

Multiplying and Mobilizing Witnesses

Lesson 1

Motivation: Key to Multiplying Witnesses

Instructor's Guide

BILL CARR

Motivation: Key for Multiplying Witnesses

The purpose of this module is to utilize the power of motivational influences. The objectives for this module are:

- Create a sense of urgency for witnessing;
- Refocus on the mission of the church;
- Realize the value of a leader model.

Lesson 1

In sermons, parables, and teaching, Jesus often used word pictures. These metaphors were designed to convey unforgettable truth.

He also provided some very direct mission descriptions that were not optional, but synonymous with being identified as His disciples.

Two of Jesus' most expressive word pictures were salt and light. Two of his most direct mission directions were be witnesses and make disciples. Blended together, they created a vivid picture of what the church is to be and to do. Jesus intended his followers to understand salt, light, be witnesses, and make disciples, as being the motivational keys to propel the church forward into its world. His followers, like the elements of salt and light, were to be the transforming agents of their culture by being living witnesses of Jesus' message and life. They were to share God's good news of deliverance from sin's grip and the restoration of fellowship with Him through Jesus.

I. Why motivation is needed for multiplying witnesses for Christ.

A. Isaac Newton in his *Laws of Motion* noted:

1. An object in motion tends to stay in motion, and an object at rest tends to stay at rest, unless the object is acted upon by an outside force.
2. An object accelerates in the direction you push it. The object accelerates at the rate or extent of the force pushing it. The larger the object, the more force needed to accelerate it.
3. In applying Newton's Law of Motion to the church and witnessing, we would note the following:
 - a. A church or individual believer inactive in witnessing will remain inactive until moved upon by an outside force of influence.

- b. A church or individual believer motivated to witness will continue to witness due to the influencing force of the motivation upon them.

B. Current reality regarding the church's witnessing effectiveness.

Eight observations:

1. The percentage of adults in the United States who attend church is decreasing.
 - a. 49% in 1991
 - b. 42% in 1995
 - c. 40% in 2001
1. According to George Barna, 1 in 3 adults in the United States are unchurched.
2. Approximately 50 percent of the estimated 375,000 churches in the United States failed to add one new person of faith by conversion growth in the last year.
3. Regardless of how you do the math, current conversion rates still point to one sobering conclusion: lost people lose. It takes the combined efforts of 85 Christians working over an entire year to produce one convert in the United States. At this rate, a huge percentage of people will never have the opportunity, even once, to hear the good news of Christ's love from a friend they trust and in a way they can understand.
4. Some research suggests that more churches are closing than opening every year.
 - a. Year 1900 ~ 27 churches per 10,000 people
 - b. Year 1990 ~ 12 churches per 10,000 people
5. Conversions to other religions and dropouts from Christianity are escalating in the United States. Islam is growing so fast in the United States that it now claims to be the second largest religious group. Buddhism is growing nearly three times as fast as Christianity in the United States.
6. In the United States, Christianity has been and remains in a state of decline for the past 50 years. The church has failed to gain an additional 2 percent of the population over the past 50 years.
7. Too many churched people believe and behave identically to their unchurched counterparts. John Stott, English theologian and pastor, responded to the question, "What is the church's greatest hindrance to evangelizing the world?" "*The greatest hindrance remains our failure to be what we profess to be. The covenant of faith still challenges us to look like what we are talking about. Nothing*

commends the gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency.”

II. A biblical directive for motivation.

The writer of Hebrews in the New Testament sounds a clear signal for today’s church. “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (10:24).

The word translated “spur” is a very visual word that projects an image of pro-activity towards inducing the church to active ministry and witness. To spur is another way of saying “to motivate.”

Jesus utilizes a motivational directive recorded in Luke 10:2 by referring the disciples to visualize the world as a harvest field. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.” Here is another mental picture to serve as a motivational force to propel the church forward as a witnessing and harvesting agency.

The apostle Paul in his instructions to Timothy and the church writes, “Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner” (2 Timothy 1:8). By direct and indirect references, Paul focuses the church’s attention to its mission of being a witness for Christ to its culture. Neither Jesus nor Paul assumed the church would automatically step forward as witnesses. Therefore, they both used motivational appeals to influence the early believers to witness. We must both understand and utilize the principles of motivation for multiplying the witness faith of today’s church.

Power of Motivation

In concluding this lesson concerning motivation, note that the power of motivation must be witnessed in the passion and life of the one making the appeal. This example of a passionate witness for Jesus is extremely forceful in compelling others to follow.

In Philippians 1:8, Paul writes to the church, indicating his passionate concern for them. “God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ

Jesus.” The word affection is *splanknon*. Its meaning is active; defined as the source of human action or the seat of passion.

People who make a difference, who make an impact are seriously passionate about what they do; and this influences others to draw others to them and their mission. Joan of Arc, the young teenage maiden who helped rally the armies of France, was effective in her appeal because of her intense faith in God, passion for her cause and love for the people of her country.

During one battle against a heavily fortified city fortress, her allied commanders were balking about leading the attack. They were afraid. Joan stepped forward and boldly announced, “I shall lead the army forward.” Her advisors were quick to note no one would follow on such a mission. It’s suicidal and certainly no one would follow a girl.

Joan’s reply, “I will be leading the army over the walls, and I won’t be looking back!” The army followed! A victory was won because they caught the passion of their leader.

Motivation is a powerful key to multiplying witnesses, but a visible passionate witness for Christ must lead the way.

MULTIPLYING AND MOBILIZING WITNESSES

Lesson 1

Participant Booklet

BILL CARR

Lesson I

Motivation: Key for Multiplying Witnesses

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Small Group Exercise

1. What metaphors would describe you in your relationship with Christ?
2. If you applied Newton's Laws of Motion to your witness, which law would apply?
3. What do you believe are your life's purposes? Why?
4. In view of Jesus' directive in Acts 1:8, how would you relate this to your personal lifestyle?
5. As a church, are we making a difference in our community? If so, in what ways and how does it show?

Action Plan

1. List within the past 12 months those who have come to faith through your church.
2. List within the past 12 months those who have been involved in the witnessing force of the church. What percentage does this number represent of the total church membership?
3. Create or adopt a metaphor for shaping the witnessing climate of your church.
4. Prepare an action plan that keeps the designated metaphor constantly practiced and celebrated.