

# Good News for Our City

How to tell your story and share your faith



# The Training Center

The Training Center is a ministry of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The Training Center is the tangible expression of one of the three guiding metaphors that best describe the vision and mission of Fellowship; namely, that Fellowship is a “greenhouse,” a “training center,” and a “launching pad.” The necessary link between the greenhouse and the launching pad is the Training Center where people are prepared and equipped for leadership in life and ministry.



## CORE TRAINING

Core Training is a track of ten training experiences for everyone at Fellowship. These ten trainings are meant to provide a starting point for engaging life at Fellowship and growing into a prepared and equipped spiritual leader. Whether you are new to Fellowship or have been around for decades, The Training Center is the place to start growing and developing.

### **BIBLE AND THEOLOGY**

Panorama of the Bible  
We Believe or Our Faith  
Personal Bible Study

### **MISSION AND MINISTRY**

Perspectives/GO Primer (coming 2019)  
Leadership Lab  
Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship (coming 2020)

### **LIFE AND GROWTH**

Align Your Finances with the Heart of God  
Re|Frame Family: Marriage and Parenting  
Great Commandment: Worship, Prayer, and Spiritual Growth (coming 2021)

### **DISCOVER**

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## **SESSION 1**

## **SESSION 1:**

# Defining Evangelism

*Evangelism seems to have drifted into individual personal “styles.” A believer is challenged to find his or her personal “style” of evangelism; your “style” is whatever you choose as your own preference. If you feel comfortable with your personal “style,” then that is all that matters. However, there are still people who are lost and couldn’t care less about your own personal style of evangelism! Evangelism is not about you. Evangelism is about God and what He has done through Jesus Christ... Developing an evangelistic lifestyle begins with your relationship with Jesus Christ. Evangelism flows from your personal relationship with the living Savior. Evangelism is a spiritual adventure.*

– Douglas Cecil, *The 7 Principles of an Evangelistic Life*

## **What is Evangelism?**

Evangelism is an event, process, and lifestyle. It is an event in the process of making disciples and should become a lifestyle for every believer; a lifestyle of spreading the Good News (Gospel) that God has provided a remedy for mankind’s hopeless condition of sin and separation from Himself.

Evangelism is not a program or initiative that lasts for a time and then fades away. Scripture is clear that evangelism is the calling and responsibility of every follower of Christ to

share the good news of Jesus Christ! There are many models and modes of evangelism found in Scripture and Christian literature. Therefore, every follower of Christ should be adequately trained and equipped to share the Gospel with those whom the Holy Spirit brings into his or her sphere of influence.

The specific term “evangelism” is not found in Scripture. It is an English word derived from the Greek word, “*euangelion*—good news.” Paul defines the “*euangelion*” or good news in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*” This is the good news in its most simple form.

However, something must be done with this news. The Scriptures have a word for announcing this good news, to *evangelize*. It gets translated many different ways. For example, in Acts 13:32-33 Paul said, “*We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus.*” And again in 1 Corinthians 1:17, “*For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*”

In summary, “Evangelism is the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ with a view to bringing about the reconciliation of the sinner to God the Father through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.”

*—Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*





4. Given that definition, how would one go about making a disciple?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. “Go” is a helping verb that aids in our understanding of the mission. It gives some “umph” to the “make disciples” command. The idea is that we are not to be passive, waiting for people to come to us. Rather, we are to be active, going to where people are. Where do you regularly interact with people who do not yet know Jesus? How could you be more proactive to interact with not-yet believers?

## Our Helper

READ ALOUD:

*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup>For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.*

—2 Corinthians 4:4-6

1. How does the blinding of an unbeliever's heart affect attempts at evangelism?

2. According to this passage, what is God's work in evangelism?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How can we acknowledge that work as we seek to share Christ with others?

## Homework

To be “baptized” into the faith is symbolic of converting to be a disciple who trusts Jesus. This is the aim of evangelism. It is the beginning of a new life of “learning to obey all that I (Jesus) commanded.” The command to make disciples is rooted in Jesus’ *authority* to give the command and His *presence* that enables us to keep it.

### **This week pray and journal on two questions:**

1. What are the biggest obstacles in my life to living out the Great Commission, and how do Jesus’ authority and presence address those obstacles?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who are not-yet believers I know that need to hear the good news of God’s salvation in Jesus?

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## **SESSION 2**

## **SESSION 2:**

# Telling Your Story

### LAST WEEK'S FOLLOW UP

1. Last week we asked you to pray about obstacles to evangelism and how Christ's power and presence address them. Share with the group any insights from your prayer time.
  
2. Did you think of two people who do not yet know Christ? Share about them with the group.

## Introduction to Session 2

The most effective tool in your arsenal is your story. You know it well and will never have trouble memorizing it! You need only look as far as the life of the apostle Paul to see the effectiveness of using your story. He told of his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus over and over. You do not have to embellish your story or try to make it more than it is—just tell others what Jesus means to you.

Stories move, challenge, and inspire us in a unique way. They are not the only form of effective communication, but they are certainly a special way to express what God is doing and has done in your life. Stories help us see how God's character interacts with our lives. They reveal how theology impacts everyday life.

1. What are some of your favorite stories? What do you like about them?

2. When do you find yourself telling stories?

## How to tell a story

All stories have the same basic form.

They begin with an **Exposition**. In this section you lay out the pieces that make up the story. Who are the characters? What is the setting? What is normal life like in this story?

Then we move to the **Crisis**. In this section life is disrupted. A great challenge faces a character in the story. The heart of every story is how characters face this challenge. It gives the story a center that organizes and balances everything else. How the crisis resolves is the theme or thesis of the story.

Finally, we arrive at a **Conclusion**. Here we see the results of how our character faced his or her great challenge.

As we tell our stories, we can follow this basic outline. First, give us the *Exposition*. Who are you? Where did you come from? This is your life before Jesus. What was normal life like apart from Christ?

Then, what was your *Crisis* moment? Was there one large challenge that brought you to faith? What was the conversion like? How did you meet Jesus? Don't be too thrown by the word "crisis." For many, there is not one big crisis event. The challenge may be a pattern. "I was always crushed by a sense that I'm not enough."

Finally, what is the *Conclusion* for you? In one sense, your story is still ongoing! It is not concluded. But as believers we live our lives in the new normal of following Jesus. Tell people what life is like for you now. You may have many decades of life in your story. You don't have to tell everything! Let the crisis organize the information for you.

## **Workshop**

Take some time during group to write out your story below. Be honest. People can sniff out a fake story quickly. We serve a very real God, so give people a real story about Him.

### **The Exposition**

Who are you? Where do you come from? What were your dreams for life? What were some of your biggest hurts and disappointments? How were you trying to accomplish your dreams or address your hurts?

### **The Crisis**

How did Jesus enter into your story? How did you discover His life, death, and resurrection as good news for your life? You may not even focus on the moment you became a Christian but rather on a significant change Christ brought into your life since following Him.



## **The Conclusion**

How is life different now? Look back to the dreams, hurts, and disappointments you mentioned earlier. Are they completely gone (probably not!)? Or do you now face them in a different way? What did you learn about God and yourself? What conclusion are you still waiting for?

## Discussion

1. What insights came out of that time? Did anything stand out to you in writing down your own story?
2. If there was one word you would use to describe the theme of your story, what would it be?

## Homework

This week practice what you've learned in two ways:

1. Listen to the stories people tell, both in everyday life and in media. Can you identify the exposition, the crisis, and the conclusion? Can you identify a theme?
2. Share your story with one person. It could be a trusted friend, a family member, or someone who doesn't yet know Christ.

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## **SESSION 3**





## The Power of the Gospel

READ ALOUD:

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. <sup>17</sup> For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”* –Romans 1:16-17

1. The word “power” here means the ability to do something. What is it that the Gospel is able to do?

2. For whom does the gospel have this power?



## The Response to the Gospel

READ ALOUD:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. —John 3:16*

*Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.  
—John 6:47*

## The Whole Story

READ ALOUD:

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,<sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.<sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh<sup>m</sup> and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.<sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,<sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.<sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not by works, so that no one can boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

— Ephesians 2:1-10







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## **SESSION 4**

## **SESSION 4:**

# Building Relationships and Clearing the Debris Field

### LAST WEEK'S FOLLOW UP

Share your short summary of the Gospel story.

What strikes you most about the good news of what God has done for us?

## **Sharing your life**

### READ ALOUD:

*Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, <sup>8</sup>so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. –1 Thessalonians 2:7b-8*







4. What kinds of questions or objections have you heard to Christian faith? How do you feel when you receive those questions or objections?

5. How prepared do you feel to answer those questions? How would you go about getting prepared?

6. Why is it important to show gentleness and respect in these conversations?





