

# Thriving through Evangelism

Lesson 04 of the series, "Thrive"

## I. Jesus wants us to thrive.

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10 (NKJV)

*Note:* The apostles didn't define "thriving" the same way we do.

"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete."

1 John 1:3-4 (NIV)

"We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard." Acts 4:18-20 (NLT)

"For the love of Christ compels us..." 2 Corinthians 5:14 (NKJV)

## II. We thrive through evangelism.

*Note:* "Evangelism" = introducing others to Jesus by telling them the Good News about Jesus.

*Note:* Evangelism is normal and natural if we introduce others to Jesus as a part of our everyday life.

"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering." Romans 12:1 (MSG)

"Therefore, as you go, disciple people in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. And remember, I am with you each and every day until the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (ISV)

### a. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through worship.

"They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity - all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved."

Acts 2:46-47 (NLT)

### b. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through connect groups.

"Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in the ministry of Christ Jesus... Also give my greetings to the church that meets in their home. Greet my dear friend Epenetus. He was the first person from the province of Asia to become a follower of Christ." Romans 16:3-5 (NLT)

### c. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through conversation.

"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

Colossians 4:5-6 (NIV)

*Note:* We must earn the right to be heard.

"...you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way." 1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

*Note:* It's all about relationships.

### d. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through eating.

"Levi invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. (There were many people of this kind among Jesus' followers.) But when the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, 'Why does he eat with such scum?' When Jesus heard this, he told them, 'Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.'" Mark 2:14-17 (NLT)

### e. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through servicing.

"There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor. About this time she became ill and died... But the believers had heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda, so they sent two men to beg him, 'Please come as soon as possible!' So Peter returned with them... The room was filled with widows who were weeping and

showing him the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them. But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, "Get up, Tabitha." And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up! He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive. The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord." Acts 9:36-42 (NLT)

- f. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through celebration.

"The next time you put on a dinner, don't just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favor. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You'll be—and experience—a blessing. They won't be able to return the favor, but the favor will be returned—oh, how it will be returned!—at the resurrection of God's people."

Luke 14:12-14 (MSG)

- g. We thrive when we introduce others to Jesus through recreation.

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:17 (NIV)

### III. Two important notes on evangelism.

- a. We must tell others about Jesus.

"For 'Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.' But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?" Romans 10:13-14 (NLT) Joel 2:32

- b. We must offer unconditional friendship.

"As he reasoned with them about righteousness and self-control and the coming day of judgment, Felix became frightened. 'Go away for now,' he replied. 'When it is more convenient, I'll call for you again.' He also hoped that Paul would bribe him, so he sent for him quite often and talked with him. After two years went by in this way, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And because Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jewish people, he left Paul in prison." Acts 24:25-27 (NLT)

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## Connect Group Questions

1. What has been your basic understanding of the term Evangelism? How have you seen it lived out?
2. Have you ever shared your personal faith in Jesus with someone? If so, how did that go? If not, what emotions or feelings of inadequacies kept you from sharing?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. What was Paul's viewpoint of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ? How do you think he used the rhythms in his own life to intentionally share his personal faith in Jesus?
4. In what areas of your everyday ordinary life could you intentionally invite someone to join you?

The F.R.A.N. plan helps us become aware of those in our areas of influence. Take a moment to write in at least three names and share them with your group.

my F.R.A.N. plan

Friend \_\_\_\_\_

Relative \_\_\_\_\_

Acquaintance \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbor \_\_\_\_\_

5. Read the following questions that you could use to steer any conversation toward the Gospel. Are there any additional questions you would add?
  - a. Have I told you what God has been saying to me lately?
  - b. How can I be praying for you?

Quotations to consider:

"The last words of Jesus should be the first concern of the church." John Ed Mathison

"I'm a little pencil in the hand of a writing God, who is sending a love letter to the world." Mother Teresa

"That is precisely the point of our celebrations-that people would both see the heart of our God and feel invited to the party." Caesar Kalinowski

"Yes, people enjoy life, recreation, and fun, but they usually do so to escape instead of sharing them with the people they love." Hugh Halter

"Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God." Bill Bright