

Evangelism Class Week 1 - Telling Faith Stories
Gathering October 25

- Go around the room and share a story about your week in 1 minute or less
- Why did I have you do that?
 - Because Stories are powerful,
 - they move us, and have a way of staying with us
 - stories are one of the primary ways we communicate with people
 - when you get together with friends, chances are a lot of the conversation is swapping stories
 - and because tonight, we are talking about stories
- Tonight, we are going to be talking about and practicing telling faith stories
 - Stories like how you found MPC as your church home,
 - or a time when God showed up in a powerful way,
 - try to imagine a story that might come up in a conversation
 - To give you an example, a story that comes up fairly regularly for me
 - Is the story I tell when people ask about how I ended up in grand junction
 - Tell the story
- So, now it's your turn
 - Now, turn to your neighbor and tell the story of when God first felt real for you...
- How do stories help us in our quest to make sense out of life?
- What stories have you heard that helped you know that God is alive and active in our lives?
- This is a quote from a book I like about this topic: "Our stories say to others that God isn't just a distant idea. God is an immediate presence. As we tell stories from our spiritual pilgrimage, others start thinking about their experiences of God."
- Something to keep in mind when sharing faith stories with non-believers is that the story has to make sense to them
 - One problem that Christians often have is they use vocabulary that isn't helpful
 - What are some words that we might use that other people won't understand
 - Write them on board
 - What words could we use instead?
 - Things like
 - Sin
 - Grace
 - New life
 - Salvation

- Repentance
- Now, I want you to think about some “faith” stories you might share with someone
 - It does not need to be how you were “saved”, but should relate to God
 - Maybe brainstorm several stories from your life that you think are really worth sharing, then pick one
 - Write it down, or say it in your head
- Anyone want to share?
 - Was there any language ____used that would be hard to understand from for a secular audience?
- How was this for you?
 - What fears do you have about doing this in your life?

End in prayer

Week 2: Outreaching Training

Asking Questions

Opening Exercise

- Turn to your neighbor (not your spouse) and in a minute, I want you to find out as much as you can about the other person
 - Did you find out a lot about them?
 - How?

The Importance of Asking Questions

- You probably asked them questions!
- Questions are the tool that make for good conversation
- Questions are great because they build relationship and trust
 - Questions create connection
 - This is my test for if I can be friends with someone – if they actually ask questions (show interest in me)

The Problem

- But the problem is...that most people don't ask questions
 - Kids do...
 - British researcher and psychologist Dr. Sam Wass did a study that said on average kids ask their parents 73 questions per day
 - Over 14 hours that's over 5 questions per hour
 - But get this, 4-year-old girls ask the most, an average of 390 questions per day!
- But adults, don't do this
 - Fear and insecurity get in the way of curiosity
- Rather than asking questions we have simultaneous monologues or
 - Statement conversations
 - Where they are just waiting to jump in with another story
 - In truth, most people are pretty bad at listening
 - Instead of listening, they are thinking about what they are going to say next
- Asking questions is an underrated skill – so we are going to work on it tonight!

Exercise 2

- Turn to that same neighbor and decide who is going to be A and who is going to be B for this next exercise
 - A is going to start talking about something
 - This doesn't have to be super deep, probably better if it isn't
 - And B is only allowed to ask questions
 - And these questions should probably relate to what A is talking about it
 - You get about a minute
- What was it like to be B? easy? Hard?
- What was it like to be A?

- Switch roles
 - How was that experience?

How Questions are part of sharing the gospel

- Questions are the building blocks of good conversations
 - But we live in a Conversation starved culture
 - We are connected on a certain level (social media) but starving on another level
 - Questions draw people out and make people feel seen and heard
 - Questions create connection and this is so important when we talk about evangelism
 - evangelism happens over dialogues not monologues

Types of Questions

- I want to talk now about some different types of questions I think we need to be prepared to ask when it comes to having faith conversations
- 1. Information questions
 - It took me a really long time to get here tonight there was so much traffic
 - Information question – how long did it take?
 - These aren't bad questions, but they don't really help the conversation to go deeper
 - Small talk level
- 2. Emotional Questions (A little bit deeper questions)
 - How did that feel for you?
 - How do you usually handle traffic?
 - Maybe you don't care about this, or don't think to do it
 - Pray about that, pray that God would grow compassion in you
 - Maybe this sounds scary or too deep?
 - But remember – people are longing for connection
 - Questions help people realize things, clarify things, sometimes they even diffuse hostility...
- 3. Starter questions that pave the way faith conversations
 - How about faith or spiritual things, has that ever been part of your life?
 - Is that something you think about?
 - You need a few that work for you
 - Has faith ever been part of your life?
 - Have you ever been to church?
 - Questions need to assume nothing
 - Not – if you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you are going to Heaven?

- 4. Clarifying questions
 - Tell me more
 - What do you mean by that?
 - You said spiritual not religious
 - What do you mean by that?
 - Restate, so are you saying...?
 - It's okay to get that wrong
 - You are showing you want to understand
- 5. Challenging questions
 - Sometimes people say things that show they aren't really thinking about spiritual things at all – spiritually asleep
 - Let's say they say, I don't think it matters what we believe,
 - Do you really think so? How did you come to that decision?
 - Or I think all religions are the same
 - Can you explain that to me?
 - Sometimes we don't need to go on the defensive, but can put them on the defensive (in a compassionate way –not attacking)
 - This is hard
 - Be careful of the use of the word WHY (it can make people feel attacked)
 - Some great examples of challenging questions are:
 - What do you mean by that?
 - Why do you think that?
 - Have you ever wondered...?
- 6. Invitation Questions
 - This can be invitation to become a Christian questions
 - We need to be ready, equipped and prepared for these
 - It sounds to me like you've already become a Christian, or that you are ready to become a Christian
 - It sounds like something has changed for you
 - What would might say?
 - But it could also be invitation to something
 - Would you like to come to alpha with me?
 - Would you like to come to church with me?
 - Or even would you like to read the Bible together and meet regularly to talk about this?
- Why do you think we are afraid to ask these kinds of questions?
 - Emotional (a little bit deeper)
 - Starter
 - Challenge

- Or invitation
- Is there someone that you want to practice these kinds of questions on?
 - How might you do that?

Pray for opportunities to have deeper conversations with those around us

Evangelism Class Week 3
Topic: Why Is This Good News to YOU?

Reminder of Where We've Been

- Telling Faith Stories
 - Being able to share your story/ testimony is powerful because we are naturally drawn in
 - And because it tells others that God “isn’t just a distant idea. God is an immediate presence.”
 - Makes God seem knowable
- Asking Questions
 - Questions vs simultaneous monologues
 - But questions are the building block for good conversations...
 - Because that is how you go deeper
 - Talked about different types of questions
 - Informational question
 - Emotional questions
 - Questions that pave way for conversations about faith
 - Clarifying questions
 - Challenging Questions (Is that what you REALLY believe? Why do you think that?)
 - Invitation questions

Opening Exercise

- Tonight, I want us to get at what actually is the gospel, why is it ‘good news’, and how do we communicate it?
 - Eventually, we will give some models for how to share the gospel with others
- But before we even get there, I there let’s start with a more basic question...
 - How would you describe or explain “the gospel” to someone else?
- Exercise 1
 - Turn to your neighbor (groups of 3)
 - Share/ Answer: What is the gospel? How would you explain it
 - **NOTE:** Does not need to be fancy! Just needs to be how you would respond to this...
 - *Let group respond then regroup*
 - **ASK:** Were there things someone else said/ ways others explained that you particularly liked? Share with the group?
- **SAY:** But here is the issue...
 - Often when we talk about the gospel, it can be more like a formula...
 - Believe + Jesus = Salvation

- That is true but...
 - What makes the good news good to YOU?
- Exercise 2
 - **ASK:** Why is the good news actually “good” for you? What makes it feel good to you?
 - Take a second and write down a few lines...
 - *Give a minute to respond then bring back to group*
 - **ASK:** Would anyone be willing to share why the gospel is good news to you specifically?

You’re Already Equipped

- What you all did was basically just tell the story of the gospel...
 - You could articulate the story of Jesus to someone else and why it was important to you....
 - In other words, you already have the tools to share the good news with people
 - That is the best version of sharing the Gospel you can do for others...

Introduction on Models

- But, sometimes it is still good to have some models of ways to share the Gospel
- Tonight, we are going to go through some of those models...
 - Each have their pluses and minuses
 - But they might give you a way of explaining the gospel in a particular way
- I don’t think there is one way to share the gospel...
 - You might be more drawn to one than another – that is fine!
 - I certainly have preferences!
- But I have used just about all of these at different times, with different people, for different reasons
 - They all have their place
 - Like two blind people holding the leg of an elephant vs. trunk and trying to explain animal
 - Both do... but in different ways
- Some you might be familiar with. Others not...

THE MODELS

- What do you like about this model?
- What do you not like about this model?
- Who might this model appeal to and why?

The Bridge

Broken World - Beautiful Paradise - Giant Chasm... How do we get there?

Romans Road to Salvation

Stop 1 - Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

- We are Sinners compared to God's glory

Stop 2 - Romans: 6:23 "[And] the wages of sin is death"

- Sin is a BIG problem for all

Stop 3 - Romans 5:8 "But God showed His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- Jesus is our savior because he saves us from our sins

Stop 4 - Romans 6:23 "And the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- And this is a free gift that lasts for eternity

Stop 5 - Romans 10:9 "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in you heart the God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

- Need for confession and belief

Three Circles/ Four Circles

1. Designed for Good/ God's Design
2. Damaged by Evil/ Broken World
3. Restored by Christ/ The Gospel
4. *** Sent to Heal/ Go

Four Spiritual Laws

1. God Loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.
 - a. Emphasis on God's love
2. Humanity is sinful and separated from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.
 - a. Sin separates us from the love and plan of God - we look for meaning and purpose away from God
3. Jesus is Christ's only provision for humanity's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.
 - a. Christ brings us back to God
4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.
 - a. Offers us a fulfilled and purposeful life in Jesus

Cultural Apologetics

Leslie Newbigin – Need a missionary encounter with the culture you are in

- The gospel both fulfills the deepest longings of a culture AND challenges the lies of a culture
- If apologetics defends the faith, cultural apologetics shows the beauty and truth of the gospel through culture

Definition: Want others to see that the gospel is not just true (logical), but also beautiful and something to be longed for

Longings

- What areas of culture can we highlight...
 - Longing for Justice
 - Longing for truth
 - Longing for Beauty
 - Longing for Experience
 - Connect with their longings
- See this in films, music, TV shows, etc.....

Challenges

- But then be willing to say that our longings are deeper than culture can lead us to... need Jesus
 - Longing for beauty cannot just be hedonism
 - Longing for justice cannot be wrathful
 - Etc.

Note

- Conversation based approach... more of a long, term commitment than a presentation of the gospel
- Ask them questions
 - What does that mean? Ask about meaning....
 - If there is no God, there is no meaning...
 - But if there is meaning, there is purpose and intent...and that means God
 - That is beautiful! But where does the feeling of beauty and transcendence come from
 - When misdirected, we believe lies