

Personal Evangelism Training Seminar

Trainer's Manual



Sharing Christ With The World, One Person at a Time

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What is Witnessing?

Objectives: This section of the study should take about 30 minutes. During this time you will be defining witnessing by discussing what witnessing is, and what witnessing is not. This preliminary section will help to settle apprehension of the participants. It is very important that everyone becomes involved in the beginning of this study because a greater learning awareness will be created.

Procedures: As the participants enter, hand them their materials and greet them. Team members should be circulating with the church members, not clustered together. The audience will listen more closely to the seminar leaders if they believe the leaders care about them.

Use the first five minutes for introductions. If your training will be predominantly with youth, have them stand, introduce themselves, and share one weird thing about themselves.

Tell the audience this seminar is a "Group Participation Activity," hold up the "Certificate of Participation," and point out that they will receive this attractive certificate to commemorate their participation today. Encourage them to feel free to discuss or ask questions.

Witnessing Is:

Read the first definition of witnessing. Have the group say it together several times. Point out:

1. God has provided the message: "good news of Jesus Christ."
2. God has provided the power: "in the power of the Holy Spirit."
3. God is responsible for the results: "leaving the results of God."

Read the second definition. Point out that to be an effective witness, we

don't need to "get the Spirit," but that the Spirit needs to "get us." If we are a willing witness, God will lead us to a seeking sinner by His Divine Appointments. Have someone read Acts 8:35 and discuss Philip leaving the masses to witness to the one, because the Spirit led him. Ask the following two questions: 1) When is it best not to witness to someone? (Answer: Never witness when God tells you not to.) 2) How bold should I be with my witness? (Answer: As bold as Satan is with his!)

Read the third definition of witnessing. Point out the Christianity is one generation away from extinction. If our faith is not spread by this generation of Christians, there will not be another generation.

Witnessing is not:

Read the first definition. Explain that our witness is telling what we know about the gospel, not "blowing our own horn." Read Romans 1:16 and point out that Paul's boasting was in the gospel, not in himself.

Read the second definition. You need to convey to the audience the danger of debating with a lost man. You can win an argument and lose a soul. Our presentation of the Gospel needs to be simple. Our witness should be as compelling and simple as the blind man's in John 9:25. Have someone read the text and discuss the implications of it.

Read the final definition and comment that Ananias was not glorified in his witness to Paul in Acts 9:17, but Our Lord certainly was.

Summary

Review the first definition and encourage the participants to memorize it and to remind themselves of what witnessing is before they present the gospel.

Point out that the word witness comes from a Greek word from which we get our word "martyr." Ask: What is the difference between a martyr and a

witness? (Answer: A martyr dies for a cause; a witness lives for a cause. To each, the most important thing is the cause!)

Leighton Ford says, "An authentic witness always carries the seed of the martyr."¹

Will I Be Able to Witness?

Objectives: This section of the study should take about 60-75 minutes. During this time you will briefly discuss and contrast lifestyle and verbal evangelism. Primarily, this session will help develop the skills and provide the confidence a soul-winner needs to be successful.

Procedures: Present the three ways to witness (language, lifestyle, leading to Christ) in a lecture format. You will only have 10 minutes to present this material.

Next, you will teach the participants how to give their testimony, and actually give them a chance to practice. This will take 30 minutes.

Last, you will teach the participants how to present the gospel using a witnessing booklet. This should take 20 minutes.

If necessary, borrow 15 minutes from the final session. This is the most important hour of the two hours. It is essential that these skills be taught. However, if you do not get off the subject, and you see that the session moves rapidly, you can teach this section in 60 minutes.

Language:

Many Christian youth have a problem maintaining a good witness because of the type of language their friends hear them use. You should emphasize at this

¹Leighton Ford, Good News is for Sharing (Elgin, Weston, Fullerton: David C. Cook, 1977), p. 15.

point the importance of clean language. Have someone read James 3:11. Comment that James is calling for the same consistency in our speech that appears elsewhere in nature.

Contrasting Illustrations:

Recently, while teaching this seminar, someone came up to me after the session and said he could not be effective in his witness because of a problem he has with cussing. I agreed with him and told him to either surrender his tongue to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, or keep it quiet that he is a Christian. A few days later, I was in the home of a new Christian from our church who commented to me about the victory God was giving him in controlling his language since accepting Christ. I told him that many have found that they lost half of their vocabulary after becoming a Christian. The difference between these two men is the desire to be a good witness to their friends. The first one has no desire, the second has a great passion for souls. (By the way, the second man in this illustration has already led two of his friends to Christ within five months of his own conversion.)

Lifestyle:

Point out that we demonstrate the validity of the Gospel in the way we live. Have someone read II Corinthians 5:17. Since we are new creatures, others will see a difference in us.

Two illustrations:

In the San Diego area in 1980, I was witnessing to a barber while getting a haircut. We had come to a standstill in the conversation because he did not believe Christianity could add anything to his life. When he was finishing up, I asked him if he knew any Christians personally. He thought for a moment, then responded that his wife was the only Christian he knew. I asked him if her life was any different than his and that of his friends. After a long pause, he said yes. I told him that difference was her relationship with Jesus Christ and for him to go home and ask her how he could discover the difference Christ could make in his life.

Hugh Morgan, Director of Missions for the Trinity Southern Baptist Association, likes to tell the story of walking into a place of business a new member of his church owned, while Hugh was a pastor in Carmichael, Calif., in 1957. He casually asked the man how he was getting along. The man paused, and said very seriously, "Pastor, since I gave my life to Jesus three months ago, I have had to change my way of doing business."

No doubt accepting Christ makes such a visible difference in our lives that others will be able to see Christ in us. We must be careful, not just of what we say, but how we live, because our friends are watching!

Ask: Do you think this statement is true: "Some people have the gift of evangelism--I don't. I witness with my life, not with my mouth." (Answer: False. This cannot be the case for two reasons: 1) If all you must do is witness with your life, then you are better than Jesus, because He had to verbalize His witness. 2) If all we had to do was witness with our lives, then Jesus did not need to give the "Great Commission.")

Leading to Christ:

Begin this section by discussing the three important transitional questions.

If there is a blackboard in the room, write the following outline:

First question: Can you spare a couple of minutes of your time so I can share with you the difference Christ has made in my life? **Give Testimony.**

Second question: Can you spare a few more minutes so I can show you how He can do the same for you? **Gospel Presentation**

Third question: Is there any good reason you cannot allow Jesus to be the Lord of your life right now? **Sinner's Prayer**

Your Testimony

Begin by asking the audience if they have ever seen "before and after" ads in a magazine. On a page depicting a marvelous diet is a picture of a man who the photographer must have had trouble fitting into that small picture. Next to the first picture is a picture of the same man 75 lbs. lighter. The first picture has the caption "Before;" the second, the caption "After."

Your testimony has the same verifying effect as the pictures in the advertisement. It is authoritative because it has happened to you. It is not just a theory, but a reality.

Illustration:

In 1981, friend of mine, Roger Greenwalt, and I were visiting a church in the Los Angeles area. This church, after the first song, asked the guests to stand and introduce themselves. After several introductions, a filthy man with a long, gray beard stood and said something to the effect that he was here today to find some answers to problems in his life. After the invitation, Roger went over to the man and began witnessing to him while I greeted the pastor. I joined Roger and the man and quietly prayed as Roger very ably presented the gospel to him.

Roger gave an appeal to the man to accept Christ. The man looked away from Roger and looked me straight in the eye and asked a most piercing question:

"What difference has Christ made in your life?" I was startled for a moment, but soon recovered and told him my testimony. After doing so, Roger again made an appeal to the man, who then prayed to receive Christ.

This man was not impressed with what the Bible said. He had never read it before. What made the difference to him was what Christ could do for him.

There are four parts to everyone's testimony: before, realize, became, and after. These words form the acronym BRBA. (I know there is no such word as "Brba," but if you use this as a memory device, your students will never forget the four parts of their testimony.)

Ask one of the students why it is important to tell people what your life was like before accepting Christ. (Answer to this question is under the word "before" in the Student Booklet.)

Ask another of the students why it is important to tell people how he realized a need for Christ. (Answer under the word "realize" in the Student Booklet.)

Ask someone else why it is important to tell people how he became a Christian. (Answer under the word "became" in the Student Booklet.)

Ask another why it is important to tell a lost person what change Christ has made in their life. (Answer under the word "after" in the Student Booklet.)

Provide the group five minutes to complete the testimony activity in the student handbook. Now divide the group into pairs. If they move slowly, assign the pairs yourself. The two team members who are not leading this session should also participate.

Review the four parts of the testimony, and ask them what "Brba" stands for. Tell them that they should be able to give their testimony in two minutes, which means 30 seconds for each part.

Tell them you will give them 30 seconds each to tell what their life was like before they met Christ. They will have a hard time deciding who should go first. So tell them to compare shoe sizes. Then ask the person with the biggest foot to go first. Say: "Ready, set, go bigfoot." (The use of humor will make this very difficult task easier.)

After the 30 seconds are up, make a sound like a buzzer and stop them. Tell the next person it is his turn. Say: "Ready, set, go petite feet."

Repeat this same procedure for each of the four parts. After each partner has had 30 seconds to share, before going to the next part, take a moment to give the following hints to giving a good testimony:

1. After all have completed "before," tell them to be careful not to glorify past sins. Although many have turned from the gutter to God, they don't have to describe in detail what the gutter was like! Some have done more harm in doing so than good by giving their testimony.

2. After all have completed "realize," ask them to guard against too many details. If they are to summarize their conversion experience in two minutes, they will not be able to give a detailed description of the weather the day they followed Christ!

3. After all have completed "became," point out that all of us become a Christian in basically the same way: we ask God to save us. This is a turning point in the testimony because here the person being witnessed to will hear how he can also accept Christ. It is very important that we tell them that God saved us, we did not save ourselves.

4. After all have completed "after," ask them to be sure to be truthful. Accepting Christ does not make our life trouble-free, it just gives us a place to take our troubles!

Ask the students if the buzzer interrupting them annoyed them. (They will always say "yes.") Apologize to them and say, "I feel bad for interrupting you a moment ago, so I want to give you a chance to give your testimony straight through, without any interruptions."

Give each student two minutes to give their testimony.

Witnessing Booklet

If you are on schedule, you have 20 minutes left to demonstrate to the participants how to use a witnessing booklet to lead someone to Christ.

Ask for a volunteer. If no one raises a hand, pick someone. Bring him to the front with you and sit in chairs facing the audience. Demonstrate how to use the booklet adhering to the following principles:

1. Never call the witnessing booklet a tract! It is a booklet!
2. Fold the booklet over so the person being witnessed to will not look ahead of you.
3. Point with your pencil or pen as you read.
4. Hold the booklet so the other person can read it.
5. If the person asks you a question that is not relevant, reply, "That is a good question. May I try to answer it after we have completed this booklet?"
(You will need to prompt the participant to ask a foolish question at some point like, "Did Adam have a belly button?")
6. When you read a Bible verse, emphasize that "The Bible says," then explain the verse in language the person being witnessed to can understand.
7. When the booklet asks a question, give the participant an opportunity to respond.

Roman Road:

You are probably running very short on time by now. Take a few minutes to

point to the "Roman Road" in the Student Booklet. Tell your students that they should mark these verses in their New Testaments to make the Scriptures easy to find. They can mark their New Testaments by underlining the verses, writing the captions that are in the Student Booklet at the top of the page, and "turn to page X" at the bottom of the page. (Page X is the page number the next verse appears on.) The front cover of the New Testament should have written on it the page where Romans 3:23 can be found.

Why Should I Witness?

Objectives: This last section of the study should take 20 to 30 minutes. In order to leave time for practical application, you should be careful not to take much more than two hours for the entire study. During this time you will be identifying reasons for witnessing with a view to motivating your students to apply what they have learned.

Procedures: You have a choice of either teaching this material in the same question-and-answer format we have been following, or to treat it as sermonic material. Prayerfully adapt this material to your own style of presentation. The first illustration under "Personal" could be presented quite effectively as a skit .

You will be looking at two passages of Scripture: the "Great Commission" in Matthew 28:18-20; and Jesus' post-resurrection conversation with Peter in John 21:15-17.

Command of Jesus:

Personnel

Different statistics are given for the number of Christians that have never led anyone to Christ, but all of those statistics are terribly high. Can you imagine the shape a business would be in if they ran their business this way? I can hear the voices during a meeting at a department store. the manager begins the meeting by relating the most recent procedures in effective salesmanship. He teaches them about the product and the best way to present it to the customer. After his thoughtful presentation is over, he asks the employees if they have any questions or comments. Responses:

In the corner, a lady doing her nails responds to the pep talk with: "Really, you don't expect me to leave the break room, do you? I only took this job because I enjoyed the fellowship here, and if you want me to stay, you'd better not bring up

work again!"

At the front of the room, a rather scholarly-looking gentleman looked up from his note pad and said, "I find all that you are saying to be interesting. I'm so glad I came to this symposium today, but I just don't feel qualified to sell. After all, there is so much to know. I'm afraid I would say the wrong thing."

Over near the mirror, Valley Valerie finally quits teasing her hair to say, "Like, I'm not on this selling trip, you know. I mean, really, I might offend someone if I come on too strong. And besides, like, some of my friends might call me a 'selling freak' or something!"

Finally, Shy Sally, in her little squeaky voice summed up the sentiments of the rest: "I would like to be a more effective sales person, but I'm afraid someone might reject me. Besides, aren't you paid to run the store?"

Several years ago, the country was paralyzed with fear over polio. A pioneering scientist discovered a vaccine for the dread disease. The vaccine is named after him: the "Salk Vaccine." After this vaccine was discovered, he shared it with others. What a tragedy it have been if he had kept it to himself. Needlessly, millions of people would have been forced to live in an iron lung, or would have died.

What is even more of a tragedy is the disturbing silence of Christians. We have the only cure for sin: Jesus Christ. There is no excuse for not telling others. We cannot watch the world die and go to hell while we enjoy our fellowship, or try to learn more, or are afraid of what others will think, or fear rejection. We must go and tell!

Purpose

Point out to the participants that this sentence (Matt. 28:19-20), has only one verb: make disciples. The three participles--go, teach, and baptize--are

instructions for carrying out the command "make disciples." In other words, we make disciples by going, teaching, and baptizing. All three participles take the imperative force of the verb. Here Christ spells out the purpose of the church. We are to go and tell the good news, then we are to baptize the converts, then we are to teach them to observe the teachings of Christ.

In other words, evangelism is not complete until the evangelized becomes an evangelist! Baptism and church membership are not options, they are a part of what it means to make disciples.

Power

Have the participants once again quote the first definition of witness: "Telling the Good News of Jesus Christ, in the Power of the Holy Spirit, and leaving the Results to God."

In verse 18, Christ claims to have all power (authority). In verse 20, He promises to be with us always. Therefore, we can conclude that we have ample power at our fingertips to accomplish the command Jesus gave us.

As a matter of fact, we have more power than an atomic bomb, yet most of us run scared from Satan's firecrackers. The church must charge Satan, and confront his strongholds, and not run from his feeble threats.

Remember: be as bold with your witness as Satan is with his wiles!

Compassion for Jesus:

Tending Sheep

In your presentation of this passage (John 21:15-17) don't get hung up on the different meanings of love in the Greek words. It will only detract from the simple message you are trying to get across. The point of this passage is not which Greek word was used, (Jesus probably spoke these words in Aramaic), but that service to God is directly related to our love for Him.

Notice what Jesus did not ask:

1. Peter, do you love sheep?
2. Peter, do you enjoy feeding sheep?
3. Peter, do you think the sheep want to eat?
4. Peter, do the sheep love you?

He asked, three times, "Do you love Me?"

Point out that we cannot stop sharing our faith because we don't love people, don't like doing evangelism, or because we question the results, or wonder whether people like us. We spread the gospel, bottom line, because we love Jesus!

In his book, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, Green said, "If you believe that outside of Christ there is not hope, it is impossible to possess an atom of human love and kindness without being gripped with the great desire to bring men to this one way of salvation."²

"Selling Souls"

You hear about people selling their own soul to Satan, but if you could sell someone else's soul, and keep your own, how much would you sell it for?

Ask: Is a hundred dollars enough to get for sending a soul to hell for eternity? How about a thousand, a million dollars?

Say: You cannot put a price on someone's eternal soul, can you? Yet daily we give away people's souls for free. We say, "I'm too shy, I can't witness . . ." Sold! One soul to hell. "I'm too busy, I can't witness . . ." Sold! One soul to hell. "What will others think? I can't witness . . ." Sold! One soul to hell.

You see, Satan doesn't really have to buy souls, because we give them away daily with our neglect and our alibis!

²Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 249.