

Building Community in the Church and in the World?

1. What relationships are you building in the community with people who don't know Christ for the purpose of sharing Christ?
2. What relationships are you building in the church with people who know Christ with the purpose of sharing Christ?

Jesus asked his followers, "Who Do You Say That I AM?" the Answer: *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

Here is what I have learned in these years here with you at Gateway.

1. It is possible to create environments where unchurched, unsaved people can come and even have fun.
2. If you can get unchurched people in community with church people who will be real and loving, the unrealistic stereotypes begin to break down. Biblical community begins to happen.

So these are the questions:

(1) Are you investing and are you inviting? Are you leveraging your relationships to bring the people that God has placed in your life, into God's program called the Church?

(2) Are you serving strategically? Are you plugged in to partner together to make sure that when people come, they experience the presence of God? Are you serving? We need everyone to get together on mission... God's mission!

COMMUNICATING GOD'S STORY- Through Your Life! Your Humanness

"You are the ones chosen by God... God's instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you." 1 Peter 2:9 (Mes)

The Value of Your STORY – most persuasive form of communication

UNIQUE. There's not another in the entire world just like it.

PERSONAL. You can share from your heart.

100% Yours. You are the greatest authority on it!

MEMORABLE. People love to hear stories and they remember them.

RELATIONAL. People connect with experiences.

EFFECTIVE. In our world, it may be your most effective witness.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

"Let the whole world know what he has done for you." Ps. 105:1b (LB)

"Every day tell how he saves us. Tell the nations of his glory; tell all peoples the miracles he does." Ps. 96:2-3 (NCV)

THE WORLD IS MY FISHING POND

"Jesus called out, 'Come follow me and I will show you how to fish for the souls of men.'" Matt. 4:19 (LB)

HUNTING

VS

FISHING

Aggressive

Based on confrontation

"Go out there & shoot them"

Uses "1 size fits all" bullet

Take your best shot & it's over

Scares off the animal if you miss

The animal has no choice

Must be a skilled shot

More gentle

Based on attraction

"Get them to nibble on your bait"

Allows you to try all kinds of lures

Reeling in a fish requires *give & take*

You get more than one chance

The fish gets a choice!

Anyone can put bait into the water!

THREE KEYS TO BEING A SUCCESSFUL FISHER OF MEN & WOMEN

1. IDENTIFY MY **PERSONAL FISHING POND**

⁸But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8 NLT

My Fishing Pond – Is my circles of influence - God holds me most responsible for people I already have relationships with. I start first with those closest to me! *"Go home to your family and friends. Tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you."* Mark 5:19 (NCV)

2. **THINK LIKE THE FISH IN MY POND.**

"To the Jews I became like a Jew to win the Jews...to those who are without the law I became like a person who is without the law... to those who are weak I became weak so I could win the weak. I have become all things to all people so I could save some of them in any way possible. I do all this because of the Good News and so I can share in its blessings." 1 Cor. 9:20-23 (NCV)

3. **FISH MY POND AT DIFFERENT TIMES**

"He has brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were very far away from him, and to us Jews who were near." Eph. 2:17 (LB)

"Now you belong to Christ Jesus. Though you once were far away from God, now you have been brought near to him because of the blood of Christ." Eph. 2:13 (NLT)

Fact: Some people are *close* to making a commitment to Christ, while others have a *long way* to go!

Key: Effective evangelism relies on assessing how receptive a person is and then helping them take the next step.

"Evangelism is helping people discover how God is already at work in their lives."

We are all called to be **ON MISSION**

COMMUNICATION TIPS: HOW TO SHARE EFFECTIVELY

1. RECOGNIZE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE OF WITNESSING

Right brain witness (emphasizes personal experience) "all your heart"

Left brain witness (emphasizes facts and scripture) "all your mind"

Key: People Need Both!

2. THINK THROUGH WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY

"Everything you say should be kind and well thought out so that you know how to answer everyone." Col. 4:6 (GWT)

"Intelligent people think before they speak; what they say is then more persuasive." Pr. 16:23 (GN)

3. ASK GOD FOR HELP IN CHOOSING THE RIGHT WORD

"Pray for me that when I speak, God will give me words so that I can tell the secret of the Good News without fear." Eph. 6:19 (NCV)

4. SHOW LOVE

"If I have no love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or clanging bell." 1 Cor. 13:1 (GN)

People don't care how much we know, until they know how much we care!

5. BE POSITIVE AND PLEASANT

"A wise, mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is." Pr. 16:21 (GN)

"Be tactful with those who are not Christians..." Col. 4:5 (JB)

"A word of encouragement does wonders!" Pr. 12:25 (LB)

6. NEVER USE ANY PUT-DOWNS

"Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not put them down, not cut them out." Col. 4:6 (Mes)

7. TELL STORIES - GIVE EXAMPLES

People always relate to a story better.

"Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables." Matt. 13:34 (NLT)

8. LIGHTEN UP!

"The Son of man came enjoying life..." Luke 7:34 (Ph)

9. BE YOURSELF. BE NATURAL. DON'T TRY TO SOUND

"SPIRITUAL"

"When I came to you, it was not with any show of oratory or philosophy but simply to tell you what God has guaranteed." 1 Cor. 2:1 (JB)

"Your speech should be unaffected and logical so that your opponents may feel ashamed at finding nothing in which to pick holes." Titus 2:8 (Ph)

10. BE VULNERABLE AND AUTHENTIC

"Because we loved you, we were happy to share not only God's Good News with you, but even our own lives." 1 Thess. 2:8 (NCV)

"We've spoken frankly to you, we've opened our hearts wide." 2 Cor. 6:11 (GN)

"Be sure that you live in a way that brings honor to the Good News of Christ." Phil. 1:27a (NCV)

11. MEMORIZE A FEW KEY VERSES

"Concentrate... on being a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, and who knows how to use the Word of truth to the best advantage." 2 Tim. 2:15 (Ph)

12. KEEP IT SIMPLE

"I fear... (Satan) will corrupt you from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Cor. 11:3 (KJV)

13. REMEMBER, THE HOLY SPIRIT IS USING YOUR WORDS

You are not trying to convince anyone on your own.

"For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true." 1 Thess. 1:5a (NLT)

How the Church Community Builds Biblical Community with the Secular Community:

1. Be Welcoming and Non-Judgmental

2. Be Supportive and Open Our Lives to them To Live In Biblical Community With Us

3. To Train them Up to Send them Out. The church is not to be judged by its seating capacity but by its sending capacity.