

The Invitation

(Evangelism Brushup)

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- **Matt. 28:18-20 Great Commission, passed from generation to generation (2 Tim. 2:2)**

- from the time Jesus commissioned the apostles, successive generations have taught others, and continued to evangelize the world

- **our job is to reach people with the gospel**, in the day and age we live in, to the best of our ability, using the lawful expediencies God has blessed us with

- **inviting people to come to church, and to study the Bible** with us, is one of the most important thing we do to reach people in our society today

➤ **Importance of inviting people to church and Bible study**

- **Matt. 22:1-14** Jesus, parable of the dinner guests – **God invites everyone to come into the kingdom**

- **kingdom of heaven compared** to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son

- **sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited** to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling

- **again he sent out other slaves, inviting** them and telling them everything is ready, but they paid no attention

- one went to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated the slaves and killed them

- **the king was enraged, and he sent his armies** and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire

- **because the people invited were not worthy, he sends more slaves to invite everyone** they found, both evil and good, to the wedding feast

- one man came without wedding clothes on, and the king had his servants bind him, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, "For many are called, but few are chosen"

- **as God's children, our job is to carry God's invitation to the world**

➤ - **Rev. 22:14-15, 17** Spirit and bride invite, to obey, wash robes, be saved

- **our job is to carry the Lord's invitation to the world**

➤ - **1 Cor. 14:22-24** apostolic example of teaching unbelievers the gospel in our assembly

➤ - **illus.: Harold Commer, importance of inviting people to church** (Bible study)

- "A recent **Gallup Poll** indicated that **25% of those who do not attend church say they would visit if they were invited to by a friend**. Of course the number who would really attend is much lower. Yet, you still **continue to get 5 to 20% response to your invitations if you regularly invite associates who know your morals and life**. Invitations do produce visitors" (Harold Comer, Biblical Evangelism, p. 24).

- **if you know 100 people who don't go to church, 5 - 20 will visit church with you if you invite**

- probably have to invite several times

- have to be willing to get 80-95 no's, to get 5-20 yes's

➤ - **illus.: survey by The Institute For American Church Growth**, who asked over **10,000 people** this question: "What was responsible for your coming to Christ and this church?"

- I had a special need - 2%

- I just walked in - 3%

- I like the minister - 6%

- I visited there - 1%

- I like the Bible classes - 5%

- I attended a gospel meeting - 0.5%

- I liked the programs - 3%

- A friend or relative invited me - 79%

- **some people to day will have a home study with us right off the bat, but many prefer "checking us out" and "checking out our religion" first** - greatly changed since the error of the Cottage Meeting (1955-1970)

- **vitaly important to invite people to church, receive them the best way possible**, so that those who are seeking truth will learn God's word as we teach (publically, in homes)

➤ **Building relationships important to influencing people with the gospel**

- **it's always been important to building relationships to influence people with the gospel**

- **illus.: Paul** built relationships with unbelievers, and was very influential

- **Acts class**, Paul well respected and admired by everyone except for those who were against the gospel, and persecuted him as a result

- **illus.: during the Gospel Meeting period** (1900-1950), brethren built relationships with people to invite and bring to meetings, and develop the relationship afterwards to teach them

- **illus.: during the Cottage Meeting period** (1955-1970, term used for home Bible study), brethren built relationships to ask people if they come to their home as present Bible lessons

- **today: the most effective means of evangelism is shining our lights in the world as good neighbors, and inviting** those with whom we contact to come to church and/or Bible study

- **Matt. 5:16** we shine our lights, people see good works and glorify God

- coming to church with us for worship, and studying God's word with us, glorifies God

- **"good neighbor" evangelism, as I've termed it**

➤ - **process** (review from previous lessons):

- **"Most converts are first impressed by the good life of a righteous member. Secondly, they accept an invitation to a service, then return a few times until they are ready to accept a Bible study. They are baptized after four to ten studies"** (Harold Commer, Biblical Evangelism, p. 12).

- **illus.: dating, courting, asking to marry, engagement, marriage** (not that we "court" people spiritually)

- **young man doesn't** ask girl to marry him before going on first date

- **young man doesn't** ask girl to marry him before the girl knows anything about him

➤ - **"95% of our adult converts began their journey to a new life when they were impressed by the good life of a godly person they had observed"** (Harold Commer, Biblical Evangelism, p. 24).

- **illus. Eric:** young man met in Land O' Lakes, New Year's day, gave ride home, talked about God, introduced to Charles Murray (St. Pete), beginning study

- **more real examples of this at the end of the lesson**

- **General stats regarding invitations, visitors, conversions** – vary depending on specifics
 - **for a congregation that is really blessed and working** to the very best of it's ability, **10% of invited unbelievers will visit once**, and **1% of them will visit more than once** (Harold Commer, Biblical Evangelism, p. 31)
 - **it takes 2-10 visits before most unbelievers are ready to talk** about religion, or agree to a study (Harold Commer, Biblical Evangelism, p. 31)
 - **of the unbelievers who visit more than once, a fair percentage are converted**
 - - **if 25% (1/4, which would be amazing) of the unbelievers who visit our congregation more than once are converted to Christ:**
 - **statistically, we would have one baptism for every 400 "good" invitations**
 - **congregation of 100**, every member would have to **invite 4 unbelievers per year** for one convert, or 1 per quarter
 - **family of 5 would have 20 invites per year**, or almost 2 per month
 - **statistically, we would have one baptism for every 40 visitors, with 4 of them visiting more than once**, if we did excellent job following-up
 - **statistically, we would only grow 1% per year**
 - **if we wanted to grow 3% per year, each member would have to invite 1 unbeliever per month** (statistically)
 - **family of 5 would have 5 invites per month**
 - **note: good follow-up required for this stat**
 - **impresses the need to invite, and do our best to follow-up** when people visit
 - **impresses the importance of everything we do as a congregation**, especially when we assemble for worship and study, and to follow up with visitors the best we can
- - **how do we grow 2-3% per year** (not including move-ins, or children of members)
 - **every member extend 1 "good" invitation per month**
 - family of 5, 5 "good" invitations per month
 - **every member follow-up with visitors the best we can**

➤ examples of invitations

- - **invite to church, Bible study**
 - **ask someone if they're going to church right now:** ask to come in way that doesn't demand immediate answer
 - ask everyone, constantly asking everyone you meet
 - **illus.: Debbie Lynch: church website is inviting**, days and times, email preacher, invite via email
 - after she came and visited the congregation (classes, people) was positive influence, emails
 - **illus.: Gerald, neighbor came by while Gerald worked in his yard on Saturdays**, asked to come to church over and over, finally Gerald went to church, was converted, then his whole family was converted
 - **illus.: Smith boys, came to church with us for years**, talked with them about God and salvation a number of times, recently obeyed the gospel

- - **invite door knockers to study the Bible**
 - **ask if they'd like to study Bible, set a day and time** (not do then, so you can prepare)
 - **illus.: Jehovah's Witness who last knocked on door**, told the lady I'd be glad to study the Bible with her, gave her my number and asked her to call and set an appointment, she called, studied with her and husband

- - **invite people who bring up a religious topic in conversation**
 - **those who are critical of you**, ask if they'd like to study
 - **those who agree with you**, ask if they'd like to study

- - **invite people you email**
 - **ask if they'd like to have a phone Bible study or email Bible study**
 - **illus.: Len: contact from HEPhillips.org**, lives in NJ, phone study on Monday nights

- - **invite people you know to come to church**
 - **bring up Bible or religion in conversation, invite without demanding an immediate answer**
 - **illus.: Pam invited two guys from bowling alley to church**, they came, one studied and was converted, then the other studied and was converted

- - **invite people to a Bible study at work, school** – before, after, during lunch – not during work (joke)
 - **get Bible study started, invite people to come**

- - **recommend a church** – invite people to attend a congregation close to where they live
 - **Gary Palmer: exhortation, explain the experiences he's had, and what he learned**
 - **his experience** with his own conversion – had relationship with man who turned out to be a preacher, introduced to the gospel, converted
 - **lady, health food store**, recommended Temple Terrace, put her in touch with teacher, obeyed gospel
 - **others:**
 - **Summer:** internet contact, emailed me through BSG, wanted her daughter to be baptized, introduced her to Charles Murray (St. Pete), beginning study
 - **Curt:** internet contact from BSG, introduced to Mitchell Stephens in Memphis TN in August 2009, studied, baptized November 2009

Summary / Inv.

- review - PP

- **how do we grow 2-3% per year** (not including move-ins, or children of members)

- **every member (Christian, all ages) extend 1 “good” invitation per month**

- family of 5, 5 “good” invitations per month

- **every member follow-up with visitors the best we can**

- **if we care about the souls of men, and want to be evangelistic, we know what to do**

- **invite** people to come to church and Bible study

- **prayerfully follow-up, and minister the word** to them when they're ready

- **inv.:** if you're not a Christian. . . .