

Theme:

Relational Evangelism

Title:

Lesson 5: Getting In the Race

Introduction:

One of the wonderful things about a relay race is that you don't run it alone. You have a team to help you get the baton across the finish line. When you relay your faith, you don't run that race alone either. Not only do you have others who are part of the team, but you are in partnership with God Himself. God isn't sitting on the sidelines watching as you run the race, He is actively involved in the race. He is running the race with you and through you. He is helping you run and He is arranging the track of life so you relay your faith effectively.

Desired Outcomes:

In this session, you will learn how to work in partnership with God to introduce people to Christ. You will discuss the necessity of leaving excuses for evangelism behind, and gain insight on engaging people in conversation and discovering their spiritual receptivity.

Core Scriptures:

- Hebrews 12:1
- Exodus 3: 11-12;
- Exodus 4: 1, 10-11
- 1 Corinthians 3: 6-7

Welcome: The following can be used as optional Ice-Breakers:

A. Practice within your group basic ways to begin a conversation:

1. Ask an open-ended question.
2. Make an observation about something there.
3. Offer a compliment and follow it up with an easy-to-answer question.
4. Simply introduce yourself and follow it up with a who, what, when, where or how question. "What brings you here?"

B. Does anyone have an experience to share with the group resulting from using the FIRE questions?

Word:

- A. Beware of making up excuses to disqualify yourself from sharing the gospel. When asked to be God's messenger, Moses gave God several excuses that believers today often use:

1. Excuse - Who am I? I'm a nobody. God's Answer: I will be with you. Christ in you is enough.
 2. Excuse - I don't know enough, what do I tell them? God's Answer: Tell them what I've told you (Tell them your story).
 3. Excuse - What if they don't believe? Answer: God is the one who moves hearts to believe (1 Corinthians 3: 6-7).
 4. Excuse - I'm not good at talking to people. Answer - The Lord made your mouth, He will help you and teach you what to say.
- B. God will work through you as you yield yourself to Him. He works by His Spirit in the following ways:
1. The Holy Spirit works through Circumstances - God is in control of the circumstances of our lives and they have never hindered Him. Our responsibility is to be obedient with what God has given and trust God to supply the rest.
 2. The Holy Spirit works through Scripture - The Holy Spirit works to save people as you share the word of God. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17
 3. The Holy Spirit works through You - You are not called to share Christ by yourself, you are in partnership with the Lord. The Holy Spirit empowers us to witness; teaches us the truth; the Holy Spirit gives us guidance.
- C. Spiritual Receptivity - Relational witnessing begins by discovering spiritual receptivity. A person's spiritual receptivity can be identified based on responses in four key areas:
1. Openness to you - Will they talk willingly to you about everyday things?
 2. Attitude toward Spiritual Things - You can use the FIRE questioning approach to determine if a person has a positive or negative attitude toward spiritual things. This will inform how we move forward in our discussions with them.
 3. Understanding the Gospel - We are saved by grace through faith, but everyone does not understand that. The "eternal" question in the FIRE questioning approach can be used to determine what your friend understands about the gospel.
 4. Response to Spiritual Discussions - This is the best indicator of someone's spiritual receptivity. How far will they allow you to go in the FIRE questioning approach?

The following could be relevant questions to ask:

- Can you identify with any of the excuses that Moses gave God? If so, which ones?
- How does it make you feel knowing that you are partnering with God as you relay your faith?
- Which of the four categories of receptivity do you think would be the easiest for you to interact with and why?

- Which of the four categories of receptivity do you think would be the most challenging for you to interact with and why?

Thoughts to Consider:

In light of the effects of the Coronavirus on our community, it is important that we realize that people need to hear our stories of hope, salvation and restoration. In the midst of fear, anxiety and uncertainty, people are looking for answers. This poses a great opportunity for us to share the gospel of Christ.

Worship:

You are my Strength - William Murphy or a selection of your choice

Works:

A. Pray together the Four prayers that Pas. Smith has asked us to Pray:

1. Pray that the virus comes to an end soon.
2. Pray for those who have contracted the virus to get well soon.
3. Pray for our medical community that they will come up with solutions and answers soon.
4. Pray that we will not be overtaken with fear or anxiety, but with courage and faith we will meet the challenge at hand knowing that God will bring us through it and make us stronger for it.

B. Read Matthew 13 - the parable of the Sower, in preparation for next week's lesson.