

“Shattering the Darkness Evangelistic Campaign”

[The SBTC is grateful to Dr. Charles Stewart and the Cana Baptist Church family for permission to use their Prayer and Evangelism campaign on this web site. Since praying for lost people is so crucial to reaching them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we offer what one affiliated church is doing with the prayer and blessing that a congregation of any size can use this approach in praying for and sharing the Gospel with lost people. The SBTC can resource congregations with Gospel tracts prayer guides if you choose. Please contact Ted Elmore, telmore@sbtexas.com, if we may be useful to you.]

Cana Baptist Church
2309 E. Renfro Street
Burlleson, Texas

Thank you for your interest in our church’s evangelistic campaign. At this accounting our church has been in this effort for more than 126 weeks and have recorded more than 487 precious souls having come to Christ through the witness, life, and ministries of Cana members and worshipers. We have had 88 of these new Believer baptized into our fellowship with almost two dozen awaiting baptism. For this wonderful harvest we continue to give our Heavenly Father all the credit and glory!

The goals of our “Shattering the Darkness” campaign:

1. To bring honor and pleasure to the Father
2. To see the Father use our people to bring the lost to salvation
3. To heighten the awareness of our congregation to daily evangelistic opportunities
4. To embolden our congregation to sow the seed of the Gospel as a life-style
5. To establish new Believers in their walk with the Lord Jesus

At the beginning of our campaign, I brought an evangelistic message and asked our church members if they believed it would honor the Father for us to ask Him to allow someone in our church, either a member or worshiper (nonmembers who attend Cana), to have the privilege of sharing the Gospel and introducing a lost person to the Lord Jesus during the coming week. When the congregation indicated an affirmative response, we stopped the service and engaged in corporate prayer requesting of the Father, if it would honor and please Him, to allow someone in our church to introduce one soul to Christ in the coming week. Please notice that we are placing the emphasis on God’s allowing us to join with Him in bringing the lost to salvation.

I encouraged our people to join the Pastor is praying this prayer daily in the upcoming week, to carry a Gospel tract with them throughout the coming week, and to be sensitive to God-given opportunities to share the Gospel with lost persons in their daily routines that week. Incidentally, our Missions Committee provides free Gospel tracts to our people in its Tract Rack in the foyer of our church and has been doing so for at least five years prior to this campaign.

I also requested that when anyone had the joy of leading a person to receive Christ to contact the church office, send an email to the Pastor at saved@canachurch.com, or post their experience to Cana’s Facebook page. I asked our members to provide me with their witnessing experience and the first name of the new Believer.

Initially we created a simple display at the front of the church worship center with seven candles. A carpenter in our church later made and donated a fourteen-candle display. We use battery-operated wax candles for this purpose. They work nicely and are not a fire hazard. When we receive a report of a conversion, we light a candle on Sunday to honor God’s mercies in the salvation of that sinner. As Pastor, I spend a few minutes prior to my morning message explaining the circumstance of each conversion testimony represented by a lit

candle. I never give the name of the evangelist and only a first name of the new Believer. This is to be sure that God gets all the glory, and this helps to protect the motives of our people as they share the Gospel each week. The testimonies are useful to help our people to see that the Lord is using ordinary people to bring the lost to Christ. After I have shared the testimonies I lead in prayer for those new Believers and for our church family going into the new week that we would be sensitive to opportunities the Lord might provide us to share the Gospel. This might take five minutes of our morning worship service.

There are Sundays when we have no candles lit. I do not chide or reproach our people because it is the Lord Who brings sinners to salvation. We are to be faithful to share the Gospel and leave the results up to God. I know that many of our people are sharing the Gospel and Gospel tracts each week, but have yet to see a conversion take place. We want them to continue to be faithful witnesses. As the late Carlos McLeod once stated, "There must be sowers if there are to be reapers." On these Sundays when there are no candles lit I lead the church in prayer for the Lord to help us to be faithful in sharing the Gospel in the coming week and, if it would please and honor Him, that He would allow someone in our church to have the joy of seeing a person come to Christ in the coming week.

We have provided evangelism training for our people during the Shattering the Darkness Campaign, and will continue to do so. We have trained our people in One Verse Evangelism and are providing the Romans 6:23 evangelism cards which we purchase from the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. Within two weeks of providing the training, our folks had led eight persons to Christ using these cards. They are available here <http://sbtexas.com/evangelism/personal-evangelism/>.

We also encourage our people to take the free Gospel tracts in the Tract Rack. We have also had about two dozen members receive training so they can participate in the North American Mission Board's Evangelism Response Center ministry. This is allowing our church to introduce people to Christ all over America right from our own homes! Every ministry, from VBS to Family Fall Festival to Cana Christmas to the Children's Music Camp, to our Easter Pageant, etc, has built into it an evangelistic emphasis which we make primary to what we are doing. So evangelism is becoming the DNA of our church and the Shattering the Darkness Campaign, we pray, is becoming a lifestyle rather than a campaign.

We make available to our members a Billy Graham follow-up booklet to share whenever possible with the new Believers, and we also encourage the new Believers to become active in a good church near their home. We encourage our members to maintain a relationship with the new Christian when possible.

Should you have further questions regarding this evangelism effort, please feel free to contact me at the following email address:

Charles@canachurch.com

Cana Baptist Church, Burleson, TX 817.295.3891

God bless you in your efforts to bring the lost to Christ and live out the Great Commission!

Dr. Charles A. Stewart
Pastor, Cana Baptist Church
Adjunct Professor
Department of Applied Ministry
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Fort Worth, TX