

Three Circles Evangelism - Session 6

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] Well, good evening, good to see you all. Thanks for coming out to session three of our three! Circles training. Next Sunday we will take a break from this training. Nathan Gunner will be with us in the morning and also in the evening. That will be at 5 30 that we'll meet in here.

And so choir practice will be at 6 30. So we're flipping. And the reason why that is is to accommodate Nathan and his wife. They're going to go back and pick up their son in Wichita who'll be staying with his parents. And so it makes things a little bit more convenient for them. So we are accommodating them in that way. Before we begin, I wanted to add two caveats to this morning's sermon. The first is this. When you preach expositionally, what's great about it is you just you preach whatever is there, you know. And so I wanted to make sure that you realize that I wasn't thinking, huh, you know those Highland Park people, they really complain way too much. I'm going to write this sermon, you know. So that's the thing about expository preaching is it's whatever, it's wherever you're at. And I think that's one of the wonderful things about it is you you come to some of these texts that are, you know, challenging to preach, challenging to hear. But it's a good thing because it's God's Word and God wants us to hear from all of it. And then the second thing was this. There's a difference between a concern and a complaint.

And so I don't want you to think, well, if I have a concern that I can't share that because they're going to think it's a complaint. So there are some things to be concerned about, but, you know, still take those things to the Lord first so that you know, hey, this is really a concern that I should approach one of my deacons or elders or pastors with so that they can handle this because, you know, God puts things on our hearts that we need to go through the proper chains of command, so to speak, how the church is organized and structured. So I don't want to discourage you from sharing your concerns. And I wanted to make sure that that was clear as well.

[2 : 29] Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Take it to God. Take it to your spouse. And if they say you're crazy. Yeah. Amen. Thank God for those filters, right?

Yeah. And then the other thing is, you'll have to forgive me. My excuse is that our printer was, it wasn't working for most of this week. And I got into my office downstairs and I realized that I didn't print off copies for you for lesson three. So if you want to complain about it, you know, take it somewhere else, all right?

Yeah. But it wasn't her because it was, it was fixed by Thursday. So I don't want to throw her under the bus. But I was, I was focused on wrapping up the sermon and then I, I got out and then came in today. I was like, oh no, don't have time to do it. So there's some copies of lesson two. If you want to come and grab those and you can fill out, take notes, if you want to fill in the blanks as we watch this video. And if you have a scrap piece of paper, you want to do that, I will go back over those after the video is over. So let's go ahead and watch.

We're going to write down our well-planned transition statements and then practice them until we've memorized them. Are you ready? Okay. The example goes like this. I haven't been through that exact thing.

But I have had similar problems. Can I share something with you that's really helped me? So let's get to it. This time we'll do a role play. Your facilitator will help you with this, but basically it's going to go like this. One person comes up with a problem issue or concern and shares it with the other person. That person then uses the transition statement to turn the conversation to the three circles and goes through the three circles. Now, again, it may feel a little awkward, but we practice in here so that we can have more real gospel conversations out there.

[4 : 34] And once you practice, your facilitator will give you some time to work on your transition statement, celebrate stories of the conversations you're having, and assign you next week's personal training practice to partner up. It's time to get those reps.

First was the three circles works best when someone shares a problem, issue, or concern. So, you know, for example, he's saying, you know, as you work in your neighborhoods with your family, somebody will express a problem, an issue, or concern that they have. You know, especially, it seems like, as was mentioned, there's so many, there's so much bad going on in our world right now that, you know, people talk about it. We've got the situation in Florida that just recently happened that's got a lot of people upset, and rightfully so. A lot of people talking about, you know, what we need to do next. It's a good situation. It's a good opportunity. Unfortunately, it stinks that it happened, but, you know, that's an opportunity to talk to somebody about to make that transition, you know. Yeah, I don't, for example, if I heard somebody talking like that, they're like, yeah, it's, you know, we're living in a world. Things aren't the way that they're supposed to be, you know, and if I didn't have Jesus Christ in my life, I just, I wouldn't find any reason to have hope, you know, for anything, really. And, you know, using those kinds of things to transition into a conversation that focuses on the gospel. We live in a broken world is the next fill-in. Third one, brokenness gives us opportunities to turn everyday conversations into gospel conversations. 2 Peter 5, 17 through 21 says, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God for our sake. He made him who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The fourth one, reconciliation means to take things that have been broken apart and put them back together. Take things that have been broken apart and put them back together. Okay, God has fixed us to be fixers. And then he asked you to rate yourself. He asked you to rate your desire for sharing the gospel. He asked you to rate your confidence. And then he asked you to rate how often you actually share the gospel, right? And so the one thing I think that he said, which which I agree with, is that people want to. I think we want to. A lot of us really want to. A lot of

[7 : 31] Christians really, they understand that this is something that we must do. It's something that we've been commanded to do. It's something that we want to do. And so things like Engage are, you know, the purpose is to give you the opportunity. And often I've found it's much easier when you're with other people, when you're doing this together. You know, we're going to have our Red Highland Park t-shirts on on that day. And we're going to be with other church members. And so it's going to be pretty clear to whomever we are serving that day that we are with the church and that we're Christians. And so if people ask you, you know, why are you guys doing this? That's a perfect opportunity to transition right into these three circles of why we're doing this. Do you go to church anywhere?

You know, I would ask them, no, we don't. Well, you know, let me explain this to you. So you'll have the opportunity. And that's part of it. I've heard a lot, and that's one of the wonderful things about Engage is I think for a lot of Christians, they're like, well, I just don't know what to do. I don't really want to go knock on my neighbor's door and just start talking to them.

I mean, so this gives us an opportunity, gives you an opportunity. And then these training sessions are to help build confidence. But the one thing I've heard and I believe that evangelism is not so much taught as it's caught. You know, you can be taught, but you're not going to really make the effort that you should be until you start. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's caught. Once you're once you're out, once, once we are out there and we're doing this and you see people interacting, something inside of you, the Holy Spirit, just, you know, you're like, this is good. This is a good thing. And I want to be a part of it too. I want to have those conversations as well. And so you catch it and then it spreads through the church. I'm telling you this, it happens. I've seen it happen.

Once you start doing it, it's like once you get that icebreaker out, out of the way and you're there and people start approaching you and you start having these conversations with people, it's something that, you know, you catch it and you're like, yes, I want to keep doing this. And then once you do engage, like I remember the first time I did it with our church in Leavenworth, there's a lot of sort of, there's a lot of uncertainty, you know, well, I don't know that people are going to sign up for it was one of the things I heard or, you know, I think it's a good thing, but I'm concerned about what I'm going to, if I'm going to be able to share anything, I just think I'm going to, I'm going to freeze up. And so then after we did it, people were like, wow, when's the next one?

When's the next one? Hey, I've got these ideas of other things that we could do, you know? And it just, it catches, I mean, people get excited about it. And so I'm believing and thinking and promising

you that that's going to be the case here. It's after we do this one, be like, wow, that was great. [10:28] You know, now when's the next one going to be? So you will have that opportunity. The next one is we need a plan to transition the conversation.

The next one, we ask permission to share something that has helped us. And then the last one, we practice an ideal situation so we can be successful in real world situations.

So you understand what the topic of tonight's is, is that transition statement. So you're talking with somebody, they start talking to you or sharing with you a problem that they're having, or you're just having an everyday conversation. Okay, how am I going to take this conversation and steer it, direct it towards a gospel-centered conversation? So we're going to practice tonight.

Wes, will you, will you come help me? Will you be my, well, now they're right up here, see? And you can come up here and you can grab this and take it down there with you. Is there a microphone up here? Okay.

So we're going to, we're going to create a scenario. And do you feel, you feel confident if I'm the one with the problem that you can be the transition guy? Okay. Why don't you, well, how about you, you be the problem guy. Okay. Doesn't have to be something, you know, that that's a real problem.

[11:59] Yeah. Just come up with something. Yeah. You know, like a normal conversation. The thing that gets me, Mike, is how the universe is just so unpredictable. I just, okay. You know, my kids, it's like, I try to get them to behave and they just, they don't care. So I try to get them to come to church and they just, they just never even, I shouldn't do that one.

But my kids don't behave when I tell them to do stuff. They just kind of look the other way and I don't want to hit them all the time, but I just can't get them to obey me when I'm telling them to do stuff. I just, I don't know what to do. Yeah. That's, that's a hard one. I got, you know, the same problem with my kids is, uh, you know, kids, oh yeah, kids will be kids, you know, they, they oftentimes they don't do what you want to do. But, uh, for me, what helps is, um, you know, I try to explain them from, from the Bible, how, you know, how they, how, how God has, you know, called them to honor their mothers and fathers, but I've got to be the right example for them too. You know, if I'm not living the kind of way that I want to, if they see me doing the things that I'm telling them not to do, then that's going to, that's going to, you know, that's not going to help me when I'm trying to tell them, Hey, do another way. Yeah. So my thing is I try to just live my life as best as I can like Christ and hopefully they see that. And, uh, and so do you go to church anywhere? Do you believe? No, not really. Have you ever gone to church? Have you ever heard the gospel before? When I was a kid, you know, I'd heard Noah's Ark and Daniel the lion's den and stuff like that. Okay. So then, bam, we would go into the, well, let me show you these three circles right here on my phone or wherever it might be. You know, God designed everything to be good. Huh? Yeah. Hey, there's, yeah, that's an idea. You know, we might put that logo on here and then on the back, we could do the three circles. Hey, turn around. Let me show you on the, this guy's back. All right. Thank you, Wes. Okay. So you understand the more you do it, the better you'll get at it. And, uh, for me, I have an, I have an easy transition as I'm a pastor, you know, so I can just say to people, well, I'm a pastor, you know, let me tell you blah, blah, blah. Okay. Um, so that's what we want to work on tonight is your transition. How are you going to work towards, um, taking a regular conversation and turning it into a gospel conversation? So, uh, for example, when you guys pair up, um, just anything, anything that, you know, people struggle with, you know, I'm, uh, one that's common is, uh, uh, marriages. You know, I'm having problems with my marriage. Um, it's falling apart and I don't know what to do. And if somebody approached you with that, how would you transition to the gospel? Well, I'm sorry to hear that. You know, um, I definitely know that God wants your marriage to stay together. Uh, let me, let me, you know, then you transition the rest of the way. So, uh, you know, we hear it a lot more than I think than that, uh, we realize that people are, are often complaining, uh, you know, letting us know about what's going on in their lives. So in pairs of two, this is your task. And again, if we can't do it with one another, we can't expect that we're going to do very well doing it with people that we don't know at all. And this is another way where we have, we have fun and we get to know one another as well. Nobody's judging you, right? Nobody in here is Billy Graham.

Maybe, maybe though, maybe though the next Billy Graham is in this room, right? The next great evangelist. Um, but we're all called to do this. It's not something that God asks us to do. It's not something that God suggests that we do. God commands every single believer to share the good news of his son, Jesus Christ with everybody. So, uh, let's practice that tonight. Practice that

transition. You don't have to go all through, all the way through the three circles. Um, it would be all right if you want to, but just take, you know, one of you, one of you bring, you know, the scenario of, uh, somebody who's got a, an issue that they're struggling with. The next person work a way to transition that to, uh, to having a conversation about the gospel that incorporates the three circles. Does that make sense? Anybody have any questions? Okay, let's do this for about 10 or 15 minutes.

Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulder.

Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulder. The shame that hear my mocking voice call out among the star-fool. It was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished.

[16 : 49] His dying breath has brought me life. I know that it is finished.

Sounds like we've had some good conversations. Hopefully you're feeling more comfortable and confident with your transition statements. Work on those, practice those so you get better and better at it. Um, and pay more attention. You know, you might, you might, especially this week as you, as you're working and you're interacting with your friends and family, how often people talk to you about their brokenness and, and, uh, use that opportunity to share the gospel. Uh, I wanted to share this with you. Um, I'm gonna, uh, we're gonna, we're leaving tonight. Our family, we're, we're going to, uh, up to Kansas City. I have a conference that I'm going to go to this week. It's the, uh, Nine Marks Conference on Expositional Preaching at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where I went to school. So I'll be there through Wednesday. And, uh, the, the main speaker there is a guy named Mark Dever. Have you, any of you ever heard of Mark Dever? Okay. Yes. He's a pastor at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., Southern Baptist guy. And, uh, he's doing some really awesome things in a city that desperately needs to hear the gospel. And so he's written, he wrote this book, uh, quite a while ago, uh, but, uh, and he's written others. There's, uh, other authors and it's all part of this Nine Marks ministry. And, uh, because you might be curious what those Nine Marks are, Nine Marks of a Healthy Church, I'm going to share those with you. Mark 1, Expositional Preaching. Mark 2, Biblical Theology. Mark 3, The Gospel. Mark 4, a Biblical Understanding of Conversion. Mark 5, a Biblical Understanding of Evangelism. Mark 6, a Biblical Understanding of Church Membership. Mark 7, Biblical Church Discipline. Mark 8, a Concern for Discipleship and Growth. And Mark 9, Biblical Church Leadership. So, uh, on Mark 5, a Biblical Understanding of Evangelism, he, uh, lists, uh, several ways how we should evangelize. And I wanted to share those with you, uh, tonight. Uh, number one, he says, tell people with honesty that if they repent and believe they will be saved, but it will be costly.

So when we are sharing the gospel with people, we want to share that they must repent and believe, but that it will be costly, right? Because Jesus said, right, whoever wants to follow me must deny himself and take up his cross. There's cost to this. And so it's not something where we, where we say, you know, hey, uh, just try Jesus out and, you know, give it 30 days and, you know, maybe you're gonna, you're gonna get, you know, a whole lot of money or a new car or something like that or a promotion at your job. Um, doesn't work that way. Uh, number two, tell people with urgency that if they repent and believe they will be saved, but they must decide now. Um, again, we don't know when we're sharing, uh, the gospel with somebody, how much longer that they have. And, uh, if you will ever get another opportunity. So they need to know that they need to make a decision right then and right there. Number three, tell people with joy that if they repent and believe the good news, they will be saved. However difficult it may be, it is worth it, right? So when we tell people how costly it is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, we don't say, so I don't, maybe not, you know, you seem kind of like a wimp. I don't know that you can do it, right? We're not saying that we're saying, yes, it's costly, but listen, it's worth it because all of eternity is staked upon this, right? And even though you suffer for Christ, it's enjoyable. There's joy that comes from it because you are being identified so closely with your Lord and Savior. And there are plenty examples of scripture where we can, uh, point people to that. Fourth, use the Bible. Uh, that's pretty obvious, right? Know the Bible, use scripture, um, have a good grasp of God's word so that you can better communicate it. And when they ask you questions that you can answer those questions that they might have. Use the Bible.

[21 : 29] Fifth, realize that the lives of individual Christians and of the church as a whole are a central part of evangelism. Realize that the lives of individual Christians and of the church as a whole are a central part of evangelism. So, uh, we've got to understand that this is all of our jobs individually and collectively as a church to share, uh, the gospel, to be evangelistic.

So we're not just saying, Hey, well, we'll just, you know, we got a few of those guys are pretty good evangelists. We'll just keep sending those guys out, right? And they can do all the evangelism for us. No, we want to obviously, um, give many opportunities to those whom God has specifically gifted really well towards evangelism, but we've got to understand that this is something that God didn't call a few to do, but has called all of us to do. Uh, six, remember to pray, remember to pray. Uh, and again, that's pretty self-explanatory. Pray for God to provide you with those opportunities. Pray for boldness and courage to encourage to, to seize those opportunities and to share the gospel and pray, um, that God would, you know, if, if you answered, if you scored low on your desire to share the gospel, then pray that God would, you know, increase that desire, that God would give you a passion for it so that you, you feel compelled. This is something you've got to share. Uh, number seven, build relationships with non-Christians, build relationships with non-Christians. Uh, so for example, I was talking to Jesse, we have basketball that we do here once a month and we've drawn in some, uh, people that we otherwise, you know, wouldn't have a relationship with.

And so a lot of them are non-believers. And the point of this is, yeah, we have fun playing, but if we're not going to connect that to the gospel in some way, then we're failing big time. So we're thinking of ways where, how can we, um, give these guys an opportunity to, um, to hear the good news and to equip them into, well, to engage them, to enlighten them, to encourage them and equip them. Right? So, uh, we, we want to build relationships with non-Christians so that we have those opportunities to share the gospel with them. And then eight, work together with other Christians to take the gospel to those who don't live around any Christians. And again, that's pretty self-explanatory as well. We have, uh, things like IMB and NAM and we give to, uh, the cooperative program and we are engaged with that on a global level and on an even smaller level. You know, Dan will be taking a trip to Latvia with the point that we establish a relationship with the church there. And, uh, so we are, we are going to be engaging our community and we're also going to seek to engage the world as well.