

Evangelistic Meetings

Purpose: The purpose in this lesson is to communicate key principles involved in enabling you to successfully plan, present and follow up an evangelistic group meeting.

Objectives: By the end of the this lesson you will:

1. Be able to define what is meant by “group” meeting.
2. Be able to explain why we do group meetings.
3. Delineate the phases of a group meeting.
4. Be able to list several groups which you want to approach for a group meeting.
5. Feel more confident in arranging a group evangelistic meeting.

Key Verse: Acts 10

I. Introduction

When thinking about reaching a campus/city, people easily get overwhelmed. There are too many people! But that’s because we often look at reaching them one-by-one. We forget that people tend to belong to groups. If we could find a way to reach these groups . . . it wouldn’t be so overwhelming. During this lesson we are going to focus on reaching groups through a strategy called Evangelistic Meetings. First, let’s define some terms.

II. Definition

Group Meeting: A group meeting is an outreach in which the Gospel is presented to an affinity group.

Affinity Group: A social grouping of people with like interests, skills, etc.

III. Why Do Evangelistic Meetings

A. Reaches More People (Sows Broadly). Look up the following verses and be prepared to discuss how they relate to sowing broadly. Write down your answers.

1. Ecclesiastes 11:1-6
2. Mark 1:36-39
3. Acts 13:45,46

Jesus and the Apostles started their ministries by reaching out to large groups. God has called us to give all people an opportunity to give their lives to Christ and the quickest way to do that is the large group.

- B. Audience Specific: Addresses Specific Felt Needs of a Group
How did the Apostle Paul adapt his message to his audience? Look up the following verses and be prepared to discuss how Paul adapted his message. Record your answers.

1. 1 Corinthians 9:20-22
2. Acts 13:16-23
3. Acts 17:22-31

It is important to demonstrate to an audience that you recognize they are not just another group, but that they have their own interests, needs, and questions about the gospel. By applying the relevance of Christ to a felt need of the audience and encouraging Christians to bring their friends to the activity/talk, you help set the stage for people to listen to the gospel.

- C. Readily Reveals (Filters) Ripe Fruit
What do we learn about filtering from these passages? Look up the following verses and be prepared to discuss how they relate to “ripe fruit.”

1. Acts 2:5-14, 37
2. Acts 17:32-34

Using a filter allows you to present Christ to a large group and to meet with those who show an interest in knowing more.

- D. Ready-Made Natural Groups. Look up the following verses and be prepared to discuss how they relate to ready-made Natural Groups.

1. Acts 2:42-47
2. Acts 16:11-15, 40
3. Acts 18:4-8

IV. Phases of an Evangelistic Meeting

- A. Investigation

1. Look for natural groups of people to whom you can present the Gospel within one of their own meetings.
 - a. those in which you have an interest
 - b. those in which you have a natural link
 - c. ones in which you know of someone who has a specialty they would be interested in.

2. Become a student of the groups you identified.

You must get to know your audience and be able to adapt to them as Paul did. Do a little research to discover their common interests, needs, habits, etc. You will want to do this to make your presentation effective, and it will prepare you for effective follow up after the meeting. What are some things you would want to research?

- When are most of the group members together?
- If they do not live in the same locality, where do they spend their leisure time?
- Are they involved in any projects such as fund-raising, community service...?
- Do they play sports together?
- What problems or concerns are they voicing?

B. Setting up the group meeting

1. Approach the Leadership

2. Take advantage of a regular meeting time and the attraction of a meal or refreshments. When looking for a situation for a potential group meeting, look for a group that is already meeting regularly. You will want to find out when the meeting time is and if there is a meal or refreshments already planned. Try to become part of that meeting. Perhaps offer to provide the refreshments.

C. Preparation

1. Choose personnel who will best relate to the audience

It is good, but not necessary, to have something in common with the audience. They will feel more comfortable and be more willing to listen. If you use a member of the group, be sure that he or she has a good reputation and command respect from other members of his group.

2. Build the evangelistic message on the common interests of the group, but clearly state the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:1-4). The speaker will want to adapt his introduction, illustrations, comments, etc. to the audience. What are some ways in which a message could be built on the common interests of a service club?

3. Prepare an invitation to receive Christ and a feed back method that will be clear and positive.

Once the gospel has been shared in the power of the Holy Spirit, there will be individuals who will want to receive Christ. They need to know how to do it and how to tell you about it. You will want to know what everyone thinks about what you shared. Comment cards are an excellent way to help you get this information. Comment cards can also help to serve as a “filter” for your follow up.

Sample Comment Card

Name _____
Address _____

Phone # _____ E-Mail Address _____
1. What did you think of the meeting?
2. What did you like best?
3. Do you have any questions?
4. Are you interested in further information on knowing God personally?
5. Today, did you trust in Christ as Savior?

D. Presentation

1. Create a positive atmosphere – share with them, don't preach at them.

Attitude, posture, tone of voice, gestures and choice of words should project, but not come on too strong. Create an atmosphere where they would be comfortable and eager to listen. We are sharing something so great and life changing that they should be interested. Help them be interested by how you present yourself and the content of what you share.

2. Be sensitive to the audience

Remember the variety of reactions that Paul experienced. Some will not want to accept Christ right away. Some will be neutral and some may even be hostile. That is why it is important to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leave all of the results to Him.

3. Establish Credibility

Whether you are the Emcee, giving the testimony or the main speaker, you will want the audience to recognize that you are sincere and trustworthy. Be relaxed, confident, positive, and not defensive. Pray for credibility with the audience.

4. Build a basis for future one to one contact.

By your attitude and comments you will want to help them want to meet with you in the future.

5. Keep in mind that you are there to begin an ongoing relationship with the group.

God will do many things through you. As you put yourself in the public eye people will build an impression of you and of Campus Crusade/your church. This impression may sway whether or not they ever invite you back or listen to you again, not to mention listen to other Christians. Keep the door open for furthering the work of God in this audience.

6. Remember that you represent Christ

If you are focused on yourself, you will lose credibility. Pray before, during and after your meeting. Ask the Holy Spirit to take what you have planned and memorized and make it fresh and dynamic. Focus on lifting up Christ so that men and women will be drawn to Him. Claim God's love and compassion for the audience - seeing them not as another group, but as individuals for whom Christ died.

E. Closing the meeting

1. Give an opportunity to receive Christ (unless it is pre-evangelistic)

2. Obtain feedback to determine: what individuals are thinking, who received Christ and how clearly your presentation was communicated. (see sample in IV.C.3)

3. Tell the group WHY you want feedback.

4. Be specific about the information you want. Repeat it several times.

You will want to be sure to ask for their name, address and phone number as well as their thoughts on the meeting.

5. Make sure everyone fills out a comment card.

Because of the possible peer pressure in the group, if everyone is doing it, that will free up others to respond. Stress that you want their honest comments even if they didn't like what you said or were bored! Have the other teammates fill out cards.

6. Always express appreciation for their time and attentiveness.
7. Invite group members to remain after the meeting for further discussion, or to make appointments with you or your teammates. This communicates love to them and that you are willing to give them personal time in the days to come. The next hours after a meeting are crucial. You can have a sharp meeting, but if you don't know how to follow up on individuals the next day, the momentum of reaching that group could be lost.

F. Follow-Up

1. After the meeting is closed, ask individuals the four questions:
 - a. "What did you think of the meeting?"
 - b. "Did it make sense to you?"
 - c. "Have you ever begun a relationship with Christ like the speaker talked about?"
 - d. "Would you like to talk more about it?"
2. Immediately after the meeting make as many appointments as possible.
3. Later that day read the comment cards and phone/or visit individuals to make appointments. DO NOT read the cards in public.
4. Make an appointment with the leader of the group to evaluate the meeting and to determine their response to the message.

The leader of the group is a key person. He/she can help or hurt your influence for the sake of Christ with the group/audience. God has used many leaders (Christian and non-Christian) to open doors to ministry that otherwise would have remained closed.

5. Be a "Safe" person.

Begin to be identified as someone that they can talk with on a casual and personal basis. Be trustworthy and respectful of conversations you might have with people. Conversations may not always be about spiritual things, but they build a friendship that God honors and will use for His glory.

6. Determine who had a hostile response. Make every effort to have open positive communication with that person/or those persons. One hostile person can have a big impact on the whole group. Usually about half of the people who have a negative response to a meeting have misunderstood something you said or had a previous bad experience which has flavored what they heard you say. Remember you want to build bridges that God can use.

V. Conclusion

Group meetings can range from five to thirty minutes, depending on what a group will want or allow you to do. Pray and see what God will do. God used the Apostle Paul to reach many groups of people in a variety of settings. The book of Hebrews says that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He will use you and your teammates to reach many groups for the Kingdom.

Planning Sheet For An Evangelistic Group Meeting

I. Investigate Possible Audiences

- Pray
- Create criteria for selection
- List as many groups as you can
- Investigate per the criteria sheet
- Determine who the best point person is

II. Select a target audience .

III. Select the appropriate "tool" for reaching the target audience.

- Do needs analysis
- Determine resources available .

IV. Plan the event.

- Set specific objectives
- Steps for meeting these objectives .
- Set up the event
- Schedule those steps - calendar
- Budget .

V. Execute Steps To the Event

- Gain access/authorization
- Do publicity
- Organize prayer
- Make physical arrangements
- Organize follow-up

VI. Execute the program

- Emcee begins
- Give testimonies (optional)
- Give the Message
- Use response device/comment card

VII. Evaluate

- Thank God for what happened
- Evaluate each part: good, bad, do differently

Evaluation Sheet

Stage	What was done well?	What needs to be improved?
Investigation		
Selecting Target		
Selecting Tool		
Event Set Up		
Executing of Plans		
The Event: Testimonies Presentation Closing		
Follow Up		

Discussion Questions:

1. What is meant by a group meeting?
2. Why do we do group meetings?
3. What are the phases of a group meeting?
4. As a result of this talk, what are some of the groups which you want to approach for a group meeting?
5. How has this talk helped you feel more confident in arranging a group evangelistic meeting?