

MOSAIC: CONNECTING WITH GOD AND OTHERS
EVANGELISM CYCLES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH
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MATTHEW 4:18-22
S-1766

SLIDE 1: So, Jeff was 12 he and his best friend broke a window while playing baseball. They looked around to see if anyone had seen them. No one was in sight except for Jeff's little brother.

They offered him a piece of candy not to tell. He refused.

"I'll give you my baseball." "No."

"I'll give you my baseball and my new glove." "No!"

"Well, what do you want?"

"I want to tell!"

Would it not be nice if we Christians had the same enthusiasm to tell the good news as Jeff's brother had to tell the bad news!

VIDEO "No Excuse" if we can get it running on short notice on the tech computer. If not, we'll use it another time.

If video works I will not use following story. If video works I will omit following story.

I know of a barber who heard a sermon on this passage one Sunday in church and determined that day to become a fisherman for Christ.

Resolved to speak to everyone who sat in his barber chair: "I'll witness to everyone; I've just been piddling about it."

Monday morning—first man in wanted a shave, lathered, hot towel. Stropped razor while the man steamed—tried to think of something to say.

Finally, took off towel, said, "Man, are you ready to die?"

Crude, but true, so many don't know how to start.

Today talk about the spiritual growth cycles of evangelism.

SLIDE 2: MATTHEW 4:18-22: As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." 20 At once they left their nets and followed him. 21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Share evangelism sermon count over the decades.

I have a serious apology to make. We have drifted away from our first calling. My failure as leader.

SLIDE 3: I read the following PARABLE FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL for the first time almost 30 years ago at Casas. Repeat it periodically.

Thinking back to the focus we had on evangelism I hoped never to become like the life saving station that became a club. I suppose all organizations drift over time. It happened here at Casas.

"On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occurred, there was once a crude life saving station. The Building was just a hut. There was only one boat but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea and with no thought for themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the Lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful, little life saving station; and it became famous.

"Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding areas wanted to become associated with the station so they gave of their time and money and effort for the support of the work.

"New boats were bought and new life saving crews were trained and the little station grew.

"Some of the members of the life saving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped! They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge for those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots and beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building.

SLIDE :4 *"Now the life station became a popular gathering station for its members and they decorated it beautifully and exquisitely because they used it as sort of a club.*

"Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on life saving missions so they hired a life boat crew to do the work. The life saving motif still prevailed in the club's decoration and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where the club held its initiations.

"About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast and the hired crews brought in loads of cold, wet, half drowned people. They were dirty and sick and some had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful men's club was considerably messed up so the building and grounds committee had a shower house built outside the club where the victims of the wrecks could be cleaned up before coming inside.

"At the next meeting there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life saving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon life saving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a life saving club. They were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters they could begin their own life saving station down the coast a little ways, which they did.

"As the years went by the new station experienced the same changes that occurred in the old one. It even evolved into a club and yet another life saving station was founded.

"History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that coast today you will find a number of exquisite clubs along the shore.

"Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, and most of the people drown."

Our intention—among all the other things Casas is doing—is to lead us back to the life station stage.

•SLIDE #5: "Follow me and *I will make you* fishers of men" is Jesus declarative statement of the normal Christian life. The normal Christian life begins with following Jesus and results in fishing for people who are lost without Christ. It cannot be otherwise.

•SLIDE #6: Go to marine boot camp and you will emerge a Marine.

•SLIDE #7: Go to Med school and you will emerge as a Doctor or nurse

•SLIDE #8: Go to Embry-Riddle flight school and you will emerge an Airplane pilot

- SLIDE #9: Go to Juliard Conservatory and you will emerge a musician.
- SLIDE #10: Enroll in the School of Christ and you will become a fisherman for Christ.

Following Jesus is always a process along a spiritual journey.

SWITCH TO ROGER'S COMPUTER

SLIDE 11: Spiritual Growth chart

Describe chart and point out that we have not shown what comes after Spiritual Mother and Fatherhood.

- SLIDE #12: CHART OF -10 TO +10

People don't tend to come to Christ all at once! Want Casas to be a safe place where you can ask your friends questions about Christ.

Comes a time at "0" when a personal decision must be made to follow Christ.

Glenn says our culture has moved from -3 to -7 in the last 25 years

Officer in Dallas fire Department: marriage failing—goes to class and weeps as he begs recruits not to do what he did.

Met him at Starbucks: Discussed why his wife was so upset and angry. "It was all my fault was it not?" "Yes, may be too late but here is how to heal it.

Discussed the financial issues involved in a divorce. They went to a mediator and are still friends in working with the children.

Let's talk about how you are going to get through this.

Philippians 4:4-6 and Philippians 4:10-13.

Read Matthew and John. "What are those? Are they the same as the New Testament?"

Read Psalms and Proverbs "Are they the same as the New Testament?"

My friend was probably a -5.

SLIDE 13: Spiritual Growth chart: Cycle of spiritual growth—evangelism occurs at every stage.

The Four Growth Stages Include Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence and Parenthood—but, it is most powerful in the hands of a spiritual mother or father.

1 John 2:12-14

Philippians 3:10

SWITCH BACK TO TECH'S COMPUTER

SLIDE 14: Spiritual Infant Evangelizing: Woman at the well

So excited you can't help but tell!

Billy Gipe and Jim Tausch (killed in car wreck at 17)

Expect that from a pastor. I wasn't yet a pastor.

SLIDE 15: Spiritual young man: Peter (accomplished fisherman)

There were at least four calls for the disciples. Each was a call to a deeper level of relationship and commitment to Christ.

Phase One – First introductions occurred: John 1: Andrew and Peter; James and John

Phase Two – Several months later they left all to follow Him!

Phase Three: Two years later Jesus officially designated the twelve as Apostles just before they were sent out to preach.

SLIDE 16: Phase Four: After the resurrection, Christ commissioned them as shepherds.

“Feed my lambs . . . Take care of my sheep.” John 20:15-16:

He had matured to the role of Spiritual Father.

The spiritually mature are not to stop fishing—they add shepherding to their job description.

Spiritually mature begin looking like Christ and Christ was constantly in the business of bringing lost souls to His heart.

Child goes to SS class. How did you like it? Fine.

What was your teacher’s name?

SLIDE 17: “I don’t remember her name, but she must have been Jesus’ grandmother because all she talked about was Jesus.”

That is the attitude of a spiritual mother or father.

The cycle from salvation to maturity: Let me show you what happens to the spiritually mature.

SWITCH TO ROGER’S COMPUTER

SLIDE-DRAW 18: Mark 4:28-29: All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

SLIDE-DRAW 19: John 12:24-25: I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

SWITCH BACK TO TECH’S COMPUTER

•BUILD SLIDE #20A: Hind’s Feet - “The High Places are the starting places for the journey down to the lowest place in the world.”

•BUILD SLIDE #20B: Mountains of Spices - Much Afraid on High Places Sees family in Valley of Humiliation.

“Who will go?” “You will.” Couldn’t reach any of her family for Christ as Much Afraid... Now as Grace and Glory she’s able to return and win Dismal Forebodings and Gloomy and Craven Fear to the Lord Jesus Christ.

SLIDE 21: Are you sequestered from the world in your “spiritual bubble?”

Prophetic Church: Change the world through Politics

Fortress Church: Withdraw in fear from the World.

Missional Church: Seek and to save the Lost—that is the mission.

Paul says we should be prepared to share the gospel. What are the essentials of the Gospel—the things someone must know and/or experience to become a Christian?

Build up the glory of the life in Christ!

SLIDE 22: **1.** The message of Christ is “Good News”. Jesus invited everyone to eat freely from His Bread of Life (John 6) and to drink deeply from His Living Water (John 7).

This not something you tell with a straight face! They have to experience the exciting changes in your life.

Received Christ: told my 2nd grade teacher! “Do you mind if I bring my Bible to class?”

“In fact, I read all the way to Psalms since Sunday!” “Did you really!?”

My first public act for Christ was to tell a lie! But, I surely was excited!

Never been the same since.

Hard for an old sourpuss to lead people to the living water of Christ!

SLIDE 23: **2.** New life in Christ is so fantastic that it can be experienced only by being born again. A physical birth is not enough. Only a spiritual birth can make a difference (John 3).

SLIDE 24: **3.** Our sin stands in the way of experiencing the Bread of Life and the Living Water. Romans 3:23-24: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

SLIDE 25: **4.** Jesus died in our place on the cross death to pay the penalty for our sin. Grace and forgiveness open the door for us into the presence of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

SLIDE 26: **5.** We enter into the life of Christ by personally receiving Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

John 1:12-13: “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”

If we are going to follow Christ to fish, we must see where he was most successful.

•SLIDE #27: What might fishing look like?

SLIDE #28: Woman At Well With Jesus “John 4” Rejected woman: look for the Messiah: “I that speak to thee am He.”

•SLIDE #29: Accepting the Rejected: “I will give you living water.”

•SLIDE #30: Disciples in storm on Sea of Galilee “Matthew 8.”

•SLIDE #31: Supporting the struggling
“What kind of Man is this that even the wind and the waves obey him.”

•SLIDE #32: Raising Lazarus, Jesus weeping on the way to the tomb. “John 11”

•SLIDE #33: Comforting the hurting
John 11:45: Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.

SLIDE #34: Now we begin to see what comforting looks like:
Accepting the Rejected; Supporting the struggling; Comforting the hurting

Fire Lieutenant: Sitting at Starbucks.

He was rejected, struggling and hurting.

“Are you a Christian? No.

My friend was probably a -5. Went from -5 to 0 in about an hour and a half.

Anthony Campolo has a minister friend who is associate pastor of a large Presbyterian church in California. She loved to go to Nordstrom’s department store in Bel Air during the Christmas season. She could not afford to buy much of anything there because of the prices, but she loved the decorations and the music played throughout the store.

On one visit she was on the top floor looking at some of the finest dresses in the world when the elevator opened and out stepped a bag lady. Her clothes were dirty and her stockings were rolled down to her ankles. She stood there with a gym bag in her right hand, obviously out of place—she seemed not about to buy anything. The dresses were in the \$1000s of dollars category.

Campolo’s minister friend said that she expected some security person to come and usher the bag lady out of the store. But, instead, a stately saleswoman approached her and said,

“May I help you, madam?”

“Yeah, I want to buy a dress.”

“What kind of dress?”

“A party dress,” the bag lady answered.

“You’ve come to the right place,” said the saleswoman. “Follow me, we have some of the finest party dresses in the world..”

The sales lady spent 15-20 minutes matching dresses with the woman’s skin color and eye color. After selecting three dresses which seemed most appropriate, she led her into the dressing room.

The bag lady tried on all three dresses and then said, “I think I have changed my mind, I don’t think I want to buy a dress today!”

“That’s OK,” said the sales lady gently. “But, here is my card. Should you come back to Nordstroms Department Store, I do hope you will ask for me. I would consider it a privilege to wait on you again.”

•SLIDE #35: Of course, this is a perfect illustration of what Jesus would do, if Jesus were a saleswoman in Nordstroms.

•SLIDE #36: I came to seek and to save the Lost.