

Proposal to Get Local Witnessing Off the Ground

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After reading Jack LaValley's proposal recently, I had to put my idea into print.

For a long time it has been difficult for members not living close to a church center to be involved in witnessing. Why? Because, even if one found a good person that was interested in what we believe, we have no simple way to teach them.

Thirty years ago our movement created the Level Four Principle outlines: a textbook for teaching seven-day workshops. I worked with the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) for about two years during a period after my Blessing to my wife, Carol, in 1982, and I developed notes for teaching two-day workshops based on sections of the Level Four outlines. This worked for individuals with no commitments: they could just stay and hear the lectures over two full days.

Now, many in our movement are scattered all over the country, having found jobs and raised families. We still find good people where we live and work. But how do we teach them? One summer a pair of Jehovah's Witnesses came and visited our house. I wanted to hear what they believed, so they started teaching me. They taught from a small paperback book, about the size of the paperback Level Four that was published, but less than half as thick. The book taught their view of the Bible in simple English, with nice illustrations.

A light went off in my head! Why don't we publish such a book, containing the contents of a weekend workshop? Maybe seven chapters –Creation, Fall, Purpose of the Messiah, Principles of Restoration, the Three Families, History of Restoration (parallels of history), and Second Advent, with elements of The Last Days –written in simple, every day English: the kind of language used during the lectures when we joined. When we want to teach someone what we believe, we just invite them over, and we read from the book together for as long as we can, and then we keep meeting until we finish, maybe after nine or 10 hours of reading. Or we read at their house, it doesn't matter.

This has so many advantages, and none of the disadvantages of the paperback Level Four outlines. I made the mistake of loaning out a paperback Level Four to a minister, asking him, "Please read Creation, Fall, and Mission of the Messiah, and then skip around if you must." But no skeptical minister will follow this direction, so this minister found how "anti-Christian" Rev. Moon's teachings are and essentially excommunicated me from his church.

So, I am working on such a manuscript, using the pink highlights of "Exposition of the Divine Principle" (1996) as a starting point. We'll see where this goes.

But we all have our own gifts. At this time we need to try creative things to see what is best in this time.

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