



evangelism

church leadership resources

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Based on the Church Health Assessment you completed, evangelism may be one area of needed growth for your church and/or church leadership. We often overcomplicate evangelism. The truth is, if you know enough of the gospel to be saved, you know enough of the gospel to tell someone else how to be saved. In the **Explanation** section below, you will find several important biblical foundations for evangelism as it relates to church health. Subsequent sections of this report will include **SBTC Resources/Tools, Other Recommended Resources** and **Contacts**. All of these are designed to help strengthen your church in the area of evangelism. Please take time to read through this report and to share it with some key influential leaders in your church.



explanation

“Every day the Lord added to their numbers those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47

Most churches would say they want to grow numerically. Most of their members would say they have a genuine longing for their friends, family and coworkers to be a part of their church. The desire for growth is generally there. But often, church members either do not feel equipped or are simply not willing to evangelize their neighbors, coworkers and friends.

Yet, if you are a Christian, you have everything you need to effectively evangelize. The church members of Acts chapter 2 had literally been born again for a matter of a few days, and God was working through them as evangelists to redeem those within their social circles who would hear and believe the gospel. Evangelism is as simple as telling the people God puts around you what you have come to know and believe about Jesus Christ and inviting them to know and believe in him as well.

I want to write this as clearly as I can: Your church will not become healthy, or remain healthy, if church leaders and church members do not evangelize. Evangelism is essential to church health. Allow me to offer five truths about evangelism as it relates to a church's overall health.

Evangelism is for every church member.

In healthy churches, every member owns the responsibility, and the joy, of evangelizing. God has given every Christian a circle of influence. Your circle of influence is different from mine. And the Lord has graciously given you the opportunity and the responsibility to leverage your influence to invite your circle into his kingdom through repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. Your circle of influence is comprised of your home, your neighborhood, your workplace and your social circles. When it comes to evangelism, your circle of influence is your responsibility. Healthy churches massage this truth into the blood flow of the congregation. They provide evangelism training opportunities and evangelistic outreach programming. They empower, equip and release the membership to be the primary evangelizers in their community, especially within their own circles of influence. In the healthy church, the membership knows that evangelism is for every church member.

Evangelism starts in the home.

Your circle of influence begins with those nearest to you. When someone comes to faith in Christ, the primary field of harvest is often in his or her own home. Believing fathers and mothers are to evangelize their children. Believing children are to evangelize their siblings, parents and grandparents. Sometimes the people we love most do not understand the change that the gospel has affected in our lives. But when that gospel takes root and bears fruit over time, a repentant grandchild, child, sibling, parent or grandparent can have a greater gospel impact on the life of an unbelieving family member than any preacher could ever hope to affect from behind a pulpit. When Andrew believed in Jesus, he “first found his own brother Simon . . . and brought him to Jesus” (John 1:40-42). The Philippian jailer believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and then he immediately evangelized his own home: “Right away he and his family were baptized . . . and

[he] rejoiced because he had come to believe in God with his entire household” (Acts 16:33-34). In the healthy church, church members understand that in every generation, evangelism starts in the home.

Evangelism is sometimes an opportune presentation.

There has been some pushback in our current Christian climate against “canned” gospel presentations. However, every day, when the eternity-changing message of the gospel can be transported from faith to faith in the simplest, easiest-to-remember vehicle, it is a beautiful and powerful thing. When Paul came to the Corinthians, he “did not come with brilliance of speech or wisdom” but “decided to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:1-2). God does not need our eloquence, and the gospel does not need our logical trickery. But the message of Christ does need to be communicated simply and effectively so that the Holy Spirit can apply the message to the hearts of the hearer, for “how can they believe on him, about whom they have never heard?” In the grocery store, on the street corner, on the ball field, in the hallway and on the airplane, God often drops an opportunity in the lap of believers who are willing to share the gospel in its purest, simplest form. Other times we go seek those opportunities with intentionality by knocking on doors or mingling in the mall. However it may come, believers in a healthy church are sensitive to God-ordained moments when an opportunity is presented to share the gospel. In healthy churches, members capitalize on opportune moments for evangelism.

Evangelism is sometimes an ongoing conversation.

The joy of the redeemed is to faithfully and compellingly share the truth of the gospel to everyone who will listen. But it is the responsibility of God alone to affect change in the souls of those who listen and to produce repentance that leads to salvation. Certainly, no one has ever or will ever come to Jesus unless he is “drawn by the Father” (John 6:44). It is a mystery to the faithful evangelist why some come to saving faith the first time they hear the gospel while others hear and reject the same gospel for decades before finally receiving the gift of eternal life. Sometimes God chooses to save the hearer upon the first delivery of the gospel. Sometimes it takes time for that gospel to break through the walls of a hardened heart. In healthy churches, members do not give up on those family and community members who have rejected the gospel for many years. Instead, they take every opportunity to embody the truth of the gospel while sharing it relentlessly and inviting him or her to respond in simple faith. In healthy churches, members understand that sometimes evangelism is an opportune presentation, and other times it is an ongoing conversation.

Evangelism must be a part of every worship service. In healthy churches, worship leaders sing the gospel; Bible teachers teach the gospel; faithful men and women pray the gospel; announcement-makers announce the gospel, and pastors preach the gospel. The gospel message should be the central theme of every worship service. After all, it is only because of the gospel that we can gather as a redeemed community of faith and continue to gather as progressively sanctified children of God. The gospel should never lose its wonder. The healthy church never gets over the gospel. Should a lost soul come to a church gathering—whether by a direct invitation or by dropping in out of curiosity—he or she should be unable to walk back out the door without hearing the simple gospel message and being extended an invitation to respond in some way. In the weekly gatherings of healthy churches, the gospel is not just tacked onto the end of a sermon. It is the central message of the service. It is the joy of every song, the solemnity of every prayer, the power of every sermon and the invitation of every heart. In the healthy church, evangelism is part of every worship service—on purpose.

sbtc tools & resources

Evangelism Takes Heart

A nine-week devotional journey to cultivate a heart for evangelism in the local church.

1Cross APP

The simple gospel message shared through short videos in over 60 different languages, fully integrated with daily devotionals from Evangelism Takes Heart, a digital English Bible and a link to the SBTC Evangelism Resource webstore.

Stand Firm Apologetics Course

Video-driven apologetics course designed to strengthen Christians' faith in the face of the most common cultural objections.

Personal Evangelism Tracts and Witnessing Tools

Browse the SBTC Webstore for tracts and tools to help church members share Christ with their families and friends.

other recommended resources

Recommended Books:

The Master Plan of Evangelism

by Robert Coleman

Evangelism: How the Whole Church

Speaks of Jesus

by J. Mack Stiles

Tell Someone

by Greg Laurie

Evangelism Training/Methods:

3 Circles

by Lifeway

One Conversation: Can We Talk?

by John Meador

Share Jesus without Fear

by William Fay and Ralph Hodge

evangelism contacts

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the following contacts for encouragement, consultation or direction. It will be our joy to come alongside you as you lead your church to reach your community for Christ.

Tony Mathews – tmathews@sbtexas.com
Senior Strategist for Missions & Evangelism

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