

A Study on Evangelism Core Group Study Guide By the Chi Alpha Staff at UVa

This study is a study on Evangelism – We will focus on the “What”, “Why”, and “How” of Evangelism. Many of the ideas come from *Out of the Salt Shaker and into the World* by Pippet and *Becoming a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels. Both are highly recommended for your personal reading. This series will include a different Bible passages each week, with questions, an overview, spiritual exercises & the occasional excerpt from one of the above books.

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Overview of the Study

Breakdown of Studies:

WHAT

Week One: Acts 8, Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

WHY

Week Two: Matthew 5, Salt and Light

Week Three: Luke 15, Three Parables

Week Four: Luke 14, Banquet

HOW

Week Five: Love, John 13, 1 Corinthians 13

Week Six: Holy Spirit

Week Seven: Testimonial, John 9, Man Born Blind

Week Eight: Invitational, John 4, Samaritan Woman

Week Nine: Service

Week Ten: Intellectual, Acts 15, Paul and the Athenians

CLOSING

Week 11

Objective of the Study:

The Gospel of Luke is intended to give its readers a thorough look at what it was that Jesus came to accomplish. He came to accomplish God's plan for the world, and that looked very different from what His disciples and followers thought. Through Luke's description of Christ, we are able to see who Jesus was and is, and how we are to follow Him. This study will be broken down into 3 parts: the birth and preparation of Jesus, his message and ministry, and his death and resurrection.

Week One: What is Evangelism? Acts 8:26-40

Objective: To define evangelism in relevant terms.

Opening Questions:

- 1.) What is evangelism?
- 2.) When you hear the word “evangelism,” what is your first thought and gut feeling?

Overview:

Typically, our first thought concerning evangelism is to categorize it in one of two things: relational evangelism or those random chance encounters we always hear about. At first glance, the story of Philip and the Ethiopian seems to be a chance encounter. However, we believe it to be much more.

A few things to note:

First, Philip and the Ethiopian were both on their way somewhere else. The Spirit was at work in both of them before they had even met. Second, Philip had to be obedient to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Several times, the Spirit asked Philip to do things without explanation. Without Philip’s obedience, the opportunity to present the gospel to the Ethiopian would not have presented itself. Third, the appointment was God’s. Judging by the response of the Ethiopian and Philip’s timing, this was obviously something that God ordained. Fourth, Philip meets the Ethiopian where he is. Philip didn’t first tell the Ethiopian that he was a lost soul and he needed Jesus. Instead, he explained the passage in Isaiah and elaborated on who the prophet Isaiah was speaking about. Then, Philip transitioned to the gospel message- a truly simple message.

Judging by the Ethiopians desire to be baptized so quickly, it is obvious that Philip went into some depth in his explanation. The Ethiopian was aware and accepting of the concept of being baptized by spirit and by water. Likewise, there are times when we should go into depth when we evangelize.

Lastly, it is important to notice how each of their lives were changed because of this divine appointment. We see the Ethiopian rejoicing; it probably is not much of a stretch to speculate that he shared his conversion story with his peers. In regard to the changes in Phillip’s life, he is not heard about again until Acts 21 where Luke tells us that Philip is now known as “Philip the Evangelist.” This single event determined how others would know him and how God would use him for the rest of his life.

Text Questions:

Acts 8:26-29

- 1.) What is the first thing that the Lord gives Philip? How does Philip respond?
- 2.) What happened when Philip responded obediently to the angel of the Lord's direction?
- 3.) What phrase is repeated in verses 27 and 28? What does this say about where evangelism takes place?
- 4.) How do you think Philip felt running up right beside a chariot of an Ethiopian, someone he did not know? Was this a comfortable situation or a natural thing to do?

Acts 8:30-35

- 1.) Again, how does Philip respond when he hears the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah?
- 2.) Would you consider the Ethiopian's response to be a normal response? How would you have responded if some dude (Josh's word) offered to explain what you are reading to you?
- 3.) What was Philip's starting point in evangelism? Why did he start there? Where did end up (v. 35)?
- 4.) Why didn't Philip start with the Gospel and then move back to the passage in Isaiah?

Acts 8:36-40

- 1.) Speculate on the depth of Philip's conversation with the Ethiopian.
- 2.) What do you think about the Ethiopian's reaction to Philip's disappearance? What does this say about

Application Questions:

- 1.) Philip began with discussing the passage in Isaiah that the Ethiopian presently was reading and then transitioned to the life of Jesus. How is this applicable to you and your peers as you evangelize? What does this say about evangelism?
- 2.) In this passage, the phrase "on his way" is repeated several times. How do we evangelize "on the way?"
- 3.) How do we "run beside a friend's chariot?"

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise:

Spend time praying that God will give you divine appointments as you live in the Spirit 'on your way.'

Memory Verse:

Acts 8:35 The Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

Week Two: Why Evangelism? Matthew 5:10-16

Objective: Part 1 of 3 answering the question of 'Why evangelize?'
Evangelize in order to be the light in the world.

Opening Questions:

- 1.) How many times did you evangelize this week?

Overview:

We included verses 10-12 because we believe they have a lot to do with the theme of evangelism as well as the salt and light passage. Like Gordon Fee, we disagree with the headings and see Matthew's gospel as written as one continuous story. It is not a stretch to say that in this world we will be persecuted, laughed at, and mocked as we share our faith- our light or our flavor- with others and live as God commands us to. Christ makes it clear that to not live as salt in the world makes little sense (see verse 13 "trampled by men"). The benefits of living as the salt of the earth far outweigh the consequences. Often times, we over complicate it with our 'what ifs' of evangelism (what if she reacts like this; he gets irritated; etc.) but that does not change the message of truth.

A clarification on salt and salt losing its saltiness:

"But we have to take care that the salt that is in us doesn't lose its flavor. The salt that people used two thousand years ago was not the chemical compound of sodium and chloride (NaCl) that we use today. Instead it was gathered from veins or layers found in the earth and mixed with impurities. If the salt was exposed to natural elements such as rain, sun and air for an extensive period of time, it lost its flavor. The flavorless salt was good for nothing else but to be thrown on the streets where it destroyed all fertility. So instead of being a preserving agent, the salt became a destructive agent. For the Christian, for the salt of the earth, to lose his degree of saltiness, the Gospel would have to be diluted in his life. This person is the complacent Christian. . ."

<http://deneenwhite.wordpress.com/2007/01/06/how-does-salt-lose-its-saltiness/>

Text Questions:

Verses 10-12

- 1.) How does this relate to evangelism?
- 2.) What are we called to do in the midst of persecution? Why?
- 3.) What does verse 12 say in regard to how we fit into 'the story'?*

Verse 13

- 1.) What does it mean to be the salt of the earth?

- 2.) How can you lose your saltiness?
- 3.) What does this verse say will happen if you lose your saltiness?

Verse 14

- 1.) How do you become the light of the world? (see John 8:12)
- 2.) What would be the benefit of putting your light under a bowl? Why do we do it so often?
- 3.) Who gets the praise when you let your light shine?

Application Questions:

- 1.) Now look back at verses 10-12, after discussing losing your saltiness and being the light of the world, what do you think about the verses about persecuted? What should we do in the face of persecution?
- 2.) How do you remain salty?
- 3.) What are ways we can let our light shine?

Memory Verse:

Matthew 5:16

Week Three: Why Evangelize? Luke 15

Objective: Part 2 of 3 answering the question of 'Why evangelize?'
Because every person counts.

Opening Questions:

- 1.) If you dropped a penny, would you pick it up?
- 2.) Do you enjoy throwing parties for people?

Overview:

The passage we're looking at today is a very unique one. It is the only one recorded in which Jesus tells, ultimately, the same parable three times in a row. Jesus deems the topic of evangelism to be important enough to be repeated three times in a row. Do we think this is because we're often so scared to do it? How many times do we have to remind ourselves that eternity is at stake and that there will be a party in Heaven every single time a sinner comes home? It is important to note that in the first two examples, the sheep and the coin, the answer is obvious to hearer that they would go and search for the lost item. In modern day America today, this idea is lost. We don't desire to go and look for things that are lost, after all time is money. Probably in the manner, we don't evangelize our neighbors, family members, classmates, because we just don't have the time. Here we see a great example of why Jesus does not approve of this behavior.

Text Questions:

Verses 1-7

- 1.) Would you have gone after the one stray sheep? (Understanding that in this context they would have always gone after the one sheep.)
- 2.) Do you think the ninety-nine persons at the end of the passage also need to repent?
- 3.) What does the shepherd do when he finds the lost sheep? What happens in the heavens when a sinner repents?
- 4.) How do we act like the shepherd in our present world?

Verse 8-10

- 1.) Does this passage remind you of any other passage we have covered today?
- 2.) Why do think these passages are back to back? Name other examples where he tells the same parable back to back (there aren't any).

- 3.) What occurs when the woman finds the coin? Likewise, what happens in heaven when one sinner repents?

Verse 11-31

- 1.) Who do you identify with in this passage?
- 2.) What do you think of the older brother's response? Would you have had the same one?
- 3.) Who is the Christ figure in this passage?
- 4.) What does this say about Jesus' heart for evangelism?
- 5.) Again, they rejoice.

Application Questions:

1. Do you have any people in mind which you can reach out to? Especially people who seem to have fallen away from the faith since coming to college? (these passages were ones in which the person or thing was once found, became lost, and then was found again.)

Memory Verse:

Luke 15:31

Week Four: Why Evangelize? Luke 14:25-34

Objective: Part 3 of 3 on 'Why evangelize?'

To understand the cost.

Opening Questions:

1.) Have you ever tried to pay for something and realized you didn't have enough money?

Body of the Study:

Today we are going to cover the famous "count the cost" passage. Here is where Jesus sits the disciples down and really explains the gospel message to them. Yes, through Jesus we get the forgiveness of sins and a life that is everlasting but Jesus focuses on the other side of that equation. The cross. The Christian life is not always going to be easy, sometimes it will be hard and it will cost you some things, especially your reputation. You may look silly at points. But, it's ok, it's worth it for truth. We use the passage for the topic of evangelism for this very reason. Jesus says that we have to go out there and not worry about what we look like but we have to share his message. We cannot afford to lose our saltiness, we must count the cost and continue forward.

Text Questions:

Verses 25-30

1. Does Jesus actually mean that you have to hate your family, or do you think he means in comparison to how much you love God?
2. How does one carry the cross of Jesus daily? What does this look like in relation to evangelism?
3. Are there things in our own Christian walk that we need to count the cost for? What about specifically with evangelism? Our reputation? Our friendships?
4. Can you relate to the guy who builds the tower?

Verses 31-33

1. What happens with the king when he decides the cost is not worth it?
2. Why does he decide to send a delegation for peace?
3. What does it mean to give up everything we have (verse 33)?
4. Do you think that we do that today in America, or in this room?

Verses 34-35

1. What passage does this remind you of, what other passage have we looked at that dealt with salt? (Matthew 5)
2. What happens when the salt is not being used as salt of the earth?
3. How can the saltiness be regained?

Application Questions:

- 1.) What are some ways in which we can keep the saltiness in our lives?
- 2.) What are some things we are going to have to "count the cost"? (reputations, friendships, coolness....)
- 3.) Is there anyone we have in mind in which we can share the gospel?

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise: Get in small pockets and pray for the people mentioned in number three of the application part.

Memory Verse: Luke 14:33

Week Five: How to Evangelize: 1 Corinthians 13

Objective: Discussing how a) love is the root of evangelism and b) how to evangelize out of love.

Opening Questions:

1.) Why do people often turn down the things that others offer them, things that they need?

Overview:

This week we are looking at a passage that is not an evangelistic story as we have done previously, but a passage that discusses how your heart should be engaged in evangelism.

Can we evangelize simply for the sake of evangelizing? If we are not acting in love, what are we acting in? Pride, selfish ambition, self-centeredness. If the desire to evangelize lies in oneself, we are missing the point of evangelism; we are missing what it means to have God's heart for the lost as was depicted in the evangelism stories of the previous studies.. Love is the basis for evangelism; all of our actions are to be rooted in love. Without love, we are nothing and we gain nothing.

Text Questions:

1 Corinthians 13

v. 1-3

- 1.) What is your reaction to hearing a clanging cymbal? What happens if you speak without love?
- 2.) What does verse 2 tell us happens if we have all the answers and/or faith, but have not love?
- 3.) What does it mean to be nothing?
- 4.) Why would we give away our possessions if we were not doing it out of love? Why do we not gain anything unless love is involved?

v. 4-7

- 1.) What does this tell us about who we should be when we evangelize? What characteristics should we have and not have? Which characteristics do we need to grow in?
- 2.) What characteristics of love stick out to you in the context of evangelism?
- 3.) How does it tell us to treat the person we are evangelizing to?

Application Questions:

- 1.) What areas of love do we need to grow in?

- 2.) Who do we think we can love into the kingdom?
- 3.) How can you purposefully act in love towards someone in your life this week?

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise:

We encourage you all to spend time each day over this next week praying for God to 'break your heart for the things that break His.' Ask God to let His love for others well up inside of you so that you can love them with an overflow of His love.

Memory Verse:

1 Corinthians 13:1

Week Six: How to Evangelize: John 9:1-34

Objective: Discussing how to evangelize by the testimonial approach.

Opening Questions:

1.) Have you heard a testimony that has impacted your walk with Christ? If so, how?

Overview:

There are two major points we want to get across in this passage. First, we all have a testimony that reveals the power of God in our individual lives. Second, we don't have to have all the answers to evangelize- we just need our story. In our passage today, we read of a man who was born blind receive his sight by the power of Christ. After this experience, people are drawn to him. The same thing happens to us when we encounter the living God. The man himself had not yet seen Jesus, but that didn't stop him from talking about Christ and his encounter. We see that he answered the questions he knew the answers to, and responded "I don't know" to the one he didn't. His lack of knowledge did not discount his power encounter. He knew that he had a testimony that showed the power of God, his theology would come later, the proof was in the pudding. In the same way when we evangelize we don't have to be scared about not knowing all the answers. God gives each one of us a personal testimony so that He may use it for His glory. Our stories are not given for us, but rather for God to use. It's all we need to start a conversation with a friend, especially a non-believer. Someone who does not accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God will not understand a theological argument as well as they will understand a personal example of how God has impacted our lives. However, this does not mean that the man never grew in his knowledge of theology. As he continues to process the situation he understands the encounter more theologically. We see in verses 30-33 that he is able to give an answer that not only includes his power encounter but backs it up with theology that is so truthful that the teachers of the law through him out of the synagogue. This shows that it does not matter who we are talking to about our testimonies, they cannot discount them. This man told his experience to men who were trained in how to read the law. They thought they knew all the answers. However, they were left unable to explain away this man's experience and had to either become a disciple of Jesus or continue in their ignorance. From the passage we see that they continue in their ignorance for now, but we know that they at least have some more to think about. Evangelism works the same way. We don't always see the fruit immediately, but that does not mean the seed isn't there.

Text Questions:

John 9

v. 1-7

1.) What does Jesus say is the purpose for this man being born blind?

v. 8-12

- 1.) What happened after the man was healed?
- 2.) What did the people who came to him want to know?
- 3.) What was his response?
- 4.) What did the people want after they heard the story of the man's healing and who had healed him?
- 5.) What was the man's response?

v 24- 34

- 1.) Why do you think they asked to hear the man's story again? What is appealing about the man's story?
- 2.) How does the man respond?
- 3.) How does a theologically ignorant man reveal truth through his testimony in v 30-33?
- 4.) What is undeniable about the man's testimony?
What does that tell us about the power of our own personal testimonies?

Application Questions:

- 1.) Do you have any stories in your life that display the power of God? Remember, these stories do not have to be a supernatural work of God like a healing, etc. God works in our lives in various ways and gives us stories that reveal His glory and His power.
- 2.) Do you ever feel like you don't speak out because you don't know all the answers? (v 12)

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise:

Pray that God provides an opportunity this week for you to share a part of your testimony and reveal to someone the power of God at work in individual lives.

Memory Verse:

John 9:3

Week Seven: How to Evangelize: Act 17:16-34

Objective: Discussing how to evangelize through an intellectual approach.

Opening Question:

What hinders you from starting conversations with your friends about Jesus?

Overview:

There are three points we want to get across in this study. First, we want to call your attention to how greatly distressed Paul was; this is the reaction we should have knowing we are living in a community with non-believers. Paul's distress, his realization that they had not found the one true God, motivated his conversations.

It was very common to open air preach in the New Testament period. Paul knew that the Athenians were very intellectually minded people; they were always interested in hearing new ideas. Paul uses this to his advantage and meets the Athenians where they are. He uses an intellectual approach because he is dealing with an intellectual people group. When we evangelize, we need to speak to people utilizing the method that reaches them. For example, there are times when an intellectual model of evangelism may be best and times when a testimony model may be best. It is important to consider who your people group is and what their interests are when evangelizing.

Twice Paul uses Athenian culture (the temple to the Unknown god and a quote from an Athenian poet) to present the Gospel. Likewise, we should look for things in our culture that point to God: movies, ideas, books, etc.

Finally, the Gospel message is simple and attractive. Once Paul presents it the first time, they ask him to come back. Then we see at the end of the story, when Paul presents the Gospel the second time, conversions occur.

Text Questions:

V 16-21

- 1.) What is Paul distressed by? Why is Paul distressed? What does that tell us about how we should care for people? Does it distress us when we see people who have other 'gods'?
- 2.) What does Paul do in the synagogue?
- 3.) What was Paul preaching? What happened when he preached this? Why do you think they wanted to hear more?

V 22-23

- 1.) As Paul's first step in evangelism, what does he point out in their culture? How does he use this as his first step?

V 24-31

- 1.) How does Paul distinguish God from the gods of the culture in his very first sentence?
- 2.) Last week we saw a woman present the Gospel through her testimony, how does Paul present the Gospel here?

3.) Who does Paul quote in v 28? How does his quotation lend authority to his reasoning for those he is teaching?

V 32-34

1.) What was the reaction of the people? How many followed Paul? Out of those that followed, which two are listed? *point is to emphasize that a member of the Council which Jesus spoke to became a follower

Application Questions:

- 1.) Who do you have in your life that can be reached intellectually?
- 2.) What are some forms of idol worship at the University?
- 3.) Do you have an intellectual picture of the Gospel?

We thought it would also be a good idea to brainstorm some intellectual questions concerning Christianity which your peers may ask. These could be good to use as 'Case Studies' in Core Group discussion.

- 1.) Is the Bible authoritative and why?
- 2.) What's the difference between the God of the OT and the NT?
- 3.) How is Jesus fully God and fully man?
- 4.) How is Jesus relevant to today?

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise:

Spend time praying for freedom for UVA students from the idols we experience here.

Memory Verse:

Acts 17:24

Week Eight: How to Evangelize

Objective: Discussing how to evangelize through the work of the Holy Spirit

Opening Question:

- 1.) Have you ever had an experience with the Spirit?

Overview:

We have spent a semester on the 'how, 'why,' and 'what' of evangelism, and this week we focus on how it is all fruit-less without the Spirit of God. It has never been a matter of who we can convert or how we can convert people, but a matter of how we can work in accordance with the Spirit. These three passages give an overview of the work of the Spirit in evangelism versus an example (For an example, see the first study of Evangelism which discusses Phillip and the Ethiopian). The passages illustrate how the Spirit is the revealer and testifier of our faith.

Text Questions:

1 Peter 1:7-12

- 1.) What is the goal of faith? What is the goal of evangelism?
- 2.) Why is this the goal?
- 3.) What does the Holy Spirit do in this passage?

1 John 5:7-12

- 1.) Who is it that overcomes the world? Is our purpose in evangelizing to 'overcome the world'?
- 2.) What is the Spirit?
- 3.) What does the Spirit do in this passage?
- 4.) How does the Spirit help us when we evangelize?
- 5.) What testimony is greater than our own?

1 Corinthians 2:10-12

- 1.) Who knows the thoughts of a man?
- 2.) Who knows the thoughts of a man and the thoughts of God?
- 3.) With whose wisdom do we speak? How does this apply to evangelism?
- 4.) What does the Spirit do in this passage?

Application Questions:

- 1.) Why should we utilize the Spirit in evangelism?
- 2.) How do we do that?

Creative Implementation for the week/Spiritual Exercise:

A time of meditation for the purpose of listening to the Spirit of God.

Memory Verse:

1 Corinthians 2:12