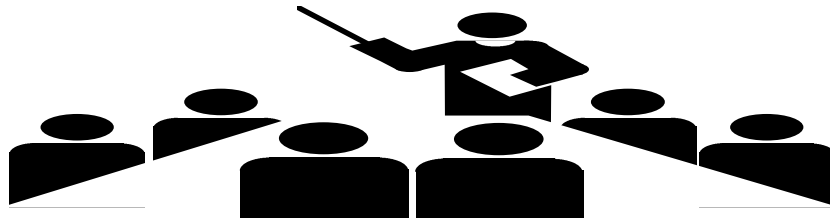


EVANGELISM SEMINAR



Facilitator
The Rev. Dr. Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.
Director, Bureau of Evangelism
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
Charlotte, North Carolina



ALTAR MINISTRY

TOPIC



During and After the Invitation to Christian Discipleship

Dr. Darryl B. Starnes, Sr., Facilitator

I. The Reasons for Extending a Public Invitation¹

- A. Scriptural Reasons
 1. To afford those who hear the gospel an opportunity to respond positively to it. (Acts 2:36-41)
 2. To afford those who have heard the gospel in the past the opportunity to receive Christ. (1 Cor. 3:6-7)
 3. To compel people to come to Christ. (Luke 14:23)

- B. Historical Reasons
 1. The Old Testament prophets pressed their listeners to repent and take a public stand for God.
 2. John, the Baptist, called upon his listeners to repent and submit to public baptism.
 3. Jesus called for people to respond to Him in faith through public confession and baptism.
 4. The Apostle called for people to publicly repent, believe, and be baptized.
 5. The early evangelists invited sinners to publicly come to Christ.
 6. The first pastors exhorted sinners to make a public indication of their desire to follow Christ.
 7. History's greatest soul-winning evangelists have used some method of public invitation.

- C. Practical Reasons
 1. It allows those wanting to be saved an opportunity to seek help from a trained personal worker.
 2. It provides an opportunity for those who are anxious or under conviction to get help and instruction.
 3. It provides a means for those who are confused to get further explanation of the gospel.

- D. Logical Reasons: evidence demands a verdict
- E. Psychological Reasons
 1. People need an outlet for response.
 2. People are mentally conditioned to expect it.
 3. People need to be reminded that God expects their commitment.

- E. Consequential Reasons
 1. Effects Upon Christian Observers
 - a. It brings to memory their own walk forward.
 - b. It assures them that the friends that they invite to church will be given an opportunity to be saved.
 - c. It often stirs them to become soul-winners.
 - d. It often moves them to renew their commitment to the Lord.
 - e. It builds them up spiritually.

 2. Effects upon Pastors and Evangelists
 - a. It can be an encouragement to continue faithfully toiling in the Word.
 - b. It can be a means of measuring the effectiveness of their presentation of the gospel.
 - c. It can give them immediate access to new converts.

II. Preparing A Public Invitation²

- A. Prayer: the secret of a burning heart
 1. Pray for God to break your heart about the lost condition of many within the church or services.
 2. Pray for God to save those within the flock or the community who are without Christ.
 3. Pray for God to enable you to prepare and deliver an effective invitation.

- B. Transition: connecting the message to the invitation
 1. An Appropriate Question
 2. The Promise

¹ R. Alan Street, *The Effective Invitation* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1984), pp. 139-150.

² *Ibid.*, 151-164.

Continued

- C. Theological Instructions (define, illustrate, provide scriptural support for what they must do)
 - 1. Repent: change their minds and turn from their sins
 - 2. Believe: place the trust in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
 - 3. Surrender: commit to live a life in obedience to Christ.

- D. The Proper Use of Persuasion
 - 1. You must be sure yourself that Christ is the only way to salvation
 - 2. You must make your invitation personal.
 - 3. You must strengthen your appeal with invitational Scriptures.
 - 4. You must be certain your invitation can move the will and bring it into submission to Christ.
 - a. Approaching the will through the intellect (it is reasonable and makes sense)
 - b. Approaching the will through the emotions (it is necessary)

- E. Motivational Themes (an effective method for reaching the will through the intellect and emotions)
 - 1. Select a motivating theme for each invitation (i.e. the danger of delaying a decision for Christ)
 - 2. Find Scriptural passages that deal with the topic.
 - 3. Plan a two step-approach utilizing Scriptures, exhortations, and an illustration
 - a. The first set of Scriptures and exhortation should reach the mind
 - b. The second set should touch the feelings.

- F. The Call to Public Commitment
 - 1. Select carefully the method of public invitation.
 - 2. Prepare the content of your appeal.
 - a. Keep it simple.
 - b. Keep it personal.
 - c. Keep it positive.
 - d. Keep it brief.
 - e. Keep it direct. (without notes)

III. Invitational Models

- A. The Delayed-Response Invitation
 - 1. The After Meeting
 - 2. Special Appointments
 - 3. The Signing of Cards
 - 4. Special Classes
 - 5. The Delayed Altar Call
 - 6. The Dangers of Delayed –Response Invitation

- B. The Immediate-Response Invitations
 - 1. The Altar Call
 - 2. The Raising of Hands and Standing at the Seat
 - 3. The Act of Public Confession
 - 4. The Progressive Invitation
 - 5. Baptism
 - 6. The Private Decision
 - 7. The Dangers of Immediate-Response Invitation

IV. The Importance of Counseling

- A. The Ministry of Personal Workers
 - 1. Ministering to those who come forward and publicly commit.
 - 2. Encouraging those who are hesitant but show signs of being under conviction.

- B. The Inquiry Room

Instructions for Counselors

PREPARATION

Before you begin, make sure that you have the following items:

- ✓ A Bible
- ✓ A Pen
- ✓ A Notepad
- ✓ The Decision for Christ Report Form (See other side of this form)
- ✓ The “So Great a Salvation” Tract (It will be helpful to those making decisions for Christ)
- ✓ A prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit to guide your words, actions, and attitudes
- ✓ An awareness of the location of the designated area for follow-up ministry

PROCEDURE

- **Receive the person(s)** who have made decisions for Christ from the pastor, director, or worship leader.
- **Take them** quickly and quietly to the designated area for follow-up ministry.
- **Ascertain** the specific nature of their decision for Christ and minister to them appropriately.

- *If they prayed the prayer for salvation* and were converted in the service, have them record their decision in the appropriate place inside the “So Great A Salvation” Tract.
- *If they came forward for salvation* but have not been led into the prayer for salvation, use the inside of the “So Great A Salvation” Tract to help them understand the plan of salvation and the gospel. Lead them in the prayer for salvation as outlined on the tract. Have them record their decision.

Use the backside of the tract to assist you in immediate follow-up for everyone who prayed for salvation, whether they were converted in or after the service. It contains four importance sections:

- 1) Understanding What Has Just Happened to You;
- 2) The Assurance of Salvation;
- 3) The Importance of Spiritual Growth;
- 4) The Significance of Christian Discipleship.

- *If they came forward to re-dedicate their lives to Christ*, you must help them pinpoint the time of their original conversion. (Only those who have been saved can re-dedicated their lives to Christ) Have them record the date of that decision as best they can in the appropriate place inside the “So Great A Salvation” Tract. Use the backside of the tract to help them understand 1) what happened to them before; 2) how to have assurance; 3) how to grow; and 4) the significance of discipleship.
- *If they came forward for prayer*, give them the counsel and prayer ministry that you deem appropriate. Should further ministry be needed please notify the pastor, director, or persons in charge.
- *If they came forward to answer the call to the ministry*, give them the appropriate counsel and prayer. Instruct them to consult with their pastor for guidance. Notify the pastor, director or persons in charge.
- *If they came forward to unite with the church*, notify the pastor, director, or persons in charge.
- **Give each convert** a “So Great A Salvation” Tract for safekeeping. It is a permanent record of their decision for Christ. Encourage them to read through it later that day and periodically throughout the year.
- **Record** the person’s name, address, phone #, the date and nature of decision on the **Decision for Christ Report Form**. Record their pastor’s name and the location of their church, so that they can be notified. Please record your name and phone #. Return the completed form to the pastor, director of evangelism, or persons in charge.

THE DECISION FOR CHRIST REPORT FORM

The Bureau of Evangelism African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Event _____ Date _____

Site _____ City _____ State _____

<u>Name/Address and/or Phone #</u>	<u>Date/Decision(s)</u>	<u>Pastor/Church/City</u>
1. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
3. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
4. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
5. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
6. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
7. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
8. _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

Counselor's Name/Phone _____ / _____ Date _____

Counselor's Name/Phone _____ / _____ Date _____

Counselor's Name/Phone _____ / _____ Date _____