is forgiveness, but not without repentance. There is forgiveness, but not without a cost. Certainly the cost for sin has been paid. The cost for sin is death, eternal death and that price has been paid by Jesus' death on the cross.

The eternal punishment (price) for sin has been paid, and much of the temporal punishment (consequences) has been paid as well. However, there may be times when we will have to suffer some of the temporal punishment for our sin. And there may be times that we as Christians may need to explain this reality to our unchurched family members and friends who have a hard time understanding how we may speak of a loving God who they believe, has brought suffering upon them instead of admitting that they bring suffering on themselves by sin.

When we speak of, about, and even for God, we must always do so truthfully, and at the same time, lovingly. Doing so may be difficult, but, as always, at the right time, God will give you the words you will need to give an answer for the hope that you have in Jesus as your Savior.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . To speak Law & Gospel (Part 1).

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9). How true, how important, and how fitting are these words from John. These are the words we speak on Sunday mornings before we confess our sins, all our sins, our sins of thought, word and deed. These words remind us of the importance of confessing our sins so that we might be given forgiveness of sins, because, if we do not recognize and confess our sins, we are refusing God’s gift of forgiveness.

What does this confession have to do with *Lifestyle Evangelism*? Confession has much to do with *Lifestyle Evangelism* because, too often Christians are perceived to be either hypocrites or people who think they are better than others. Thus, it is important that we begin by recognizing our own sins and the fact that we are “by nature sinful and unclean.” It is important that we do not put on airs, that is, that we do not present ourselves as being better than non-Christians because the fact of the matter is that we sin just as much as anyone else, and often even more, because we know God’s commandments and still disobey them.

In his explanations to the Ten Commandments, Dr. Martin Luther reminds us that we sin against the commandments, not simply by doing something we should not be doing, but by not doing some things we should be doing. Or to say it another way, we sin more sins of omission than sins of commission; yet, these sins are just as damnable as the others.

Therefore, it is important that we recognize and confess our own sins first; then, so that we might be able to recognize and lovingly call attention to the grave sins of our unchurched family and friends (who may not know or understand what sin is nor its grave implications). Remember, the Law must be proclaimed in its severity if the Gospel is to be taken seriously. For, as many people believe, if I am not so bad, then why would I need a Savior? Yet, we speak the words of the Law with love, care and concern for the one to whom we are speaking.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . To Speak Law & Gospel (Part 2).

It is unfortunate that we live in a society which has such a high disregard for intolerance of sin, so much so that we do not even like to use the term *sin*. Yet, unless we recognize and confess our sins, there can be no forgiveness and absolution.

We have a problem in that we confuse a recognition of sin with a condemnation or judgement. Such is the case when we suggest that what someone did was wrong, even a sin, and we hear a response such as, "You're not supposed to judge people," as if quoted from the Bible. Our response is that to recognize sin is not the same as judging and that if a person continues in his/her sin, not only has s/he judged her/himself, but we, as a Christian congregation, may judge her/him as well. Excommunication means, that a congregation has studied that situation on the basis of God's Word and determined that a person has sinned and refused to confess and repent that sin. The Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven are to be exercised in that way..

However, we must understand that the judgement of excommunication is not, in any way, to be a mean-spirited plot, but rather is a call to the one who remains in his/her sin to see the seriousness of his/her sin so that s/he may repent and be restored to the fold.

Accordingly, for us to practice true *Lifestyle Evangelism* means that we must be prepared to call sin what it is, *sin*. We must be prepared to have accusations brought against us (fair and unfair). And we must stand firm and thus, in love, explain the devastating results of unrepentant, sinful living versus the rewards of repentance, contrition and forgiveness, and absolution.

Again, how can one take seriously the need for a Savior unless one is shown his/her need? The Law must be proclaimed in its severity, especially to unrepentant sinners so that the Gospel may be taken seriously, may be proclaimed and may be believed. And once the Law has been taken seriously, then the Gospel must be proclaimed in all its sweetness, giving the assurance of forgiveness of sins and the certainty of eternal life in heaven. Such is God's Way as shown in His Word.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . To Speak Law & Gospel (Part 3).

We have spoken the word of the Law. We have explained what sin is, rebellion against God, by occurring when we do the things we should not be doing and do not do the things we should be doing. We have explained how we sin in thought, word and deed (actions). We have acknowledged and confessed our sins. Now what?

Now comes the part of joy and celebration because, as sins are confessed, so sins are forgiven. When someone sins against us and says, "I'm sorry," what great joy and what a great privilege we have in that we may announce to them, "Your sins are forgiven." And instantly, as the words are spoken, because they are words which do what they say, we forgive sins. Is it true because we speak those words? No, but it is true because Jesus has already paid the price for the sins which were committed, and because He has paid the price; therefore, as the words of forgiveness are announced, there is forgiveness and life through Jesus Christ.

The Law might be summed up in Exodus 20, where the Ten Commandments are stated. Jesus summarized the Law of the Commandments with the words, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37,39b). Love is the summary of these commandments. If we could love God with all our heart, soul and mind, we could keep the rest of the commandments. If we loved our neighbor as ourselves, we would not sin against them.

The Gospel might be summed up in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." God is love, and in His love, He gave the life of His Son who paid the price, the cost, the wages of sin, for us in our place.

As the Law must be proclaimed in all its severity, lest the Gospel mean nothing, so the Gospel must be proclaimed in all its sweetness lest one be led to despair.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . To Speak Law & Gospel (Part4).

Too often, when one speaks about the Gospel, it is said that the Gospel is the fact that Jesus died for our sins. And of course, even though not stated, it is implied that Jesus did not stay dead. We do not worship a dead God, but a living God. Jesus died and rose from the dead. And that fact is the Gospel, the “Good News,” but if we stop there, then we miss proclaiming all the Gospel in all its sweetness and in all its truth and purity.

The fullness of the Gospel can only be appreciated when we understand its completeness. The completeness of the Gospel goes way beyond the matter of Jesus’ death. Yes, the purpose for Jesus’ coming into the world was to give His life for ours, but not only did He come to die, He also came to live.

The Law requires certain things from us. We can do none of the things required by the Law. The fullness of the Gospel is seen in the Truth, that Jesus did everything for us that we are unable to do. Because we are unable to keep the Law perfectly, Jesus obeyed the Law perfectly, for us. Because we are unable to keep from doing the things we are not supposed to be doing, Jesus resisted all temptations to commit the sins of commission. Because we are unable to do the things which we should be doing, Jesus did all them for us, thereby removing our sins of omission.

The fullness of the Gospel is that Jesus is our substitute. He lived, and then by faith, He gave His life for ours. When we are judged, God will look at us and see Jesus’ life of perfection, and by faith, it will be counted as ours. At the same time, when God looked at Jesus, instead of seeing His perfection, He saw our sins, which Jesus freely took upon Himself in order to pay the price for those sins on the cross.

It is by faith, which is also a gift from God, that we are able to take hold of all God’s good gifts and blessings and make them ours. The fullness of the Gospel is understood only as we understand that by faith Jesus’ life is my life.

Lifestyle Evangelism is Pain and Joy.

Too often, Christians are believed to be people who never experience the pain of life; rather, they are “entitled” to experience only joy. Certainly, we Christians understand the fallacy of this perception. We know from our own personal experience that we, too, suffer from times of pain and sadness. We experience the death of a loved one. We experience the loss of a job. We experience the pains of physical, mental and emotional illnesses. Yes, we Christians suffer the ills of this world in the same way as our non-Christian counterparts.

Unfortunately, there are too many Christians who think they need to keep up appearances, especially during difficult times. What we fail to realize is that when we work so hard at keeping up appearances during difficult times, we are making a witness to our non-Christian friends which, they may either not understand may think too difficult for them to follow, which would keep them from wanting to be a Christian.

Think about this: If you were not a Christian, and you knew someone who was and this person always “seemed” cheerful, even during times that you knew they were having difficulties, would that not make you stop and think? You might think that your Christian friend is either really strong in his/her faith, or more than likely, that s/he has no emotions; otherwise, s/he would not be so happy at a time when you know s/he should be sad.

We witness best when we witness that we, too, are human beings living in a sin-filled world and that we suffer the same difficulties of our non-Christian counterparts. The exception is that we have Someone to cling to and we have Someone who holds us up during our difficult times. We have God, Who is always there with us to give us comfort and encouragement during difficult days, as He has demonstrated numerous times. We also have a family of Christian brothers and sisters who work to encourage and build us up as well.

What a great witness, especially during difficult times, to let our unchurched family and friends know that we are affected by the trials and tribulations of this world, but, we also have a faith that sustains us during these difficult times. Thus, we witness what a great God we have.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . the Word.

As Lutheran Christians, one of the things that sets us apart from other Christians is that we believe and understand that the usual way our Lord has of coming to us is through *means*. This word does not mean that He can not come directly, but His usual way of working with us is through *means*. More in particular, we believe that the means He has of coming to us is the means of grace, which are the Word of God (the Bible) and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper). It is through these means that our Lord comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings (faith, forgiveness, life and salvation).

With those definitions in mind, it is important that a big part of our lives and our lives of *Lifestyle Evangelism* include the Word. The Word is what is at the heart and center of our life. Not only do we know and understand the importance of the Word (reading our Bibles), but we demonstrate its importance through our actions. There might be a Bible always within sight. The Bible is the first book we consult for important matters and decisions. We may even read the entire Bible - chapter by chapter- during the year.

Certainly, the Word is a big part of our own lives, but it is also a great tool in our exercise of *Lifestyle Evangelism*. Because we understand that God works, not through people, but through His Word, we understand how important it is to help our unchurched family and friends hear that Word. Thus, we understand the importance of encouraging them in their own lives to read the Word (maybe even giving them a Bible if they do not have one) and of inviting them to come to worship and Bible class where they will have opportunity to hear the Word directly and to hear it explained and proved.

As our Lord comes into contact with our unchurch family and friends through His Word, the Holy Spirit will give faith through that Word. He will then continue to work through that Word to strengthen and keep them in faith. Thus, we see the importance and the power of the Word even the Word made flesh, Jesus Himself (as John witnesses to us).

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Holy Baptism.

As noted before, the Lord uses the means of grace, namely, the Word of God (the Bible), and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper), to come to us. It is through these means that our Lord comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings (faith, forgiveness, life and salvation). This week we concentrate on Holy Baptism.

As Christians, a big part of our lives is our Baptism. It is through our Baptism that the Lord puts His name on us (as water and His name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were put on us). He puts faith in our hearts. He gives us forgiveness of sins. He claims us. He writes our names in the book of Life. He gives us a part of His Kingdom.

This putting on us of God's name is very important, because what God puts His name on He claims as His; it belongs to Him. Thus, when God puts His name on us, we are His. We do not choose Him, He chose us.

Because our Baptism is so very important, it is a big part of our *Lifestyle Evangelism*. As we live each day, we face trials and tribulations, we struggle with the difficulties of each day, and we daily sin much and are in need of forgiveness; what a great witness we can make when we are reminded that when we "mess up" (when we sin) we have been baptized and we can start over, no matter what time of day or what time of life. And what a great opportunity to witness as we share this good news with others as they ask us how we do it.

We show how important our Baptism is when we do things like celebrating Baptismal birthdays along with regular birthdays. We show how important our Baptism is when we talk about the difference our Baptism makes; when we share what Baptism really is because of, what God works through Baptism, and when we live its importance in our own lives. We are adopted as children of God, our Heavenly Father and so we are a part of His family.

What great joy we have knowing that God has chosen us and has put His name on us - Christians. We are His. How important to live in this joy!

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . The Lord's Supper.

As noted before, the Lord uses the means of grace, namely, the Word of God (the Bible), and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper), to come to us. It is through these means that our Lord comes to us to give us His good gifts and blessings (faith, forgiveness, life and salvation). This week we concentrate on the Lord's Supper.

Another big part of our lives is the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is that meal wherein our Lord invites us to come to His table to partake of His body and blood, in, with and under the bread and wine and through which we remember, that is, participate, in His death and resurrection. As we partake of the Lord's body and blood in the Lord's Supper, we participate in His death. His death, that is His eternal death, becomes our death. He died the eternal death penalty, paying the price, the cost, the wages of our sins. We participate first in His death and second in His resurrection. His rising from the dead becomes our rising from the dead. As He rose to new life, we know that we too will rise to new life, even eternal life. And His life becomes our life. We have life, life more abundantly in this world and life in the world to come, known as eternal life in heaven with Him. We also are given strength to face the world as we live in it but are not of it.

Because the Lord's Supper is very important, we demonstrate that fact in our lives of *Lifestyle Evangelism*. We demonstrate the importance of the Lord's Supper through a proper understanding of the importance of the Supper and its sanctity, respecting it as *His* Supper and partaking of it as He has given it and as the Word of institution say. We demonstrate the importance of the Lord's Supper through our proper preparation as we approach His Supper, examining ourselves and approaching in faith and partaking only with those who believe in Christ as we do (thus it is called *Communion* - being on with God and our fellow believers).

What a great witness we can make to others as we give due respect to our Lord's Supper by partaking often and explaining its importance to our faith and hope in Christ Jesus.

Lifestyle Evangelism is C & E and *More*.

Most of us have heard of “C & E” Christians. “C & E” Christians are those people who attend worship twice a year - on Christmas and Easter (thus the name C & E). Of course, Paul reminds us that it does not matter the motive for going to worship does not matter, simply that it is important to be in worship so that one might hear the Word (the means of grace) so that the Holy Spirit might work through that means in order to give faith.

For us Christians, our *Lifestyle Evangelism* will most certainly include celebration at Christmas and Easter as well as at the many other festivals and celebrations during the church year and especially during the festival portion of our church year. Our church year begins with Advent and the time we take to prepare ourselves for our celebration of the birth of Jesus. We will want to hold off on our Christmas celebration until Christmas Eve/Day. Then, for twelve days we celebrate Christmas, culminating in our Epiphany celebration on Jan. 6. Epiphany leads into Transfiguration Sunday, which is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent. Lent concludes during Holy Week which begins on Palm Sunday and includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday and concludes on Easter morning. The Easter Season continues until we celebrate Christ’s Ascension and then the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The following Sunday we celebrate Holy Trinity Sunday and then we move into the non-festival portion of our Church Year.

How important these celebrations are and what a great witness we make of our Christians faith and our worship life as we bring these celebrations into our own homes. Our worship life is not just a secondary part of our lives. Our worship life is the main focus of our lives as all our life has as its center and focus our relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ. As we are seen celebrating these great events in the life of our Savior, so we will be asked and we will have the opportunity to give an answer for the hope and joy that we celebrate because we have our Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Do (ing) Unto Others.

When asked “What is the Golden Rule?” too often it is quoted as, “We are to treat others like they treat us.” Or, “We are not to be mean to people who are not mean to us.” Very often, even too often, the Golden Rule is quoted and interpreted in a negative way.

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12), is the Golden Rule. Notice that this “rule” is given in a positive, even proactive way. The emphasis is not a reactive emphasis, but a proactive emphasis. In other words, we are not to wait and see how someone will treat us before we decide how we will treat them. Instead, we are to treat them first in the manner in which we would like them to treat us. We are to begin the treatment of others with love.

This statement does not mean that, if we do good first and that good is met with evil, then we can reciprocate with evil. Even then, we are to continue to follow the way of doing good.

Because this approach to life is so different from the self-centered, self-absorbed world in which we live, our actions will be noticed. Our way of *Lifestyle Evangelism* will demonstrate what it means to live a life thinking and caring about others besides ourselves. Especially in the cases where our good is met with evil, our kindness will shine even greater. In much the same way, that Jesus met adversity with love, so with His help, we are to do the same.

The Golden Rule is not outdated. As a matter of fact, if you follow the Golden Rule, you may notice how even those who have treated you with unkind intent before may begin treating you as you treat them. Although such a change may not happen immediately, as new behaviors sometimes take time to develop, all we have to do is watch and see if it does happen. Then, we can rejoice that others have seen our witness and as always, be ready, when asked, to give the reason for your actions, namely, that we love others because God loved us first.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Knowing Who Chose Who.

Do you remember as a child being on the playground at recess and all gathering to pick teams to play some sport? Do you remember that it seemed as if it was always your best friend who was one of those who always got to pick? Do you remember how you always chose to be on her team? Do you also remember that it really did not matter if you chose to be on her team or not? What mattered was whether or not she chose you to be on her team.

There are some people who can tell you the day, date, and time that they “chose” Jesus to be their personal Savior. There are some that will tell you that not only have they chosen Jesus to be their Savior, they have “dedicated” their lives to Him. They have made Him the Lord of their life. Perhaps they are trying to say that they believe in Jesus as their Savior.

As Lutheran Christians, we know who chose who. We know that, similar to its not being important as to whose side we choose to be on in a sporting event, it is not important that we “choose” Jesus. As a matter of fact, we even confess, “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him” (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14; 12:3; Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:8,9). What is important is that He chose us. We confidently confess, “But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.”

What great comfort we can find in the thought that it was not we who chose God, but God who chose us. This truth is of great comfort because we know that God keeps His Word. If God says it, we can believe it. If God says it, it will happen. When God chooses us, we know that we are His, and we can rest assured that He will do everything He can to strengthen and keep us in faith until Jesus comes to take us from this earth to be with Himself in heaven for eternity.

What great joy to share with others that God chose us and that He has already chosen them, too.

Lifestyle Evangelism is A Kind Word.

Have you ever noticed how angry some people are in our world? Angry words are often exchanged instead of nice pleasantries. One person says something which is misunderstood by another and then there are words of retaliation. The idea is to speak harsher words in order to inflict further hurt and perhaps more pain on the other person. As words of anger escalate, sometimes it even gets to the point of fists swinging and, as we have seen or heard, even to people being killed.

Therefore, how does one respond to another when there is a misunderstanding or when harsh words are spoken? The once wise King Solomon, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). Some have paraphrased these words by saying, "Kill them with kindness." The fact of the matter is, it works. When someone speaks harshly or rudely, they are usually taken aback and perhaps even ashamed, when those words are met with words of kindness, that is with sincere words of kindness.

We could meet the world head on, which it probably deserves. We would be justified in speaking meanly to others as we have been spoken meanly to; yet, here I would remind you of our lesson on the Golden Rule. However, we are not of this world. We are of our Father's world, and we represent our Father as ambassadors. As ambassadors for Christ, we want to represent Him and live as He would live, move and have His being, in other words, and we can only do so with His help; then, we will speak kind words in order to turn away any wrath which is directed toward us. We will also understand that, very often, harsh words of wrath which are spoken to us as Christians are really being spoken to Christ who lives in us. Unfortunately, that is the way of the world.

How easy to respond in kind. How difficult to turn the other cheek. Only with Christ's help are we able to do the right thing which, in turn, shows the faith that is in our hearts and reflects Christ's love to others.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Sometimes, Burning Coals.

Paul talks about the difference between giving from the heart and giving out of fairness by telling us that there is a difference between inviting your friends over to eat, when you know that they will invite you over to eat with them the next time. This reciprocation is simply taking turns in feeding each other. Now, in and of itself, such action is not a bad thing. The problem is when we think we are being generous when we are really only trading with each other. Paul suggests that true giving in this sense is to invite those to eat whom you know will not be able to invite you back in order to repay you for your kindness.

Wise King Solomon, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, takes this idea one step further. He suggests, "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you" (Proverbs 25:21-22). The first lesson we learn is the way to rid yourself of your enemies, by making them your friends. Not only are we to make them our friends, but we are to feed them as well.

The second lesson we learn is how to be truly mean to those who are mean to us. We spoke before about speaking a kind word to those who have spoken rudely to us. Here we are told that the best way to "get back" at someone who has hurt you and is your enemy is by being kind to him/her, even treating him/her to a meal. The result is that you will indeed inflict great amounts of shameful pain on them, and your reward will be a Godly reward given in heaven.

There is much truth in Solomon's Word (of course, you say, he is speaking God's Word); therefore, if you have never tried overwhelming your enemies with kindness, I would encourage you to do so. Being mean by being so nice is the best way to witness the love that Jesus Christ has taught us. It is also a most excellent way of doing something which will make you "feel" good and know that your reward is in heaven. Here again, we might paraphrase this lesson in *Lifestyle Evangelism* as, "Kill them with kindness."

Lifestyle Evangelism is Being Faithful.

Success in our world today, and especially in our capitalistic society, is measured by dollars and cents, or by other numbers. Although this is denied within the church, there is truth to the fact that even in the church the success or failure of a congregation is measured by its number of those in attendance, baptisms, adult converts, and so forth. Even as individual Christians we may, at times, feel a little pressure suggesting that we are not as good of Christians as we could be because we are not, individually, bringing in the numbers we should to church, either as guests or visitors, or the like.

Fortunately, God does not measure success the way we do. Fortunately God never has commended that we be successful. And simply to ask that we be successful would be to ask to define the term success. Do we use this word to mean numbers, dollars and cents, or what? No, God never asks that we be successful about anything. He does ask that we be faithful. "Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

"Be faithful." What does that mean? That means holding on and clinging to Jesus, believing in Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength until the end, your physical end on this earth. We are not to be running after (as Moses says, a whoring after) other gods. We are not to concern ourselves with counting how many "notches" we have on our belts from bringing others to Jesus. As a matter of fact, in the Old Testament, David sinned when he counted the people. It is only with God's bidding that we attempt such counting.

One of our greatest concerns in *Lifestyle Evangelism* is to live faithful lives. As we live faithful lives, we will be showing the faith that is in our hearts. Others will see our faith and we will have the opportunity to give an answer for the hope that we have in Christ our Savior, which is what motivates our living lives of faith. And we pray that the Lord would help us to live such faithful lives even unto our own physical death.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Shown in Words.

Is evangelism a part of your lifestyle? How do you know? One way to tell is how you speak. For example: When you attend worship and Bible class on Sunday mornings, how do you refer to those people who are in worship who are not members of the congregation? Do you refer to them as strangers? If you do, it means that you believe them to be unwelcome and invading “your” territory. Perhaps you refer to them as visitors. Although this term is better than strangers, there is still the subtle implication that these visitors are welcome so long as they leave.

Have you ever thought about those people who worship who are not members as guests? The difference between a guest and a visitor is that guests are always welcome, and we want guests to return. We cannot wait until a guest comes back to visit us again. Do our words reflect this type of hope and love to those who worship with us who are not a part of our worshiping community?

Of course, such is the language we may use with one another. What is the language we use in speaking to those who worship with us who are (not yet) a part of membership? When we speak with them, are our words welcoming, inclusive words, or are our words harsh and standoffish?

It is interesting to think, and who knows, when we take the time, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to reach out our hand, to greet and visit with others, we may even meet a new friend. We may even meet the person who will become a close friend. And we may even be the person to offer some word or words of encouragement to someone who is in need of encouragement.

With the Lord’s help, we can develop a *lifestyle evangelism* mind set which will show forth in our words to each other as well as to others so that we welcome others as guests whom we want and expect to become a part of our fellowship here on earth and ultimately in heaven.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Shown in Expressions.

What is that look on your face? Is that a look of pleasant surprise? Is that a look of disgust? Is that a look that implies, “you’re invading my turf”? Just what is that look? How often it is that our expressions negate our words? Too often.

When you greet someone on Sunday morning, someone who is not a member of our congregation, but someone who is a guest worshipping with us, what “look” do you give them? Perhaps your words are words of welcome, but what is your expression? Is your expression an expression of welcome as well?

And what about your body language? Does your body language betray your words? Does your body language express joy and excitement? Do you lean in and listen? Or are you looking around for a friend? Are you antsy and cannot wait until your “little ‘hello’” is completed so you can say you greeted a guest at worship?

The Lord knows we struggle with these expressions. He knows we need all the help we can get. And He is there ready to help us. As we come to worship, as we ask Him for help, so He is there to help us in greeting our guests with sincerity and love. He is there to help us to meet and greet as well as to show forth our expressions of care and concern.

If you are not sure about your expressions, try looking in the mirror, or even asking a good (honest) friend what your expressions are saying, aside and apart from your words.

Perhaps you have heard the expression, “If you are happy, let your face know.” How true it is that what is in our hearts and minds does show through our words as well as our expressions. May the Lord help our thoughts be thoughts of love, care and concern, and may He work those thoughts through our words as well as our expressions so that our guests may truly know they are welcome and wanted.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Worship Helps.

God works through means, in particular, the means of Grace, the Word (the Bible) and the Sacraments (Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper). Our worship is liturgical because the liturgy is the Word of God. We do so because we worship best when we say back to God what He has given us to say; after all, how much better can we speak to God than to speak back the very words which He has given us in the first place. Again, our worship is liturgical, which means that our worship is permeated with the Word of God.

During worship we speak back to God with His Word as He speaks to us through His Word. Some, especially for those who do not have a background in liturgical or Lutheran liturgical worship, may need a little help in the actual practice of worship or in understanding our liturgical worship. Thus, *lifestyle evangelism* is helping those unaccustomed to liturgical worship, not only in their practice of worship, but also in an understanding of why we worship the way we worship.

Our worship is not a "here today and gone tomorrow" worship (set in and with time), but because our worship is liturgical and Biblical, it transcends time. When we worship the way we worship, our worship is with the saints who have gone on before and with those yet to come (thus, it transcends time). When we take the time to explain the why and how of liturgical worship, we open doors for others so they, too, may share in the richness and appreciation of our worship experience.

What a wonderful witness we can make in helping others in worship and what a wonderful witness our Lord makes through His means of grace as these means permeate our worship service. It is through these means that God first works faith and continues to strengthen and keep us in faith until Christ comes again. What a wonderful witness we make as we hear these means give the answer for the hope that we have in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Reflecting.

Have you ever looked up in the sky at evening and seen the moon, but on another night you do not see it, even if it really is there all the time? Because the moon has no light of its own, we only see the moon when it is in the right position to reflect the light of the sun shining on it. If the moon is not in the right position, it cannot reflect the light of the sun, or it may only be able to reflect some of the light, which gives us the smaller portions or phases of the moon.

In a very similar manner, we may compare ourselves as moons to the Son of God. We have no love of our own. God, the Son, is complete love. When we love others, it is only because He first loved us. When we are in the right position, when we are living lives of faith, then the Son of God is able to shine on us, and we are then able to reflect that love and shine so that others might see our love for them.

Likewise, when we are not in the right position, when we are living lives of sin, then we are not in the right position, and although we may be able to reflect some of the love of God the Son, that reflection is rather imperfect. For us sinful human beings, we do reflect God's love, though imperfectly.

It might even be true that we have phases in our own lives. Maybe there are times we are up, happy and glad because things are going great. There may be other times when things are not going so well because some disappointments have occurred. Believe it or not, through both these times we may reflect God's love, and as always, imperfectly. There may be "up" times when we may reflect God's love as well as "down" times, because, at all times, our Lord loves us and continues to shine His love in our hearts and lives so that we may be able to reflect that love to others.

No, we do not always shine as full moons; however, by the grace and power of God, we do always shine. May the Lord help us let our lights shine so that He may be glorified.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . A Right Focus.

Have you ever noticed how, at the end of one church year and at the beginning of the next church year (3rd Last, 2nd Last, Last Sunday of the Church Year and Advent Sundays), the Scripture readings all point to Christ first coming and to His second coming. These messages also remind us of what is important in our lives, that is, that our lives on this earth are not permanent; after all, what is a hundred years of life on this earth compared to millions of billions of years of eternity? What is important is focusing our attention on the world to come.

However, there is a “bug” in this mixture. That “bug” is the devil. He would like nothing more than to take our focus off the important things in life and instead, be concerned about all the meaningless, minor details, you know, the things that really will not matter tomorrow. But the devil gets us so involved in these meaningless things that we forget about what is important.

The devil does not tempt us to do things he knows we will not do. He does not tempt us not to go to church; instead he fills our lives with so many things that we no longer have time for worship. Our focus is taken off getting ourselves ready for eternity and is placed on all the things of this world. Now I am not saying that the things of this world are not important. There are some important things we need to be doing while we are in this world, but the most important thing is getting ready for the world to come.

When it comes to our circle of influence, what do our actions tell them about what is important in our lives? The old saying is true; “Actions speak louder than words.” Do our actions say that this life or that eternal life is more important?

When the devil tempts us, it is time to take stock, regroup and, at times, refocus.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . *A Right Attitude.*

There is a story, an illustration, that will help us to see how the devil does his work. The story tells how an elder went to visit all of the members on his responsibility list. He took a note pad and asked each member, "Do you have any complaints about the church, or the pastor?" Of course, upon completion of his visits, he had several pages of complaints.

When you are visiting with your circle of influence, family members, unchurched family or friends (or even your church friends for that matter), what do you say about *your* church? What does your body language or your actions say about your church, or for that matter, about your faith? Do you continually share with your circle of friends how disgruntled you are with your church, school, pastor, workers, etc? "I think the pastor should stop preaching about my sin." "I think old so and so is a real . . . (hypocrite); I do not know why he even comes to church." Then, do you follow this grumbling up with, "Hey, how would you like to come and visit with us next Sunday?" and wonder why you get an "I don't think so" response?

We live in a sin-filled world. Because of sin, we are all, at times, susceptible to hopping on the "things are so bad" bandwagon. But we are God's church, God's people in this place, to do His work. With His working through us, we can do great things. A great proof of that is to look at the diversity of the disciples and see how Jesus' love held them together.

If the elder in our story had asked each member, "What do you like about our church, school, pastor, etc?" or "What do think we are doing right?" He would have helped the members to refocus away from the distractions of this world and on to the work that the Lord would have us to do.

When you are with your circle of influence, think about and talk about those things you like about *your* church and share that with them. As you sow, so shall you reap. You will be amazed at just how much better things will look when you start out with a positive (God-given) attitude, worked in you by Christ!

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . An Honest Assessment.

We often wonder who we should include as people to whom we should actively witness. Our neighbors do not go to church, but they say they are Christians. They say they believe in God and go to church occasionally (Christmas and Easter). What about my cousin who is a Lutheran? I guess if you are Lutheran then you must be a Christian. Sure, he is not participating in church activities, but he attends at least once a month. My boss and his wife do not go to church, but they are good people. To whom should I witness?

Too often we think, "We are living in a Christian country. Everyone in the good ole U.S. of A. is saved." Everyone except the atheists, Communists, Muslims and Buddhists. Well, that thought is nice, but what does God say? In James 2:14-26, we hear that there is not such thing as an apathetic Christian. There is no such thing as a good intentioned Christian. He also tells us that being a Christian is not just not doing a bunch of "noes." Being a Christian is a yes, an action, a doing, a living for Christ. Being a Christian negates "cheap grace," that is, I am saved so I can just sit around and enjoy life for myself.

Now, before you accuse me of teaching work righteousness, please understand that I am not advocating, nor teaching work righteousness, rather I am advocating a Gospel action moved by the Holy Spirit, based on saving faith. True saving faith is not believing there is a god. Even Satan believes that (James 2:19); besides, that belief would be a different heresy, universalism. True saving faith is not a spare tire God to bring out when you need Him. True saving faith is complete trust in Christ's life, suffering, death, and resurrection for salvation.

Where, then, do these "works" come in? Because of what Christ has done for us, we cannot help but live our lives according to His will. We cannot help but let our faith show forth in our lives. We cannot help but do the things God has prepared for us to do (Eph. 2:10), using the gifts, time, and treasure He has given us to do them.

What, then, does this reassessment mean for us? We do include many people on our mission list, all those who do not show by their lives that Jesus Christ is their Savior. The *harsh reality* is that the list may include your mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter, wife, husband, neighbor, fellow church member, etc.

Remember to start with prayer. Pray for these people specifically. Then, with the help of the Holy Spirit working through you, work to get our apathetic "Christian" friends involved, so that they, too, may be a part of the excitement of living for the Lord.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Unconditional Love.

One important principle in being mission-minded is that of having **unconditional love**. Your circle of friends and family may at times be suspect of your caring for them. To the non-Christian, caring is usually done with *strings attached* as almost every other gimmick in the secular world. You may find your family, friends and loved ones making a statement like, “Even if I do not accept your religion, will you still love me?” That statement cuts deep into the heart, but for the non-Christian, it is a fair statement. In our own way we need to let them know that, yes, we will still love them without making them feel guilty about accepting our “religion.” Only in not attaching strings to our love and not trying to make them feel guilty do we show true, unconditional love. This principle is extremely difficult to follow, and do need God’s continued guidance and strength to exercise this type of unconditional love.

Another important principle in being witness-minded is that of **patience**. We cannot force a *decision, conversion, or faith* on anyone. We can talk until we are *blue in the face* and it could make great sense to us, but we are not the ones doing the converting, putting the faith in their hearts. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives/works faith in hearts when and where He pleases.

As we patiently wait on the Holy Spirit to do His work, we continue to pray for our family, friends and loved ones. We continue to live our lives as a witness to the faith we have in us. And we continue to introduce our circle of friends and family to other members of our congregation and involve them in church-related activities.

As we can see, being witness-minded can be a tough, taxing experience, but it can also be very rewarding as the Holy Spirit works through us to bring His Word to His people. And we do God’s will, giving glory to the Lord for the souls He saves.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . unconditional love at work (1).

Have you ever thought how you are a witness, especially how you are a witness at work? We are witnesses whether we say anything or not. We are witnesses simply by our actions. What a bit of a scary thought! Why? Most of us do not give thought to what our actions say. Maybe we need to make a conscious effort at witnessing, especially at our work, our place of employment.

Being a witness is hard enough. Being a witness at work may be even harder. How, then, do we meet this challenge? We meet it in various ways, from simply keeping our mouths shut and minding our own business; at least in this way no one will ridicule us. Or we can take the other extreme of being very vocal about our faith, condemning everyone, and having no one listen to us, but simply ignore us and/or even hate us; at least this way we can justify ourselves for trying and being martyrs for the Lord. We can simply be a part of the group, knowing God will forgive us when we go to church on Sunday because He knows how hard it is to go against the group. (Adult peer pressure is oftentimes as great as teenage peer pressure or worse.)

We can change our beliefs and value system and do almost anything else to justify the way we deal with our working environment, like compartmentalizing our lives. We can compare ourselves to other people and see that we are still better than they. But, if we look close enough we could also find some that are better than we. Ultimately, though, we must compare ourselves with Christ. We all wind up the same, missing the mark. If you have not done so, take a good hard look at the people with whom you work. Can you tell what role they are playing? Without being judgmental, are there any of your fellow workers witnessing Christ? Have you noticed?

This week, think about ways you might be more conscientious of the witness you are making. Then, work on being more conscious about making a positive witness of Christ's love for all.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . unconditional love at work (2).

How do we witness in the challenging setting of our work environment? First, we look to Christ and follow His example. We begin in prayer. We pray for the people with whom we work, asking the Holy Spirit to open their hearts to Christ and His message of salvation. We also pray for the courage to witness silently, and when He gives us the opportunity, we pray for the courage and for the words to verbally witness. Remember, if you pray for the opportunity to witness, be ready, because He will give it to you, often before you really are ready.

Second, do not condemn the people with whom you work. We may not always agree with what they do, but we want to remember that, Christ died for them, too. If they are good enough for Christ, they are good enough for us. Not condemning them does not mean that we agree with them, nor that we must be like them. In turning down their invitation to do what they do, we must let them know that we still unconditionally care about them. Remember, people will respect you if you can make your own decisions and not simply follow the crowd.

Third, remember that, we are *in* this world, but not *of* this world. We are here for only a short time—eternal life (in heaven or hell) is forever. The Lord has put us here to plant as many seeds as possible, even though the hard part of that is that we may not see any fruits of our labors. He even promises us that it will not be easy and that we may even suffer persecution. He also promises, that if we do acknowledge Him before others, so He will acknowledge us before His Father in heaven and that the sufferings of this present time are nothing to be compared to the glory which will be ours in heaven.

Lastly, the best witness we can make is to live every day to the glory of God. Seek His guidance, strength, and power in all relationships. Perfect love casts out all fear; with that truth in mind, may the Lord help us to have that kind of love for our fellow workers.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Loving first.

Unconditional love and caring is one of the keys to help you to witness to your circle of influence (family, friends and loved ones). In the book, *Who Cares About Love?* Win Arn, Caroll Nyquist and Charles Arn define love in this way; “Love is intentionally doing something caring or helpful for another person, in Jesus’ name, regardless of the cost of consequence to oneself.”

In His sermon on the mount (Matt. 5:43-48), Jesus says that we should love our enemies. If we love only those who love us, what good is it? Do not even non-Christians show love to those who love them? Jesus says we are to take the initiative and show love, especially when we are not shown love. The Golden Rule (Luke 6:31) is a very positive statement telling us to take the initiative and treat others in the same manner in which we would like to be treated.

The authors of *Who Cares About Love?* have found that the happiest people are loving and caring people. This loving nature translates into a congregation in which parishioners show love and feel loved and cared for by one another. Sunday morning guests feel loved by the parishioners. It makes the church a place that reflects Christ’s love.

How are we doing as individuals and as members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church? I believe we are above average in being warm, open, loving and caring, to each other and to the guests who grace our presence. Of course, we can always do better, and being conscious of our efforts helps us to do better.

Have you gone out of your way to say “Hi” to someone lately? Even if it meant that the person may not acknowledge your greeting? Have you spoken a good word lately, complimented someone? With the Lord’s help, we can make a conscious effort to love our neighbor unconditionally, those people who need love and care. With the Lord’s help we can intentionally act first to show care and concern for others as Jesus showed for us.

Lifestyle Evangelism is life in action.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31 NIV). Paul’s words, originally sent to the Christians at Corinth, are meant for us today. As the Corinthian Christians slipped into the habit of resting on their grace, so we fall into that same habit today. Paul’s message is that we are indeed free as Christians, but with freedom comes the responsibility not to abuse our freedom. We have the privilege (responsibility, or as Luther would say, duty) to live our lives to God’s glory.

What makes this profound news a *lifestyle evangelism* tip? Simply this: Jesus did not give us the command to go out and convert people. He gave us the command to go out and make disciples. He gave us the command always to be ready to give an answer for the hope we have in our faith in Him. One way we make disciples is by our actions. You know the old saying, “Actions speak louder than words.” Add to this wisdom the fact that Paul says to do all things to the glory of God, and you have a super witness.

Apply this adage to your daily life, at home, at play, at work. Have you ever thought, “What would Jesus do if He were to make the decision I have to make?” (Understanding that it is only with His help that we can ask or make such a decision and carry it out.) The reality of this is that, because of our living in such a pluralistic society, we may not want to use the above question as a criteria for our decisions; it just is not practical, we often think. Try it.

Being a good witness is not converting a lot of people. You may never even see any fruits of your labor (converts). Being a witness simply means letting Christ live in you in such a way that whatever you do, you do to God’s glory. To God always be the glory.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Unconditional Caring and Love.

One of the important principles in *lifestyle evangelism* is that of unconditional caring and love. The Bible says, "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:13).

In his book, *Who Cares About Love*, Dr. Win Arn does an excellent job of explaining the three principles of unconditional love. Principle number one is *Always Act First*. Do not wait for others to approach you, but approach them first. Some people are naturally shy and not taking the initiative could mean you may never meet this person again and that you will have lost the opportunity to make a friend.

Principle number two is *Accept People As They Are*. This principle is for those who think they are not good enough to associate with others as well as for those who think they are too good. Sorry, but to put it simply and bluntly, we are all equal sinners and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb in God's eyes. Just think; if God loved that person enough to die for him/her, who are we to love him/her any less? You know, we can always find someone "worse" or "better" than we, but we must ultimately compare ourselves with Jesus.

Principle number three is *Be Available*. If you want your yard to look good, you have to spend time keeping it up. If you want your car to run right, you have to spend time in maintaining. If you want your marriage and family to grow and prosper, you have to spend time with your spouse and children. If you want to develop, keep, and strengthen your friendship, you have to make time to be available.

In the second half of his book, Dr. Arn talks about eight steps to loving. Let me summarize what he says: We love only as the Lord loves us and as that love flows from Him, through us, to others. God first loves us. We love others. With the Lord's help, we "first" love others (see the *Golden Rule*). We communicate our love through active listening to the wants, needs and praise of others. We respond with caring gifts, not necessarily a material gift, but a gift such as forgiveness, praise, or an uplifting word. We care by sharing ourselves.

We love because Christ first loved us. God so loves us that He gave His only Son for us. How much more is it possible for us to love one another.

Lifestyle Evangelism is Gospel Distribution.

What would happen to a company that spent all its time, effort, and money on maintenance? What if this company spent little energy, time, or money on distribution of its product? What if this company spent all its energy on resolving inner conflicts and tension as if those were the most important issues of the company? What if this company, so intent on keeping down its overhead, especially when its overhead was spent mostly on distribution instead of internal maintenance, vetoed any type of increase in funds for such product distribution reduced such funds? What would eventually happen to this company? I think we all would agree, that in today's world, without its spending monies on product research and development and product sales and distribution, this company would eventually fail, collapse, go bankrupt.

I personally do not like to compare a church to a business because we do not concern ourselves with profits and losses. We are not here for the purpose of making a profit. However, there are some good analogies that can be made. What kind of company are we here at St. Matthew? Is our priority the giving and distributing of the Gospel? Or is our priority maintenance of our company? Or both? How would St. Matthew fair in the business world today?

A company's reputation is a witness and does advertise for that company. What does St. Matthew witness and advertise to our community? As firm believers in the Gospel, we will want to give a testimony of it. We will want to give it away. How can we make sure we are advertising (witnessing) the Good News?

We can start with ourselves. We individually ask the Holy Spirit to change our attitude to one that is intent on witnessing, through our lives, the Good News that Jesus is our Savior. We pray that the Lord would help us to make giving and distributing the Good News our number one priority, and we put that priority to work in our church. Also, with witnessing as a priority, the natural flow of events causes us to want to be better equipped ourselves to share the Good News. God equips us through our own personal, as well as, group study of God's Word. Thus, as we set our priorities to those of the Great Commission, we build a stronger church for our Lord, based on the firm foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Gospel Dissemination.

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander” (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Christ’s command is that we are always ready to give an account, a reason, for the hope that is in us. Are you ready to tell someone about your hope for eternal life in heaven given to you by faith in Christ Jesus? Notice that Peter does not say, “If your gift is evangelism, be ready to give a reason . . .” He simply says, “Be ready,” and “Do this with gentleness and respect . . .” Some people think they are too quiet or shy to be evangelists. Peter indicates that they, the quiet and shy people, are the ones who make the best evangelists.

On the other hand, Matthew 10:19-20 tells us that we are not to worry about what we will say, “Do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” This Scripture adds to what Peter says in that, not only are we to be ready to give a reason, but we are not to worry because the Holy Spirit will speak the reason through us. For most Lutherans, that expectation sounds scary, but actually it is a great feeling for the Holy Spirit to speak through one. Through our daily devotions and Bible study, worship, and Sunday School classes, we fill our minds with the words the Holy Spirit uses to speak through us. Therefore, these things are very important.

And one more thing. We do not have to worry about messing up or thinking we might mess up, because we know that it is the Holy Spirit, not we, who is doing the work. God’s strength is shown in our weakness. To quote Stephen C. Stohlmann from Concordia, St. Paul, Minnesota; “God’s grace is so wonderful that He takes our imperfections, our stuttering tongues, or poor, bad, and negative witnesses, our blunders and more through our mistakes than through our success does He communicate the Gospel to our sin filled world. It does not matter how bad WE mess up God can and does use it for good. We are to never be ashamed of the Gospel, nor of our poor witness, because we know that God’s strength is made perfect in our weakness.”

Be a part of Bible Class so that you might fill up with all the good “stuff” the Holy Spirit will use to speak the Gospel through you. To God always be the glory.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Being Hot.

I want to begin by asking you to ask yourself several questions. Answer them as honestly as you can, not the way you think I would want them answered, not as honestly as you feel comfortable with, because if we are really honest, we may not feel too comfortable with the answers we have to give. This survey does not intend to point only to a certain group of people, so some of the questions might not refer to you. If not, you may want to re-word them to fit your life.

As you attend your children's or siblings' sports events this year, what do your actions say to those other fans in the stands? As you sit at home with friends and neighbors viewing your favorite sport (or any show, for that matter), what do your actions say to your friends? Your family schedule and your relationships with your spouse, children, and siblings what do these say about your life, priorities, and self? Your attitudes and actions at work, home, and school are telling people what? Does your life give it away that you are (or for that matter, are not) a Christian?

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16). These are the words our Lord states to the church at Laodicea, and they are just as valid for us today. Are you hot or cold for the Lord? Are you turned on or turned off? Do you turn on or turn off others to Jesus Christ? The Lord does not want lukewarm Christians. He wants turned on, "hot" Christians.

It is always the right time to rededicate your life, committing yourself, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to being "hot" for the Lord. It is always the time to invite your circle of influence, those acquaintances, family, or friends you know who are not presently Christian or churched, to get into the habit of attending church. Watch the bulletin, the newsletter, and calendar for upcoming worship, study, and service opportunities.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Complete Commitment.

I would like to share with you a fiction article from a fictional Marxist newspaper that I came across a few years back:

The Gospel is a much more powerful weapon for the renewal of society than is our Marxist philosophy. All the same, it is we who will finally beat you. We are only a handful, and you Christians are numbered by the millions. But if you remember the story of Gideon and his three hundred companions, you will understand why I am right. We Communists do not play with words. We are realists, and seeing that we are determined to achieve our object, we know how to handle the means. Of our salaries and wages we keep only what is strictly necessary; we give up the rest for propaganda purposes; to this propaganda we also consecrate "all our free time and part of our holidays."

You, however, give only a little time and hardly any money for the spreading of the Gospel of Christ. How can anyone believe in the supreme value of this Gospel if you do not practice it, if you do not spread it, and if you sacrifice neither time nor money for it?

Believe me, it is we who will win, for we believe in our Communist message and we are ready to sacrifice everything, even our life, in order that the social justice shall triumph. But you people are afraid to soil your hands.

From *Paiz Et Liberte*
A French Communist Publication
(taken from *Why No Revival?* - Chick Publication)

Although I do not agree with (or like) completely what the article says, I do believe it says some pretty powerful things to us as Christians. What do we give for the spreading of the Gospel? Do we give dollars for missions . . . so we do not have to tell anyone because we have paid for someone to do it for us? Do we realize that our unbelieving friends are damned to hell for eternity? Are we more afraid of man or God?

My *Lifestyle Evangelism* tip is simply take advantage of the training available here at St. Matthew, Adult Bible Class, other Bible Studies, Worship, resource people as well as personal training through personal devotions and Bible study. Then, put your training into practice. Show with your life that your relationship with Jesus is the first priority in your life.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Not Politically Correct.

The media tells me I am to be politically correct, which translates into being tolerant of alternative lifestyles, religions, beliefs, and so forth. Pushed to its ultimate conclusion, being politically correct means being anti-Christian. Even the religious community tells me that I am to be all inclusive, which is another way of saying to be politically correct (read, anti-Christian). As a pastor and member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (not any of the other synods), I am reminded that I need to be true to God's Word and to the confessions (to which I have pledged to be faithful and with which I have no problem); yet, this practice is offensive to many, even in the religious and Christian world, and even to some in our own church denomination. So what is a person to do?

As I write these *Lifestyle Evangelism* tips I strive to make them unoffensive, non-threatening, and as little work as possible (for you) because that way makes everyone the happiest. Unfortunately, making everyone happy is also beyond my ability. No matter what I write, I will offend some, and I will be a threat to others. By some, I will be accused of mixing and commingling law and Gospel as I talk in terms of sanctification, that is, living out our faith and doing the good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do. For many, these excuses will justify not reading these tips and ultimately will justify one's sitting on one's grace. I guess we are people who understand that "any excuse is a good excuse" to keep from having to live our faith.

For others, it is my prayer that these *Lifestyle Evangelism* tips will be an inspiration which will encourage them in doing the good works which God intends for them to do. Above all, I ask you to remember that it is God who gives you faith, so it is also God who stirs in you and motivates you to do the good works He has for you to do. It is also God who does the good work in and through you. And it is to God that we give the glory, thus making it a good work in His eyes.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Doing the Work.

“Attitude check!” “Praise the Lord!” It does not get any better than this! This month I want to address our attitudes, why they might be where they are and how we might change them for the glory of the Lord. To give you an idea of what I am talking about, let me reintroduce this month’s tip this way: This month we want to look at the joy of using our gift(s) to God’s glory, the frustration of doing a job for which you are not gifted, and the joy that is possible when playing the role of an evangelist.

When talking about witnessing or evangelism we often hear the phrase, “That’s the Pastor’s job,” or “That’s the job of the board of evangelism.” If you read your Bible, Paul tells us that the pastor’s job is to teach the members to work in God’s service (Eph. 4:11,12). For that reason, here at St. Matthew, you make yourself available to be taught by God’s Word, which is taught by the pastor. At times we still have the attitude “That’s a job no one will take,” “I can’t do that,” “I’d never do that,” etc. Why is it this way, and how can we change?

I honestly believe a negative attitude comes from misunderstanding the gifts God gives to His Church. What I mean is that for too many years, we were taught that we needed to find out what our spiritual gift was so that we might be able to serve in one capacity (as we were gifted) or another. This idea of making a choice brought many excuses for declining work with the words, “That is not my spiritual gift.”

How do we change our attitude? We understand that the Lord gives His Church all the gifts it needs, which means that, if you are needed to do some work or service, the Lord will help you accomplish the task that is before you.

This fact does not take away from the fact that we may have to serve, from time to time, in a role in which we do not feel comfortable. In writing to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 4:5, Paul tells us, “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardships, *do the work of an evangelist*, discharge all the duties of your ministry” (emphasis added). Evidently Timothy was not “gifted” as an “evangelist,” but it did not remove that responsibility from him.

Remember, we are all witnesses but sometimes we are called on to be evangelists (people who share the good message). Otherwise, we are simply to use the gifts God has given us to His glory. If we do not, we are neglecting our duty (privilege). May the Lord bless you as you use your gifts to His glory.

Lifestyle Evangelism is An Unconfused Witness.

Every year as we approach Christmas Day, it becomes more and more evident that we are living in a vastly confused world. For example, if you listen closely, you might hear, "I can't believe it; those Christians are now trying to take our Christmas fun, too, and make it a religious holiday." Did you stop and explain to that person just what the Christ-mass is all about?

To add to the confusion we have our Federal Government, which we wholeheartedly support as being placed over us by God (cf. St. Paul, Romans 13), trying to pass more and more legislation to keep religion out of government. It is my understanding that the United States of America wrote its Constitution for just the opposite reason, to keep government out of religion.

As Americans we have religious freedom. We have the freedom to be a member of whatever religious organization we wish and to worship in whatever manner we desire. Unfortunately, as Americans, we have come to take our freedom *of* religion to mean freedom *from* religion. We are not mocked, ridiculed, or tortured for our faith as many Christians are in many countries of our world. As a matter of fact, our faith is a mere luxury if anything, so we sometimes ask ourselves, "since I do not have to, why go to church?"

The Christmas season and the Easter season are the two seasons of the year, especially when we see our great worship of *creation* rather than the *Creator*. Our thinking is that life on earth will be for a very long time and eternity is some vague concept a long time away. Our surprise will come when at the end of our brief life here on earth, we will face eternity, either in heaven or in hell. Have we confused our focus of what is really important here on earth?

We have also confused our focus in our witnessing efforts. We tend to focus on the differences between believers and unbelievers, not wanting to associate with those non-Christians—afraid it will rub off. Instead, we should be focusing on the difference faith makes. We focus on ourselves as witnesses instead of on the Holy Spirit, who gives us the power to speak and who does the converting of the heart.

Time is linear; it is heading someplace-to eternity. There is an overarching purpose to all that happens. You do not have to look very closely to see Satan's game plan at work in corrupting our world today. God is not the author of confusion; Satan is, as he is the father of lies. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can refocus our love, trust, and guidance.

As we redirect our focus, the witness opportunities become even more clear. As the Psalmist says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Psalm 3:5).

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Inviting to "Come and See."

"The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, 'Follow me.' Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, 'We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' 'Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?' Nathanael asked. 'Come and see,' said Philip" (John 1:43-46).

"Come and see" is the answer we can give to the questions from friends and strangers alike. How do I know what you say is true? "Come and see." How do I know that what you live is true? "Come and see." We are conscious of our lives' being a witness for Christ. We live so others can see Christ through us. We even tell others about Jesus, but what do we say when asked, "Is it true?" We say as Philip did, "Come and see." Come to worship and Bible class, come to fun and fellowship, come and see that Jesus is the Christ and the way to heaven.

Philip was not sure what to do about feeding the multitudes, as John relates in John 6:5-7. He was not sure what to do with the Greeks (Gentiles) that came to see Jesus, as told in John 12:20-21. Maybe Philip was a bit shy or timid; maybe he just did not know what to say, but he did watch and see, and he invited others to come and see.

Today, we do not always have all the answers. We have our own little doubts. We are shy and timid at times. Don't we also watch and see, watch and believe? At times our response to the questions and excuses of our circle of influence should be, "Come and see." For when our questioners do come and see, the Holy Spirit works growth through the seeds that are planted, and the Word of the Lord will not return void. Bring your unchurched family and friends to "come and see" and to believe in Jesus. Come and see Christ do great things.

Lifestyle Evangelism is Life in Perspective.

This month I have a message of urgency I need to relate to you. I would like to start by asking you to think about your life. You will live a long life of 70, 80, 90, or even 100 years. To each of us, that span seems like a long time. Now, I would like for you to think about that length of time in respect to how old the earth is. If we take the Bible as it is, the earth is somewhere between four to six thousand years old. Now, I want you to go one step further. Think about how long you will live in respect to eternity. If you have been following what I have been saying, you will see that our long, long life time on this earth is merely a twinkling of an eye in comparison to eternity. To get a different view on this time length, think about it this way: if a football field were the timeline of the age of the earth (100 yards) there would be an infinite line extending in both directions for eternity and our lifetime here on this earth would fit as a one and one-half inch segment of that line.

So why is it so urgent that I tell you this? Because I do not think that we think about or realize the urgency of which we must tell others about Jesus Christ our Savior and only hope for eternal life in heaven. We feel like we are here on this earth for a long time, and we forget that there are people "out there," even some of our own friends and family members, who, when they die, are going to go to hell for eternity. Jesus does not say they will go to hell for just a while and then He will bring them to heaven. He does not say that earth is hell. No, He says that at death, we are judged to go to heaven or hell for eternity. It cause me great pain me to know that some of my own family and friends are not going to heaven but will be in hell for eternity.

The sad part, however, is that some prize being accepted and "normal" here on earth more than they prize their friends being in heaven for eternity. Of course, I may not say so to others, but the truth is that, what they say by their actions and by the way they live their life is that life in this world matters more than eternity.

What can we do? We can make a commitment to invite our unchurched friends and family to church and church activities where they can meet and see Christ in others and hear of Him through the preaching and teaching that takes place. And we can be an example in our own lives by our regular church, Bible class, Bible study attendance, family and private prayer and devotion times and in this way be ready to give an answer to those who must hear to be saved for the faith that is in us.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Following the Golden Rule.

“I’m but a stranger here, heaven is my home.” This song so well describes the Christian state of being. We are living *in* this world, but we are not *of* this world. The Lord tells us to separate ourselves from the heathen. This month’s *Lifestyle Evangelism* tip is one way in which we separate ourselves from the unchurched and non-Christians.

Two Bible passages help us focus on this separation. “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12). And “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, *just as in fact you are doing*” (emphasis added) (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Our world today is a “step on or be stepped on world.” We are quick to show criticism or to put someone down in order to build ourselves up. How easily we, too, as Christians can slip into this negative mind set. We even read the Golden rule, Matthew 7:12, in a negative way. We think “If I do not hurt someone, then they *should not* hurt me.” But, Jesus gave us the Golden Rule in a very positive way and in a way which does separate us from the world. Jesus tells us to first take it upon ourselves to go out and do something unto (for) others, something we would want others to do for us. One such something is what Paul says in Thessalonians, that is, to encourage and build up one another. However, Jesus is saying more. He is saying that we are to go about doing good and building up others and not expect anything in return. It is when we go about doing good and expecting good in return that we get messed up because we are not doing good for the right reason.

Your *Lifestyle Evangelism* tip for this week is to go about encouraging and building others up. Try giving five compliments to everyone before giving one criticism. In doing so, you will be separate. Others will see your powerful positive witness of Jesus Christ’s love for all.

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . An Easter Thing.

I know a man who exemplified what being a good witness is all about. This man lived his life as a witness of God's great love. Wherever he went, whatever he did, you could see the love of God the Father through him. So often I would see him stop to help (those who seem to us to be) the helpless. He never thought of himself, what dangers he might be in if he stopped to help, or if he would be late if he stopped, or even what other people would think if they saw him. He made a difference in the lives of so many people, and he did so without expecting anything in return. However, in return for his goodness, he did get what he expected. He was ridiculed, called names, and there were even plots to kill him because in his sincerity, he made the establishment look bad. He was not synodically trained; he did not even have a college education, but he did not use that as an excuse or let it stop him from witnessing. Because so many people loved him, so many more hated him. He never made excuses and never gave a second thought about a person's past.

Today, although we all should, no one can compare his/her feeble attempts of witnessing with this man's, but instead we compare ourselves to those we see as worse witnesses.

During the Easter season each year, we should think that we are good witnesses, that it would be easy to be a good witness. After all, this time of the year is that Christians celebrate the resurrection of our God, Jesus rising from the dead. How about if we exemplify Jesus, the man about whom I was speaking above, in our daily lives?

As you read about Jesus, true God and true man, I pray that you will not feel guilty but will be inspired to rededicate your life, with his help, to Jesus. I pray that you will recommit your life to be a living example of Jesus, your brother and your God.

Appendix Seven

Second Survey

Thank you for taking part in this survey. You may answer the questions as briefly or as extensively as you like. Please answer the following ten questions and return this survey to the box in the narthex, or give it to Pastor, or leave it in the church office. Although you may notice that there is a number attached to this survey this is for control and tracking purposes only.

1) What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

2) What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

3) What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

4) Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

5) What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

6) In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc. how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

7) In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

8) When you hear the word “evangelism,” what comes to mind?

9) When you hear the word “witness,” what comes to mind?

10) When you hear the term “lifestyle evangelism,” what comes to mind?

11) Did you take the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class? (circle one) Yes No

Appendix Eight

The following are the results of the second survey.

NO

1) What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

- R1. The faithful should strive to bring people to Jesus Christ and witness to those you have the opportunity to.
- R2. That Jesus had surely been raised from the dead; therefore God was real, now and until the end of the world.
- R3. That God would like all His children to be with Him.
- R4. Spread the word to everyone and God will always be there for you.
- R5. That I had the good fortune of being taught these things and that I should go out and do the same for others.
- R6. Our Lord and Savior has told us what He expects of us. He assures us of His presence with us always.
- R7. It means to baptize and teach to obey, and God will be with you to the end.
- R8. Tell others about Jesus.
- R9. Each and every one of us must keep spreading the word of God's Good works and deeds.

2) What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

- R1. Pray for unbelievers and witness when the opportunity arises
- R2. Go to all nations preaching that Jesus was alive and everything He had promised were true and real.
- R3. When people ask, I take the opportunity to tell what I believe.
- R4. Invite people from work to church.
- R5. When it comes to discussion that I let people know what I believe.
- R6. Jesus died for our sins. We are saved by His grace not by our works. This is the Good News we must share.
- R7. I tell people that baptism is very important to be saved.
- R8. Tell others about the gospels.
- R9. We never let the Word of God take a rest.

3) What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

- R1. I do not attend Bible Study, and I also do not have the chance, due to health reasons, to meet with my fellow believers.
- R2. Being able to live a life without sin.
- R3. Live an unrighteous lifestyle.
- R4. I should spread the word to neighbors as well.
- R5. Hard to get the discussion started when around people that you don't know.
- R6. I lack the faith that God works through me. It is God that people may reject not me. This work is done for His Glory.

- R7. I don't tell enough people.
- R8. Can't communicate well.
- R9. Nothing at this time.

4) Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

- R1. Yes. If not us then who will call the unbelievers?
- R2. Yes. It is important because you are to tell the good news wherever you go.
- R3. I believe it is important for me to raise my children to know God, "fear," love Him.
- R4. Yes, it can bring more people to faith.
- R5. Yes, because Jesus said go therefore and teach.
- R6. Very important! The Word is what sets us free; it much be shared.
- R7. Yes. It's because of saving souls.
- R8. Yes, tell others about the gospels so others can be saved.
- R9. Yes, we think it is. No whys to it.

5) What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

- R1. It is our duty to "minister" to all peoples. This is a blessing we have from God!
- R2. It is important to me to know I am a part of it.
- R3. I am to live a lifestyle that shows others God's grace and mercy.
- R4. That as believers we are to spread our knowledge of God's word.
- R5. That we are saved and will have eternal life.
- R6. God loves everyone and has commissioned His priesthood to share His promise with all.
- R7. It makes me happy to know I'm a Christian.
- R8. No answer.
- R9. This I don't understand, beings that I'm not a priest.

6) In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc. how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

- R1. Faithful prayer and lifestyle changes toward a more Christian ideal.
- R2. By the way you act and live.
- R3. I work hard and try to be as big of a helper as I can.
- R4. At work I encourage others to come to church. Pray daily for others well being.
- R5. Try and do and act the way a Christian should by the way we were taught.
- R6. Praying for all in need. Treating others as God treats us (forgiving) and sharing our faith in thought, word, and deeds.
- R7. I talk to others about the wonders of God's love and how I see His works every day.
- R8. Tried to live my faith.
- R9. The same answer as #2.

7) In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

- R1. Attending services, studying the Word, and spreading the Joy of Jesus.
- R2. By visually trying to live and act as Jesus wants me to.
- R3. By helping in areas I am needed and by attending diligently to receive all I can.

- R4. Helping with church activities and attending services regularly.
- R5. Try to the best of my ability to do what and act like a Christian by what I was taught.
- R6. Regular study of His Word.
- R7. I attend church regular, and I do things at church to help out.
- R8. Attending Bible study and church on a weekly basis.
- R9. By being faithful to my church and God.

8) When you hear the word “evangelism,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Evangelists such as Billy Graham, etc.
- R2. Telling people what is happening and going on.
- R3. Telling others about Jesus.
- R4. Reaching out to others in the community with God’s word.
- R5. Going out to other nations teaching the Word.
- R6. Sharing the Law and Gospel of our Lord and Savior.
- R7. Spreading the news about God.
- R8. To tell others about Jesus.
- R9. Billy Graham.

9) When you hear the word “witness,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Telling all of the love of Jesus Christ.
- R2. Someone who was there and heard and saw what was going on.
- R3. Living a lifestyle that shows Christ’s grace.
- R4. Spreading God’s word.
- R5. Able to help prove what the Bible says when several are discussing to a non-believer.
- R6. Living our life that reflects our faith in Jesus and that this life is of sin but our eternal life is sinless.
- R7. Telling people about God and by letting them see what my faith has done for me.
- R8. Live your faith to show others your faith.
- R9. Stand before all and be a part of my congregation.

10) When you hear the term “lifestyle evangelism,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Living a Christian life in thought, word, and deed.
- R2. That you should live a life as close as possible as Jesus commands us to live.
- R3. The same thing as witness.
- R4. Demonstrating in your daily life the importance of being a Christian.
- R5. People that devote their life to go to other nations and teach the Word.
- R6. Living our faith in Jesus.
- R7. Living to tell others about God daily.
- R8. To tell others about Jesus.
- R9. I guess being involved, teaching the Word of our Lord.

11) Did you take the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class?

- R1. No
- R2. No
- R3. No
- R4. No
- R5. No
- R6. No
- R7. No
- R8. No
- R9. No

YES

1) What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean to you?

- R1. It means sharing the message of Jesus Christ with others. As a Christian this is what I am to do. God commands it.
- R2. We are to share our faith with others.
- R3. To go to all people and share the Gospel. Also, the promise of God being with me.
- R4. That we should all be disciples no matter when we live.
- R5. To tell others about Christ Jesus; that He came to save us from sin; to baptize others in His name; to follow Him in His teachings, and that He will be with us until the world's end.
- R6. That we should send and support missionaries throughout the world.
- R7. It means you should remember you are baptized, and you should always try to be as good a Christian as you can.
- R8. That I have received God's gifts by being baptized, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, faith.
- R9. It first sounds to me to do mission work all over the world, training people to baptise people in Jesus' name, then getting these same people to obey God's word n everything that they do. Also, Jesus beseeches us that He will be with us always.
- R10. Attend worship regularly and share my faith and hope with others and also the promise of our Lord that He is with us always.
- R11. It means sharing the message of Jesus Christ with others by witnessing how the message has affected my life and by obeying His teaching and to stand up for my faith even if it means death.
- R12. If this was the center of the explosion, then we should be on the leading edge or shockwave covering the world.
- R13. Spread the Word to friends, neighbors, and strangers.
- R14. This is what Jesus left His Church to do when He went to His Father in heaven.

2) What do you do now that relates to your understanding of Matthew 28:19-20?

- R1. Attending church, studying His Word to equip myself to be an effective witness in sharing the message to others.
- R2. I try to live my life in a way that serves as a Christian witness to others.

- R3. Talking about my faith; show by example how Christ affects my life.
- R4. Invite people to church, visit the sick, work with Seniors.
- R5. Study and read the Bible; have devotions; try to set a good example to others; attend worship and Bible Classes; partake of the Lord's Supper and whenever possible let those around me know of God's love for them.
- R6. Through the church, money is given for mission and names are provided so we can pray for our missionaries.
- R7. I try to keep God's word; read the bible; come to church and bible class as much as I can.
- R8. Tell others when I have the opportunity.
- R9. Pray to God every day, go to church, try to set a good example.
- R10. Attend church, be friendly to people to make them feel welcome so they will return to worship with us and share our Good News.
- R11. We praise and worship our Heavenly Father. I am always ready to make a defense for Christ.
- R12. I try to be on the leading edge of the shockwave by speaking and living my faith.
- R13. My actions in the world should show I am a Christian and others see my faith through my actions.
- R14. I am a member of a Christian congregation where the Word is taught in its purity and the Sacraments administered properly.

3) What do you do now that hinders your accomplishing Matthew 28:19-20?

- R1. Not always taking the time to speak to others about Jesus and also lacking the boldness to approach someone I don't know very well.
- R2. I sometimes act in a way that does not reflect how a Christian should act.
- R3. Worry about feelings or offending another person.
- R4. Sin, putting off.
- R5. I don't always know how to spread God's Word verbally. I lack knowing the Bible as well as I should. I'm afraid I won't be able to back up my belief in the Bible.
- R6. Not always remembering to pray for or give extra support for the work of missions.
- R7. Nothing I can think about that I don't do.
- R8. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help.
- R9. I don't know.
- R10. Don't participate in many other church activities but do my best to be at church.
- R11. Not always putting His message first priority in my life.
- R12. I pick and choose too much where and when and who I share my faith with.
- R13. Not having a great knowledge of the Word.
- R14. I am a sinner.

4) Is your participation in Matthew 28:19-20 important? Why or why not?

- R1. Yes. We are all required to share the message of Jesus and to be prepared to give a defense and testimony of our faith to bring others to Christ.
- R2. Yes, because each of us has different friends and different talent, etc., that can be used to further God's kingdom.

- R3. Yes, because with the Holy Spirit it will bring more people into the kingdom of heaven.
- R4. Yes. It helps strengthen my faith.
- R5. It is very important to participate since that is Christ's command and we are to follow His teachings.
- R6. Yes, so it can continue and God's command can be carried out.
- R7. Yes, it is very important to me.
- R8. Yes, tell others the Good News.
- R9. Yes, it's important. We need Christians to pray and pay for mission work. What our churches give to mission is very important.
- R10. Yes, if one person is brought back or to church, it is all worth it.
- R11. Yes, we are all commanded to "go forth and teach all nations."
- R12. Yes, it is important. It is the job of every Christian, in addition to their calling to evangelize and spread the Gospel.
- R13. Yes, because it might be able to bring a non-believer to know Jesus.
- R14. Yes, to a certain degree. I carry out the Great Commission through my station in life; believer, husband, farmer, etc.

5) What does it mean to you to be a member of the priesthood of all believers?

- R1. I am chosen by God and belong to Him. By His wondrous and marvelous deeds, I have been called out of darkness into His wonderful light.
- R2. We are all responsible for sharing God's grace with others.
- R3. Part of God's kingdom; with believers of all time.
- R4. I thank God that I am a Christian, that He chose me to be His child.
- R5. I'm so grateful to be a child of God; to have been born into a Christian family and I think God put me here to spread His message.
- R6. To have eternal life in heaven.
- R7. It means a lot to me to be a member of a Christian church.
- R8. Special - when we sing, worship, and share God's blessings.
- R9. It means that I believe I will be in heaven forever. That has been what I have believed in ever since I went to Sunday School and church all my life.
- R10. Through our baptism we become members of the body of Christ, and it is a reminder to me of the good gifts and blessings our Lord gives us daily.
- R11. Through His grace, everyone can accept His message and receive eternal life.
- R12. It is an honor and privilege, but also has responsibilities and duties to be performed.
- R13. It is a great responsibility, and I fall short of going out in the world and boldly stating my feelings and beliefs.
- R14. It is a gift from God given to me through the death and resurrection of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I do not have to "go through" a papacy to God.

6) In your daily life, according to your station as mother/father, sister/brother, wife/husband, employer/employee, etc. how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

- R1. By living a life of what it means to be a Christian; be an example to them and share my faith in Jesus Christ with them.

- R2. By acting in accordance with the 10 Commandments, and by acting as though I know I'm saved.
- R3. Pray for my family, teach my children, talk to my friends about my faith, have Christian symbol/signs on car/house/clothing.
- R4. To be a good example.
- R5. I attend worship; pray daily for my husband, our children, grandchildren, great-grandkids, for all those they love, for those all or in need and for myself.
- R6. Showing love and concern for others. Praying for others.
- R7. I read the bible every day and say my prayers.
- R8. Being kind, helping people who need help, etc.
- R9. As a wife, I love and obey my husband. As a parent, I (we) brought up our child in the church and tried to set an example of Christian life.
- R10. Express to others the importance of praying for each other, asking Jesus for guidance and trusting and having faith that He knows what is best for us.
- R11. Lead by example; by remembering our Baptism; by hearing the Word and participating in the Sacraments through regular and diligent use.
- R12. I share my faith freely with my family and encourage the unchurched of my family to follow my example.
- R13. In my daily life everything I try to do, I am working for God.
- R14. As a forgiven sinner.

7) In your church life, how do you demonstrate your faith in Jesus?

- R1. Prayer, attending church and bible study faithfully and by letting God speak to me through His Word and sacraments.
- R2. By attending church regularly and by studying God's Word daily.
- R3. Attending worship and bible class; participating in Sacraments, tithing; being involved in serving others.
- R4. By going to church, taking part in singing, going to Bible Class.
- R5. Try no to miss worship services; to take the Lord's Supper regularly; attend Bible classes; to volunteer as much as possible and hopefully to encourage members and guests for their daily lives.
- R6. Try to attend worship regularly and being a good steward. Taking part in the sacrament.
- R7. I try never to miss church unless I am sick in bed or out of town.
- R8. Attending bible class, bible study, Vacation Bible School, work day at church.
- R9. I pray to God every day and worship in church as much as I can.
- R10. Attend Sunday School and church to learn, pray, praise and give thanks to Jesus for all He gives us.
- R11. By bringing first fruits offerings, by regular church attendance and Bible Study.
- R12. I serve the church the best I can. I give of my talents and time.
- R13. Helping with activities as much as possible. Hearing the Word every time it's offered.
- R14. As a forgiven sinner.

8) When you hear the word “evangelism,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Sharing the good news/message of Jesus, his life, suffering, death and resurrection for us with others.
- R2. TV evangelists, tent revivals
- R3. Sharing the Gospel message.
- R4. Witnessing to others, treating others good.
- R5. To spread God’s Word in whatever means possible no matter where I might be. To tell whoever that God is in charge - so let Him take care of our needs believing positively that He will in His way.
- R6. Bringing others to Christ.
- R7. Telling people about Jesus.
- R8. Go out and tell others.
- R9. That we as Christians should go out and tell others about Jesus.
- R10. A way of expressing themselves. A gift from God.
- R11. Sharing the “Good News” with the unchurched.
- R12. Outreach and open exhibition of faith to the unchurched or unbelievers.
- R13. Going out into the world and spreading the Word to unbelievers.
- R14. In my “Americanized” mind, the first thing that comes to my mind is those wretched T.V. evangelists.

9) When you hear the word “witness,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Someone who has seen something happen, furnishes evidence or attests to something as fact or gives testimony. As Christians we should make a testimony of our faith to others.
- R2. Someone who testifies as to something.
- R3. Showing and sharing what Christ does in your life as a testimony of Christian faith
- R4. Talk to others about God, living a good example.
- R5. Same as above - to tell about Christ - to live my life in a Christian positive way *with joy* - trying to be good example of Christianity - trying not to judge people.
- R6. Telling others how God has helped you in your life and what He means to you.
- R7. Like a was a witness in a trial.
- R8. Someone who has seen something happen, is an eyewitness.
- R9. We should use our faith and do good deeds as a love of God.
- R10. How you live your life, positive/negative. Speak and listen.
- R11. Demonstrate your beliefs and teachings of God’s Word.
- R12. One-on-one connection with another person about my faith.
- R13. Same as above but to a smaller scale.
- R14. Jehovah’s Witnesses knocking on doors in neighborhoods.

10) When you hear the term “lifestyle evangelism,” what comes to mind?

- R1. Practice what we preach and teach, make use of the gifts God has given us, baptism, His Word, the Lord’s Supper, etc. so that our faith overflows as we share it with others.
- R2. Filling ourselves with God’s word and the sacraments to the point where we overflow, and God’s grace then spills over onto other people in our lives.
- R3. Showing and sharing what Christ does in your life everyday.

- R4. The way you live your life as a Christian.
- R5. The Bible and it's teachings; our Lutheran doctrine following (based on) the Bible and to live our lives in such a way as to please God everyday.
- R6. Living our life in the way God commands. Leading others to Christ.
- R7. (No answer.)
- R8. The church where you hear God's Word and His blessings are received; the Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- R9. I don't know.
- R10. That our church is dedicated to the Lord by our worship services and all our activities here at the church.
- R11. Living by example.
- R12. The culmination of faith and lifestyle being integrated.
- R13. Living your life as an example so the world can see your faith by your actions.
- R14. Pastor Bogs' class.

11) Did you take the Lifestyle Evangelism class?

- R1. Yes
- R2. Yes
- R3. Yes
- R4. Yes
- R5. Yes
- R6. Yes in part.
- R7. Yes
- R8. Yes
- R9. Yes
- R10. Yes
- R11. Yes
- R12. Yes
- R13. Yes
- R14. Yes

Appendix Nine

Interviews

Thank you for taking part in this interview. Please answer the questions as briefly or as extensively as you like.

- 1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated? (*Circle One*)

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different

- 2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?
- 3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?
- 4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?
- 5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?
- 6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?
- 7) Have you learned something new? What?
- 8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?
- 9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?
- 10) Anything else you would like to add?

Appendix Ten

The following are the results of the personal interviews.

Interview Number One

1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated?

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different
4 Somewhat Different				

2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

It showed more that Christ does the work.

5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

There were no life application examples, no situations to learn from in this course.

6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?

I would add more examples of situations that may occur, what to do in particular situations, more role playing. Why, in order to make me feel more comfortable if the opportunity arises to share or witness verbally.

7) Have you learned something new? What?

No, I was just given more confidence in witnessing the Gospel.

8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?

Somewhat, yes.

9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?

Most likely, yes.

10) Anything else you would like to add?

No answer given.

Interview Number Two

1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated?

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different
5 Very Different				

2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Covered more of the basic things or more thoroughly than the other courses I had taken.

5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Nothing.

6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?

Nothing, it was interesting.

7) Have you learned something new? What?

I learned that when we remember our Baptism that means that we are not remembering water being put on us, especially if we were Baptized as a baby, but to remember means to bring to mind the fact that God's name was put on us, that we were claimed by Him and we are His.

8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?

I do because of some of the things pointed out, things I had forgotten from the other courses.

9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?

Most of my friends are in the church, except my neighbor.

10) Anything else you would like to add?

No answer given.

Interview Number Three

1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated?

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different
5 Very different				

2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

This gave people more of an overview of everything. *Evangelism Explosion* trained us to be able to go out and talk about our faith. There was something I did not agree with in *Lifestyle Evangelism*, I guess it is because I am old school. The *Lifestyle Evangelism* course did not make a distinction between a person being an evangelist and being a witness. I am uncomfortable with losing that distinction.

5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

I did not like losing the distinction between being an evangelist and being a witness. I am comfortable being a witness. I am not an evangelist.

6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?

No answer given.

7) Have you learned something new? What?

A witness and an evangelists run into each other.

8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?

This was a reinforcement, strengthening in thoughts and beliefs and ability.

9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?

Right now it is difficult, because I am not meeting new people. I have my circle of friends and most of them are in church.

10) Anything else you would like to add?

Don't call me an evangelist, I am comfortable as a witness.

Interview Number Four

1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated?

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different
4 - Somewhat Different				

2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

More extensive, gets into it deeper, explains what evangelism means to me. It encourages me, something I can keep in mind to motivate me to be a better witness to do what we're here to do.

5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

I couldn't find anything worse, it was in a positive light.

6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?

Can't think of any changes I could make.

7) Have you learned something new? What?

It seems like we got into exactly what you're supposed to do and be better prepared - spelling it out, in a positive light, encouraging.

8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?

I do.

9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?

I believe that I will.

10) Anything else you would like to add?

My thoughts are that we could have a repetition or up date or once a year or more often. We all need encouragement to do what we're supposed to do.

Interview Number Five

1) How would you say the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class compares to other Evangelism courses in which you have participated?

1	2	3	4	5
Very similar	Somewhat Similar	Neutral	Somewhat Different	Very Different
5 Very Different				

2) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

3) If you answered 1 or 2 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Did not answer one or two.

4) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was better, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

Because we are focusing on our religion specifically. Other programs, i.e. TV evangelists are not as specific. All the while we are evangelizing, we are showing how we live, how our religion works. Others may present the Gospel, but not necessarily how it works. I.E. the Mormons tell you some of what they believe but not all, until your sucked in. We tell what we believe and why we believe.

5) If you answered 4 or 5 in the first question, what would you say was worse, if anything, in *Lifestyle Evangelism* than the other Evangelism courses you have taken?

No, not really. For those people with a short attention span, maybe cut to the chase, get to your point.

6) If there was one thing that you could change about the *Lifestyle Evangelism* class what would it be? Why?

I would not change anything. It seems okay to me.

7) Have you learned something new? What?

I learned of my nasty pattern, that is that I keep my mouth shut until I find out where the other person is at, and then I speak. We do that to avoid problems. I should just speak up and let them know what I believe.

8) Do you feel better equipped to share the Gospel or be a witness in your life?

I feel less worried about it, which means I don't have the phobias about it, partially because I am older and don't care what people think one way or another.

9) Will you increase your sharing the Gospel to others now that you have taken the class?

I'll do my best. I am conscious now. In the past I was not as conscious, I would go to church, enjoy it and not care about others.

10) Anything else you would like to add?

It was nice to see things condensed down.

Appendix Eleven

Editorial Revisions

The following are editorial revisions which were made and incorporated as the course was taught (Appendix Three). In the first session, under the “Summing It Up” section, the whole section is changed as follows:

Many evangelism programs begin with Matthew 28:19-20 as the basis, the commission and mandate for evangelism. Because of the question concerning the giving of this command, whether to the church or just the disciples, we begin with other, clearer passages of Scripture which present to all Christians the response of faith, duty, responsibility and privilege to bear witness, even to defend one’s hope in the Good News of Christ Jesus. We are at all times to be ready to give a reason for our hope. We are to confess and not deny our faith. We are not to be concerned about what we will say when the time comes because God will give us the words to say. And the words we speak will be a witness, or testimony, of the evangel, or the Good News of the hope we have in Jesus and His work of saving us.

In the third session, a tenth question may added be as follows,

10. The church grew by the power of the Holy Spirit, working through the means of grace (the Word and the Sacraments). The church still grows this way today. Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9. Although this text is speaking about a conflict in the church of Paul’s day, what does it tell us about our own outreach efforts today? And the answer may be: *(At times we may be the first to sow the seed; at other times we may be watering the seed sown by someone else; and at times we may be reaping a harvest; yet at all times, it is God who is doing the work through us.)*

Also, in session three, the following paragraphs and questions are added:

The Doctrine of the Message (a preview): As we have seen and heard, it is through the Word (and Sacraments) that the Holy Spirit works faith (strengthens and keeps one in faith). Now, let us take a few minutes and look at the specific Word we might want to use at any specific time. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 and answer the following questions. 1. What two types of people does Paul address in this text? How would you classify these two types of people in our world today? And the answer: *(Paul mentions the Jews and the Greeks. The Jews are those in our world who do not believe in Christ’s crucifixion, and the Greeks are those who believe the Bible is folly.)* 2. We live in a world that has been dominated by the teaching of evolution with the understanding that science can explain everything in our world without God. Therefore, there are many people in our world who do not know what the Bible says about anything. And there are those who have a basic or greater understanding of the Bible and yet still reject it. Using this information, how might we describe the “Jews” and the “Greeks” of today? And what does that description mean for us when it comes to where we begin with them in regards to giving a defense of the hope that we have in Christ Jesus? And the answer: *(The “Jews” would be those who have a basic or greater knowledge of the Bible, and the “Greeks” would be those who have no Biblical background. With the “Jews,” we might*

well begin with the Word of God, but with the "Greeks," we might have to begin with Genesis, creation, the fall into sin and the promise to send a Savior.)

In session four, question three is revised as follows:

3. The Holy Spirit calls us to faith. After we are called to faith, is there anything required or expected of us, and if so, what? What are these called? What things fit into this category? (See Eph. 2:8-10; Luther's Small Catechism, Q. 163).

In session five, question 2. Change Bible passage "Ruth 2:14" to "2 Tim. 4:22" and question 5. change - "give an answer" to "give a defense." Under the section "We Practice What We Preach" question 1. Change "If you faith" to "If your faith." And under the section "Summing It Up" in the second paragraph, first line - change "as we are give God's" to "as we are given God's."

The following changes are made in session six, in question 2. Remove Bible passage references to "Matthew 13:19; 22:37; Mark 8:38." In question 5. Add (See Luther's Small Catechism, Q. 77). And in question 7. Add (See Luther's Small Catechism, Q. 85).

Session seven, under the heading, "What Is Important" question 3. Change "giving an answer" to "giving a defense." Add question,

4. What does it mean to remember our Baptism? The answer: *(We define "remember" as not thinking about the actual event, which is difficult if we were baptized as infants, but to be reminded that, at our baptism, God's name was put on us, we were given faith and forgiveness of sins, and our names were written in the book of life; further when God puts His name on us, He claims us; now we are confident because He has chosen us, and we are His.)*

The following change is made to session eight, under the heading, What Is Important," question 3. Change "giving an answer" to "giving a defense."

Under session nine, under the heading, "Summing It Up" the first paragraph, last line, change "give an answer" to "give a defense." The second paragraph, first line, change "When the terrorists attached on 9/11/02" to "When the terrorist attacked 9/11/01."

In session ten, under the heading, "Getting Into the Lesson" change opening paragraph, last line from "give an answer" to "give a defense."

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