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Ministry Resources Hub

Attitudes and Approaches

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Attitudes and Approaches

Be Humble and Positive

Paul said in Philippians 2:5, “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant.” Humility and patience with people are important. Remember how you came to Christ. We have the most positive news to share with others.

Communicate the Message of Love.

Our motive for sharing the gospel is love. 2 Corinthians 5:14 (NIV) says, “The love of Christ compels us.” Our love for Christ should move us to share the gospel with those who don’t know Christ. Some people attribute this quote to St. Francis of Assisi: “Preach the gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.” Some historians state there’s no evidence that St. Francis ever said this. No matter who said it, people need to know that God loves them.

“I am convinced that the greatest act of love we can ever perform for people is to tell them about God’s love for them in Christ.”—Billy Graham

A student named Steve Walker was sitting outside on the grass one day by himself, waiting for class to start at Cal Poly, Pomona, California. Two students from Cru walked up to him and asked if they could talk to him about something. He asked them what about, and they said, “Jesus.” That didn’t scare Steve because he had grown up in a very religious family, but he had been taught that Jesus died and suffered on the cross because he (Steve) was a bad person. He believed that God was always mad at him or sad because of his badness. The guilt and shame of his condition was so strong that he never felt there was any chance to please God or any chance that God would love him. These two fellow students shared the Four Spiritual Laws with Steve, and it was the first time he had heard that God loved him. It froze him in his tracks. The students asked Steve if he would like to accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, to have his sins forgiven and washed away, and have the Lord change him into the person God wanted him to be. Steve’s response was a combination of anger and disbelief—anger because no one had ever explained this

to him in all his years of religion, and disbelief because he couldn't imagine saying no to such an offer of God's love and forgiveness, as well as God's willingness to change him into a person who was pleasing to Him. Steve prayed to receive God's offer of love and forgiveness. One week later, Steve was walking around campus with the same two students, asking other students if he could talk to them about Jesus. Steve soon got involved in discipleship, and a few months later, he left his engineering major and his college and transferred to a Bible college to study to become a pastor. Eventually, he started an amazing new church that has grown to nearly 5,000 people in Bothell, Washington, and has many amazing ministries that impact people for Christ.

Love in Action

In Matthew, Jesus said we are to love God with all our being. He added, "The second [commandment] is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:39 ESV). The gospel message becomes more receptive when we demonstrate God's love in sacrificial ways. Words coupled with love have a great impact.

We are to be salt and light in the world. "You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house" (Matthew 5:13-15 ESV).

In 2007, my niece Rebecca Pratt started a ministry called Orphan Relief and Rescue to get children out of human trafficking and domestic abuse in Benin and Liberia, West Africa (a stronghold of voodoo and witchcraft practices). The ministry has rescued hundreds of children who were sold into slavery. Initially, the team decided not to share that they were Christian missionaries because their lives could be at risk. They built friendships, and in time, the parents wanted to know why they were helping their children. The team shared with them the love of Christ, and many parents and children embraced Jesus as their Savior. Orphan Relief and Rescue headquarters is located in Burien, Washington, and can be found online with more details of its ministry.

Lee Strobel writes, "Is there an elderly widow down the block . . . or a junior high student who's looking for someone to shoot baskets with . . . or a single mother who could use a babysitter for her two children . . . or a colleague who's going through a

divorce. Someone said, 'People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.'"

Show an Interest in People's Lives

Recently I returned an item at Home Depot. I asked the cashier in the return section what her name was. She was from India and was a Hindu. She said her name was Kshama. Then she wrote it on a Home Depot business card and gave it to me. She asked, "Do you know what my name means?" I said no. She said it means "forgive me." I then explained to her that Jesus forgave us at the cross of all our sins when He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30 ESV). She said she had never heard the gospel before. I went back to my car and got her a gospel tract on heaven and the Gospel of John, and she thanked me.

When I occasionally strike up a conversation with someone with tattoos, I ask them the significance of the tattoo and then try to somehow connect that to the gospel.

Offer to Pray

I was working out at a local fitness facility and met a Hindu man named Ranga who was 79 years old. I gave him a booklet my brother wrote called "Why Jesus? Have You Considered Him?" Ranga read the booklet, and then we often talked about what it said. He has lung fibrosis with scarring of the lungs. I asked him if I could pray for him, and he agreed. I touched his shoulder as I prayed for him, and I saw that my prayer touched his heart. Soon after, I gave Ranga the book *More Than a Carpenter* by Josh Mc Dowell. Ranga texted me, "I am reading the book that you gave me; a page every day." Then he noted, "I am the way (John 14:6); Jesus claimed to be the visible expression of God (John 14:9). Jesus is the true manifestation of God himself. . . . Blessed is the one that can surrender with unconditional faith and devotion." The last time I saw Ranga at the fitness facility, he gave me a big hug. I plan on helping him download a Bible app and giving him a copy of the New Testament and a DVD on *The Passion of the Christ* movie. Ranga recently told me he now believes that Jesus is God.

Reaching Gen Zs and Millennials

Gen Zs were born from 1997 through 2012, and Millennials were born between 1981 and 1996. A large percentage of Millennials and almost 50 percent of Gen Zs are religiously unaffiliated (the “nones”), which means they have walked away from the church. Barna research indicates that over 30 percent of Millennials identify as LGBTQ. In *Not Beyond Reach*, Aaron Pierce writes, “We can’t wait for people to come to us (church); we have to go to them. . . . We need to learn to share the gospel in ways they will understand.” The global youth culture is based on secular humanism, naturalistic evolution, Eastern religious spirituality, and a religion of self.

Jon Sween has a ministry to Gen Zs in the greater Seattle area. He offers this advice in reaching Gen Zs for Christ:

- Pray for an opportunity to connect with Gen Z young adults (Romans 10:1).
- Listen and ask good questions.
- Be a friend and love them.
- Read *Not a Hopeless Case* by Halee Gray Scott on Gen Z.

Look for Divine Appointments

When you pray for divine appointments to share your faith, expect that the Lord will open doors for you to share. The enemy of evangelism is often because our schedules are too full. Make time in your schedule for people. Jesus was often interrupted by people, but He always took time to minister to their needs. Ask the Lord to show you how you can be more available to the needs of non-believers.

I like Kevin Harney’s suggestion in *Organic Outreach* to have a “thirty-second rule” where you say a quick prayer to the Lord such as “Lord, here I am. I’m ready to scatter the seed of your gospel.” Then ask yourself, “How might I extend the love of God and the grace of Jesus in this situation?” This is great advice!

Our son Matt and his wife, Amy, joined the ministry of Church Resources Ministries (CRM) in New Orleans and later decided to move to Columbia City, a highly ethnic area of Seattle, Washington. They intentionally chose to live and serve in this area where more than 60 languages were spoken. Matt is now a successful Realtor in the greater Seattle area. Recently he was the recipient of the Good Neighborhood Award for his donations to local ministries such as World Relief, Orphan Relief and

Rescue, and other ministries that reach out with the gospel. God has placed us in our work, recreation, and neighborhood to impact those around us with the gospel. Where has God placed you to live, work, and impact others with the gospel?

Be Gracious and Tactful

Share with others as you would have wanted to be shared with before you came to Christ. Colossians 4:6 (ESV) says, “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

1 John 4:7 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” God’s infinite love extends to both the believer and the non-believer.

Warren Wiersbe in his book *Being a Servant of God* says, “Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels to the glory of God.”

Avoid Being Offensive

In 2022, the Seattle Mariners baseball team was celebrating its first playoff game in 21 years. A friend of mine at church and I decided to pass out tracts at the game, but when we arrived at the Mariners’ stadium, some men with large banners and loudspeakers were telling the crowd, “The Lord hates all workers of iniquity. America declares its sin like Sodom and Gomorrah!” Most people were repelled by their approach.

God can use wrong motives and methods to reach people, but we need to build a bridge for people, not burn one (Philippians 1:15-18). We need to season the gospel with grace and avoid being offensive. The gospel is good news!

Talk about Jesus

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. During the start of NFL training camp, the legendary and Hall of Fame football coach Vince Lombardi walked into the locker room of the Green Bay Packers, picked up a football, and said, “Gentlemen, this is a football.” Greg Laurie’s advice is to “keep the main thing the main thing. And the main thing is the gospel faithfully delivered.”

The basics of the gospel can be found in 1 Corinthians 2:3 (ESV) where Paul said, “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” It’s important not to get off on tangents but to focus on Christ, who He is, and what He did for us.

Paul Little in his book *How to Give Away Your Faith* suggests, “In presenting the claims of Christ, it is helpful to use the words of Jesus where possible.”

Be Yourself, and Keep It Simple

When I first became a Christian, I memorized a gospel presentation by Dave Hunt, a Christian author and radio commentator. Staff members of Cru were also required to memorize Bill Bright’s 20-minute gospel presentation called “God’s Plan.” These gospel presentations were more for giving a speech than interacting with a person or sharing a simple gospel presentation. You don’t need a script to share Christ.

Let God use your natural personality to talk about Jesus. Most people are not gifted salespeople and don’t have the gift of gab. Keep it simple and trust the Lord for the results.

Mark Mittelberg writes, “Take a deep breath, say a quick prayer, open your mouth, and let it fly . . . and watch God work.”

It’s a Team Effort

Look for ways to supplement your witnessing efforts such as inviting your friends to church or a small group to meet other believers; giving them a book; or sharing a blog, a YouTube video, a podcast, or a link to a website. I shared Christ to an Uber driver in Arizona and showed him the Bible app where he can listen audibly to God’s Word. He said, “Great! I need to start listening to something other than the news.” He thanked me and added the Bible app to his mobile device.