



# Ready to Share

Evangelism—Sharing the “Good News” of Jesus Christ.

## Definition:

**Witnessing:** *It is sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in the Power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results up to God. Witnessing, in its broadest sense, is simply telling what you know and what you have experienced in Christ.*

*"We cannot stop speaking of what we have seen and heard."*

- Acts 4:20

**Word Study:** Our word, “Evangelism” comes from the Greek word **ευαγγελιον**.

**Eu-** means “good”, **-αγγελ-** means “to tell” (we get our word *angel* or *messenger* from this word), and ending, **-ιον** places this word in a “mood” that indicates “this is real and personal”.

## "Why should we witness?"

1. It is the only way people will come to know Christ.
2. We want to see the benefits of a life with Christ passed on to others.
3. By sharing our faith, we grow and mature.
4. God commanded it.

*"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

- Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

Jesus, in His last command, said that we are to be witnesses unto Him. He died to purchase eternal life for all who would trust in Him, and we must share the Light of Life. Oh, if we could but see a friend, a loved one, an acquaintance, a business partner, five minutes after their death, we would surely lament if we had not told them of the [Jesus].

- Dr. D. James Kennedy <sup>1</sup>

## "What makes for an effective witness?"

<sup>1</sup>Morgan, Robert J. quoting Dr. D. James Kennedy: *Nelson's Annual Preacher's Sourcebook: 2003 Edition*. Electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002, S. 160.

Witnessing involves two components. If you try to witness without both, your witness will be hollow. Words form the content of the message, but our lives (i.e., walk) serve to validate the message in the mind of the unbeliever:

### 1. Your walk.

*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

- Matthew 5:16 (NASB)

### 2. Your words...

## Sharing the Good News—*Made Very Simple!*

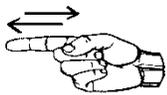


### 1. God Cares—**God really loves you and has a great plan for your life.**

Alternate phrases: God loves you ... God sees and cares... God knows... God is still on His throne

**John 10:10 (PME)** - "(Jesus said) I came that you might have a full life, and that you might have it more abundantly."

**John 3:16 (NASB95)** -<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (Greek - Lit. "The life of the ages")



### 2. All have sinned—**All people (including you and me) have sinned and missed God's Plan for their lives.**

Alternate phrases: We have all mess up... We all have a past... Everyone fails... Only God was perfect...

**Romans 3:23 (TLB)** -<sup>23</sup> Yes, all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious [plan]...

**1 John 1:8 (TLB)** -<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth.



### 3. Jesus died for us!—**Jesus paid the price for our sins by giving His life on the cross.**

Alternate phrases: God did something only He could do... God proved his love...

**Romans 5:8 (NASB95)** -<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

**1 Corinthians 15:5 (NASB95)** -<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures ...



#### **4. We must make a commitment to Christ—We can discover God’s great plan for our lives by committing our lives to Christ.**

Alternate phrases: We must surrender our lives to Christ... We must make Jesus *Lord of all* or *He’s not Lord at all*.

**Romans 10:9 (PME)** – If you openly admit with your own lips that Jesus is the Lord, and if you believe in your own heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Acts 4:12 (NASB95)** -<sup>12</sup> “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name [but Jesus] under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”



#### **5. We are weak—We cannot save ourselves by “doing good things”—it’s not possible to get to heaven except through Jesus Christ.**

Alternate phrases: There is nothing we can do to save ourselves... Our goodness makes this earth a better place but does *not* secure a perfect Heaven and in imperfect person named \_\_\_\_\_, only God’s grace and kindness does that... It you sinned just once an hour, you’d have 600,000 sins to your account...

**Ephesians 2:8-9 (NCV)** -<sup>8</sup>... you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God. <sup>9</sup>It was not the result of your own efforts ...

**John 14:6 (NASB95)** -<sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

**Romans 10:9, NIV** -<sup>9</sup> That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.



#### **6. If a persons makes Jesus their Lord, they win—but, if they reject Christ, they lose.**

Alternate phrases: If today finds you “finding Christ”, today is your best day... I want this for you... Do this...

**Romans 10:13 (NASB95)** -<sup>13</sup> for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

**1 Timothy 2:5 (TLB)** -<sup>5</sup> ... God is on one side and all the people on the other side, and Christ Jesus, himself man, is between them to bring them together ...

### **Theological Foundation and Definition:**

**Gospel:** **All** men are guilty of sin before God. The penalty for sin is death—eternal separation from God. But because of His great love for us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take the penalty of our sin on Himself when He died on the cross. Three days later He was resurrected from the dead and is alive today and forever. If any person will repent of his or her sinful way of life, and have faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and able to save him from eternal death, he or she **will be saved**.

**Acts 5:17-33, NASB95** - <sup>17</sup> But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. <sup>18</sup> They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail. <sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, <sup>20</sup> **“Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life.”**

<sup>21</sup> Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest and his associates came, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent orders to the prison house for them to be brought. <sup>22</sup> But the officers who came did not find them in the prison; and they returned and reported back, <sup>23</sup> saying, “We found the prison house locked quite securely and the guards standing at the doors; but when we had opened up, we found no one inside.” <sup>24</sup> Now when the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them as to what would come of this. <sup>25</sup> But someone came and reported to them, “The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!” <sup>26</sup> Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence (for they were afraid of the people, that they might be stoned). <sup>27</sup> When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup> “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. <sup>31</sup> “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. <sup>32</sup> “And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.” <sup>33</sup> But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and intended to kill them.

✠ Charles Wesley said about his own salvation experience: ***“My chains fell off! My heart was free! I rose, went forth, and followed Thee!”*** What, then, are we to do after we’ve been delivered? What are our instructions? The angel’s words are short and sweet: **“Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.”** <sup>2</sup>

## 1. Go...

- These are the first letters of the **“GOspel.”**
- Jesus told the missionaries in Matthew 10 to **GO** to the lost sheep of Israel.
- Jesus told John’s disciples to **GO** and tell John what they had heard and seen.
- Jesus told the demon possessed man to **GO** home and tell his friends what He had done.
- Jesus told the seventy in Luke 10 to **GO** as lambs among wolves.
- He told the wedding servants to **GO** into the highways and byways, inviting others to the banquet.
- Jesus told those at the tomb to **GO** with the news.
- Jesus tells the church to **GO** into all the world.

**Matthew 28:19-20, NASB95** - <sup>19</sup> **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,** <sup>20</sup> **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**

- Where does Christ want you to **GO** with the gospel?

## 2. Stand...

We’re to **stand** firm in the faith, to **stand** against the schemes of the devil, to **stand** fast in the liberty with which Christ has set us free, to **stand** girded with truth, to **stand** fast in one spirit—and having done all, to **stand**. The angel meant: “Plant your feet, your shoulders back, your head high, your jaw set. Don’t be intimidated, but take a **stand**.”

## 3. Speak...

We live amid unprecedented communications technology, but the most effective way of spreading the gospel is still one teenager sharing with another, one homemaker with another, one golfing partner telling another about Christ. ***One friend with one friend—sharing the good news of Christ!*** <sup>3</sup>

Have you shared your message of “good news” with anyone recently?

<sup>2</sup> Morgan, Robert J.: *Nelson’s Annual Preacher’s Sourcebook: 2003 Edition*. Electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002, S. 273.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* S. 274.

## "How do you witness?" (Introductory)

1. Test the waters with "neutral" statements and/or words.

Example: *"Oh really, I know a lady at our church that does that."*

2. Ask for permission (casually) to share about your life (via a testimony.)

Example: *"Jane, may I share with you something very important to me about my life?"*, or, *"Can I shoot straight with you about something?"* Or, *Jane, I want you to know something, okay?"*

- A *brief* testimony consists of three components:

- ① Your life before Christ (and how you realized your need for Christ.)

- ② How you met Christ.

*"A made the most important decision a person makes..."*

- ③ Your life *now* with Christ.

3. Ask for a response to your testimony by asking two questions:

Example: *"Jane, have you ever had an experience like that?"*

Other suggestions:

*"Jane, would you say you have made Christ Lord of your life or are you still on that journey?" ...*

*"Jane, if you were to die today, do you know for certain that God would let you into heaven?"...*

*"Jane, if you were to stand before God and He were to ask, 'why should I let you into my Haven?' What would you say?"*

4. Ask for permission to share what you have learned about God.

Example: *"Can I share with you some things we are learning at our church?"*

5. Share the "plan of salvation" and seek a response.

## Seeking the response (a.k.a. “drawing the net”)

### *Things to say*

1. We must individually receive Christ into our hearts to be the Lord of our lives. We do this through prayer. Prayer is simply talking to God. **Have you ever prayed and made Jesus the Lord of Your Life?**
2. If you have never prayed and asked Christ into your heart, we hope that right now will be the time you accept God's wonderful plan for your life. **Would you like to know what it is that God wants you to do?**

### **Things to Know: “What does all this mean?”**

**Answer: We must pray and individually receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord; it is the only way we can make peace with Him and enter into a personal relationship with Christ.**

### *The Two Most Important Questions:*

#### **1. Is there anything keeping you from receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord?**

- What if a person rejects what I say?

Realize two things:

1. They are not rejecting you as a person. In their minds they are merely disagreeing with an opinion you hold. They are actually rejecting Christ.
2. Evangelism is a process, not an event, or more accurately, a process that leads to an event.

#### **2. Would you like to receive Christ right now as Lord of your life?**

You can receive Christ into your heart as Lord through prayer. (Prayer is talking to God.) God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

*"Lord Jesus, I need you. I know that you have a wonderful plan for my life. I also know that my sin has kept me from your great plan. Please forgive the sin in my life. I know you died on the cross for me. I now commit my life to you by asking you to come into my heart. I receive you as my Lord. Take control of my life and make me the kind of person you want me to be. Thank you for coming into my life as Lord, and forgiving all my sin, and giving me eternal life."*

- Amen!

**Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?**

If it does, **pray this prayer right now and Christ will come into your life as Lord, just as He promised!**

## Important things to remember about witnessing:

- Remember, it's your job to witness. It is God's job to convert people.
- Depend on the Holy Spirit to work supernaturally. Before you talk to a person about God, talk to God about that person.
- Don't look at people as "projects." Look at people through the eyes of Christ.
- As you witness, be pleasant, casual, friendly, and positive and never be negative.
- Avoid getting into arguments.
- Avoid "chasing rabbits."
- Be sensitive and convey that you really care.
- Use the scripture and/or something written they can have when you are finished.
- If you are asked a question that stumps you, say this: *"I don't know the answer to that, but I'll try to find out for you."*
- Don't preach.
- Be yourself.
- Practice "long-term" witnessing habits: (e.g. pray daily for opportunities to witness, maintain a lifestyle that is above reproach, don't isolate yourself from non-Christians, practice and practice.)
- Remember that "friend to friend" witnessing is the most effective form of witnessing in the world—and, it is biblical! Pray, wait, share!

# “Getting Started” Sharing the Good News

Many set their “sights” too high, e.g., “I must reach a city” or, “I must reach my whole neighborhood.” We must not forget that God is ultimately responsible for drawing people to Him. We are only the “witnesses” that take to good news to them. I believe it would be better to think in terms of reaching one...just one... at least one.

“Each One, Reach One” have become a theme here at SRBC. It basically asked each member (or each family) to commit to reaching one person (or one family) for the cause of Christ (either through salvation of church membership. You friends represent the greatest opportunity for you to share Christ with others. Remember, “Friendship evangelism” is the most effective means or reaching others for Christ.



***Once you have your short testimony and the Gospel presentation ready to go, get started.***

Here are some suggestions for getting started with the most important task any person have before them, the privilege or sharing the living-giving news of Jesus Christ.

A. Make a list of five people you know who evidence a need for Christ.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Start to pray for them every day that you will have the opportunity to share with them.

C. Prayerfully plan some specific “friendship activities” with each of these persons.

D. Take opportunities to use “neutral words” and see if you can get a conversation started.

E. Send them Christ-honoring Christmas, Easter, or Friendship cards.

F. Invite them to a special church event or service.

G. Give them a good example of what Christianity is about. (e.g., meet some need in their life, pray for their children, remember their “important days”, ask about their life story, be their friend, tell them you “value their friendship and pray for them daily,” etc.

H. Be ready when God opens the door. ***“Their eternal lives are at stake!”***

# Sharing the Good News in Specific Situations

## A. Children

It is estimated that most people have their greatest openness to the Gospel when they are young. The latest “stats” also indicate that when a person reaches 18 years of age, their chances of being reached for Christ drops considerably. Therefore, children represent the richest and most important aspect of the mission field around us. Here are some things to remember when sharing with children.

- Get on their level by sitting near them.
- Keep your words on their level.
- Be as short and concise as possible.
- Be excited and be real—it is “good news”.
- Draw pictures and write down simple words for them to keep.
- Document dates, places, and decisions—it will help them “fight doubt” later.
- If at all possible, have the parents involved in this important process.
- Use a simplified “Hand memory hook” presentation.
- If you have time (it is important), review the “Once You Give Your Life to Christ” material.

I use the following document when I talk with children about Christ. You can download these documents from [www.SouthReno.com](http://www.SouthReno.com) by going to “Pastor’s Corner”, then to “Pastor’s Guide Sheets” and select the document titled, “Good News for All Kids” (It may be in the archives section). If you don’t have the document immediately available, take a plane sheet of paper and have the child draw their hand by tracing it with a pen. Use it to write simplified points of the Gospel Story. When it comes time to “drawing the net”, make sure your “sinners prayer” is very, very simple.

A blank copy of the “Good News for All Kids” and “Once You give Your Life to Christ in located on the next two pages.

1 Begin by tracing the hand of the child and placing very simple points of the Gospel on each finger. Be sure and point out this “Good News” is for them! ↓

2 Circle “your” and underline “forever” for emphasis. Be sure and document when a child receives Christ. Then call Grandma and tell her the good news! →



# Good News for All Kids!



This "PASTOR'S GUIDE SHEET" was developed by Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church, Reno, NV • jtaylor@southreno.com  
Scriptures are printed verbatim with references noted but highlights and underlines are added.

## Good News for \_\_\_\_\_!

### 1. **God loves you!**

John 3:16, NIV - <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son ...

### 2. **Only God is perfect, we are not.**

Romans 3:23, NIV - <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

### 3. **Christ died for you!**

Romans 5:6, NIV - <sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for you.

### 4. **You need God—and U can have Him!**

Romans 10:9, GNT - <sup>9</sup> If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved.

### 5. **You cannot "save" yourself.**

Ephesians 2:8-9, GNT - <sup>9</sup> For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it.

Good News: **You can have Him!**

So...What Do You Do Now?

If you want to, you can pray right now and give your life to Jesus Christ. You do this by talking to God and giving Him your life:

*You can pray a prayer just like this one here below—if you mean it!*

**Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me, I admit I have sinned against You, Lord. Thank you for giving Your life for me. I want to make You the Lord of my life right now. Please come into my heart and be my Lord and Savior forever! - Amen!**

# Once You Give Your Life to Christ...

## 1. Christ will live in your heart ... forever!

Revelation 3:20, NASB95 - <sup>20</sup> *'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him ...* [Notice these word are in red ink, it's because Jesus said them!!!!!]

## 2. All your sins are forgiven ... forever!

Colossians 1:13-14, GN - <sup>13</sup> *He [that's Jesus] rescued us ... 14 in Him we have ... the forgiveness of sins.*

## 3. You are part of the family of God ... forever!

John 1:12, GNT - <sup>12</sup> *[To those who] ... did receive him and believed in him; so He gave them the right to become God's children.*

## 4. This gift is just for you ... forever!

Ephesians 2:8-9, NIV - <sup>8</sup> *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.*

John 5:24, NASB95 - <sup>24</sup> *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*

John 10:27-28, NIV - <sup>27</sup> *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.*

Ephesians 1:13-14, NIV - <sup>13</sup> *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

## What Should You Do Now?

### 1. Tell somebody.

Tell your family ... your church ... and your friends—they will be so happy for you!

### 2. Be baptized!

Now that Jesus lives in your heart, let Him give you the courage to obey God by being baptized. Baptism is that thing we do when we let everybody know we believe in Jesus. It will encourage you, it will encourage the Church, and it will please God.

### 3. Get involved in your church (if you're not already)!

### 4. Pray everyday to God.

### 5. Read your Bible.

<p><b>Important Dates To Remember</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place I accepted Christ as Lord _____</li> <li>• Date I accepted Christ as Lord _____</li> <li>• Place I was baptized _____</li> <li>• Date I was baptized _____</li> </ul>
---	--

## B. Hospice and “pre-death” situations.

Following a genuine show of concern, I ask, *“What do you think the Lord is saying to you in this situation.”* No matter what they say, I respond by saying, *“If you felt the Lord was calling you to leave this old Earth, would you be ready?”* No matter what they say, I give a short testimony, a brief gospel presentation and then ask them, *“Have you ever had a moment like that when you asked Christ to come into your life?”* I will sometime interrupt any casual dialog by saying, *“John, nothing is more important than being right with God—nothing else matters!”*

## C. Those in a crisis.

Listen sensitively to their words, thoughts, and fears will often “open the door” for us to ministry to someone. Jesus always met physical needs when sharing the Gospel with those around Him. Physical needs include food, transportation, acknowledging a loss/emergency, childcare, money, holding a person’s hand, etc. We know that the real need is a person’s need for Jesus. God will allow us to meet real physical needs to help open the door to help us meet real eternal needs. Once physical needs are met (or as they are being met), we can begin sharing the Gospel in some way.

Christian Cards

Spiritual letter of concern

Flowers

Financial gifts to them / organization

Practical helps (food, child care, house cleaning, “Home prep”, etc.)

Placing them on your church’s prayer ministry

Reminding them that you are praying for them

## Praying with them

At an appointed moment, say, *“John, I have watched you live them this storm over the past few weeks and though I can’t carry every one of your burdens, I have truly tried to do what I can to help you in this terrible ordeal/loss by doing what can meet. Is there anything else I can do to help you? I mean that, what can I do for you right now to help you more?”* Listen to what they say. At some point say something like this. There are two directions you can take.

① *“John, the storms of life help up realize what is and is not important. Sometime, I want to talk briefly about something very important. There is something very important to know about me and I want you to know it. I feel I have grown closer to you in this crisis and I want you to know something about me? Can we talk soon?”*

② *“John, times like these help up realize what is and is not important. I want you to know something. When I was a young man... (share you brief testimony).”* Then say, *“God cares for you, John. He truly cares. ... (share the Gospel with John)”*. Following the presentation, give John an opportunity to receive Christ by saying this. *“John, we all need Christ to go to Heaven once this life ends but I feel you will need Christ to make it through this ordeal. John, nothing else really matters than being right with God. I want you to receive Christ right now. I made peace with God by...”*

## D. The Waiter or Waitress at Your Table

Just wanting to “spread a little seed”, think about this. Be friendly, learn their name, and thank them for their hospitality. At some point prior to your meal being served, say this:

*“Heidi, thank you, again for being so awesome. Heidi, we are Christians and in just a few minutes, we are going to thank God for our blessings—including you and our food. Is there any other matter we can pray about—just for you?”*

Don’t may a big deal of it. Just a kind and gracious offer. Write the name down and remember to pray for them by name a situation. As you have opportunity, visit the same restaurant and ask to be seated in there section.

*Oh, and tip graciously. Unfortunately, Christians have a reputation for being poor tippers.*

## E. Those in a major “life event” (i.e., retirement, a wedding, a new birth, etc.)

Remember that the most fertile soil is for those whom you know “as friends”—i.e., friendship evangelism. Please remember this truth:

***“A friend who knows Christ becomes a lifeline of hope to a friend who does not know Christ.”***

Witnessing for Christ means that you become part of another person's story. Your friend is "away" from God just like a sheep was from the fold, the coin was from the purse, and the son was from the father's home. Major life event help us become part of His story in their lives.

- Acknowledge the event with great joy and fanfare.
- Send flowers, Christian cards, or letters of congratulations—document the event!
- Buy a book for "gift" that commemorates the event with a personal note attached.
- Set a time to verbally acknowledge your happiness for them.

Call them and say you would like to drop by for just few minutes. Being "face-to-face" in this is important. When you get there, present them with some sort of gift acknowledging the "life event". Say this:

*John, the Bible says that we are to "rejoice with those who rejoice". I am so excited about \_\_\_\_\_ (the life event.) I want you to know that I value our friendship and count it a privilege to see this take place in your life. John, I pray for you every day—I have for some time now. I have yet another reason to value our friendship. Thank you for letting me play a small part in this—at least I get to see you go through this great time. God bless you, John. Hey, I have a small gift to commemorate this event. Here you go! (Give them the gift.) Again, congratulations. John, what can I do you? Seriously, what can I do for you—I want to do something for you? I would love to help you.*

At some point, you seek to share the gospel, find that "divine moment" and say this:

*John, we have been through some good times and some tough times—together, as friends. As I have said before, I deeply value our friendship. I feel our friendship has come to that place where I want you to know something about me. [share your testimony, then, share the gospel presentation].*

## F. Church visitation

This material will deal with "you" (representing the church) paying a home visit to someone who visited our church—most likely in the past few days. Here are some important beginning statements.

- You will be visiting those who visited us—we already have "common ground".
- They filled out a "Friendship Card" and gave us some information. They may have asked for specific information (e.g., to know more information about our church, etc.)
- Consider going with someone who has "OTJT"—learn from them.
- I always call before making my visit.

Example of the phone visit

*Hello, this is Joe Taylor from South Reno Baptist Church. I was looking for Jack or Jill. ... Oh, hello Jack, I believe you paid us a visit this past Sunday. We were so honored to have you as a guest, thank you being with us. It is a big deal to us that you were there. I hope you had a good experience...*

*Jack, I have some information and a small gift that we would like to get in your hands. It will help you get to know us a little better and it give us an opportunity to say "thank you for coming". It will also communicate that we do care. I just need a moment to drop it by but I wanted to do that personally. Would tonight work? I don't intend to stay long at all. How about 7:00ish. If I am more than a few minutes late, I'll call you, okay? Can I make sure that I have your address correct? I also want to leave you my number in case something comes up and you need to contact me for any reason.*

*I will look forward to it. Have a good day.*

Here are some things not to do, when making a home visit.

- Don't be late
- Don't stay long
- Don't pray in front of the house
- Don't make the visit about "you"
- Don't park in the drive way
- Don't walk in the grass
- Don't get their mail or paper without permission
- Don't be "unaware" about SRBC, its histories, its beliefs, or its ministries.

Here are some things to do when making a home visit.

- Do stand back from the door once you have knocked on it (so they can see you).
- Do take somebody with you. (It is better for everyone).
- Do notice what the yard and house tell you about the people.
- Do remember their names (without looking at the friendship card).
- Do be careful with the animals.
- Enjoy yourself!

Opening Statement at the Door

*Jack, I am Joe Taylor. I talked to you on the phone. Thank you for letting me come over; may I come in for a moment? [Go in and complement the home, if possible]. Thank you for welcoming me into you home. I am so honored to be here. As I said, I am not staying all night, okay?*

[Begin to notice what the home tells you about Jack (i.e., toys, pictures, certificates, memorabilia, etc.).]

Dialog once in the Home

*Jack, tell me about you and your family...* [Listen intently and enjoyably.]

*Jack, how did you hear about South Reno Baptist Church?*

*Is there any specific ministry you would like to hear about?*

*Are there any questions you have that I need to know about?*

*Jack, I want you to know why I am a part of South Reno Baptist Church.*

**F**ather—they help me know the Lord in a life changing way. (Preaching, worship, SS, etc.)

**F**amily—my family life is better because of SRBC.

**F**riends—they truly are a “friendly church that cares”—about my family and me.

**F**or Joe—during my best times, they are there; during the worst of times, they are there for me. But, as I said, most importantly, they help me know the Lord.

*Jack, seeing that we are talking about the church, would you say you know Jesus personally—as Lord? Or, would you say you are still on a journey to know God?*

[If given, take the opportunity to share your testimony and share the gospel.]

Some other questions to consider:

*Jack, in your personal opinion, what do you think it takes for a person to go to Heaven when they die?*

*Jack, what brought you to SRBC? Are you looking for something specifically?*

*Jack, here is that material I talked to you about over the phone. It is some information about South Reno Baptist Church. Jack, what are you looking for in a church home?*

May I pray for you before I leave? How can I pray for you?

Following the visit:

- Write a brief thank you note to thank them for allowing you to be in their home.
- Make a follow up call and mention something specific about your visit.
- Follow up on any questions that came up during your visit.
- Pray for them—if you said you would pray about something, do it and let them know you did!
- Find them at church and welcome them—calling them by name.

**N**ot to decide is to decide. Delay carried to its ultimate end is the same as rejection. With deep compassion and concern we must let our friends know that God's word is TODAY and the devils' word is TOMORROW.

– Leighton Ford<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Leighton Ford, *Good News is for Sharing*, Elgin, Illinois: David C. Cook Publishing Co., pp. 165-166.

*“Now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.” - 2 Corinthians 6.2*

## Ç. Answering the Tough Questions—*if it is not just “grief statements”*

### ***“Why is there evil and suffering in the world?”***

Answer: Man—not God—is responsible for the suffering in the world. God created our world perfect—as in *The Perfect Garden of Eden*. Man chose to leave the perfect garden when he sinned. Because of man’s sin, we live in a fallen world where life will not be fair; it will not always make sense, or be fully understandable. The “fallen world” is a witness to you and me that we need a perfect Savior.

### ***“Why did God make us if He knew we would sin?”***

Answer: God thought you and I were worth the risk. I love my wife dearly but if she did not have *free will* and all I had to do was push a button to get her to kiss me and say “I love you”, what kind of love would that be? To be meaningful, love has to be given freely. God won’t break the door of your heart down and force you to be right with Him. He did die on the cross to remedy all of your sins.

### ***“I am a good person. How good of a person do you have to be to get into Heaven?”***

Answer: As good as Jesus was—perfect. You’re being good does make a difference in this world—thank you for that. Nevertheless, being good—even real good—does not get you into the next world—Heaven—unless you are perfect even as Jesus was perfect. We sometimes believe that because we are better than some we are *good enough*, in reality we are *good for nothing* apart from Christ living in us as Lord. He is the only way to Heaven.

### ***“What about the other religions? Don’t we all believe in the same god?”***

Answer: You have asked a profound question. You have to decide how you are going to decide that “big question.” I want them to be right with God. I do not want anybody to miss heaven. However, to answer that question, I have decided to see what God’s word says. I have to let Holy Scripture tell me—not I tell it—the correct answer. The Bible says, “Jesus is the only way to God.” Jesus himself said, “*No man comes to the Father but through me*” (John 14:6). Few religions believe “we are all right”. Almost all religions are “work based”—if you live a good life, you go to heaven. Only Christianity is “faith based”, if you believe in God and place your faith in Him you can go to Heaven.

### ***“What about the hypocrites in church?”***

Answer: I have been around the church all my life. Let me tell you what I know. The church is made up of imperfect people that for the most part, know it. For every one hypocrite—that person that tries to convince everyone he is something he is not—there are 100+ awesome followers of Christ. Are these *followers* perfect? No. Are the sincere? Yes! They sincerely know when they mess up

and sincerely try to live their lives as best they can in the power of God. Don't hide behind those very few, rare hypocrites. Don't let a fool make you a fool. Don't let a fool keep you from Christ.

Alternate answer: If you are going to hide from something—in this case, God—you have to be smaller than what you are hiding behind. Don't demean yourself smaller than a hypocrite. Unless you are worse than a hypocrite, don't hide behind one. Are there hypocrites in the church? Yes, most churches have a few. Every organization has hypocrites...hospitals, dentist, plumbers, mechanics, grocery stores, etc. But you wouldn't avoid a business just because a few people there are hypocrites, would you? The biggest lie on the planet is that all the people in church are hypocrites. That's not true. The church is filled with dear, wonderful people. If the church was filled with perfect people, I wouldn't be able to invite you there. I would even be able to attend myself.