**Primer #2—Evangelism: Developing the Sower’s Art**

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1. ***Total Christ***: The *Ultimate* Evangelist
   1. Review of the marks of ***Total Christ***
   2. By virtue of engaging in the life of Christ via the spiritual marks of the church, the individual and the corporate body, experience Jesus and His Gospel in two primary modes:
      1. Rationalistic or Logical explanation of the Gospel
      2. Participation or Experiential explanation of the Gospel
   3. Total Christ Spirituality Shapes the posture and trajectory of our lives toward:
      1. **God**: For His glory and Our Delight in Him

**Ephesians 1:17-23:** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, ***may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,*** 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, ***that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe***, according to the working of his great might ***20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.***

* + 1. **Self**: We are not our own

**Colossians 3:17 *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*** (cf.-Eph. 2:10)

* + 1. **Creation**: The habitation of God and His image bearers

**Colossians 1:16**  For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things were created through him and for him. (cf.-Gen. 1:26-28)

* 1. Big Picture: The Building of a Kingdom

Via our participation in the Church or Total Christ

**Revelation 21:1-3** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God…**Revelation 21:22-26** And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day- and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

***Interesting observations***

**1 Thessalonians 2:19-20**  For what is ***our hope or joy or crown of boasting*** before our Lord Jesus at his coming? ***Is it not you?*** 20 ***For you are our glory and joy.***

**Philippians 4:1**  Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for***, my joy and crown***, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

**Philippians 2:14-16** Do all things without grumbling or questioning, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, ***so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.***

1. Kingdoms in Conflict
   1. Living in Light of Another Reality

**Kingdom of God🡪Mark 1:14-15**  Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." **(God as the central character)**

**VS.**

**Kingdom of Man🡪Genesis 11:1-9** Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. 2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." 5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. 6 And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." 8 So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth. **(Man as the central character)**

* 1. Inevitable Collision of Conflict

**Jesus’ Words🡪Matthew 10:16-18, 21-22, 24-25** "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, 18 and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles….Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, 22 and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved….24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household. (cf.—James 1:12; I Pet. 1:6-7; 5:10)

* 1. Contrast or Conflict: Unexpected Springboards to Evangelism
     1. Exposes the Distance & Shifting Terrain between God and Man
        1. Cultural & Demographi Pluralism
        2. Tolerance
        3. Prejudices
        4. Idolatries
        5. Profound Personal Issues
        6. Faulty Worldviews
     2. Can be intimidating

1. Barriers to Sharing Our Story
   1. Misunderstanding the Source of Spiritual Change
   2. Unbelief: Is the gospel really good news?
   3. Idolatry of Self
   4. Lack of training (interpreting the cultural terrain & sharing the story)
2. Tools for the Evangelistic Journey
   1. Develop a ‘Sower’s’ Mentality—Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23; John 4:35-38
      1. Harvester vs. Sower—Complimentary Roles/Team effort
      2. Build Fences

“As strange as it may sound, the first thing every new farmer must do is not plant or water, but build fences…he must define the limits of his responsibility. This land belongs to me, this land does not….In the same way, the sower is to define his “turf.” Who are the people whom you regularly come in contact?”[[1]](#endnote-1)

* + 1. Love & Justice in Balance
    2. Frontal vs. Indirect Communication
    3. Outside-in vs. Inside-out
  1. Cultivating: The process of preparing the soil to sustain life.
     1. ‘Dustbowl’ of 1931 & Soil Conservation Service(1935)

“it taught a philosophy of the soil. It helped farmers to think about the soil in a different way, to understand that our rocky and lifeless earth is covered by only a few precious inches of life-supporting topsoil. Soil itself is a crop; it must be cultivated and tended just as carefully as the harvest it produces.”[[2]](#endnote-2)

* + 1. Soil Analysis Needed
       1. Level of Biblical Literacy

Where do we need to start with the seeker?

Don’t assume a knowledge of biblical vernacular.

* + - 1. Significant Prejudices

Christian Stereotypes or Images.

What are you aware of?

* Pushy or manipulative
* Phony
* Politically or Socially Conservative
* Intolerant
* Know-it-all
* Out-of-Touch or Out-of-Date
* No sense of Humor[[3]](#endnote-3)
  + - 1. Personal Issues

What are the issues percolating to the surface?

* Anxiety and Worry
* Cares of this life
* Materialism and Greed
* Relational or sexual problems
* Pride and lust for power
* Immorality and unrighteousness[[4]](#endnote-4)
  + - 1. Inadequate Worldview

Prior core beliefs or internal map, that guide us to what is believable. (plausibility structure, see Peter Berger)

* Senses
* Rationalism/logic
* Relativism
  + - 1. Cultural Issues

What are the attitudes towards the gospel, truth, and Christianity?

* + - 1. Personal Cost—Matthew 10
* Religious
* Family & Marital
* Friendships
* Business/Vocational
* Lifestyle
  1. Planting: Sowing Seeds of Biblical & Gospel Truth

“The problem is that our human experience is so distracting that the spiritual often has to be injected into life, just as a badly needed vaccine must be injected into the blood system. But injections can be painful; the trick is to inject the spiritual into daily life in a way that doesn’t seem annoying, abrupt, or insensitive. That’s the sower’s challenge. That what it means to plant”[[5]](#endnote-5)

* + - 1. Timing is Everything: Looking for moments when the average person is commonly more open to consider spiritual issues:
* Holiday’s: Christmas, Easter, New Year’s, birthday’s
* Transitional Events: job change, child going to school or leaving home, a move, 40th birthday
* Family Crisis: illness, surgery, divorce/separation, parent-child conflict, death, etc.
* National Events: economy, senseless tragedies, political bombshell, etc.
  + - 1. Tools

**Questions[[6]](#endnote-6):** Pulling the roof-off of their worldviews and assumptions.

* About the seeker’s personal background
* About the seeker’s opinion or advice
* That involves the seeker’s imagination
* Ask for the seeker’s emotions on an issue.

They help by….

* Being nonthreatening
* Communicating humility
* Allowing seeker’s to discover truth for themselves
* Demanding questions in return

**Agreements:** Narrowing the Gap (*Red October)*

“A wise communicator seeks to build agreements, not arguments. ***We’re not that much different, you and I. We come from similar backgrounds. We want a lot of the same things out of life. We only differ at this one point***.”[[7]](#endnote-7)

Acts 22—Paul’s example in Athens

* We’re not so different…
* We have similar values
* We have the same concerns & interests
* We have the same needs

**Your Life**:

**1 Thessalonians 2:6-8**  Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. 7 But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. 8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

* The other’s agenda, not yours
* Take him, don’t send Him
* Be there after the deal is done.

**Materials**: The Media to share God’s Story

* Must speak the seeker’s language
* Must show an understanding of the seeker’s world.
* Must be intelligent and credible in dealing with issues
* Must raise good questions to their lives/world’s
* Must have reasonable persuasive goal[[8]](#endnote-8)
* Don’t bite off more than they can chew
  1. Nurturing: Creating the optimum environment for continued growth

“Jesus told us in the parable of the sower that seed can be destroyed well after the planting process, as in the case of the seed that is choked out by thorns. The soil was good, the seed was good, but the plants were unable to compete over time with the thorns. What happens if the sower pulls a few weeds?”

* + - 1. Prayer
      2. Watch for bugs and parasites: periodic distractions that can bring spiritual interest to a standstill:
         1. Media, academia, popular culture, personal or professional problems, etc.
      3. Look for suckers
         1. Anything that diverts the seeker from the central issue of the gospel.

“I am willing to concede every point to my opponent—except the most important one.” Abraham Lincoln

“a sense of the center”

C.S. Lewis

b. things to consider:

* What is the basic gospel?
* What are the essential issues?
* What points can I concede to the seeker?
* What points constitute a challenge to the gospel itself?

1. Tim Downs, *Finding Common Ground: How to communicate with those outside the Christian community…while we still can*, pg. 107-8, Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1999 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., pg. 110 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., pg. 115 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., pg. 116 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid., pg. 127 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid., pg. 129-132 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid., pg. 133 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. **Roman Road Presentation of the Gospel:**

   We acknowledge God as the Creator of everything, **including ourselves,** and accepting our humble position in God's created order and purpose. **(God is Creator and King of all things) Romans 1:20-21:**  
     
   *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened."*

   2. We must realize that we are sinners and that we need forgiveness. None of us are worthy under God’s standards. **(We Have Rebelled against the King) Romans 3:23:**   
     
   *“For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.”*

   3. God gave us the way to be forgiven of our sins. He showed us His love by giving us the potential for life through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ.  **(But God has still loved us) Romans 5:8:**   
     
   *“But God demonstrates His love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*   
     
   4. If we remain sinners, we will die. However, if we **repent** of our sins, and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we will have eternal life. (**He has paid the penalty for our sins) Romans 6:23:**   
     
   *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

   5. **Confess** that Jesus Christ is Lord and **believe in your heart** that God raised Him from the dead and you are saved. **(We accept the King’s Gift of Substitution)** **Romans 10:9-10:**   
     
   *“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*   
     
   6. There are no other religious formulas or rituals. Just call upon the name of the Lord and you will be saved! **(The King does it all, We just receive it by Faith) Romans 10:13:**   
     
   *“For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”*   
   7. Stay connected to Jesus by staying connected to His Body!

   **Romans 12:4-8; 10-16**  For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.... 10 *Be* devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

   **The Roman Road: Are You Ready?**  
   The Roman Road shows you the path – are you ready to accept God’s gift of Salvation now? If so, believe in what Jesus Christ did for you on the cross, repent of your sins, and commit the rest of your life to Him. This is not a ritual, just a prayerful guideline for your sincere step of faith:

   ***“Father, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”*** [↑](#endnote-ref-8)