

Relationship Evangelism - The Farming Method

Lesson One - Introduction

We are all familiar with the great commission recorded in Matthew 28:19 when Jesus told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, baptizing converts and discipling them according to the teachings he had committed to them. Jesus was not giving his disciples an option among many options from which to choose their ministry. He was commanding them to win converts and disciple them in the lifestyle that he had taught them.

The book and these lessons have grown out of a lifetime of desiring to respond to the mandate of the great commission. For years I studied different evangelism programs and read books about personal evangelism. I was most affected by Bill Bright and his approach to personal witnessing.

One day I was browsing through the paperback book section of a thrift store and came across a book titled, "Come Change the World With Me." The author was Bill Bright the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. I wept as I read the stories he told of how people responded to the simple message of the gospel.

I guess the thing that moved me most was the simplicity of his presentation. My orientation was in a denomination that had a very detailed formula for salvation, and even when followed there was enough doubt that only eternity would tell who was saved.

After reading about the way Bill Bright witnessed and about the results he had I began to look into the materials he offered for personal evangelism. I learned to use the Four Spiritual Laws booklet and was amazed at how people responded to the simple gospel message.

The next evangelism program that affected my life was Evangelism Explosion by Dr. D. James Kennedy. I'll never forget the day I was studying this presentation of the gospel and I came to the place where we used the statement Jesus made while hanging on the cross, "It is finished." As I studied that particular passage a light of understanding came on inside of me.

I had been raised in a performance based religious group and our identity in Christ was related to what we had done more than on what Christ had done. As a result I constantly wrestled with failures in my life and was becoming convinced that I would never become good enough to merit eternal life.

When I read that Jesus had said, "It is finished," and understood that what he was actually saying is that he had paid the price and the cost of my salvation was paid in full I fell to my knees and with tears gave thanks to God for what Jesus had done.

My life was totally and irrevocably changed. I would never look at salvation again

wishing that I could be good enough. It was done. He had completed the work on the cross and all that was left for me to do was to accept that and commit to follow him.

It was my experience with these two evangelism programs that began to prepare me for the work that God would later have me do. After many years of personal evangelism and seeing literally hundreds of people give their lives to Jesus I have put the things I have learned into this book.

My prayer is that this book will help you to have an effective ministry of evangelism. The approach that is presented is a little different some I have studied, but the elements of the gospel are the same.

I have titled this book *Relationship Evangelism - The Farming Method* because I have learned that the most effective witness is one that is reinforced with positive a relationship.

You will probably notice that there is not a lot of memorization work in this program. The main reason for that is I have a hard time with memorization and I figured that most

other folks do to. Also, I have found that it is important that we sound genuine to the people we are witnessing to. We come across as more sincere if we are presenting our own experiences and explaining the gospel in our own words.

The two primary tools that I use when actually presenting the gospel are The Starting Point which is followed with The Next Step. These two booklets are explained in depth in this book and you will learn to present the gospel with confidence using this format.

The final section of the book explains the process of relationship evangelism that I simply call farming. Experience has shown that when this method is followed consistently it will produce consistent results. I strongly encourage you to employ this strategy in your evangelism program, it works.

Finally, I trust that as you read and study this book, God will impress upon you the call to evangelism and that you will accept the challenge to be his ambassador of reconciliation.

**Have Your Evangelism and Outreach
Questions Answered in the Relationship
Evangelism Study Group**

You can have the entire book, *Relationship Evangelism - The Farming Method*. I am giving this book free to all those who join the **Relationship Evangelism Study Group**.

The study group is a free membership program that has online meetings every week. The meetings are in webinar format with comments and questions by the participants.

Each week we will be discussing some aspect of the witnessing process and answering questions about how to use the tools we discuss.

If you are serious about growing your ministry through building relationships this group will be a blessing to you.

To get more information on the Relationship Evangelism Study Group go to (or just click on) www.dailygodwalk.org/RESG