

Evangelism Class 8

Developing Relationships with those who do not yet share our faith

Last week I told a number of stories and after class showed a video about fishing. I told you about my most recent fishing trip in which we targeted dolphin or mahi mahi. Our method was to go to where dolphin are most frequently found...in the Gulf Stream...most folks who are serious about catching dolphin do not fish for them in the Intracoastal Waterway...because they are not usually found there. A principle of fishing is to Go Where the Fish Are. Seems pretty basic, but after someone becomes a Christian, often we find that a part of our new found faith is that we become part of a community. However, it is easy and often comfortable to stay inside our community and never venture out. We, over time, come to have fewer and fewer friends outside the community of faith...this makes evangelism challenging...to catch fish we need to be where they are.

Where could Christians go to meet people who may not share our faith?

Once we get there, we need to create pathways to relationship. Once we got to where the Captain thought we might find fish he began to set up the boat for fishing. He got out the rods he thought we should use for this particular type of fish. He rigged them with the type of lures or baits he thought mostly likely to draw the fish we were targeting. Next, he put out a chum bag...a porous bag with a block of frozen ground up fish remains that slowly would thaw and leave a stream of smell and bits of food to attract fish to start following our boat as we drifted, leaving a trail behind us.

Evangelism Class 8

Developing Relationships with those who do not yet share our faith

How could we put out 'chum' or leave a trail that might attract people?

We begin with several assumptions...

God loves broken and imperfect people.

How do we know this?

People need God

How do we know this?

He has sent us.

How do we know this?

God is at work.

How do we know this?

A ministry of kindness...is irrefutable and attractive. If we believe that we have been placed where we are, we should look for God's hand, explore what may outwardly seem like coincidences, and expect God to show up and orchestrate times, circumstances and events in ways that alert us to God's activity. While not all people may share our faith, all people do share a common humanity and life is a great equalizer. Our lives and experiences will bring us into contact with others who may have experienced things helpful to us and we may have experienced things helpful to them. Acts of kindness are great bridge builders, and relationship starters. There was a saying and a bit of a movement that started back in the days of my youth which urged people to do a 'random act of kindness' daily. Long before that, the Boy Scouts of America urged Scouts to do a good deed daily.

Evangelism Class 8

Developing Relationships with those who do not yet share our faith

Discuss ideas for how and when and where to meet and develop relationships with people outside of our usual circle of Christian friends.