

Friendship Evangelism

Goals: To understand the importance relationships play in leading people to Christ.
To recognize that evangelism is often a process and not just a one-time event.
To learn how to transition into deeper God oriented conversations in their current friendships.

Openers:-

- Respond: “We assume evangelism is some separate activity that we do isolated from the rest of our lives. The truth is that evangelism begins naturally, by doing what we love to do.” - Rick Richardson in *Reimagining Evangelism: Participant’s Guide*.
- The Barna Group is an organization that provides research and training for churches, nonprofits and businesses. Their research has shown that relationships matter more to people in our culture than work, entertainment or church.
What might the implications of this trend be on how we approach evangelizing our campus?

Scripture:

Luke 5:27-31

Later, as Jesus left the town, he saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at his tax collector’s booth. “Follow me and be my disciple,” Jesus said to him. So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.

Later, Levi held a banquet in his home with Jesus as the guest of honor. Many of Levi’s fellow tax collectors and other guests also ate with them, But the Pharisees and their teachers of religious law complained bitterly to Jesus’ disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with such scum? Jesus answered them, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor - sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent.”

Colossians 4:5-6

Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

Digging Deeper:

Observations & Interpretations

- Who did Jesus hang around with? Why did he make these choices?
- What do you think it was about Jesus that made the spiritually “sick” and “sinners” want to be around him?
- Why did Jesus upset the religious leaders so much?
- Were there some key friendships that influenced you into becoming a Christian or at least taking Jesus more seriously?

- Do you have many friendships with non-believers? What is the nature of those friendships?
- What does Colossians 4:5-6 tell us about our interactions with non-Christians?
- Read the following and discuss:
Don't underestimate your friend's interest in spiritual matters. Most people are interested in spiritual conversations. We can most effectively share our faith with those who **trust and respect** us. Trust and respect are at the heart of friendship, and friendship is the product of large amounts of time spent together. Also, ask yourself if you are you open with your non-Christian friends about your struggles, or do you always put on a good face? Expressing your hurts, and even your doubts regarding faith, can break through those trust barriers with your non-Christian friends.
- (if you have seekers in your core--be sure to let them respond to these next 2 questions first!)
- How could you find out if your non-Christian friends have an interest in spiritual matters?
- How can you be a real friend to someone outside the faith without making them feel like they are just a spiritual project?

Applications

- Choose 2 - 4 people in your life who need to know Jesus. Commit to praying for them daily. Praying increases an awareness of God's heart for the lost..
- What are some things that we can do to widen the circle of friendship in our lives if we feel we don't have much interaction and friendship with non-Christians? (follow up to this question: What would you need to change in your schedule in order to have time to build relationships with people who don't know Jesus?)
- Part of being "salty" in our speech means provoking curiosity. Good questions can do that. Here's a sample. See if you can come up with some more questions:
 - What is your take on this whole God question? What do you think God is like?
 - Have you ever felt like you received a sign from God? What would you do if God gave you a sign?
 - How have your views changed since you came to college?
 - What do you think is wrong with Christians today?
 - Do you think you have a destiny? What do you think life is about?
 - Have you ever had a spiritual experience? Would you like to have one?

Resources: *Reimagining Evangelism* by Rick Richardson; *I Once was Lost* by Everts & Schaupp