

CONNECTIONAL LAY COUNCIL

**DEPARTMENT OF LAY MINISTRY
OF THE
CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

PROGRAM OF STUDY

**FROM GOOD TO GREAT:
SHARING OUR FAITH WITH OTHERS**

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INTRODUCTION

As Christian Believers we should look for and welcome the opportunity to share the goodness of God. For many of us, however, this is much easier said than done. We have different personalities and we come from various backgrounds and experiences, thus, the how, when, and where to share our faith takes on many faces.

If we are to, therefore, address “Going From Good To Great: Sharing Our Faith With Others”, each of us must be in touch with ourselves. Getting in touch, in this writer’s opinion, starts in the home and in our everyday activity. While everyone in our home may not be saved or be a strong witness for Christ, they should know that you or I are believers in Christ! – Rightful and consistent living says more than any words that can be spoken. Why? Because the way we are perceived and observed each and everyday is key to our success in sharing our faith.

I am sure that you have heard the phrase, “Before you sweep around someone else’s front door, be sure to sweep around your own.” In communicating how we go about sharing our faith, what does this mean for us? Well, it simply means that before we can “go out” and be an effective, comfortable, and *credible* witness for the Lord, we must be about sharing *who we are*, in our everyday environment. We must be careful that our thoughts and our words for witnessing are not on opposite ends of the scale from our everyday thoughts, behavior and expressions: When we communicate good fortune to friends, family, or co-workers are we lucky or are we blessed? When expressing our happiness, are we simply glad or are we thankful? In having fun and enjoying good company are the jokes and funny stories we tell raw and dirty or are they, even though funny, clean and wholesome? Is our everyday listening music provocative and suggestive or does it help to prepare us in our everyday walk, in “Sharing Our Faith With Others?” When we are confronted with adversity, do we express our discomfort through angry words and gestures or do we show a measure of restraint? Hence, as we prepare to move “From Good To Great in Sharing Our Faith”, let each of us remember that *who we are and what we believe, should be the same!*

GETTING THE RIGHT FOCUS

The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, proclaims the relevance of Christ Jesus to every area of the believer's life. He "became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" (1:30). Therefore, in preparing to assist others in placing themselves in a position to truly experience Christ in all of his beauty we must embrace and believe Paul's declaration in 1 Corinthians 15: 3, 4, when he said, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (Later, as follow-up to the above and to the introduction, read 1 Corinthians in its entirety).

Before discussing what is to be shared concerning sharing our faith, lets examine at least two things we are not to do:

(1) We are not commanded to force Christian standards upon the unbeliever. (1 Cor. 5:12,13) "For what have I to do with judging outsiders?" "Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among ourselves."

(2) We are not to confuse people by allowing them to believe that church membership, tithing, or any good works will convert them into becoming a Christian. (Eph. 2: 8-10) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” _____

Whatever method or plan we adopt for sharing our faith, we are to share the gospel of Christ with the unsaved. Again, Paul declares that it involves the death and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15: 1-4).

EVERYDAY WAYS OF SHARING OUR FAITH

- **Praying**
- **Singing**
- **Being a witness through expression and conversation**
- **Visiting the sick**
- **Telephone calls to those who are ill or troubled**
- **Encouragement of (friends, family, co-workers)**

Other

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FORMULATING A PLAN FOR SHARING OUR FAITH

***BEGIN WITH PRAYER;* Prayer is the fundamental activity of a Christian life. Prayer is the conduit that connects earth to heaven and man to God.**

Father I thank you today for the opportunity to be a witness for you. I seek your blessings and the divine moving of the Holy Spirit in all that I undertake in your name.

Provide me with patience and understanding for those who have yet to claim Jesus Christ as their Savior. Give me a loving attitude and a spirit of humility in letting the world know that Jesus' death and resurrection are real.

If and when challenged by those who may be bitter or misguided by past hurts, allow me to stand firm on your word without provoking my brother or sister to anger. Anoint me afresh Dear Lord and find favor in my efforts, for I carry you in my heart and in my mind. Father if I am successful in helping to bring a lost soul to you today I promise to lift you up to the highest and claim the victory in you.

Have your unrestricted way Lord; I pray boldly and unashamed, in the sweet and precious name of Jesus. Amen.

LEARN HOW TO SHARE: In order to share our faith successfully, we must keep the following rules in mind.

- **We must seek to be clean vessels (Isaiah 52: 11 “Depart, depart, go out from there, “Touch nothing unclean: Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the Lord”).**
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- **Learn how to give out the simple facts of the gospel without getting bogged down with profound theological concepts. (Acts 8: 35 “And Phillip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him”).**
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- **Avoid arguments and stick to the basic issues of man’s sin and Christ’s blood.**
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- **Use the word of God. (Acts 17: 2, 3 – “And for according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying , *This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ*”).**
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- **Depend upon the spirit of God. (John 3: 14, 15 “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.”)**
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LEARN WHEN TO SHARE: We are to share our faith or witness any time *and all the time.*

- **The question as to when we should share our faith is directly tied to when a sinner should accept Christ. The Bible is clear that God's accepted time is today. (2 Corinthians 6: 2 - for he says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you"; behold, now is "The acceptable time," behold, now is "The Day of Salvation"); also read [Hebrew 3: 15, 4: 7; Isaiah 55: 6].**
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- **A sinner has no assurance that he/she will live to see tomorrow. (Luke 12: 19; "And I will say to my soul, Soul you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry"). Also read [Proverbs 27: 1; James 4: 13-15]**
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LEARN WHERE TO SHARE: We are to share our faith or witness any place and *in all places.*

The apostle Paul witnessed everywhere; he shared his faith in prison at midnight (Acts 16: 26-31) and on a sinking ship during a stormy day. (*Acts 27: 20-25). {*Key verses} 22 "And yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship." 25 "Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God, that it will turn out exactly as I have been told."

RESULTS OF SHARING OUR FAITH

SOMEONE RECEIVES NEW LIFE BY FAITH: The new life is eternal life. One receives new life by faith –believing that Jesus died for our sins, that His death was in our place, and that His payment for sin is fully acceptable to God’s sight.

- **When one receives the gift of eternal life he/she is said to be saved. (*Acts 2: 21 “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved”*).**

- **The basic concept underlying “salvation” or “being saved” is deliverance. (*Psalm 85: 7 “Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation”*).**

- **The one with New Life is delivered from the penalty of sin (death, separation from God) and from the power of sin. (*Acts 2: 38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”*).**

RESOURCES/REFERENCES

The New Open Bible

Bible Manuel For Soul Winners
Rev. Wm. F. Quillian, M.D.

Layman's Bible Encyclopedia
Wm. C. Martin, M.A., B.D.

Evangelism Workshop,
Rev. Dr. Bobby Best, Pastor
Greater Cleaves Memorial CME
Church, Oklahoma City, Ok