

Simple Evangelism Series #2

**Give-Aways**

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**INTRODUCTION**

**A. Last week I started this Sunday night series called “Simple Evangelism”**

1. The rationale itself is pretty simple
  - a. we’ve been given the job of evangelizing our community and beyond
  - b. evangelism has become a complicated job
  - c. we need to simplify it
  
2. In that first lesson, I talked about inviting people to visit with us
  - a. I’ve read lots of church growth articles and books
  - b. it seems to me that every growing church grows, at least in part, because its members bring people in
  - c. I think one of the best things we can do is become an inviting church

**B. Tonight I want to talk about another simple evangelism activity – give-aways**

1. I’m only going to mention a few things tonight, but this is one of those things that you can use your imagination on and come up with many ways to inform, and attract attention
  
2. Give-aways are exactly what it sounds like
  - a. it’s something you can give away
  - b. it’s something tied specifically to our congregation
  - c. it’s something to help reach through any barrier that might exist between us and another person
  - d. it’s something that doesn’t cost anything to the person to whom you are giving it (and usually doesn’t cost us much)
  - e. it’s something that can surprise you by how well it works

**C. Businesses have used this kind of thing for ages**

1. They usually consider it a kind of advertising
  - a. one company supplying trade show exhibitors says this: Gift giving builds goodwill, can be an incentive, communicates a message and creates awareness.
  - b. I like that because these people understand that a give-away does more than sell a product
  
2. Give something away and you build good will
  - a. trust is a huge issue in today’s world – there is not good reason for anyone to automatically trust a church
  - b. give a no-strings-attached gift and you’ve taken a step toward building good will, which is closely related to trust

3. Give something away and you provide an incentive
  - a. when you give something to someone, that person can feel that they now owe you something too
  - b. that can surely be misused, but it can also provide a positive incentive for that person to give other things a try
4. Give something away and you communicate a message
  - a. our message as the body of Christ is surely different from an advertising message, but we do have a message
  - b. we ought to make good use of the opportunity to communicate with people
5. Give something away and you create awareness
  - a. awareness is huge – how can anybody do anything when they don't know there is something to do anything with?
  - b. this might be one of the biggest reasons anybody advertises – to make others aware that you exist

D. Let me share a few ideas tonight about using give-aways to help us evangelize our community and beyond

## I. TO UNDERSTAND GIVE-AWAYS, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND HOW I SEE EVANGELISM

A. I believe most people are saved through a team effort and by a process of transformation

1. The process involves several elements, including:
  - a. time
  - b. intellectual conviction
  - c. intellectual enlightenment
  - d. emotional attraction
  - e. whole-hearted acceptance
2. The team can be any of a number of people, all of whom play some part in helping move a person from lost to saved
  - a. illustration – cake lady, Sunday school teacher, preacher, friendly people at church, personal evangelism minister, etc
  - b. who was responsible? – all were!

B. Biblical principles

1. 1 Corinthians 3:6 -- I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. NASU
2. Lk 8:4-15 (Read)
  - a. the biggest part of evangelism is sowing the seed of God's word
  - b. maybe we ought to make the point here that this is the first thing we must be willing to give-away – the Word of God!
  - c. we are primarily seed-sowers

## II. WHAT CAN YOU GIVE AWAY TO REACH PEOPLE WHO NEED TO BE SAVED?

### A. Give away your church bulletin every week

1. I've been encouraging people to do this for years, and it has been very successful
  - a. every week, I write a devotional article
    - 1) I hope you read it – I think most of them will help you
    - 2) give your bulletin away and encourage that person to read the article
    - 3) it's a better use of the paper than throwing it away!
  - b. over the years, I have had many, many people who were not members of our congregation, thank me for articles
  - c. these articles are emailed to thousands and people all over the world read them, so you can be sure they are well-received
2. Here's something that happened just this past week
  - a. I received a letter from a lady who is going through a tough time
  - b. she was cleaning out a dresser drawer and found an old church bulletin
  - c. most of her possession were washed away when her house was flooded by hurricane Katrina
  - d. still, here was a bulletin from 2004 that someone had given her
3. As a church, we have the ability to positively affect a minimum of 50 people just by giving away a church bulletin

### B. Speaking of Katrina, I happen to know that this church served as a conduit for money, food, household goods, and more to people in this community

1. You don't think some good-will was created there?
2. Somebody says, "Yes, but we didn't grow much from giving away all those things"
  - a. to which I can only respond, "Maybe you are not looking at the long range effect"
  - b. I'm not going to tell you that for every item you give away, we're going to see a soul saved – that's not going to happen
  - c. I am going to tell you that giving things away, can go a long way to breaking down barriers, building a reputation, opening doors, etc.
3. Don't give up on the long-term effects of your generosity

### C. Give away specially prepared information designed to attract visitors

1. Let me share with you a message we're going to make available on mini-CDs, titled, "Come and See"
2. All you have to do is give it away, and ask people to listen.

#### D. Give away yourself to people around you

1. People keep looking for some big thing to do so they can make a major mark on the world
  - a. the truth is most people will never find that one huge thing
  - b. in the meantime, they will miss countless small ways to make a mark on the world
  
2. Give away your money
  - a. no, I haven't lost my mind – but this does bring up the subject we usually refer to as “benevolence”
  - b. churches are forever having to deal with requests for financial help, and unfortunately, there is no good way to determine legitimate needs from those that are not
  - c. what if Christians were of a benevolent spirit?
  - d. you could help provide for people you know are legitimate, with needs that are real, and it could open doors for the gospel
  
3. Give away your time
  - a. time may be the most precious commodity of the modern age
  - b. time involves you, personally, in the lives of others
  - c. volunteer
    - 1) lots of things to do with church
    - 2) countless things to do in our community
    - 3) again, it gives you an open door to build relationships and that is the key to having opportunities with the gospel
  
4. It's entirely possible that the giving spirit begins when Christians learn to give themselves away
  - a. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 -- <sup>1</sup>Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, <sup>2</sup>that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. <sup>3</sup>For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, <sup>4</sup>begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, <sup>5</sup>and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. NASB95
  
  - b. what made the Christians in Macedonia such a good example of giving, despite their poverty? The fact that they first gave themselves – and that produced tremendous generosity.

## CONCLUSION

### A. One warning before we leave this idea of give-aways

1. Don't forget your mission
  - a. I think this happens far more often than we know
  - b. people can get so busy giving thing away, doing otherwise good works, in fact, doing amazing things for others, but they forget what they're supposed to be doing
  
2. Your mission is to make disciples of Jesus
  - a. people can give their time, money, etc., and be very busy at it
  - b. but they may not be using the opportunities to share the gospel
  - c. in that case, busy work, does not accomplish the mission
  - d. we must remember what we're supposed to be doing

### B. Your mission, regardless how you choose to carry it out, is to save the lost

### C. Invitation