

Hesitations about Witnessing

Kevin Leopold Brugman
April 15, 2014



Here's something I wrote for our "evangelism" team over here, that I just wanted to share with y'all:

I think everyone also has their hesitations about witnessing, but deep down, really do want to see our church community grow and thrive, both for ourselves and new people. Personally, I am very busy. I have 6 children and a good job; but I also want to witness and help the church. I know that from my experience on campus, I was able to be a successful student; and support CARP on campus at the same time. In other words, I didn't have to sacrifice one for the other.



Kevin Leopold BrugmanE

The key for me to be able to do that, is that we had a witnessing "system". I knew exactly when I could plug into the system; and how it could work around my schedule. I woke up early in the morning to do my homework; I knew exactly what to invite people to, every week (since we had a cultural night every Friday); and then I supported the Cultural Night each Friday, knowing I had the weekend to catch up on some school work.

For me, and maybe for a lot of other people, I'll invest myself if I see a clear system; because I don't have a lot of free time. I think that often, the people with more time for church work, judge those who have busy lives outside the church. I think that's honestly unfair and unrealistic, given the fact that we will hopefully meet people who have successful lives in society. I just believe we need to think bigger and broader. Let's put our fallen nature aside....thank you! Plus, everyone contributes differently, based on their unique gifts.

I think we need 4 things: Clarity, Movement, Alignment, and Focus. These four aspects are based on recent case studies of churches within the last few years, which are documented in a book called, "Simple Church" by Thom S Rainer & Eric Geiger.

So, here's an example of how this might apply to us:

CLARITY:

Some simple, ongoing activities that happen weekly; which have the clear purpose of being for both members and their friends (guests or new members).

For example:

Open mic every other week; a weekly fitness activity; a small group; and/or a topic-based program (such as life after death) each week. The programs happen consistently; same day/time every week; advertised consistently through flyers, posters, etc.

MOVEMENT:

A clear and simple process of movement, in which all members, and new members, increase their commitment to personal growth and development, discipleship (raising up new members), and contribution of their God-given gifts.

For example:

Step 1: New member and members attends Open Mic, a Fitness class, a Small group, a fun activity, (maybe Sunday Service), etc.

Step 2: Spiritual parent/friend invites the new member to home, coffee shop, etc., to study World Scriptures/DP one on one.

Step 3: Participate in a small group once a week with new member, which would includes making internal goals; learning DP; contributing to a ministry; and of course fellowship and fun!

Step 4: Participate in a membership class; and help the new member discover their strengths and gifts that they can offer to the community through a ministry.

Step 5: Steps 1-3 for all members (The Assimilation Process. See below)

The Assimilation Process

1. A new member does not automatically mean an active member.
2. There is a "back door" which active members can go through.
3. The longer a person is inactive, the more difficult it is to re-activate them.
4. Different re-activation strategies are required for different kinds of inactives.

*Of all those who drop out of active church involvement, over 80% do so in the first year of their membership. The first 12 months are critical for assimilation of the newcomer.

One of the greatest challenges in today's church is keeping people. In order to experience church growth, obviously you have to keep people. There are so many other things that compete for people's time and energy. A church with an assimilation strategy that works will be effective. A successful church is not one that can only bring people in through various events, but a church that can keep people, disciple them, equip them for ministry, and offer opportunities for them to be used in the giftings that God has given them.

ALIGNMENT:

Bring together ministry leaders; and align all activities in the church with the goal of church growth, which includes personal growth and development, discipleship (raising up new members), and contribution of people's God-given gifts.

FOCUS:

Change, Change, Change. Focus mind and body on the goal. The primary focus of thought, time, talent, money, and resources is on personal growth and development, discipleship, and contribution of talent.