



Strategies for Evangelism

Dr. Aaron Wheeler • 9 Sessions



Strategies for Evangelism
Session One
Introduction

Notes for Session One:

Fill in the blank:

This course will teach the evangelism strategy of “Do the right _____ at the right _____.” What does that mean?

Discussion:

- 1.) Do you feel intimidated when it comes to evangelism? Why or why not?
- 2.) Tell about a time that you tried to share your faith with someone. How did it go? Is there anything that you wish you had done differently?
- 3.) What is the tension with seeing the world as either “saved” or “unsaved”? How could this create a problem in our efforts to evangelize?
- 4.) What is the difference between a convert and a disciple? How would an emphasis on conversion alone affect the church in the long run?
- 5.) What are your thoughts on the spiritual spectrum? How is this strategy different?
- 6.) Activity: As a group, come up with a physical expression for each place on the spectrum. Act out what a “hostile” or “stone cold” would look like. Make it fun and have some laughs. Then use those expressions as a way to memorize each place on the spiritual spectrum. Act them out each time you get together.
- 7.) Pray: Spend time naming people in your life who need to hear about Jesus. Pray that God would open opportunities for you to deepen your relationship with them.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Two
Foundations for Evangelism

Notes for Session Two:

Fill in the blank:

- 1.) _____ are the key to evangelism.
- 2.) _____ is needed when walking with someone over the long term.
- 3.) _____ is critical to sharing your faith. You have to be around people who need to hear the good news.
- 4.) _____ & _____ must work together. When they don't, we get the opposite of what we want.

Discussion:

- 1.) Why do you think that relationships are important to evangelism? What relationships were key to your choosing to become a follower of Christ?
- 2.) What does patience look like in helping someone come to faith? Why do you think we sometimes struggle with it?
- 3.) Talk about situations in your daily life where you are around people who aren't Christians. If you don't have many, brainstorm some ways that you could join situations where you would naturally be near people who need to hear about Jesus.
- 4.) Does anyone in the group have a story about a time when their content and context didn't match, and something bad happened? Has anyone ever done a good thing, but at the wrong time? What was the result?
- 5.) Are there any other foundational ideas about evangelism that you think need to be discussed? What might you add to this list?
- 6.) Pray: Talk a bit about what emotions you are feeling about the topic of evangelism. Spend some time praying that God would give you courage in sharing your faith with the people he puts in your life.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Three
Evangelism to Hostiles

Notes for Session Three:

What is a Hostile person like?

Why are people Hostile?

What is the key strategy when working with Hostile people?

Discussion Questions:

- 1.) Describe a hostile person you've met in your life. How did you know they were hostile? What were interactions with them like?
- 2.) What does it mean to have a "good talk" with a hostile person? How can your observations about the person lead to a positive conversation?
- 3.) The video mentioned that 1 Peter is a book written to Christians facing hostile people. Get out your Bibles and turn to that book together. Read over some passages together and see what kind of instruction Peter gives to this church. How does this advice translate to you and your situation?
- 4.) Activity: Role Play
Role playing can seem a bit awkward at times, but practicing spiritual conversations can be a key way to make evangelism less intimidating.
Divide up into pairs. Read over this situation together, and role-play how you would handle it. Give each pair at least five minutes to practice. Then, switch roles so that each person gets a chance.
Situation: You are hanging out with your hostile boss after work. You want to find a topic you can have a positive conversation about. Use your small-talk opportunity to have a positive conversation that both of you enjoy.
Follow-up: What worked in this role-play scenario? What are some things your partner did well? What did you notice within yourself as you acted in this scenario?
- 5.) Pray: End your time together by naming some hostile people in your life and praying that the Holy Spirit would create opportunities to make positive investments in their lives.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Four
Evangelism to Stone Colds

Notes for Session Four:

What is a Stone Cold person like?

Why are people Stone Cold?

What is the key strategy when working with Stone Cold people?

Discussion:

- 1.) The video mentioned that Stone Cold people are often experts at numbing their feelings. What are some ways you've seen people engage in numbing practices? What, if anything, has broken them out of this place?
- 2.) What is the strategy of Transition Environments? Name some of them together, both positive and negative.
- 3.) What are some ways that you can steward a friend through a Transition Environment?
- 4.) Activity - Role Play
Divide up into pairs. Read over this situation together and role-play how you would handle it. Give each pair at least five minutes to practice. Then, switch roles so that each person gets a chance.
Situation: Your Stone Cold neighbor often enjoys loud, active parties on the weekends. You are talking with them one afternoon and want to use this conversation to explore if he/she has a need they might be trying to meet with this behavior. Don't press, but try to open up this conversation to deeper things.
Follow-up: What worked in this role-play scenario? What are some things your partner did well? What did you notice within yourself as you acted in this scenario?
- 5.) Pray: Describe someone in your life who is Stone Cold. What has it been like to be patient as you wait for them to change? Pray together that God would give us patience to be willing to invest in trust even when it seems like it's not making a difference.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Five
Evangelism to Opens

Notes for Session Five:

What is an Open person like?

Why are people Open?

What is the key strategy when working with Open people?

Discussion:

- 1.) What are some of the reasons why an Open person might repress their feelings about faith? What can you do to encourage them in this season?
- 2.) One of the key strategies is to give them spiritual things to do. Brainstorm some good resources that will help an Open person begin to become active in their growing faith.
- 3.) Describe the volleyball analogy in your own words. What are some ways you can introduce a spiritual topic to see how the person responds?
- 4.) Activity - Case Studies

Read over the three case studies below, then answer these questions:

- 1.) Where would you put each person on the spiritual spectrum?
- 2.) What practical things would you do to help each person come closer to Christ?

JIM

About one year ago, a new neighbor named Jim moved next door. You learned that he is a mechanic, and over the last couple of weeks, he's been giving you a hand with some car problems. In the time you've spent together, you've mentioned that you are a Christian and go to church. Jim doesn't seem overly interested in what you have to say, but he's at least willing to listen and admits that he used to go to church when he was a teenager. Jim seems like a nice guy, but you've heard him argue with his wife many times and see him come home late quite often.

RICK

You have a coworker named Rick. He is an outgoing and engaging man who most people seem to like. He's quick-witted and often makes sarcastic comments to people around the office. Three weeks ago, you were discussing something that happened at church with a friend, and Rick overheard you. "What?!" Rick exclaimed in front of a few other people, "You actually go to church? You really believe that stuff?" From that point forward, Rick made every attempt to

tease and joke about your faith in front of others. While irritated, you feel a responsibility to be a part of Rick's life.

SUSAN

You met Susan at a birthday party. She's the mother of another child in your kid's class, and has come to be a reliable source of conversation during the long and awkward experiences of recitals, parties, and meetings that every parent must endure. During your time together, you've brought up a number of spiritual topics, and while Susan engages with them, she doesn't seem overly interested. One day, you ask her if she's ever gone to church before, and she says that she did when she was a young girl. "But I don't think I could ever go back," she said. "When they found out that my mom had been married in the past to another man, they said her current marriage was a sin and that we wouldn't be welcomed there anymore. I didn't understand it at all at the time, but I think it really hurt my mom. She had started to make friends there and felt like she was a part of something. But what did they want her to do? Divorce again?"

6.) Pray: Describe someone you may know who would fit the category of Open. Spend some time praying that you would have opportunities to help nurture their passive faith into an active pursuit of Jesus.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Six
Evangelism to Curious

Notes for Session Six:

What is a Curious person like?

Why are people Curious?

What is the key strategy when working with Curious people?

Discussion:

- 1.) Much of the lecture's discussion focused on the transition from active to passive faith. What are some ways that a Curious person will be active in pursuing Christ? How can you encourage them in this pursuit?
- 2.) Why is it important to remain patient and to not overpursue their faith journey? What might happen if we give them too much too soon?
- 3.) When we give them homework and "release" their energy to pursue the things of Christ, we then follow up and debrief what they've done. What are some good debriefing questions to ask them? How can we track their progress through these activities?
- 4.) Activity - Role Play
Divide up into pairs. Read over this situation together and role-play how you would handle it. Give each pair at least five minutes to practice. Then, switch roles so that each person gets a chance.
Situation: Your Curious friend is dealing with a difficult personal situation. She/He is asking you for advice on how to handle it, and you use this opportunity to share your testimony by explaining the way in which Jesus helped you through a similar situation.
Follow-up: What worked in this role-play scenario? What are some things your partner did well? What did you notice within yourself as you acted in this scenario?
- 5.) Pray: Tell about a time when you've seen someone become more active in their growing faith. Pray for people you know who need to make this kind of change.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Seven
Evangelism to Seekers

Notes for Session Seven:

What is a Seeker like?

Why are people Seekers?

What is the key strategy when working with Seekers?

Discussion:

- 1.) One of the key strategies for Seekers is to make sure their faith is balanced in head, heart, and hands. Which one do you think is more natural for you to lead people through? Which one might be the most challenging? What are some ways that you can think of evangelism as a “team sport” and use the gifts of others to help in bringing people to Christ?
- 2.) Sometimes a Seeker wants to accept the gospel, but has some major barrier in their life that is preventing it. What are some reasons why a Seeker might not be able to accept the gospel?
- 3.) How did you feel about the advice on when to invite someone to church? Do you agree or disagree with that strategy?
- 4.) Activity - Role Play
Divide up into pairs. Read over this situation together and role-play how you would handle it. Give each pair at least five minutes to practice. Then, switch roles so that each person gets a chance.
Situation: Your Seeker friend is considering becoming a Christian, but is afraid of what his/her family might think. Most of their family, especially their parents, are avowed atheists and will likely reject your roommate for this decision.
Follow-up: What worked in this role-play scenario? What are some things your partner did well? What did you notice within yourself as you acted in this scenario?
- 5.) Pray: Spend some time together praying for people who are ready to accept Jesus. Ask that they would receive a clear invitation to the gospel and have the courage to take that final step of faith in him.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Eight
Evangelism to Decided

Notes for Session Eight:

Discussion:

- 1.) What are the two types of gospel presentations given in the video? What would be some of the strengths and weaknesses of each type? Have you had any experience with each type? What was that like?
- 2.) The video also discussed the role of media in helping someone decide to follow Jesus. Spend some time talking about what kind of media (movies, shows, podcasts, books, music, etc.) you would recommend to someone interested in learning more about Jesus? What are some resources that you wouldn't recommend?
- 3.) What were the three core pieces of the gospel? Do you agree or disagree with that idea? What might be lost if one or more of those pieces were missing?

4.) Activity - Case Studies

Read over the three case studies below, then answer these questions:

- 1.) Where would you put each person on the spiritual spectrum?
- 2.) What practical things would you do to help each person come closer to Christ?

JIM

You and Jim have become close friends and frequently spend weekends working on various house projects or spending time watching movies together. Jim and his wife attended church for the first time last Sunday. It's been a long road. In the months since you started having Jim and his wife over for dinner, you've seen their relationship begin to change for the better, even though they still have their occasional outbursts. You asked them if they'd be interested in joining a couples' Bible study your friend hosted, which opened the door to a number of conversations about faith, relationships, and marriage. They now feel like they are part of the group, and are always there for birthday and holiday parties. Recently, after a long night of talking on the back porch, Jim said that he's been praying on his own and has felt a deep peace that he's never known before. He asks how you became a Christian and what it means to be a follower of him.

RICK

In the three years that you've worked with Rick, you've gotten to know him on a much deeper level. After you found out he is a huge fan of the St. Louis Cardinals, you began talking about baseball as often as you could, since it is one of his favorite topics. Over time, you started attending games together and chatting about the team, the season, and the latest developments. During one of the many long trips to St. Louis, Rick slowly began to open up about his past. His parents divorced when he was eight years old after it was discovered that his dad was having multiple affairs. To make matters worse, his dad was an elder at the local church, and so for Rick, the duplicity of his dad's morality and the teachings of Christianity have always been tied together. Though he still cannot bring himself to admit it, he blames God for what happened to his family, and his anger is what has caused him to be so hostile to Christianity in the past. Rick has had a few serious relationships over the years, but has never married because of his deep trust issues. You've taken the time to listen and process these feelings with Rick, and it has led to multiple spiritual conversations. You've even given Rick a couple of podcasts about Christianity to listen to, and he's received them well. You sense that Rick is beginning to find healing from his deep and lasting pain.

SUSAN

Susan has seen significant spiritual growth in the last six months. After inviting her to be a part of a young mom's brunch group that meets every other week, Susan began to feel like part of the community. She soon realized that almost everyone in the group goes to the same church, and so felt comfortable coming along with you to a few of the outreach events centered around the holidays. She said she enjoys the community there, and started attending on Sundays, even going to the parents' Bible study that meets before the main worship service. She mentioned that she's been reading the Bible on her own and always has questions about what she's reading. But things changed a few weeks ago. Susan went to her mom's house for Christmas, and while she was there, her mom found out that she's been going back to church. This led to a huge argument. Her mom accused her of betraying her and caring more about "religious nonsense" than about her own family. Since then, Susan has been distant and has always made excuses for not attending church or other group gatherings.

6.) Pray: Spend some time praying for people all around the world who don't know Christ. Ask that God would introduce people in your life who need to know him.

Strategies for Evangelism
Session Nine
Review

Notes for Session Nine:

Discussion:

- 1.) Describe the volleyball analogy and how it helps you to do “the right thing at the right time.”
- 2.) See if everyone in the group can name all six places on the Spiritual Spectrum.
- 3.) What is the rule of Content & Context? Why do these two things need to work together?
- 4.) What has been the most helpful thing you’ve learned in the course?
- 5.) How do you feel about sharing your faith now? What questions do you still have about evangelism?
- 6.) After someone accepts Christ, what needs to happen next? What do you think are the first steps to establishing a new faith?
- 7.) Discuss together the people in your life who need to hear about Jesus. Name them, talk about their situation, place them on the spiritual spectrum, and talk about what strategies you can use to help them draw closer to Christ.
- 8.) Pray together that you would feel God’s presence in your attempts to help others know about him. Pray for courage to boldly share about his love in the right way at the right time.

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