
HELPING FOLKS INVITE FOLKS: THE FIVE MOST WANTED

Session Description

It's hard to "do" evangelism; if it wasn't, we wouldn't be here still trying to figure out how to teach/cajole our folks into it. But what if there was an easier, more subversive way to get them started? In this episode Drs. Kris and Bill offer a proven practice that helps and encourages people to engage evangelism.

Session Outline

Although *evangelism* is listed as a Spiritual Gift, we are all called to practice it, particularly if we're going to take Jesus'

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28.18-20)

There are four directions in this verse:

1. Go
2. Make disciples
3. Baptize the new disciples
4. Teach the new disciples

There is no doubt that Jesus calls – expects – us to do the whole of evangelism: making disciples of non-disciples (today we might call this *conversion*) and then we are to teach them. Unfortunately, we tend to get stuck on No. 1, making it nearly impossible to get to Nos. 2-4.

While the first direction in and of itself is not *evangelism*, it is the launching pad and we have found what is probably the easiest tool ever to get people started.

1. **The Five Most Wanted** is a program Kris has successfully used in dozens of congregations to launch an evangelism initiative. It is grounded in prayer and encouragement allows a congregation to venture into low-risk "asks."

How it works:

1. Beginning at least three weeks before an upcoming event that's ripe for inviting people to come, place a Most Wanted Poster in each bulletin or worship program (it's also good to make them available in small groups and Sunday School classes.

2. Instruct each person to put the names of five people on their “poster.” They may or may not know them well; they may not even know their name. However, there are two considerations for the names they place on the poster: (1) there has to be the possibility that they may be able to extend an invitation, and (2) the persons must not be currently active in a congregation.
3. Using the instructions on the poster, encourage everyone to pray for their people regularly – every day if possible (it helps to put reminder sticky notes on places like the bathroom mirror). We pray in four ways:
 - a. *Opportunity* to extend an invitation;
 - b. *Courage* to extend the invitation;
 - c. *Awareness* when the opportunity arises;
 - d. *Favor* from the invitee.
4. Place the *Most Wanted Poster* in your bulletins/programs for at least the next one or two weeks. Encourage your folks to bring their posters with them to each service and then take time to pray the prayer as a whole.
5. Listen and share the stories you hear about the *successful* invitations.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is prayer a good place to start when it comes to evangelism?
2. How is this practice of evangelism different than how you’ve thought about evangelism before?
3. Which of the prayers is going to be the most difficult for you to pray?
4. How will you encourage your people to invite?