

USING CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS IN REACHING OUT TO POSTMODERNS:
EVANGELISM TO A CULTURE OF “HIPSTERS”

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis project was to learn how to efficiently evangelize to Postmoderns, in particular Hipsters. This project does not attempt to define the philosophy of Postmodernism, but rather uses a trial and error process in order to find a core set of questions that can be memorized for any Christian going into an evangelism setting. The paper takes the reader through the demographics of Hipsters and the preparation for evangelizing to them. By using interviews, the thesis project aims to perfect the art of apologetics in an evangelism setting. Finally, the goal is to aid other Christians in evangelizing to Hipsters by developing an evangelism training guide that may be used for personal use or also in a Bible class setting. The reader must realize that there is no perfect evangelism technique nor “magic bullet” to convert someone. Nevertheless, this project seek to be a basis or starter for evangelizing Hipsters.

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INTRODUCING THE POSTMODERN, THE HIPSTER

“Postmodernism claims there is no real truth and no real knowledge that exist on their own, it begins with the assumption that all knowledge and truth are socially constructed.”¹

* * *

The term “Postmodernism” is difficult to define. This term has morphed and changed. While plenty of textbooks have been written on Postmodernism, there is no one defining belief. Postmoderns don’t get together on Sunday and determine their doctrines. Each individual is different. However, the guiding principle of postmodernism is that there is to be general respect for one another and their truths. Truth is defined as a judgment, proposition, or idea that is accepted as true.² While there may be general respect for one another, the postmodern will not necessarily believe in another person’s truth, because there is no absolute truth in postmodernism.

Many times, we do not realize how ingrained Postmodernism is into our culture. Postmodernism has worked its way into every facet of life, from universities to preschools, and even from Churches to families. Sometimes this belief goes by the name of being “PC,” that is, politically correct. The sad thing is, there are so many Postmodern beliefs in other religions. In some strands of Pseudo-Christianity, the “Church” claims that there are multiple paths to heaven other than through Jesus Christ. Other religions, such as Buddhism, are tolerant of the beliefs of other religions. These religious tolerant ideas have seeped into the world’s thinking. How are we supposed to reach those who are lost when they generally respect us, but they do not believe in one truth?

My goal is not to determine the current fads in philosophy. I am looking to find inroads to evangelize to postmoderns, particularly those who are college aged and young professionals. Postmoderns probably will not come into your church on Sunday to go church shopping. So

¹ Thompson, David C. *What in the World is Going On?: Identifying Hollow and Deceptive Worldviews, a Guide for Christian Parents, Churches, and Schools.* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Pub. House, 2010), 4.

² Truth. 2012. In Merriam-Webster.com. Retrieved March 11, 2013, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/truth>

how do we reach them? What if we get into an argument? Will that hurt our chances? These are all things I continue to investigate and figure out.

I had the privilege and opportunity to vicar in Missoula, Montana. Missoula is a small liberal city where anything goes placed in the very conservative state of Montana. Eclectic is an easy way to describe the city. Hippies, adrenaline junkies, farmers, university students, transients, and California retirees all live in one small area enclosed by the mountains. The city is often described as “Mini-Portland,” which, in my opinion, is not a compliment. Portland, Oregon is one of the nation’s least church cities.

The church that I vicared at in Missoula did not have many people that were my age, so I made friends with some locals and we would get together quite frequently. I would often try to bring up religion, but I was quickly dismissed. They respected me greatly for what I was studying, but Christianity was my thing and not theirs. These friends of mine were at least nice and courteous. I have had friends who would not even let me bring up the topic. Nevertheless, I hope I will never give up and pray that I will not become discouraged. In particular, I pray that God bless my efforts as I learn more about the “Hipster” culture and how to evangelize to them.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC

What is a Hipster?

A Hipster is an individual in society who eagerly seeks to discover new things in the realms of music and art. At the same time, they have a sense of nostalgia. They seek to revive old music, art, fashion, and even electronics. While they essentially try to constantly discover

new stimulants in this world, they hardly seek to find any meaning in life. While there is no exact definition for the term Hipster, there are many descriptive definitions³.

The hipster term and ideas have been around the United States for a long time. Since the early 1900s, America has had groups in society that were against the mainstream culture: the Flappers in the in the 1920s, beatniks and hippies in the 1950s and 1960s, punk in the 1980s, grunge in the 1990s. Now, the term hipster is frequently referenced in pop culture, such as in Youtube videos, fashion, and especially television shows. Cosmo Kramer, in the hit 90's show Seinfeld, was called a "Hipster doofus." While each group had its own ideology, its own fashion, its own music scene, these social groups still had the basic mentality that they were against the social norms. All these groups, especially Hipsters, thrive on being unique. Yet, even hipsters desire to have some sense of commonality. They have become a niche mainstream group in society while ironically pride themselves on being independent from the mainstream.

Why Hipsters?

Hipsters often seem pretentious and are not afraid to voice their opinions. However, I question if they really believe in anything. Their voiced opinions give me the impression that they know what they are against, but do not even know what they themselves believe in or stand for.

While this group may seem to practically look homeless in their appearance, they often tend to be well educated and have analytical minds which are drawn to the philosophies of the day, or whatever their professors taught them in college, whether it be Postmodernism or Post-Postmodernism or something else (usually, a philosophy is not really named until later down the

³ -A suburban transplant to any major city who wear ragged hand-me-down clothes. They are often are shaggy and unshaven, wearing coke bottle glasses and hate to be called Hipster.

- Often declare themselves superior in taste when it comes to fashion, music, and art.
- Someone who is smart enough to talk about philosophy, politics, music, art. However, they often come across as being pretentious and pompous.
- Usually younger and lives in an artsy neighborhood that was once a rough neighborhood in the city.
- They drink cheap beer and smoke lucky strike cigarettes, and wear skinny jeans.
- One who hates corporations, yet ironically buys apple products.
- (On the positive side) One who supports travel, culture, and small business.

road). Since postmodernism seems to be the normal ideology within hipster culture, they believe that there is no strict sense of truth. In other words, there is no meaning to life. When there is no meaning to life, religion is nothing more than a stress reliever.

Generally speaking, these hipsters question the existence or even importance of God. Unfortunately, in the spiritual realm, these views do not favor Christianity. In fact, hipsters do not like hearing about Christianity because of Christianity's view on other religions. They would hate to say that any religion is wrong. In their opinion, all religions are going in the same direction. People can be selective of what they like. If religion does not turn out to involve the afterlife, at least the religion helped to make people happy on earth.

I'll be honest, my previous attempts at reaching out to postmoderns have failed, and failed miserably. But hipsters are the people I somehow most associate in life with. They are my family. They are my friends. I want to keep trying because these people are my friends and I would hate to see them go anywhere but heaven. These are the people I want to evangelize!

PRE-INTERVIEW

Evangelism to postmoderns is tricky. Postmoderns don't get together on Sunday to discuss and iron out their doctrines. Each individual is different and has different beliefs. How are we supposed to reach these lost when they do not believe in one truth? How do we talk to them when they will not go church shopping at a Christian church on Sunday? How do we reach them if you cannot even knock on their doors? What if we get into an argument? What will hurt our chances of reaching them? These are all things I decided to investigate and find out for myself.

The Decision to Interview the Hipsters:

The interview process became apparent when this idea for the thesis was created in the inner workings of my brain. When needing to convey important information to someone, understanding the person is essential in order to anticipate how they will receive that

information. While it may come across as awkward, formal, or even scatter brained, conducting an interviews really aids in helping to quickly retrieve a lot of information from an individual. The interview process helps to peel away the layers of that person to understand the person better. Every person is different. Every person has different experiences. Therefore, every person will react differently and will answer differently to the questions set before them in the interview.

With these interviews, I hoped to learn about people. This interview process can be used when good friends talk with each other and the Christian friend would like to learn more about the beliefs of the non Christian friend. However, I planned to interview complete strangers that fit into the demographic that I wanted to evangelize to. These strangers are who we are evangelizing to! Not to a wall, not to an animal, but to real life living and breathing people. With this quick survey, I was able to get to know the people that God wants us to reach out to.

Learning How to Evangelize to Hipsters Through Interviews

The principle question is how do we evangelize better? Although it would be awesome to just sit behind a computer to do evangelism, we know this is not possible. Speaking and interacting with people is necessary. Evangelism involves people. By learning about the people I interviewed, I hoped to learn how to also evangelize to them. At first, the interview process was to merely learn about people and keep the evangelizing for later. However, with some interviews, evangelism could not help but spark from the conversation. So jokingly, I told myself that a way to evangelize to the group you hope to reach is to tell them that you have a thesis that requires interviews.

Unfortunately, there is no magic bullet for evangelizing. No magic question. No magic comment that will “convince” them. This is also where another key biblical principle comes in: We can’t argue somebody into heaven. Nevertheless, people are all different and some require different evangelism tactics.

But God does tell us to “Go!” God’s Word is efficacious. His word and His Spirit is what brings people to faith, not our witty argumentations. We walk that fine line as we lovingly reach out to people. Fortunately, God has given us some amazing minds to work with.

Unfortunately, we often grow weary and impatient with these tactics and evangelizing. Patience is important! It could take years for anything to even happen!

So back to the question at hand, how do we evangelize better? Going into this interview process, I could only assume with practice! That was definitely the case!

The Questions I Had Going into this Interview Process

I had many concerns going into this thesis and interview process. I questioned whether it was necessary that I interview only the demographic I was intending to evangelize, namely postmodern Hipsters. After all, are postmodern Hipsters the only group in society that don't believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior? Of course not! So why try to spend all my time and effort on just one group? Why not interview everyone? I decided to continue with the plan of only interviewing the target demographic, rather than interviewing any random person so that answers may be slightly more consistent.

Another question I had was concerning who this interview training is for. Is it for me personally? Do I try to make this for pastors in congregations and in campus ministry situations? Do I make something directed more towards lay people? Why not everybody? Ultimately, I determined that everyone may benefit from a topic such as evangelism to Hipsters.

I was also concerned with what the response of the hipsters would be and what their views Christianity were. Are they so violently opposed to Christianity that they will just break out in anger? Or will they politely disagree? Do I even mention to them the intention of this interview process as I learn about their personal beliefs? Do I immediately try to see what works and immediately evangelize? Or do I slowly work in more attempts and evangelizing with every interview?

Of course, the question I thought long and hard on: How do you bring morality, or the gospel, or anything into the picture when everything is subjective? I may give the best law and gospel presentation the angels could sing about, and this postmodern may simply respond, "Well, that's your opinion." How do you make any headway on someone when there is no objective or absolute truth?

Evangelism brings many concerns. However, all the concerns and all the worries associated with evangelism need to be silenced by God's Word. God's Word gives the answers and the strength to carry out evangelism. Evangelism also needs to be carried out, and not only thought about. The questions and the concerns will resolve themselves with trust in God, practice, and time.

Assumptions

The interview process can be intimidating. Who likes walking up to random people and asking them personal, spiritual, and existential questions? People are not used to getting questioned on the street about their spiritual life. So, I inevitably also had some assumptions about what would happen with these interviews. I, like many other interviewers, assumed the extremes: either people will not listen at all and will turn down the interview or people will want to come to church and hear God's Word. Either, the interviewer feels the pressure to convert any and every person in the general vicinity, or has fear of complete and utter failure weighing on the shoulders. I also assumed that an interview would cause people to be reserved. Timidity would cause the interviewee not to fully answer questions as best I would hope. This would not result in good field information.

Misunderstandings

I also knew that there would be a possibility of some great misunderstandings. First, there is the potential that I would not completely understand the answer given. When questions are not worded well or correctly, people do not understand the angle of the answer to be given. People may not understand me. If I were to give an answer or even a response to their answer, will they fully understand what I am saying? Am I using religious talk that soars over their heads, in which no one is best served?

Biblical "Assumptions" and Truths

I came into this interview process with many of my own personal assumptions and even many of my own biases. While some of those assumptions about people may be true, others may

prove to be completely irrelevant. Yet, all of these assumptions come from our human brain, clouded with sinful and selfish thoughts, that only looks at little picture details.

God has some interesting things to say about people and their assumptions. In particular, He speaks of how the world views God. People are always longing for more, for some sense of self worth. They want to be a part of something eternal. After all, who really wants to live, die, and then become worm food? God said in Ecclesiastes 3:11, “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” Think of one of the world’s most famous questions, what is the meaning of life? This question says something. God says in Ecclesiastes 8:17, “Then I saw all that God has done. No one can comprehend what goes on under the sun. Despite all his efforts to search it out, man cannot discover its meaning. Even if a wise man claims he knows, he cannot really comprehend it.”

God explains the world’s reaction to the gospel for us in his Word. There is not anything new that God has not already said in his Word. Those who do not believe that there is something more to life, are in complete denial. People in the world do not want to be subject to an all powerful God. They do not want to believe that their actions will be judged eternally. Rather, life in the moment becomes more important than the consequences of that life. On top of that, who cares about some guy who came 2000 years ago? When this is the case, the words of Paul are especially applicable. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Paul also states in his second letter to Timothy, “For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”

Even though evangelism and the interview process can be especially intimidating, God gives us the confidence in His Word. We are not bringing useless made-up facts to people, but the life giving Gospel of God. His Word is what we preach. No doubt, people will reject us for preaching the Word to them. However, they are only rejecting God. Jesus said in Luke 10:16, “Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me

rejects him who sent me.” God also promises that he will be with us and speak through us. He says in Matthew 10:16,

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

God tells us that there will be opposition. However, He also brings comfort and confidence as we go out for evangelism.

RESEARCHING EVANGELISM

Literature Review: Tactics

The book *Tactics* by Gregory Koukl⁴ was selected for research material because the idea of apologetics presented by Koukl differs from that of other Christian apologetic books. The book focuses more on the plan for carrying out evangelism and apologetics. The term apologetics often implies a negatively styled argument. Apologists defend their faith and shoot down any opposing ideas. However, Koukl attempts to teach the Christian how to delicately and gracefully maneuver in a discussion, rather than necessarily giving a list of conversations and situations.

Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions

Sometimes, the truth does not seem to be enough. Far too often, the postmodern finds it is easy to ignore the truth and facts and walk away. Christians are not necessarily meant to shy away from confrontation. After all, Paul writes in Ephesians 6:10-20 to be strong in the Lord and to put on the full armor of God so that we might stand against the devil’s schemes. Jesus also comments on his call to us as Christians. He says in Matthew 10:16, “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.” We pray for the Lord’s strength and that we may be reminded of this passage.

Gregory Koukl’s book seeks to aid Christians in their daily conversations with non Christians. Gregory Koukl suggests a more diplomatic way of handling confrontations with

⁴ Koukl, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009)

postmoderns or any non Christian for that matter. Living in the twenty-first century, an ambassador of Christ requires three important skills. Koukl describes these three skills,

“First, Christ’s ambassadors need the basic knowledge necessary for the task. They must know the central message of God’s kingdom and something about how to respond to the obstacles they’ll encounter on their diplomatic mission. However, it is not enough for followers of Jesus to have an accurately informed mind. Our knowledge must be tempered with the kind of wisdom that makes our message clear and persuasive. This requires the tools of a diplomat, not the weapons of a warrior, tactical skill rather than brute force. Finally, our character can make or break our mission. Knowledge and wisdom are packaged in a person, so to speak. If that person does not embody the virtues of the kingdom he serves, he will undermine his message and handicap his efforts...The second skill, tactical wisdom, is the main focus of this book.”⁵

Simply put, Christians should know God’s Word and the central messages. Second, a Christian should always be seeking to perfect the manner by which the message is preached so that the Word of God may be efficiently preached. Finally, the character of a Christian at the moment of evangelism can also greatly affect how the non Christian reacts. A forceful attitude rather than a cheery disposition may change the non Christian’s mind to not listen.

There are hundreds, maybe even thousands of books, which have been written concerning Christian apologetics, dealing with every possible scenario and every challenge to Christianity. While the every day Christian may read these books and search the Scriptures, they may still feel inadequate to deal with these challenges to Christianity. Should this feeling of inadequacy and lack knowledge always be the reason for not confronting people? If this were the case, who would ever have enough Biblical and real life knowledge for Christian apologetics? Instead, Koukl strives to find a different approach. One in which any Christian can practice and become efficient at. With a tactical approach, the Christian can stay “in the driver’s seat in conversations so you can productively direct the discussion, exposing faulty thinking and suggesting more fruitful alternatives along the way.”⁶

Tactics can prove to be nearly as important as the primary skill, knowledge. As in sports, military encounters, or even games like chess, tactics guide people through difficult situations. The tactical approach in Christian evangelism requires intent listening in order to adapt to new

⁵ Koukl, *Tactics*, 24-25.

⁶ Koukl, *Tactics*, 24.

information, but to also “stay in the driver’s seat.”⁷ Koukl reminds that it is important to remember,

“Tactics are not manipulative tricks or slick ruses. They are not clever ploys to embarrass other people and force them to submit to your point of view. They are not meant to belittle or humiliate those who disagree so you can gain notches in your spiritual belt...It’s not difficult to make someone look silly when you master these techniques...therefore, you must be careful not to use your tactics merely to assault others.”⁸

Rather, these techniques and tactics are used to put that pebble of doubt in their hearts. The tactics are used to gain a footing so that the Christian can guide that person to the truth, which is in God’s Word.

The idea of possibly arguing with someone can be a disincentive for a Christian to engage in a spiritual conversation with a non-Christian. Rightly so. Arguing rarely produces anything good. Both parties become defensive while attempting to annoy and defeat the opponent. People become frustrated, if not angry, and soon lose any interest in the topic at hand. However, in certain situation arguments can be advantageous. Good hearted Christian arguments are not useless disputes and can prove to be a healthy exercise. Christians have debated for hundreds of years because they are seeking to clarify the truth. However, Paul warns against quarreling in 2 Timothy 2:14, 23. “Keep reminding God’s people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.”

Koukl goes away from Lutheran doctrine when he states, “Simply put, you can argue someone into the kingdom.” This approach is often taken by many Christian apologizers. The idea of argumentation is held slightly higher than the power and work of the Spirit. As Lutherans, we walk the fine middle road. While we do our best to expose the flaws of worldly thinking and lead people to Christ, we also know that God is ultimately in control.

⁷ Koukl, *Tactics*, 29.

⁸ Koukl, *Tactics*, 27.

Setting modest goals can prove to be an efficient technique. Instead of aiming at converting a non Christian on the first encounter, have a more realistic goal. “All I want to do is put a stone in someone’s shoe. I want to give him something worth thinking about, something he can’t ignore because it continues to poke at him in a good way.”⁹ This tactic relieves some pressure for the evangelizing Christian. Aiming to “close the deal” on the first try may prove to work negatively, especially if the nonbeliever is not ready or does not understand. A Christian may also feel obligated to talk about every doctrine in the Bible, which may confuse even more. Instead, aim small. The results may be surprising. With this in mind, remember that following up on this visit will be of equal importance.

The main thrust of Koukl’s tactic is a questioning method. He describes this as the Columbo method, based on the TV detective Lieutenant Columbo. Detective Columbo arrived at crime scenes appearing to be completely inept. Yet, his method of questioning suspects, on a level of almost annoyance, proved to be crucial to solving the case. “The key to the Colombo tactic is to go on the offensive in an offensive way by using carefully selected questions to productively advance the conversation. Simply put, never make a statement, at least at first, when a question will do the job.”¹⁰ The Columbo method, as described by Koukl, has three basic uses. The first is to gather information. The second use is to encourage the other person to explain their views and opinions. The final use is to steer the conversation in a certain direction.¹¹ Questions appear to be more genuine than lecturing about beliefs and opinions. Rather, a question demonstrates interest and respect for the other person’s opinions. By questioning, the listener will also learn and gather information. The information may be used by the questioner for later use in Christian apologetics, but the information also proves that a relationship is being established between the two people. Finally, the tactic of questioning places the Christian in the driver’s seat, allowing opportunities to make points without seeming pushy.

The question “What do you mean by that?” can be one of the Christians main weapons in their arsenal. The question takes the pressure off of the Christian and engages the nonbeliever,

⁹ Koukl, *Tactics*, 38.

¹⁰ Koukl, *Tactics*, 47.

¹¹ Koukl, *Tactics*, 49.

discovering the reasons for their thought process. Interestingly, people often do not understand why they think the way they do. Patience and careful listening are important while asking other questions to clear up any confusion.

When dealing with postmodern rationalists, jumping to arguments for God's existence and how he created the world may be easily dismissed. However, the question that comes to mind is, what is irrational about a God creating the universe?

“A Big Bang needs a ‘Big Banger,’ it seems to me. A complex set of instructions (as in DNA) needs an author. A blueprint requires an engineer. A moral law needs a moral lawgiver. This is not a leap; it is a step of intelligent reflection. Therefore the question “Specifically, what is irrational about believing in God? Is completely in order.”¹²

The goal, remember, is not to convert the non-Christian on the first encounter. A tug of war about God or the Bible may only be detrimental. Skeptics can easily dismiss the ideas if too forward. Instead, a Christian should try to simply get the skeptic to think about the question.

The second use of the Columbo method is to encourage the person to explain or defend their views and opinions on a matter. “For too long we have let others contrive fanciful challenges and then sit back and watch us squirm. Those days are over. No more free rides. If they tell the story, let them defend it. They need to give an argument.”¹³ Many times, people don't actually have an argument, but they simply state their view forcefully. The second important weapon in a Christian's apologetic arsenal is the question, “Why do you say that?”¹⁴ This question helps the Christian understand why the non-Christian believes and thinks the way they do. Do not be surprised when most critics are not prepared to defend their beliefs. However, the Christian must fight the urge to jump on the poor defense. Rather, keep the conversation and the pressure on the other person. “Make them give you the reasons, not just a point of view. It's not your job to defeat their claim. It's their job to defend it.”¹⁵

Many times, the person will ask the Christian a question, which the Christian is unprepared for. The words “let me think about it” can be effective. In this way, the pressure is

¹² Koukl, *Tactics*, 54.

¹³ Koukl, *Tactics*, 60.

¹⁴ Koukl, *Tactics*, 61.

¹⁵ Koukl, *Tactics*, 62.

off. The Christian has more time to do their homework and to prepare. This technique also gives opportunity to meet again.

The final step of the Columbo method is to steer the conversation towards its intended goal. A Christian wants to win the person over, not by forcing opinions, but through persuasion. The Christian must find some weakness in the argument in order to steer the conversation. First, the Christian must know where they want the conversation to go: either to clarify a point or to give new information. No one appreciates being proven wrong, especially when the other party seems patronizing or even snobby. Christians must “be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16 NIV). In other words, a Christian can soften the challenge by using clarifying questions such as, “Can you clear this up for me? Or, “Can you help me understand this point of yours?”¹⁶

Transitioning to the view of the Christian is a delicate art. The Christian must demonstrate a sense of humility and respect for the non-Christian. At the same time, the Christian must also protect themselves from an attack on their faith. Koukl suggests transitions such as:

- Let me suggest an alternative, and tell me if you think it is an improvement. If not, you can tell me why you think your option is better.
- I wouldn't characterize it that way. Here's what I think may be a better or more accurate way to look at it. Tell me what you think.
- I don't think that's going to work, and I'd like to suggest why. Is that okay with you?
- I'm not sure I agree with the way you put it. Think about this...¹⁷

Improving the skill of a spiritual conversation with a non-Christian is important to every Christian, especially those going into the ministry. A minister must not be naive to thinking that these conversations will never happen. These conversations will inevitably happen, which is why Christians should be poised. Preparation ahead of time with response questions regarding different topics can be very effective. Practice is the ultimate preparation. Practicing by oneself may seem strange. Nevertheless, practicing alone adds to experience.

¹⁶ Koukl, *Tactics*, 85.

¹⁷ Koukl, *Tactics*, 86.

While these methods are efficient on the more “offensive” side, every conversation will take a turn to the defensive. The Christian should be ready for unfair and leading questions, which are not really questions at all. Instead, they are assertions such as, “Who are you to say?”¹⁸ In these situations, continue to be in control of the conversation. State that the conversation is confusing and request that they restate their leading question.

The evangelist will encounter many postmodern and popular ideas such as evolution. “It is axiomatic that most intelligent people--college professors, doctors, lawyers, Ph.D.s, bright folks of all stripes--make foolish and elementary mistakes in thinking when it comes to spiritual things.”¹⁹ Scientific evidence is usually the number one reason for believing in evolution. “if fact, ask what testable scientific evidence led him to his conclusion. As it turns out, this claim is not a fact of science. It is a philosophical assertion about science that itself cannot be proven by the scientific method and would therefore be unreliable, according this approach.”²⁰

Religious pluralism, which is the belief that many religions can coexist and are equally true, is another popular postmodern idea. However, much like the scientific evidence claim for evolution, the idea of religious pluralism contradicts itself. If every religion is true, Christianity would be true. If Christianity is true, every other religion is false. Religions also have different ideas of God. Some believe God to be personal. Others believe God to be impersonal. Still, others believe God is nonexistent or irrelevant. Finally, religions have different views on death. People might go to heaven, hell, purgatory, reincarnation, or nowhere. In other words, every religion is not the same.

Postmoderns believe in moral relativism. Moral relativism is the idea that no religion nor person is objectively right or wrong...Postmoderns often demand that Christians not force their morality on people. Ironically, they do not realize that they are doing the very same thing that they are condemning.

Often, an argument by atheists against the existence of God is that evil exists in this world. C.S. Lewis noted in his *Mere Christianity*, “My argument against God was that the

¹⁸ Koukl, *Tactics*, 103.

¹⁹ Koukl, *Tactics*, 105.

²⁰ Koukl, *Tactics*, 118.

universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I gotten this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call something crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line.”²¹ Atheists will find themselves in a problem. Where did the idea of evil and morals come from to begin with? If morals are relative, then there are no standards. Therefore, there are no errors nor evil in our actions or in the world. A perfect and holy God is the only explanation for a moral system.

Those who challenge Christianity often are ignorant of what the Bible teaches. Mistakes in their thinking may at first be difficult to spot, especially if they claim their information came from experts. The Christian may feel intimidated. Yet, the Christian can ask what the actual claim is and if the facts are accurate. Once the facts and the truth have been found, the Christian will be able to address the concerns of the “scholar” making the challenges.

Finally, Koukl brings to the table 8 wonderful tips to remember when evangelizing.

- 1) Be ready
- 2) Keep it simple
- 3) Avoid religious language
- 4) Focus on the truth of Christianity, not merely its personal benefits
- 5) Give reasons
- 6) Stay calm
- 7) If they want to go, let them leave
- 8) Don't let them leave empty handed²²

Conclusions after Literature Review

In his Great Commission, Jesus told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the good news. Gregory Koukl's book, *Tactics*, emphasizes this importance of evangelizing to the world. Unfortunately, apologists often put more trust into their defense and witty rebuttals than in the efficacious Word of God. While the proper defense and witty rebuttals have their place in evangelism, relying and trusting in them take away glory that is to be given to God. Apologists and evangelists do not convert people. A well thought out conversation does not convert people.

²¹ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London: Fount, 1997), 31.

²² Koukl, *Tactics*, 189-190.

Relationships do not convert people. The Holy Spirit is the only one who works in the heart and brings a person to faith. A Lutheran evangelist must walk the fine line, or as some may say, the “Lutheran Middle Road.” God gives people the wonderful privilege of sharing His Word with the world. Yet, only through the Means of Grace can a person believe. After proclaiming God’s Word, the evangelist simply leaves the situation in God’s Hands, trusting God to do what He wills.

Although he emphasized the act of apologetics above the efficacy of God’s Word, Koukl did provide some wonderful tactics to efficiently preparing and evangelizing to unbelievers. One of the key insights gleaned from his book was for the believer to never keep the pressure of the conversation upon themselves. In other words, by using questions, the believer is able to steer the conversation without having to use long speeches that may sound biased to the unbeliever. In this way, the believer gently leads the unbeliever to understanding that they are sinners and are in need of a Savior. The questioning method that Koukl used was the basis for the developing the interview that I used. I found this questioning method beneficial because it allowed the non-Christian to answer the questions and allowed me to gain insight on how much the person knew.

Gregory Koukl’s 8 tips for apologetics are also marvelous for the believer to keep in mind. Number 2, from the list, may be one of the most important tips to remember when evangelizing: “Keeping the message simple.” First, the believer needs to only proclaim the Law and the Gospel in the simplest sense. There is no need for the believer to explain every possible doctrine of the Bible. Simply, Law and Gospel. Furthermore, “Keep the message simple” implies that using large words to explain the Bible should be dismissed. Words such as Justification and Sanctification may only leave the unbeliever in a blank stare. Even words that a believer may deem simple, such as Grace, may have different connotations in the unbeliever’s mind. Explaining these words in simple terms will have more success than attempting to sound biblically intelligent, and therefore pretentious.

Finally, I realize that no interview or quick witted remark compares to discussions that can take place in an established relationship, especially a friendship. The interviews that were conducted for this Senior project were a wonderful way to require the interviewees to ponder questions that they are not often asked. The problem lies in the fact that I may never see these

people again. There may be no possibility for follow-ups to the conversations and the settings were sometimes unnatural. However, an established relationship opens doors to better possibilities in the realm of evangelism.

Gregory Koukl has written a wonderful book that helps boost the confidence of believers who desire to start evangelizing or for those who wish to hone their skills.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Developing the Interview

I modeled my interview process on the ethnographic survey which provided in Professor Sorum's book *Change: Mission & Ministry Across Cultures*²³. The ethnographic survey is used to gather and study data from a certain location or even demographic. The three main objectives in using an ethnographic survey is 1) to uncover specific cultural issues, questions and hurts to which you can apply specific law and gospel, 2) to uncover specific cultural issues, questions and hurts to which you can apply specific mission and ministry strategies, and 3) to begin to develop a systematic theology that speaks to the specific needs, hurts, questions and issues of this culture.²⁴ Speaking and interacting with people was necessary to learn from the primary source. While I wish I could interview people that I did know, I made interviewing random people a priority that I may get a broad array of answers and beliefs. I would search out people I did not know and who fit into the demographic of Hipsters.

The survey which I primarily developed attempted to use the ideas of the ethnographic survey to gain information. The survey began with general questions, "Who are you?" and led to questions such as "What do you believe?" With time, the interviews morphed and included more apologetics. I incorporated the Koukl questioning method. The appendix has all the interview questions and how they changed with time.²⁵

²³ Sorum, E. Allen. *Change: Mission & Ministry Across Cultures* (Milwaukee, WI: WELS Outreach Resources, 1999), 232-233.

²⁴ Sorum, *Change: Mission & Ministry Across Cultures*, 141-144.

²⁵ Appendix 2

HEADING OUT!

Interviewing strangers is an uncomfortable situation for both the interviewee and the interviewer.²⁶ Having a conversation about deep life issues is usually reserved for those in closer relationships, if they even have these conversations at all. In other words, I had to establish some quick connection with the interviewee so that they would feel comfortable enough to open up. Before the interview even started, I would engage random people, asking if they might help me with an interview required for my thesis project. I would start chatting about simple things involving school or work related activities and then we would proceed into the interview. I kept my intentions with them vague as I did not want my personal views to affect their comfort level or put them on the defensive or offensive with my beliefs.

Four rounds of interviews were conducted. The intention of the interviews morphed with each round of interviews. At first, the interviews were conducted to better understand the demographic of twenty something postmoderns. I asked questions to obtain their views pertaining to certain topics such as existentialism, religion, relativism, and morals. The second round of interviews was focused on having smoother conversation and increasing my confidence. For the most part, I used the same interview but refined some questions and removed others. The third round of interviews was geared at incorporating more forward questions, if not even apologetic rebuttals in question form. The fourth round of interviews was intended to be more apologetic and to point out flaws in the thoughts and beliefs of people.

Summary of Interview Responses

The interview process, for the most part, went very well. While I was turned down more than a dozen times, I was able to interview²⁷ complete strangers. The information obtained from the interviews covered a whole range of beliefs. Interestingly, although some rather personal questions were asked, most people were willing to share their thoughts, beliefs, and opinions. As the interviews continued to go deeper into the belief system of the interviewees, the answers took rather fascinating turns

²⁶ Appendix 1 has a diary of my interviews and the emotions that are involved in these questionnaires.

²⁷ Appendix 3

There were a surprisingly wide variety of thoughts and beliefs from the demographic I was targeting. Like every person in the world, including Christians, these interviewees had normal worries about life. For example, they were worried about their health, their family, their loans, and their future jobs. For the most part, the interviewees did not have very many worries regarding their existence in this world, or even death. However, unlike Christians, they had an interesting mentality about these worries. They only want dismiss their worries by living life to the fullest and being happy. Happiness can come from temporary remedies like drugs and alcohol, and long term happiness can only come from success. Success with a good career. Success with finding a good faithful spouse. Finally, they wanted to find happiness by seeing their personal family having success.

When asked if people are generally good or bad, most people answered that people are generally good. Although several said that every person obviously has some bad traits, there is still some degree of good within. The Bible teaches otherwise. By nature, everyone is dead in their transgressions. There is not a hint of good within. However, the sinful nature and the idea of *opinio legis* twist the truth which is revealed in Scripture. The *opinio legis*, literally the “opinion of the law,” is the idea that is ingrained in the sinful nature that all humans think they can earn salvation and not be condemned for sin. With this idea, the purpose of life is merely to be happy and to do good.

Postmodernism teaches that there is no truth. Those who believe this philosophy tend to have never thought this through. In the interview, “Truth” was defined as that which defines what is right or wrong in a person’s life. Most of the interviewees claimed that there is no such thing as an absolute truth. In other words, there was no standard of laws or rules in which they based their own morality. However, when they were asked what they based their truth on, they generally had no idea where to answer. They do not know the basis for determining what is right or wrong. Most said they had no idea or that they never even thought about that idea before. Some said the basis was accountability and the consequences of actions. Some said any degree of truth is based on how society determines it. Others said they learned what was right or wrong from their parents. Finally, several interviewees mentioned that they based their idea of right or wrong on fairness and subjectivity. Coming from the interviewer’s perspective, these answers all

demonstrated the lack of thought in their opinions of truth and their confusion of simple morals. However, there is no confusion with the Word of God. The Word of God is truth.

Interviewing a postmodern about creation or evolution has a rather predictable outcome. Many who were interviewed claimed they strictly believed in evolution. In their opinion, evolution makes sense because it has the facts to back up the theory unlike creationism. Those who were more pro-creation had some type of Christian background or they simply liked the story. Even those who were for creation claimed they also believed in evolution.

The term spirituality has become almost a trendy term to use. Almost everyone described themselves as spiritual. However, many who said they were spiritual could barely define it. Those that could describe their spirituality generally stated that spirituality is about finding calm in life and finding an equilibrium. A few said they were not spiritual because spirituality puts faith in something nonexistent.

Finally, the interviewees were asked if they believed in an afterlife. Most of the interviewed wanted to only believe in the idea of heaven and not a hell, where they would be punished for their actions. Some liked the idea of reincarnation. Many believed that there would be no afterlife. Simply death, then nothing. To quote interview 9²⁸, “It is just cycling. Carbon cycling.”

Overall, these interviews demonstrated that most people do not care about spirituality. Interview 12 proved that he did not care about anything outside of himself. Sadly, the interviews also demonstrated that so many people today do not even know what they themselves believe in. In fact, from that very point spawned a question in the interview: “It seems like from what you are saying, you don’t really know what you believe in. Is that the case?” Subjectivity and rationality became king and queen in their hearts. Yet, these thoughts and opinions of Postmodernism are not new ideas. These ideas have been around for thousands of years. These ideas just have a new name to them.

²⁸ Appendix 3

LESSONS LEARNED

Although the process of interviewing people and being turned down was tedious, the interviews proved to be beneficial. This exercise proved to be great practice in approaching people, learning about people, and practicing in the areas of defense and apology. After the interviews, I had several opportunities to talk with people about Christianity. After interview 14²⁹, I had the opportunity to talk with the interviewee for another 2 hours. Those who had a slight Christian background were very confused on doctrines, often mixing them. Asking the right questions and having them talk became a necessary conversation tool to determine where the confusion was and to better teach the individual. Allowing those being interviewed to speak more also took the pressure off of the interviewer.

Many postmoderns grow apathetic to any religion when there is no personal connection for them. If they were or are in school, students are constantly bombarded by religious pamphlets. I personally saw people yelling at Jehovah's Witnesses for stopping them and making them late for class or meetings, whether or not they had class or meetings. Creating relationships is an important stepping stone to having meaningful discussions about religion. When we put away thoughts that the postmodern Hipsters of today or anyone in our community are incredibly pretentious, headway can be made. When these thoughts are put away, relationships must become the priority. Although not having that prior relationship increased the stress and difficulty of asking people to open their hearts, a relationship based on trust allows for the likelihood of deeper conversations.

Persistence is key. Once a relationship is more secure than a simple interview, continue to bring these important topics up. The friend may dislike or even hate talking about religion and his mind may be set against it. However, it will always be on his mind.

Finally, when we evangelize to anyone, not just postmoderns, we must rely on God. This process of speaking spiritual can be intimidating. Being persistently turned away and speaking with people who are stubborn and have no hope can be extremely depressing and frustrating. Confidence does not come from our own witty remarks, quick rebuttals, or ease in conversation. We put all our trust and hope in God. He is the one who gives us the confidence that we need.

²⁹ Appendix 3

Our confidence comes only from God, who not only sent his one and only Son, but also who performed the very miracle of bringing us to faith.

More than ever, I understand the incredible importance of evangelism work to those in our own community and teaching the Word faithfully. There is no magic bullet. There is no perfect comment or question that will get people to change their mind. We must remember that we cannot argue someone into heaven. However, the Word is efficacious and we may never know how the Spirit will work their hearts.

“STONE IN THE SHOE” QUESTIONNAIRE

Often, we ask ourselves, “What will we say?” Speaking to people about Jesus Christ can often put people on edge or even on the defensive. Believers can often be scared that the non believer may ask a question that they do not know about. Try this. Rephrase the question “What will we say?” to “What will we ask?” Using questions are a wonderful tactic. Questions help discover information. Questions help gain trust in a relationship by demonstrating concern for the individual. Questions also can help steer the conversation in the direction that is desired, which is preferably to opening up the discussion to sin and grace.

Many times, apologetic books do not give a list of questions that would be beneficial for the believer to memorize. After reading Gregory Koukl’s book, *Tactics*, and after testing out multiple different questions throughout the interview process, I attempted to do this very thing. These questions below have been used in conversations with real people. Each sub-question can be used as follow up questions to help steer the conversation.

These are questions that are like little stones in a shoe that may frustrate but also create intrigue. Ultimately, however, we are not seeking to stump the unbeliever, but lead them to question 8, which is sharing the good news.

- 1) It has been said, “What worries you masters you.” Would you say this is true in your life?
 - 1) Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
- 2) Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - 1) How do you know what is right and what is wrong?

- 2) If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
- 3) Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - 1) Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - 2) Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
- 3) Do you believe people are generally good or generally bad?
 - 1) So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
 - 2) It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
- 4) Do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - 1) Are there things that make you question evolution?
 - 2) Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?
 - 1) The fact that things are in perfect order?
 - 1) Our body?
 - 2) The world around us?
- 5) What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - 1) Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
- 6) Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - 1) (If "no" or even "unsure") Have you ever considered that if you are right and we all die, nothing happens? Our bodies simply enter the earth and become part of the cycle of life. Yet, if what the Bible says is right, you won't just be going down into the ground? Wouldn't you rather be safe than sorry?
- 7) These are the words that I see as truth. Would you mind if I share them with you? (Then share the Law and Gospel)

Testing Out the Questionnaire

The purpose of the “Stone in the Shoe” questionnaire is for the Christian to have a set of questions memorized. With these questions, the Christian will be able to learn more about the unbeliever to whom the Christian is evangelizing. These questions also provide a small framework with which the Christian can work to steer the conversation to the intended goal, a Law and Gospel presentation.

The questions I proposed are not necessarily the best questions for every situation. However, since I proposed these questions as fitting for a Christian to memorize, I thought best to test out the “Stone in the Shoe” questionnaire.

The final interview³⁰, with which I used the “Stone in the Shoe” questionnaire, was not necessarily successful in regard to converting the unbeliever. Yet, the questionnaire surpassingly did what it was intended to do, cause the unbeliever to think about and even doubt their beliefs and truths. For most of the interview, the unbeliever was not afraid to let known his views against Christianity. Interestingly, certain questions left the unbeliever speechless. Two questions, in particular seemed to work on his conscience. The first question was a follow up to question 3 “Do you believe people are generally good or generally bad?” I asked him, “It seems like from what you are saying, you don’t really know what you believe in. Is that the case?” This question caused the unbeliever to stop, think, and answer, “Yes, I guess you’re right.”

The second question was another follow up question. The question followed up question 6 “Do you believe in an afterlife?” The follow up question was “Have you ever considered that if you are right and we all die, nothing happens? Our bodies simply enter the earth and become part of the cycle of life. Yet, if what the Bible says is right, you won’t just be going down into the ground? Wouldn’t you rather be safe than sorry?” After this question, the unbeliever did not have much of a quick response but articulated, “Touché.”

“Stone in the Shoe” questionnaire has been field tested! However, this questionnaire will continue to evolve and be tweaked as others and I continue to use it. Use it to developing your own conversation starter.

³⁰ Appendix 3

IT'S YOUR TURN. GO!

Preparing for Evangelism: Encouragement and Reminders

The Bible says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15 NIV). To efficiently evangelize, a degree of preparation must be undertaken, from studying God’s Word to gaining friendships.

Personal Devotional Life

Developing a personal devotional life is vitally important to the soul. In God’s Word, we are reminded that we are by nature sinful, we are enemies of God, we are nothing. At the same time, God’s Word brings the gospel to our aching hearts. Through Jesus Christ, we have been made holy in God’s sight. We never deserved it. We never earned his favor. Yet, God promises us a heavenly home only because of his grace and mercy. What a wonderful blessing that we do not have to earn our salvation on our own, or even part way! God has done it ALL for us! The fact that God would send His Spirit into our hearts and create faith in our hearts is truly a miracle. This is one reason why continue to read the Scriptures, because we see how powerful God is. Creating saving faith in Jesus Christ in our hearts is absolutely no different from the Holy Spirit bringing to faith a Hindu, a Buddhist, or even a postmodern Hipster because by nature we all hate God and are slaves to sin. God’s Word reminds us of these wonderful things.

Reading God’s Word also gives us the confidence to proclaim that very Word that we are reading. Christ gives us the command to go out. God explains that the command is not in vain. Isaiah 53 says, “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” That is quite the confidence booster knowing that the God who created the whole universe also works through the simple words that you speak.

Finally, having a personal devotional life where you are continually learning makes you relatable. Forget trying to stay up to date with pop culture. Forget trying to watch every football score to keep up with your fantasy draft. Forget trying to understand the surface problems of a

relationship. Forget it all (obviously, I say this tongue-in-cheek). However, we have something that shows our biggest commonalities. Our biggest commonality is sin and death! Study as much of the Word as you can. Let it be a part of your every day language as the TV shows and movies, and music are ingrained in your head! God's Word gives comfort in sad times. It gives us strength in difficult times. It gives confidence when death is near. It brings joy at all times.

Relationships

Why should I listen to you? Most people will think of this question when there is no prior relationship. A relationship requires more work than simply walking up the sidewalk to their house, ringing their door bell, and asking them to come to your Easter service. Sometimes, a relationship may take a long time before a spiritual conversation could ever be thought of. Every relationship is different. With time, both parties will gain confidence and trust in one another. Another great benefit of having some sense of friendship or relationship with the other person is that the relationship gives extra incentive for you to bring the gospel to them. I would hate to see my friend on a path to hell and destruction.

To the lay people: Go! Lay people are more likely than most pastors to already have relationships with people in the community who are not believers. To the pastors: this ministry is important. Get out there. Get involved with the community. It is also important for the pastor to participate in the community where they will meet people.

Respect

Respecting the other person's thoughts, opinions, and beliefs is important, no matter how off the wall they may seem. As the saying goes, "One must give respect to get respect." Respect will go a long way. The hope is that when you listen to them and respect them, they will also respect your beliefs and maybe even your accept your invitations to church.

Patience

Patience is difficult. No doubt about it. Yet, patience is extremely important in the evangelism process. Unbelievers may be stubborn because the message of the gospel is

foolishness to them, as Paul described in 1 Corinthians 1:18. “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

Invitations

The invitation style is a wonderful approach to evangelism. In John 1, Philip uses this approach with Nathaniel. He simply says, “Come and see!” Sometimes, we over think evangelism. Evangelism can be as simple as an invitation. When there is a relationship that exists, the non believer is much more likely to accept that invitation than a personal discussion. This is an important evangelism tool when speaking with those who question religion and in particular, your religion.

Be Prepared

What will I say? Speaking to people about Jesus Christ can often put people on edge or even on the defensive. Believers can often be scared that the non believer may ask a question that they do not know about. Preparation is key.

One reminder: preparation is never over because evangelism is never done. Whether you realize it or not, when you go through the previous steps of personal bible devotions, prayer, and building relationships, you have already begun the preparation. These are all stepping stones to evangelism. Each situation is different, which is why personal reading in other Bible based literature is a fantastic way to prepare for evangelism. The WELS provides wonderful materials that give explanations of Biblical doctrines³¹ and hot topics of today such as abortion, gay marriage, or even the role of man and woman. All of this literature is Bible based, not based on what “the WELS teaches.” Often in discussions with nonbelievers, we, Christians, may say that the WELS teaches this or that, instead of explaining what the Bible teaches. Nevertheless, this literature provides a wonderful source of knowledge.

³¹ : www.WhatAboutJesus.com is a wonderful website designed by the WELS to answer difficult questions. The WELS provides pertinent books that also answer many of the questions that Hipsters may ask. Two series, in particular, are the “People’s Bible Teaching” series (which is different than the “People’s Bible” books that are commentaries on books of the Bible) and the “Impact” series. These two series will help to explain topics from Baptism to Feminism.

Another great way to prepare for evangelism is to think of the more common questions that people have about the Bible. Answering those questions ahead of time and even having Bible passages ready will greatly decrease the likelihood of stumbling over an answer.

Ask Questions!

Ask questions! This probably would not be the evangelism technique when we usually think of evangelism as the believer speaking to the non believer. However, ask questions! Ask people what their views on different topics are. From my interview experience, people know what they are against concerning a certain topic. Yet, they do not know what they stand for or why they are against something. This way, it takes some of the pressure of the believer, who might think they are shoving the gospel down this person's throat and allows the unbeliever some opportunity for self reflection.

Prayer

Prayer is a powerful tool. We can study God's Word, we can prepare, and we can practice conversations. Ultimately, the whole situation is in God's hands. Prayer puts that much needed confidence into God. With prayer, God promises many blessings. He promises that he hears and listens to our prayers. We pray that God give us the strength and the courage to speak to people. We also pray that God give us the correct words to use. We pray that God use those words for his benefit. Finally, we pray that they be saved!

CONCLUSION

Evangelism was never spoken of as an easy endeavor in Scripture. Rather, Scripture describes evangelism as a task that will inevitably be difficult. God's command to go out into the world and our Christian love compel us to face adversity to preach His Word. The question that a Christian always faces then is, "How do we reach them and do so effectively?" Armed with nothing more than the trial and error process, I sought to answer this question, in particular with Postmoderns. They are my family. They are friends. Yet, they are often looked over because they are considered "different."

The purpose of this senior thesis project was to learn how to efficiently evangelize to Hipsters. As a great disappointment, the goal never was reached. The reality is that the goal will never be reached. Evangelism to Hipsters does not have a perfect technique. Every situation is different. Nevertheless, through the process, confidence was gained. Confidence is arguably one of the most important qualities of a person to evangelizing to an unbeliever. Relationships were made and developing those relationships and friendships will be more successful in evangelizing than any random survey.

In attempting to evangelize, a Christian will have questions, doubts, and concerns. However, God does not leave the Christians to fend for themselves. When we evangelize to others, not just postmoderns, we must rely on God. God has given the Christian numerous tools to consult. The most important tool is God's Word. In His Word, a Christian finds confidence. Our wit, our flowery language, our perfect defense to an argument are nothing. A Christian is unable to argue an unbeliever into heaven. Only through the work of Holy Spirit can an unbeliever come to faith. A Christian may study, prepare, and deliver well. Yet, the unbeliever may not believe. A Christian can easily become distressed. However, God's Word will always provide the comfort that a Christian needs. Ultimately, the situation is left in God's hands. The comfort of this wonderful Gospel inspires a Christian all the more to share it with the world. God's Word provides the truth in the world of a Hipster that believes there is no truth.

Our attempts at reaching out to Postmoderns will fail and probably fail often. However, God's Word is powerful and effective. On this side of heaven, a Christian may never know if the Lord has worked in an unbeliever's heart. Either way, a Christian trusts in God and continues to preach the wonderful news to the world.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW DIARY

Day 1: My first interviews were geared at simply trying to get my feet wet with the interview process. With the first two interviews, I went to Alterra Coffee, off of Farwell. I was also turned down by a several people at that location. The second location was a coffee shop off of Locust. I was able to interview one person there and a worker. People were generally comfortable with being interviewed. It was rather difficult not to jump in with ‘apologetics’ in these interviews, but I was mainly trying to understand where people were coming from and what they believe. I was simply asking questions about them and not trying to get into much discussion. This interview process is extremely time consuming and awkward asking random people. However, it is also very incredibly interesting talking with people and hearing about their lives. Generally, it seems that people don’t know what they believe, probably because they have never been asked. They seem to know what they are against, but not what they personally believe in! During this interview, I told them I was doing my thesis project which involved spirituality. I didn’t tell them I was studying to be a pastor for this interview because I didn’t want the answers to be skewed or biased against me.

Day 2: This next interview I slightly changed. I am hoping it is a little more geared towards finding out more of their spiritual status or at least their opinions on religion. Hopefully, the next interview process will involve a little more ‘apologetics’ and attempting to get them to question what they believe in. Then, the next interview will have more of what I believe in and will explain Law and Gospel

This day has been rough. A lot of people are turning me down. I was able to go into the UWM library and talk to 4 people. The interviews went well. However, I could’t help but think that sometimes I have the same thought process as many people, probably because of my sinful nature: I want to be accepting of all people. Yet, I must remember that these people don’t know the truth. That’s why I’m doing this paper! I am constantly thinking about and trying to understand the efficacy of God’s word. I know and understand that God’s word will never return to Him empty. However, how will the people hear if we don’t tell them! It always seems to be walking that fine line, between thinking that God will take care of everything while I sit back and between the idea that I have to be the one to argue them into heaven, even though I can’t “argue” them into heaven.

Again, during this interview, I told them I was doing my thesis project which involved spirituality. I didn’t tell them I was studying to be a pastor for this interview because I didn’t want the answers to be skewed or biased against me.

Day 3: I went to Fuel cafe on Center St. It is always difficult to work up the courage to do these interviews! I was able to speak with a wonderful gentleman outside in the wonderful fall morning. His beliefs were comparable to the *Lion King*’s “Circle of Life.” I was also able to interview another woman. It was a little interesting this time being a little more forward with some of the questions, rather than just asking for basic belief information. I commented to the

girl that from what she was saying, it seemed that that she did not even know what she herself believed in. She agreed! After the interview, I was able to speak to her a little more about Jesus. It was cool, but I am not very good! I think that is what is so frustrating.

Day 4: I went back to the UWM library. There, I talked with one guy but I was turned down by another. I was then able to speak with one girl and then two other guys. These interviews were pretty successful. I feel like I'm getting the people to really reflect about their views. I felt much more confident speaking with these people and pointing out the foolishness of some of their thinking. My possible next step is to put more leading questions and statements that bring the topic to God's word. I just feel like I don't know how to get that transitional question: to go from the questioning and apologetics to the gospel proclamation.

Day 5: This final day of interviews was successful and unsuccessful at the same time. I was able to interview one woman. The interview did not get the results I was looking for. In other words, I didn't get the Postmodern answers I was desiring for further research. However, this woman was hurting from having lost her child only several months earlier due to a car accident. We spoke for about 2 hours. It is interesting how God especially used this interview for his own purpose. I was not expecting that. I pray that the Spirit work in her heart. I guess that goes to show you that the Lord uses you in ways you never intended.

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRES

*The questionnaires progress from learning the background of the non Christian, to using more apologetics in the conversation.

First Questionnaire

Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
What did you appreciate most about your education?
In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
How did school change the way you viewed the world?
What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
Do you believe in absolute truth?
How do you base truth?
Do you believe lying is wrong?
Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
Where does that decision come from?
Are you sure that what you think is right really is right?
How do you believe man came about?
In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
What do you think our purpose is in life?
Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
How would you define spiritual?
What do you talk about with your friends?
Do you ever have spiritual conversations with friends? About what?
Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
How is your fate decided?
Do you believe in an afterlife?

Second Questionnaire

Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
What did you appreciate most about your education?
In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?

Do you believe in absolute truth?
How do you base truth?
Do you believe lying is wrong?
Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
Where does that decision come from?
Are you sure that what you think is right really is right?
How do you believe man came about?
In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
What do you think our purpose is in life?
Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
How would you define spiritual?
How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
Do you believe in an afterlife?

Third Questionnaire

Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
What did you appreciate most about your education?
In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
Do you believe in absolute truth?
How do you base truth?
Where does that decision come from?
If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
Do you believe lying is wrong?
Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
How do you believe man came about?
In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
Are there things that make you question even evolution?
What do you think our purpose is in life?
Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
How would you define spiritual?
Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?

Do you see your actions as not only affecting others but also God?
Do you believe in an afterlife?
Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?

Fourth Questionnaire

Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
Do you believe in absolute truth?
How do you base truth?
Where does that decision come from?
If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
Do you believe lying is wrong?
Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
How do you believe man came about?
In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
Are there things that make you question even evolution?
Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?
The fact that things are in perfect order? Our body? The world around us?
What do you think our purpose is in life?
Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
How would you define spiritual?
Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?
Do you believe in an afterlife?
Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEWS (Transcribed)

Interview 1

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Biology major, looking to be physician assistant
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. The professors get you to think outside the box and challenge what you already know. They want you to be your own thinker. It prepared me for the future
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. Wish she would have taken more physiology. Would be better for the medical world.
4. How did school change the way you viewed the world?
 - a. I know more about everything and challenged my thinking.
5. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. I want to succeed in life and live the best life I can. Not staying cooped up in my room. Succeeding in all aspects of life. Having a social life and being the best person I can be.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I'm not sure.
7. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. I have a pessimistic view, I guess. I want to say people are generally good. But I think we live in this really selfish world. I think that outweighs more of the good. We could be more respectful. It could be good, but I see more selfishness.
8. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. I'm going to get personal and I don't even know you! I do want to be happy in every aspect. I want to have good relationships and have a good job. I worry that I might not get that. Being happy is more important to me than anything.
9. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. I'm sorta catholic.
10. How do you base truth?
 - a. This sounds bad since I'm catholic, but I don't really know!
11. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. To some degree, I think little white lies are fine. I say them all the time! Harmless little lies aren't bad. But in terms of the more severe the consequence the lie the worse it is. If you tell your friends you don't want to go out that's fine. But cheating on an exam is a step up. Cheating on your boyfriend is even worse. I think everyone is trying to get ahead.
12. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. I completely believe in evolution. I'm a biology major. In my religious view, I think creationism is more of a metaphor, not literal.
13. What do you think our purpose is in life?

- a. I'm going to use our "Christian" views and say that we need to be the best person we can be.
14. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
- a. Yes. I just don't believe in all of it.
15. What do you talk about with your friends?
- a. Do you ever have spiritual conversations with friends? About what?
 - i. Not as often. I got away from a lot of the religious side of things in college. So, I guess, no.
16. How is your fate decided?
- a. Sometimes I believe I choose my own path, and sometimes I think it is determined.
17. If it is determined, who does the determining?
- a. God? I don't know. I think there is some degree of God influencing my life.
18. Do you believe in an afterlife?
- a. Yes. Heaven.

Interview 2

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Getting phd in comp lit. Want to be a college English teacher.
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. My view of the world isn't the only view out there.
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. I just like school! So not really.
4. How did school change the way you viewed the world?
 - a. Showed that my limited perspective isn't the only one.
5. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. I don't know. My cat. Studying for school, I guess.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Neither. There are positive and negative sides. We don't have segregation anymore, but we have still have some degrees of racism.
7. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. Neither. Their experiences help shape how they behave. We can't call somebody bad because they don't have money so they have to steal, or along those lines. Their surroundings may cause them to do that.
8. What worries you?
 - a. Relationship problems. But no great existential worries
9. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. No!
10. How do you base truth?
 - a. I guess I haven't really considered how I base my truth. But I guess accountability would be how truth is established. You are accountable for your actions.
11. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. Depends! Depends on the situation. Like if it deals with people's emotions...
12. How do you believe man came about?

- a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. Because it is logical and rational way of coming about
- 13. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. I feel we don't have to have a purpose.
- 14. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. How would you define spiritual?
 - b. Yes. I'm not super religious. But I look inward and outward. I turn to prayer in some cases. I do yoga so, yeah.
- 15. What do you talk about with your friends?
 - a. Do you ever have spiritual conversations with friends? About what?
 - b. On occasion. Not a topic that comes up all the time.
- 16. How is your fate decided?
 - a. My experiences and surroundings have contributed to my 'destiny' but I also have choice.
- 17. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I'm not sure right now. I know most my questions are like, I don't know. There could be, but I'm not depending on that to make my life decisions.

Interview 3

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Going to school for human resources.
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. Its cool all the classes you can take and all the things you can learn.
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. I don't like class!
4. How did school change the way you viewed the world?
 - a. I'm not sure!
5. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. Money definitely. The attempt to be lazy all day and sit in bed.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I don't know.
7. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. Generally good.
8. Where do you get that idea from?
 - a. Most people have at least a couple redeeming qualities.
9. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - i. I'm not generally a worrier. I'm sure I do, but I don't usually dwell on stuff like that.
10. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. No.
11. How do you base truth?
 - a. I think truth is subjective.
12. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. Yes.

13. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - a. I don't know how I decide that. If it makes me feel bad then yes.
14. What do you think about Adolf Hitler and what he did. He might have thought that was fine.
 - a. I think that was bad!
15. How do you believe man came about? In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - a. Kind of like a combo. Obviously there seems to be some type of evolution. But I think there was something that created humans. I do believe in some type of God sorta.
16. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. That I don't know. I think to be good. I don't know what my answer means I guess.
17. Do you describe yourself as spiritual? How would you define spiritual?
 - a. Not really spiritual. I believe in God, but not really spiritual.
18. What do you talk about with your friends? Do you ever have spiritual conversations with friends? About what?
 - a. Not so much.
19. How is your fate decided?
 - a. You are kind of the master of your own destiny.
20. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I do. I guess I got the idea from how I was raised. I think there is something, but I don't know.

Interview 4

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. I'm actually not in school currently. I went to school for a couple years
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. Well, it was free.
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. Way too structured and there is only one way of doing things.
4. How did school change the way you viewed the world?
 - a. It changed my view on some things. People are way too much into themselves.
5. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. People and interactions with people.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I don't know. I've never been out of America, so I don't know what to compare it to.
7. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. That's a tough question. You never really know. Everybody is different.
8. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. I worry about stupid stuff.
9. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. No. Because there is so much evil in this world
10. How do you base truth?
 - a. I'm not sure though.
11. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. Oh good question. Yeah, I think it is wrong because what are you trying to do?

12. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - a. Based on society and how they base it.
13. How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
 - a. Not sure
14. Adolf Hitler thought what he was doing was right. What do you think?
 - a. No, that was wrong. But I'm not sure...
15. How do you believe man came about? In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - a. Evolution. I like the creation story though. Sounds interesting.
16. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. I have no idea!
17. Do you describe yourself as spiritual? How would you define spiritual?
 - a. More spiritual than religious. I believe in a higher being.
18. How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
 - a. Off of feeling and intuition.
19. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I believe in reincarnation, but just because it sounds cool.

Interview 5

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Speech therapy
2. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. Nothing really. I liked it.
3. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. Just my school work and family and friends.
4. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - b. Not really. Minor things, but nothing I think about every day. Just things in the moment.
5. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Worse. For sure. The way people treat other people.
6. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. Kind of blank. What they do determines if they become good or bad.
7. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. Maybe. I'm not sure.
8. How do you base truth?
 - a. Sort of on what the bible says
9. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. Yes.
10. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right? How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
 - a. What you believe personally plus things in the bible says
11. How do you believe man came about? In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - a. Creation
12. What do you think our purpose is in life?

- a. Live and try to do good, leave a good mark
- 13. Do you describe yourself as spiritual? How would you define spiritual?
 - a. I would be more spiritual. But I'm not really labeled to anything
- 14. How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
 - a. It is predetermined
- 15. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. Yes, I believe in that.

Interview 6

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Actuarial sciences for insurance companies and stuff like that
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. I love learning
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. I wish it was easier. It is challenging sometimes.
4. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. I'm goal oriented and I want to achieve them. I want to do well in school.
5. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life? Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - a. Three main things that concern me: a good career. Have a good family and get married to someone I can trust. The third, having success with my family and I care about. I do worry about death once in while. I really care about being alive, I want to see and do many things.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I'm not sure, since I'm not from America. But world culture...i'm not sure.
7. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. Sometimes, people are nice. For the most part since I've been in America, I haven't been treated differently because I'm a colored guy. In general, people have been nice to me.
8. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. Sort of.
9. How do you base truth?
 - a. I kind of believe in the bible. I believe in God, but I don't know truth. I don't understand why things are right or wrong.
10. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. According to the bible yes. But when I have to, I sometimes think it the right thing to do. It is more situational. But it isn't right to do. But sometimes you have to.
11. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. There is a scientific way to approach it. But in the bible, we say we are made by God. I believe in God. But it is hard to say. I have no proof to say that is wrong. It is subjective to say that it was God. I wouldn't reject any of those ideas
12. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. To be happy. Have a family, have a career.

13. Do you describe yourself as spiritual? How would you define spiritual?
 - a. Yes. That you believe in someone/something you don't see.
14. How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
 - a. Yes and no. He does influence what we do, but we do play a part too.
15. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I personally don't. I think everything happens here on earth. In church we are taught there may be life after. That may be true.

Interview 7

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Psychology
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. The work of tutors and the help that they have.
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. No not really.
4. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. Sunshine. I love the sun and being outdoors. I love the opportunities that we have.
5. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - i. Yeah. I believe that. Grades in school. I don't want to be a failure. When people talk about it, I think about it, but I don't dwell on it.
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. Worse. We have no values or morals. I think other cultures value education, and morals more.
 - ii. Generally good. But the values are very selfish.
7. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. I'm not sure
 - b. How do you base truth?
 - i. By what my parents teach me.
 - c. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - i. Yeah
 - d. How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
 - i. Well my parents and the people around me.
 - e. What about Adolf Hitler and what he stood for and did?
 - i. That's weird. But he was crazy though.
8. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. I go to church and I still believe in evolution, because it just makes sense. There's scientific facts and it is logical.
9. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. That is hard to say. To do good things and make for better generations.
10. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?

- a. How would you define spiritual?
 - b. I guess so. I believe there is a God. But more than that no.
11. How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
- a. No. I'm not sure. Sometimes I think things are meant to be. So I guess, it is predetermined.
12. Do you believe in an afterlife?
- a. I don't know. I like reincarnation because it sounds cool.
13. Are you open to religion?
- a. Yeah.
14. Are there things that turn you off about religion?
- a. A lot of times, I feel people are always judging.

Interview 8

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. math
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. Tutors also help. The help of study sessions.
3. In what respects might it have been an even better experience?
 - a. Nope not at all.
4. What makes you get out of bed in the morning? What motivates you in life?
 - a. I love to go to class.
5. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - i. I don't want to get fat. I don't really think about death
6. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. I think worse too.
 - ii. I'm not sure!
7. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. No
 - b. How do you base truth?
 - i. I never really thought about that.
 - c. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - i. Yeah
 - d. How do you decide for yourself if something is wrong or right?
 - i. My conscience
 - e. What about Adolf Hitler and what he stood for and did?
 - i. Yeah, I don't know what to say about that.
8. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution.
9. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. To love your family. And love in general.
10. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?

- a. How would you define spiritual?
 - i. I pray. The bible is cool because it says to love and be nice to everyone.
- 11. How is your fate decided? Is it predetermined?
 - a. No. I have the freedom to do whatever I want.
- 12. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. Not really.
- 13. Are you open to religion?
 - a. Not really.
- 14. Are there things that turn you off about religion?
 - a. I never really thought about it and I don't care.

Interview 9

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Natural resource mgmt.. Conservation biology.
2. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - i. I worry more about life, and trying to make my life in a way that is happy.
3. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I think better.
4. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - a. I don't think they are a blank slate, but in the middle.
5. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. no
6. How do you base truth? (how do you know what is right or wrong?)
 - a. Absolute truth would be a construct.
7. Where does that decision come from?
 - a. The earth process would be the best way to define any truth.
 - b. If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
8. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - a. yes
9. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - a. It negates the whole purpose of life. If we are experiencing things, why lie and waste the time?
 - b. Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong?
 - i. Obviously, bad. That's why I am here. My grandparents were in Poland at that time and then had to go to Germany to be on labor farms. After the war they could go back to Poland or go to the USA. So they came to the use.
 - ii. Anyways, there are obvious right or wrongs
 - c. How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad? Where do you get that knowledge?

- i. Fairness. If it is between different people or organisms, we should think about it more and be fair.
10. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. It is based on observation. Rather than somebody's literature.
 11. Are there things that make you question even evolution?
 - a. Sure. It is *just* a theory. But, these have been tested more. The more you test things, the more you question them too. But, I still believe in evolution.
 12. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. Nothing. We are nothing and everything is eventually nothing. But everything is everything. The purpose in life is to just work to that degree of fairness.
 13. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. Spiritual is composted. It is understanding nutrient cycles...
 14. How would you define spiritual?
 - a. It is just cycling. Carbon cycling. There is a spirituality in us trying to figure out what we are, where we stand. But, we have this amazing capacity to understand.
 15. Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?
 - a. I don't necessarily believe in a supreme being. But it does justify things for a lot of people. Some of them are wrong.
 16. Do you see your actions as not only affecting others but also God?
 - a. Not so much because we are confined to this earth
 17. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. Not so much. We are in a cycle.
 18. Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
 - a. Some people find peace in it. I do like how the peace brings people to greater fairness with other people and all things.
- * I'm calling this guy the "Lion King" theology guy.

Interview 10

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Art history and general stuff
2. What did you appreciate most about your education?
 - a. I was surprised how much I like school
3. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. It has been a rough year. So I worry about everything! It just takes over my life and it is a constant worry.
4. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - a. I guess in a way. My grandma is getting a lot older. I guess I'm worried about my own death. What would happen with all my stuff and who would take care of all that?
5. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Worse. Looking at TV, its ridiculous the things that are talked about on TV now.
6. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?

- a. I think people are generally good. But I also know a lot of people that are bad. But for the most part, good.
- 7. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. How do you base truth? (what is right or wrong?)
 - i. I don't think things are so black and white. I'm not sure.
- 8. Where does that decision come from?
 - a. If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
 - i. Yeah, I have no idea. It might be pretty subjective.
- 9. Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
 - a. Of course it was wrong.
- 10. It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
 - a. Yeah, I would say so.
- 11. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. The world has been around for a long time. I don't know. It just has to be evolution.
- 12. Are there things that make you question even evolution?
 - a. No, I don't think so.
- 13. If you believe in evolution, What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. To be happy, to find what makes you happy.
- 14. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. No.
- 15. How would you define spiritual?
 - a. Finding calm in your life. Like an equilibrium.
- 16. Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?
 - a. I believe there is something.
- 17. Do you see your actions as not only affecting others but also God?
 - a. I don't know.
- 18. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. Yes
- 19. Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
 - a. It is kind of hypocritical. But, I like the stories of how you learn to be good and be good to others. The hell thing turns me off.

Interview 11

- 1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. School psychology. I like it!
- 2. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?

- i. Sure. Fear of failure. Fear of being inadequate. I worry about the future of our society. So that is why I want to keep going with studying school things. I am a little worried about death and the unknown.
- 3. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. Its going in a bad direction. I'm in schools and see how they are getting worse.
 - ii. I believe in a blank slate. I do believe people are born bad. No matter what you do there so sociopaths. I do think that is true.
- 4. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. No. I think that can be dangerous to be so closed minded.
 - b. How do you base truth?
 - i. But. I think you have to be empathetic and know to do the right thing.
 - c. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - i. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - 1. Yeah. No. It doesnt solve anything. Sometimes you can deliver the truth in better ways. But lying is wrong.
 - d. Where does that decision come from?
 - i. Because, I would want to know the truth. It is always wrong to hurt someone, or their property. But it can vary by situation. Honesty is important. It can be subjective though.
 - e. Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
 - i. He is mentally ill person! That is an extreme example.
 - f. If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
 - i. Oh. Yeah. I don't know.
- 5. So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
a. N/A
- 6. It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
a. Yeah, I'm not sure. I would have to think about that more.
- 7. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. It makes sense, based on scientific evidence
 - b. Are there things that make you question even evolution?
 - i. No.
 - c. Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?
 - i. The fact that things are in perfect order? Our body and The world around us?
 - 1. I just don't think so.
- 8. What do you think our purpose is in life?

- i. I don't know. I think we need to respect and nature and what we have been given. I think we are here to do as much good as we can and be the best that we can be.
 - a. Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
 - i. Yeah, maybe
- 9. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. Yeah sort of.
- 10. How would you define spiritual?
 - a. Understanding how crazy it is that we are here and alive. We have all these opportunities so I try to keep things in perspective.
- 11. Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?
 - a. Yes. But I don't think he interferes.
- 12. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. No. I don't think so. I was raised to believe that there was, but I don't think so. It is scary to think that there isn't, but that's a bad reason to think that there is.
- 13. Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
 - a. I had gone to catholic school. The people aren't any better. Sometimes the religious people are worse. They can get "forgiveness" and live how they want. People should just be a good person for yourself, rather than to please a God or a religion.

Interview 12

- 1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. History. But I have no idea what I want to do with my life.
- 2. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - b. No not really. Hopefully, death is something far down the road that I don't have to worry about.
- 3. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. I'm sort of in the middle. I don't think it is getting better. I don't think it is getting worse.
 - b. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. I'd like to think they are generally good. But sometimes in the middle.
- 4. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - i. No.
 - a. How do you base truth?
 - i. My own morals.
 - b. Where did you get those morals?
 - i. I don't know. If it hurts more people than it benefits, it is probably bad.
 - 1. Have you thought that if there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true? If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
 - a. I don't know. I would just assume they are telling the truth.
 - c. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - i. For the most part yes. Sometimes there are ok times.
 - ii. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?

1. I don't know.
- d. Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
 - i. Yeah, I think the genocide was wrong.
5. So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
 - a. I'm not sure. I guess I don't care that much.
6. It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
 - a. I don't really know. I just base everything on my own morals
7. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Evolution. There is scientific evidence
 - b. Are there things that make you question even evolution?
 - i. I don't know enough to doubt it...but there is more scientific evidence than even a God.
 - ii. Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?
 1. The fact that things are in perfect order?
 - a. Our body
 - b. The world around us
 2. I don't think so.
8. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. Not really
 - b. How would you define spiritual?
 - i. Believing in a higher power. I'm not really an atheist, I just base everything on my own morals.
9. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I don't really have a take on that. I won't know until I'm there.
10. Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
 - a. I'm open to it. But that is the last thing I'm worried about it right now.
11. If you say you are open to religion, how can you say that you don't know if you believe in a higher God. Because, aren't most religions believing in a God?
 - a. Like I said, I'm open to it. But it is the last thing I'm worried about.
12. So what would you even be open about in religion?
 - a. I don't know. If I did, I would pick some religion. I'm just waiting for something that is right.

Interview 13

1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. History.
2. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?

- i. Maybe, not a worry that masters me. With death, I don't like the fact that with those who die, you can't speak with them ever again. For me, it would be awful for me to just end and have nothing.
- 3. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - i. I want to say in a better direction in regards to politics. But with children and TV today, obesity is terrible and things like that.
 - a. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. I think it all comes from a very primitive view point. Everyone seems to try and get ahead, like greed. It is very materialistic. So, I don't know.
- 4. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - i. I'm not sure. I think for an absolute truth, you need an absolute fact. Some people base their facts on the bible or something else. For those who have never explored or agreed with, I'm not sure.
 - a. How do you base truth? What is right or wrong?
 - i. I guess you have to look at the facts around you, like the books or people.
 - b. Where does that decision come from?
 - 1. I'm not sure.
 - i. If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
 - 1. I'm not sure. I guess they would have to prove it to you somehow. You would have to interpret it as truth. So it is more subjective.
 - c. Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - i. Probably no because things get blurry with what is true or not. It seems to be a vicious circle with what is right or wrong. Now I'm getting confused!
 - ii. Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - d. Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?
 - i. He was a little deranged. But, I guess it goes back to human rights. But I guess that brings up the topic, where do human rights come from.
- 5. So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
 - a. I'm not sure!
- 6. It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?
 - a. I don't like to believe in something unless there is something to back it up.
- 7. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. I would say evolution. There is a decent amount of information to back it up.
 - b. Are there things that make you question even evolution?
 - i. It is always in question. Like where does evolution even start.
 - c. Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?

- i. The fact that things are in perfect order?
 - 1. Our body
 - 2. The world around us
 - ii. I'm not sure about that.
- 8. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. A very primitive view: reproduce and die. That is a basic idea. But socially, I guess, be a part of a community and do something to contribute to the people around you.
 - b. Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
 - i. Yes. I always do. It is hard to base what you believe without solid answers.
- 9. Do you describe yourself as spiritual?
 - a. I don't know if I'm spiritual or not. I would lean more towards no.
- 10. How would you define spiritual?
 - a. I don't know. It is hard to define. It tries to find out who you are and what happens when you die. What happens to your soul, or whatever.
- 11. Do you believe in a greater power than us? Like God?
 - a. No. I don't think so.
- 12. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. I want to say yes. But nobody knows. You can't believe in something that nobody knows about.
- 13. Are you open to religion, or are there things that turn you off?
 - a. If there is a religion to back it up, I would consider it more. Like Christianity, they base their religion on one book. It is 2000 years old. And nobody knows who wrote it. Anybody could write a book and say it is absolute truth.

Interview 14

- 1. Where are you going to school and what are you studying?
 - a. Realogy The flow of liquids. I'm just taking one course here. I actually work in a lab doing research.
- 2. It has been said, "What worries you masters you." Would you say this is true in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
 - i. Yes. You probably hit the diamond mine. Back in May, I lost my son. For several months I went through the grieving process and I was very angry about a lot of things. I started reading a lot about spirituality and praying a lot. I noticed that I was focusing too much on myself. Things were not clicking. I needed to understand that the purpose is not me. It involves me. But it is not me. It is fulfilling what God wants me to do. Ever since I've been doing that and praying more, I've been more at peace.
- 3. Do you believe our American culture is going in a better or worse direction?
 - a. Morally, in a worse direction because more and more people are being selfish. If we get to a point of fulfilling a higher purpose, we will get to a better society.
 - b. Do you believe man is generally good or bad or a blank slate?
 - i. When I was younger, I was more naive and thought they were good. But not, I see that more people are languishing. They do things for themselves. They just don't care and it is all about themselves.

4. Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - a. I'm not sure
 - b. How do you base truth?
 - i. I go with my gut feeling. If I have remorse for it, I know it is wrong. I also believe that God looks out for us.
 - c. Where does that decision come from?
 - i. I came from a catholic family. So there is part of my faith that I believe in. There are other aspects that it doesn't make sense.
 - d. Would you consider yourself still catholic?
 - i. I would say yes. You know to me, its all ice cream. It doesn't matter what flavor. As long as you like ice cream.
 - ii. If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn't true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn't have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
5. How do you believe man came about?
 - a. In other words, do you believe in creation or evolution?
 - i. Creation. From what the bible says.
6. What do you think our purpose is in life?
 - a. I don't know what that is. I know that there is one. However, I do believe that everybody's purpose is to be their best self. For several years, I left the catholic church, I went to a non-denominational church. This church kept convincing me that what I should be doing is community service. Give up my time and do more charitable things. And that didn't sit well with me. Because I am a good person. But I can't do charity work, because I find it hard to volunteer my time when I am hard core scientist, lab manager, a teacher and very career driven. I wouldn't be utilizing my strengths. I want to help, but I don't have time.
7. Do you believe in an afterlife?
 - a. Yes!

Evangelism Training

Hipsters

By Peter Walther



Teacher's Guide

* This training guide is not necessarily a finished product. It is meant to be used as an outline by the teacher to expound upon, add questions, discuss, and pray about. Unfortunately, there is no “magic bullet” to evangelism, especially to Hipsters. However, this training guide will hopefully encourage Christians to evangelize to the world.

Evangelism

Training: Hipsters

I. Why Hipsters?

II. Questions For Reflection

III. 10 P's for Sharing Jesus

IV. Approaches to Evangelism

A. Cocktail Napkin Approach

B. Come and See approach

C. Friendship approach

1. Some tips for deepening relationships

2. Friendship Evangelism.

D. Apologetic approach

E. Six-Point Law/Gospel Witness

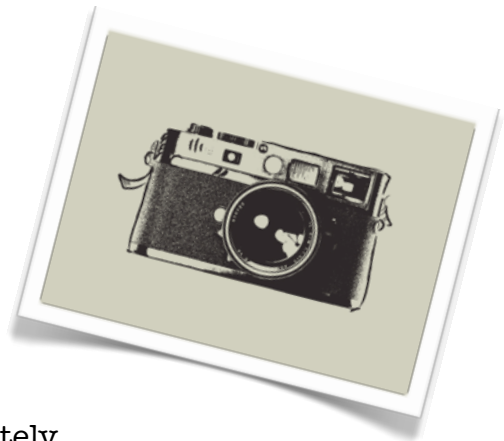
V. References

Why Hipsters?

Postmodernism has worked its way into every facet of life, from Universities to Preschools, and even from Churches to families. Many times, we don't even realize how ingrained Postmodernism is in our culture. Our culture today may even label this group as "Hipsters." Hipsters are a niche mainstream group in society that ironically prides itself on being independent from the mainstream. So how do we reach them? What if we get into an argument? Will that hurt our chances? They are my family. They are friends. Yet, they are often looked over. We would hate for them to go anywhere other than Heaven. These are the people we want to evangelize!

Questions For Reflection

A connection with Christ is essential for helping us share our faith. We cannot share what we do not have. Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) Our purpose on earth as Christians, to be Christ's witnesses, stems from our connection with Jesus. So, in order to grow in our ability to confidently share our Savior with others, we need to remain connected to him. And we do that by remaining in the Word.



1) Why does God want us to be prepared?

- 1) Helps us to speak it clearly and completely
 - 1) A good Bible information class, provided by the church, will often help lay everything out clearly.

2) Evaluate: Our way of life may be the only "Bible" some unbelievers will ever read.

- 1) True.

2) However, is that enough? Faith comes from hearing the message.

3) What fears or concerns often keep you from being a confident witness?

- 1) General timidity
- 2) Scared of rejection
- 3) I don't believe I know the Bible that well.
- 4) I don't know the answers to their questions

4) As Christians, we have the privilege and the command from our Lord to tell others about salvation through Jesus. What application do the following passages have for you to help become a more confident witness for Jesus?

- 1) Luke 10:16 He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.
- 2) Matthew 10:19-20 Do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.
- 3) Isaiah 55:11 So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
- 4) Matthew 28:20 Surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

5) Be alert to "times of transition." These are spans of time in which a person's everyday life is disrupted by some event that puts them into an unfamiliar, and therefore often frightening, situation. What are some examples of such times of transition?

- 1) Death in a family
- 2) Sickness
- 3) Troubles with work/school
- 4) Relationship problems

6) Evaluate: Evangelism is the responsibility of the Pastor

- 1) True.
- 2) It is also the responsibility of those in the congregation.

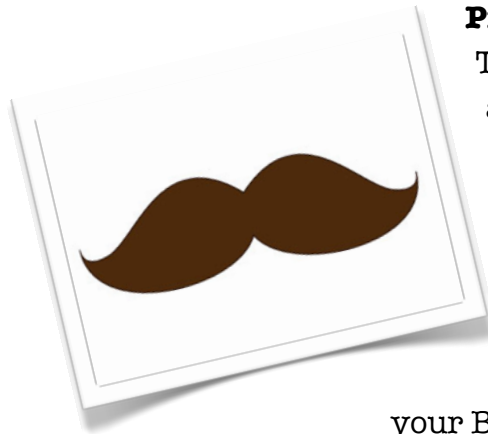
7) Friendship evangelism is not a "program" that the WELS has established. However, it is a command of Jesus. This evangelism flows out of love for our Savior as we share the good news with everyone we can. What opportunities/advantages do friendships give for sharing the gospel?

- 1) Easier to jump into spiritual conversations
- 2) Examples...

10 P's for Sharing Jesus³²

Pray

Pray regularly for people who do not believe in Jesus and also for those who do believe but are struggling in their spiritual life. Ask God to work in their hearts with his powerful gospel to bring them to saving faith in Jesus.



Prepare

The Bible says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” 1 Peter 3:15.

People will notice that you are a Christian, and they will ask you about it. “Why are you so kind to people, even to those who aren’t nice to you?” “Why do you pray before you eat?” “Why do you wear cross jewelry?” “Why do you read

your Bible and attend worship services?” Think

beforehand what you will say. Ask yourself the question, “What does it mean for me to believe in Jesus?” Then, study! Read the Word of God. Read books that the WELS prints that help answer tough questions about the Bible. The more you read and study, the more confident you will be in sharing the good news with friends.

Practice

Just like a lot of things, the more you practice, the better you can do it. The same is true of sharing your faith. Practice with a friend or family member who already believes in Jesus. Or, practice by asking yourself questions out loud. This might sounds silly, but it works! This will help you overcome nervousness and make you more confident. It will also help you to be better prepared to answer questions and concerns that people may raise as you talk to them about Jesus.

Project Your Light

While our actions will never bring someone to faith, they may open a door to sharing the gospel which can bring a person to faith. **Let your light shine!** Just asking someone, “How is it going?” can lead to an opportunity that you never

³² WELS “Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends”

expected. On the other hand, you can't tease someone one day and expect the person to take you seriously the next day when you try to talk about the importance of Jesus.

Proclaim the Good News

The good news about Jesus is the power that the Holy Spirit uses to work faith in the hearts of people. So when you have the opportunity, proclaim Jesus! Tell people about Jesus--that he is our loving friend who saved us from being separated from God and his spiritual blessings. He died to give us life with God right now and forever in heaven. Just tell people from your heart what the Bible has convinced you to be true about Jesus our Savior.

Pace Yourself

You don't have to tell a person everything that you know about the Bible all at once. Take your time and as your relationship with a friend grows, share more and more about Jesus.

Persist

Sometimes people won't listen or accept what you say. But, don't be discouraged. As you have opportunity, keep reminding your friend about Jesus and share what you believe. God loves your friend too, even more than you do, and God wants that person to experience the joy and hope of being one of His children by faith in Jesus. Pray that God's will be done for your friend and that God will keep using you and others to share Jesus.

Promises

Confidently trust the promises of Jesus that he will always be with you (Matthew 28:20), that you have the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), and that God's Word will always accomplish what he wants it to (Isaiah 55:11).

Patience

Don't give up on people too soon. Remember how patient our God is with us! God's loving patience is an example for us to follow as we introduce people to Jesus. Don't become discouraged, but trust in God.

Pride

Be proud of your Christian faith! You have been given a gift that is more precious than all worldly wealth. Your Savior is honored that you believe in him, and he is pleased that you are willing to share his name with others.

Approaches to Evangelism

Cocktail Napkin Approach ³³

A Simple Verbal Explanation

The first thing you have to understand is that there is a difference between religion as most people think about it and Christianity.

Religion is spelled “DO” because it consists of what people do to try to earn God’s favor and his forgiveness. But you never know when you’ve done enough. It is like being a salesman and working toward a quota but you’re never told what the quota is. You never know. The Bible says, worse yet, we really never can do enough. Everybody falls short.

Thankfully Christianity is spelled differently. It is spelled “DONE.” That just means that what we could never do for ourselves, God has done for us. Jesus is the Son of God who came into this world. He lived the life we could never live perfectly and he was willing to die on the cross to pay the penalty we owed for our sins. To become a Christian just means to trust Him: That he loves you so much that he really did do that. When you trust him, he adopts you into his family and begins to change you from the inside out.

³³ Winterim Evangelism class, Professor Leyrer

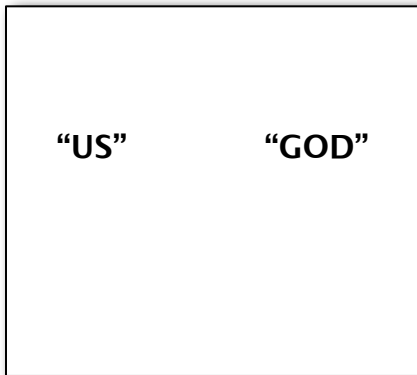
DO versus DONE.

The Brief Cocktail Napkin Approach

First Step:

Religion is all about us and God.

(write "Us" "God")

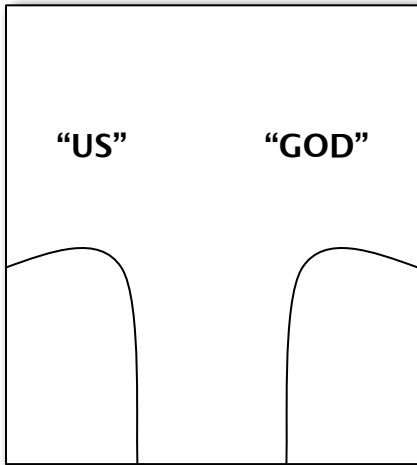


We matter a great deal to God. God loves you and he loves me more than we can possibly imagine.

Second Step:

But something is wrong with everything, and that includes us. Something has come between us and God.

(draw canyon)

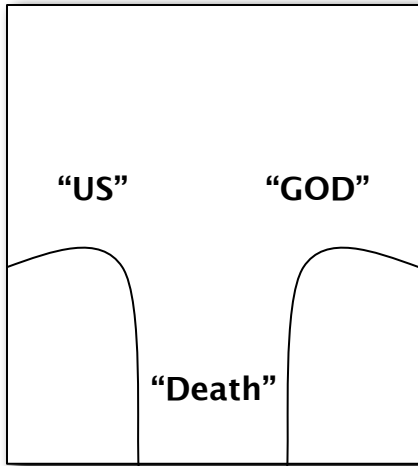


The Bible calls it sin . . . just watch the evening news, it's clear something is wrong, I mean, with us. Think about your own life. The Bible says it is sin that has separated us from God. That's the emptiness we feel. When we feel guilty,

this is what we're feeling! That's the missing piece when we say, "There must be something more than this."

Third Step:

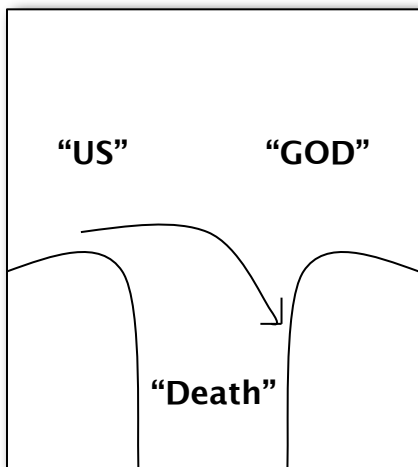
And this is what we're afraid of,
(write "Death")



We're all afraid that death might be the final ultimate separation. We're afraid that we aren't ready to die and stand before God as the judge of our lives. And we're right.

Fourth Step:

(draw "arrows")



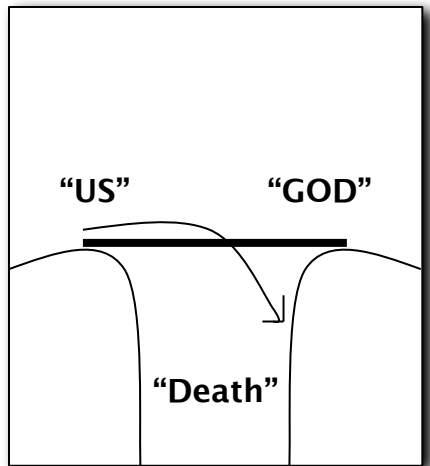
The Bible says that we can try anything we want to get across this canyon but nothing works. There is no human initiative that can solve this problem and

bridge this great canyon -- this gap between us and God. There is nothing we can do about it.

Fifth Step:

We couldn't reach God, so God reached for us.

(draw line from God side to man side)



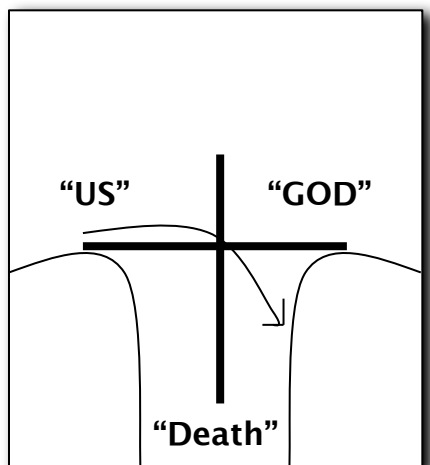
There is only One who could bridge this gap. He had to be both a human being, like we are, and he had to be God, too. That's how the Bible talks about Jesus -- born of the woman Mary but conceived by God.

Jesus is the Son of God who came into the world and lived the life we should have lived. He had perfect love for God and for people at all times.

Last Step:

and still

(complete the cross)



. . . He died. You may have heard that Jesus died on the cross. He was willing to die in our place, instead of us, paying the penalty for our sin.

That's what we believe, that what we could never do, God simply did for us. We believe it's all done; God has bridged the gap through Jesus his Son. He loves us. All the guilt of all of the world was laid on Jesus. One of the last things Jesus said before He died was, "It is finished!" It's done, it's paid for. That's what we believe. We believe that what we could never do for ourselves, God has done for us.

This is the truth. Believe it. To know and trust that God loves you this much and that he has accepted you for Jesus' sake, this means you have taken this gift and made it completely your own. God himself plants this faith within you by the power of his Word and his Holy Spirit. We have the full assurance that we are forgiven and brought into his family. We are convinced that heaven and eternal joy lay beyond our death, which we now can fear as little as we fear our own bed. Knowing this love begins to change us from the inside out. This doesn't necessarily mean that life is easy, but there is a joy and a peace, and a love that comes to me just because of this that I have never found anywhere but here: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Come and See Approach

The "Come and See" approach is far from a new age approach. In fact, this approach was used by Philip, Jesus' disciple. The book of John says already in the first chapter, "45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of

Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 Nathanael said to him,

"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

This approach is a wonderful tool.

Many believers become nervous or feel inadequately trained for evangelism. There is nothing wrong with that. Here, the Bible gives us a wonderful tool, a simple invitation.

The people that this training is geared to witness to, postmoderns and hipsters, will often



say they need facts to believe something. In other words, they need to see it to believe it. As believers, we are essentially using that same approach. We are inviting them to come see and hear God's word and, God willing, believe!

However, an invitation to church will not always get them out of bed on Sunday morning. Show your love to that individual by going out of your way. Offer to drive and pay for coffee afterwards. This act allows you to go to church together and also provides time after to discuss questions that will arise.

The "Come and See" approach is so simple. Yet, this can be incredibly effective.

Friendship Approach

Why should I listen to you? Most people will think of this question when there is no relationship prior. A relationship requires more work than simply walking up the sidewalk to their house, ringing their door bell, and asking them to come to your Easter service. Sometimes, a relationship may take a long time before a spiritual conversation could ever be thought of. Every relationship is different. However, with time both parties of a relationship will gain confidence and trust in one another. Another great benefit of having some sense of friendship or relationship with the other person is that the relationship gives extra incentive for you to bring the gospel to them. I would hate to see my friend on a path to hell and destruction.

Some Tips for Deepening Relationships³⁴

1) **Accept people in Christian love.** Acceptance is believing that a person is valuable and that we are ready to put some time and energy into building a relationship. Acceptance is an act of unconditional love. That does not mean approval of sinful behavior. It does mean that we will be a friend with someone in spite of their "warts." Such unconditional love will move the friendship to a deeper relationship in which we will have plenty of opportunity to talk about the unconditional love of our best friend, Jesus.



³⁴ WELS "Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends"

2) **Be interested in people who need Jesus.**

Focus on them (not on yourself) to find commonalities and make connections. We grow closer with people when we do things together regularly. Spend time with your friends, sharing ordinary times of life together. As Christians we build relationships not just for friendships' sake. We have an eternal goal in mind. We want to share the good news with our friends that Jesus is the Savior of all people.

3) **Help people in their every day needs.**

Our actions testify to the power of God's love working in our lives. A kind word, a helpful deed, an unexpected gift are ways that we can let our faith show and generate curiosity about "what makes us tick." Likely our charity will open up various opportunities to explain our faith.

4) **Commit yourself to the Lord in prayer.**

Ask God to help you be more confident about sharing your faith. Pray for the knowledge you need for speaking about Jesus as the world's Savior. Pray that Christ give you a deep concern for the souls of all people, but especially for the ones that you know personally. Ask God for the privilege of being used by Him to reach out with the gospel to those people who need Jesus, and get ready for the Lord to answer your prayer!

Friendship Evangelism.³⁵

When dealing with the postmodern hipster of today, we must put aside our presuppositions of them as being incredibly pretentious. Non-hipsters are just as pretentious as people think hipsters are. These ideas must be put aside if headway is to be made. When these thoughts are put away, relationships must become a priority. As with anyone, a relationship is based on trust where the possibility of deeper conversations are much more likely. Not having that prior relationship increased the stress and difficulty of asking people to open their hearts to me. Many postmoderns grow apathetic to any religion when there is no personal connection for them. If they were or are in school, students are constantly bombarded by religious pamphlets. I personally would see people yelling at Jehovah's Witnesses for stopping them and making them late for class or meetings, whether or not they actually had class or meetings. Regardless,

³⁵ WELS "Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends"

relationships are an important stepping stone to having meaningful discussions about religion.

The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of souls. While our life of faith and our eloquence to explain our faith are important to witnessing, they won't save anyone. God the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to turn the hearts of people to Jesus and work saving faith. So, after we talk to our friends about Jesus, how can we follow-up on those spiritual conversations to bring them into more contact with God's Word? Here are some tips:

- 1) Invite your unchurched friends to a special service or event at church.
- 2) Invite them to a Bible study. Your friends might be more inclined to come to classes that address issues that they have questioned and talked to you about. Additionally, offer to attend the pastor's Bible information class with your friends
- 3) Share good Christian books, videos, etc. Share some of those resources in the church library that address your friends' curiosity and questions about the Christian faith.
- 4) Introduce your friends to other Christians who have similar situations, concerns, or interests. God may use the witness of others to help reach them with the gospel.
- 5) Point them to helpful websites: www.WhatAboutJesus.com or the church's website.
- 6) Email daily devotions on portions of God's Word. Subscribe for email delivery of inspirational devotions each weekday.
- 7) Send Christian cards for their birthdays, special occasions, and holidays.
- 8) Simply, show general interest in the lives of your friends.



Apologetic Approach³⁶

We emphasize now, we are not sorry for anything! Christian apologetics is not what we may think of in our everyday language. The word apologetics comes from a Greek word, ἀπολογία, which means "speaking in defense." In other words, the art of Christian apologetics is defending the Christian faith. The term apologetics often implies a negatively styled argument. However, Christians are not necessarily meant to shy away from confrontation. After all, Paul writes in

³⁶ Koukl, *Tactics*

Ephesians 6:10-20 to be strong in the Lord and to put on the full armor of God so that we might stand against the devil's schemes. Jesus also comments on his call to us as Christians. He says in Matthew 10:16, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves." We pray for the Lord's strength and that we be reminded of this passage.

We must remember: **You cannot argue someone into Heaven!** However, we can sow seeds and pray that the Holy Spirit works in their heart.

Christian apologetics can be the most intimidating approach to evangelism, and rightly so. Confronting people and defending the Bible will not win a popularity vote. Another problem is that Christians often feel inadequate to answering many of the questions that will inevitably arise in a discussion about Christianity. However, with the proper skills and tactics, A Christian will gain more confidence to share their faith.

Here are a list of some tips to remember when evangelizing with the "Apologetic approach."



1) Read as much as you can. Then, read it again.

1) What a wonderful opportunity to begin your personal devotional schedule. How can we share the wonderful news if we are not properly fed by the life giving Word?

2) Consider adding supplemental reading to your personal devotion.

1) The WELS provides wonderfully pertinent books that answer many of the questions that

Hipsters may ask. Two series, in particular, are the "People's Bible Teaching" series (which is different than the "People's Bible" books that are commentaries on books of the Bible) and the "Impact" series. These two series will help to explain topics from Baptism to Feminism.

2) Browse through Christian apologetic books. Often, these books help set up scenarios where a Christian evangelizes an unbeliever using the apologetic approach.

2) Keep it simple

1) There is no need to dive into deep theology. Instead, keep it simple: Sin and Grace. This training guide provides a Six Point Law and Gospel Witness that is a simple and effective foundation for doing evangelism.

Also consider browsing through “God’s Great Exchange,” which the WELS has also published.

3) Avoid religious language

- 1) Although this guide does exactly this, an unbeliever will not understand many of the theological terms. Do not use big words but explain everything, from the word “grace” to larger words, such as “justification.” If these terms are used, they may be lost on the unbeliever, even though the Christian provided a great witness.

4) Focus on the truth of Christianity, not merely its personal benefits

- 1) Although the “Testimonial Approach” may be used, describing the personal benefits of being a Christian, this approach often takes the focus of the evangelism off of Christ and puts it on the individual Christian. This can often backfire when not every Christian has a prosperous or successful life. Stick to what is the common denominator for all humans, sin and grace.

5) Use questions to stay in “driver’s seat”

- 1) By questioning, the listener will learn and gather information. Questioning can also be used to steer the conversation in a certain direction. The question “What do you mean by that?” can be one of the Christians main weapons in their arsenal. The question takes the pressure off of the Christian and engages the non believer, discovering the reasons for their thought process. Interestingly, people often don’t think about this question, or understand why they think the way they do. Patience is important while asking other questions to clear up any confusion.

6) Stay calm

- 1) That is an easy thing to say. Yet, remember why you are having this discussion in the first place. You want to share the awesome news of Jesus Christ! There is no reason to be nervous because you have nothing to lose.

7) If they want to go let them leave

- 1) Being considerate and letting the person go may be a witness in itself. Trying to force them to submit to the message will only prove to be detrimental.

8) Don’t let them leave empty handed

- 1) Your conversation may sit in the memory of the unbeliever for a day. After that, you may be completely forgotten. So, give something that will last, such as a Bible. Let’s be honest, we won’t always be bringing a

Bible to a discussion. Nevertheless, consider giving your church's bulletin, or a Christian flyer; anything for them to look at to remember you.

9) Maintain a Christian character when evangelizing

- 1) Be as happy as the message you are proclaiming is!
- 2) Be consistent. Do not be making coarse jokes one minute and then expect them to take you seriously about the Bible the next minute. If a Christian does not embody the virtues of which they are preaching, they will undermine the message and potentially damage the efforts.

10) Never be afraid to ask for some time in answering a question

- 1) Many times, the person will ask the Christian a question, which the Christian is unprepared for. The words "let me think about it" can be effective. In this way, the pressure is off. The Christian has more time to do their homework and to prepare. This technique also gives opportunity to meet again.
- 2) Ask your Pastor. Your Pastor likes to know that you are a Christian witness! Your Pastor may be able to answer some of your questions and can also direct you to a book that will help.
- 3) Read more. Never stop reading!

11) Patience

- 1) The goal, remember, is not to convert the non Christian on the first encounter. Instead, a modest goal is needed. Skeptics can easily dismiss the ideas if too forward. A Christian should try to simply get the skeptic to think about it. A tug of war about God or the Bible may only be detrimental

12) Practice!

- 1) Practice with friends and family. Practice in your car alone. Confidence will only come with practice and putting in the time.

13) Trust

- 1) Trust in your God. Trust in His promises. In God we find the confidence, the comfort, the joy, the patience, the willingness to carry out his mission of spreading the Gospel to the world.

Stone in the Shoe Questionnaire

Unfortunately, there is no magic bullet. There is no magic question that will “convince” people. We must also remember, that we cannot argue somebody into heaven. However, God’s Word is powerful and effective.

Often, we ask ourselves, “What will we say?” Speaking to people about Jesus Christ can often put people on edge or even on the defensive. Believers can often be scared that the non believer may ask a question that they do not know about. Try this. Rephrase the question “What will we say?” to “What will we ask?” Using questions are a wonderful tactic. Questions help discover information. Questions help gain trust in a relationship by demonstrating concern for the individual. Questions also can help steer the conversation in the direction that is desired, which is preferably to sin and grace.

Many times, apologetic books do not give a list of questions that would be beneficial for the believer to memorize. This training guide attempts to do this very thing. These questions below have been used in conversations with real people. Each sub-question can be used as follow up questions to help steer the conversation.

Interestingly, certain questions have left the unbeliever speechless. Hence, the name of the questionnaire. These are questions that are like little stones in a shoe that may frustrate but also create intrigue. These questions have been bolded. Ultimately, however, we are not seeking to stump them, but lead them to question 8, which is sharing the good news.

- 1) It has been said, “What worries you, masters you.” Would you say this is true in your life? Is there anything that worries you about life or even death?
- 2) Do you believe in absolute truth?
 - 1) How do you know what is right and what is wrong?
 - 2) If there is no absolute truth, what you just said isn’t true. If your wife says she loves you, does it mean nothing unless I give a thumbs up or down? She doesn’t have a chance. Why would any relationship have a chance?
- 3) Do you believe lying is wrong?
 - 1) Why do you feel that it is wrong or right?
 - 2) Do you know Adolf Hitler? He believed he was doing the right thing. Do you believe what he did was right or wrong? How can we really know for certain then what is good or bad?

- 3) Do you believe people are generally good or generally bad?
- 1) So if you believe people are generally good, how can you make up for the fact that people lie, people are selfish, greedy, they hate other people, they borrow and never return things, etc.?
 - 2) It seems like from what you are saying, you don't really know what you believe in. Is that the case?**
- 4) Do you believe in creation or evolution?
- 1) Are there things that make you question evolution?
 - 2) Have you ever thought that creation is just as logical?
 - 1) The fact that things are in perfect order?
 - 1) Our body?
 - 2) The world around us?
- 5) What do you think our purpose is in life?
- 1) Do you ever wonder if there is more to life?
- 6) Do you believe in an afterlife?
- 1) (if no) If you are right and we all die, nothing happens. Our bodies simply enter the earth and become part of the life cycle. Yet, if what the Bible says is right, you won't just be going down into the ground? Wouldn't you rather be safe than sorry?**
- 7) These are the words that I see as truth. Would you mind if I share them with you? (share law and gospel)

SIX-POINT LAW/GOSPEL WITNESS³⁷

Sometimes, we need a simple outline of what we believe. This way, we have the most important truths of Scripture in mind. We don't need to jump into the deep sections of Scripture when we speak to hipsters. All that is needed is Law and Gospel. These six points are a simple Law and Gospel witness that is relevant to all people because all people are sinful human beings in need of a Savior. For another wonderful witness, that lays out the Bible's Law and Gospel, check out "God's Great Exchange," provided by the WELS.



WE CANNOT EARN HEAVEN BY WHAT WE ARE OR DO.

1. Because God demands perfection. Matthew 5:48
 - An absolute standard, not a sliding scale
 - Results not efforts
2. Because we are sinners who have not measured up to God's standards. Romans 3:23
 - Sins are: selfish thoughts, unkind words, wicked deeds AND all the good things we failed to do. Sin is our nature and inclination.
 - Comparisons with others are invalid because no matter how good or bad we are relatively, we still don't measure up.
3. Because death, eternal separation from God, is what we've earned. Romans 6:23a
 - Sin is a mounting, unpayable debt that comes due.
 - A just and holy God cannot tolerate or ignore sin. His identity, integrity and credibility are at stake.

God GIVES ETERNAL LIFE IN HEAVEN FOR JESUS' SAKE.

4. God loves us and, in his Son, satisfied his own justice. John 3:16

³⁷ WELS "Confidently Sharing Jesus with Friends"

- God's love is not just a feeling or a word, but an action—sending and punishing his Son in our place.
 - God punished our sin, transferring it from us to Jesus, at the cross.
2 Corinthians 5:21
5. God gives us eternal life for Jesus' sake. Romans 6:23b, Ephesians 2:8-9
John 3:16
- It is a complete forgiveness and salvation in Jesus.
 - It is entirely God's gift and doing.
6. God's gift of eternal life is ours by faith. John 3:36a, John 3:16
- Faith is not: an easier means of earning it; an intellectual assent to the fact.
- Faith is: total trust and reliance on Jesus for eternal life: a whole new life in us and approach to life outside of us...which God gives us when He convinces us.

For Further Reading:

WELS Evangelism Package "Confidently Sharing Jesus With Friends."

Koukl, Gregory. *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*.
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009.