



# Creating a Culture of Evangelism

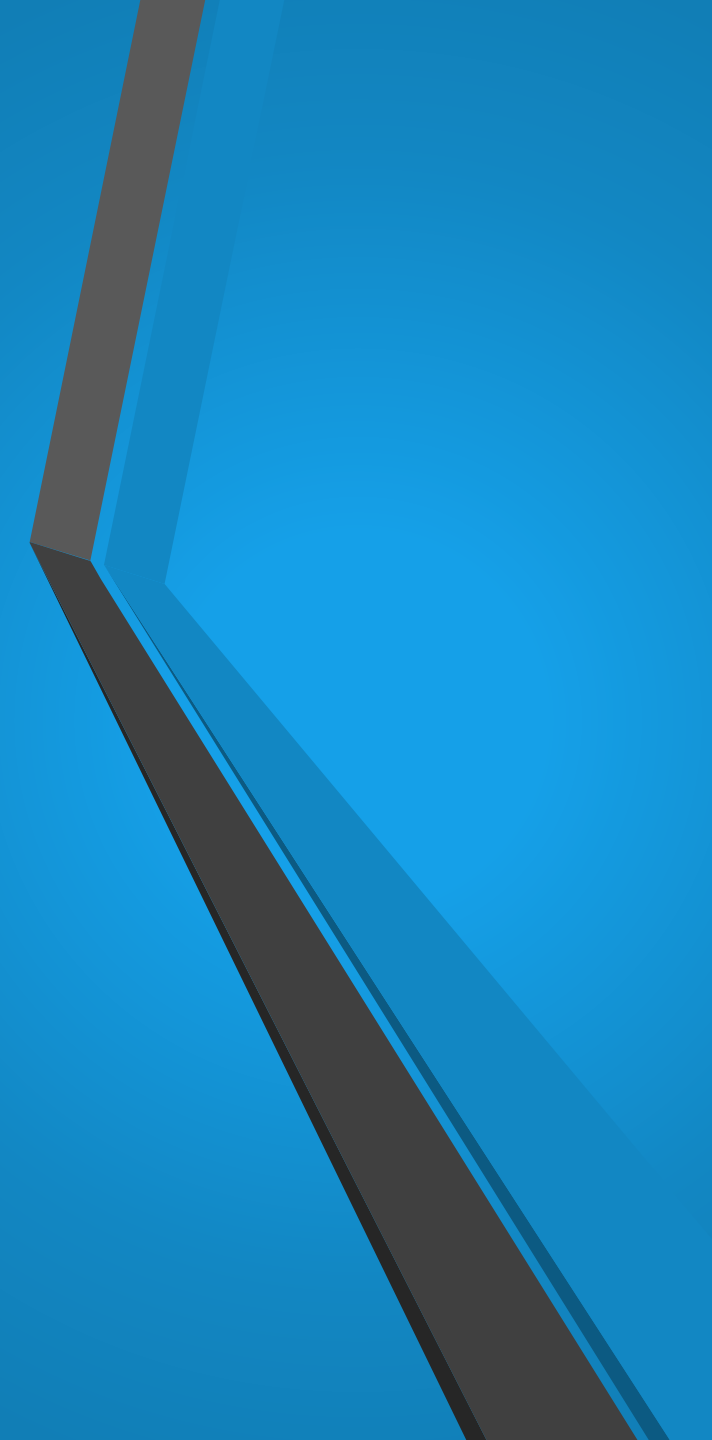
“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and  
teaching everyone...”

Colossians 1:28



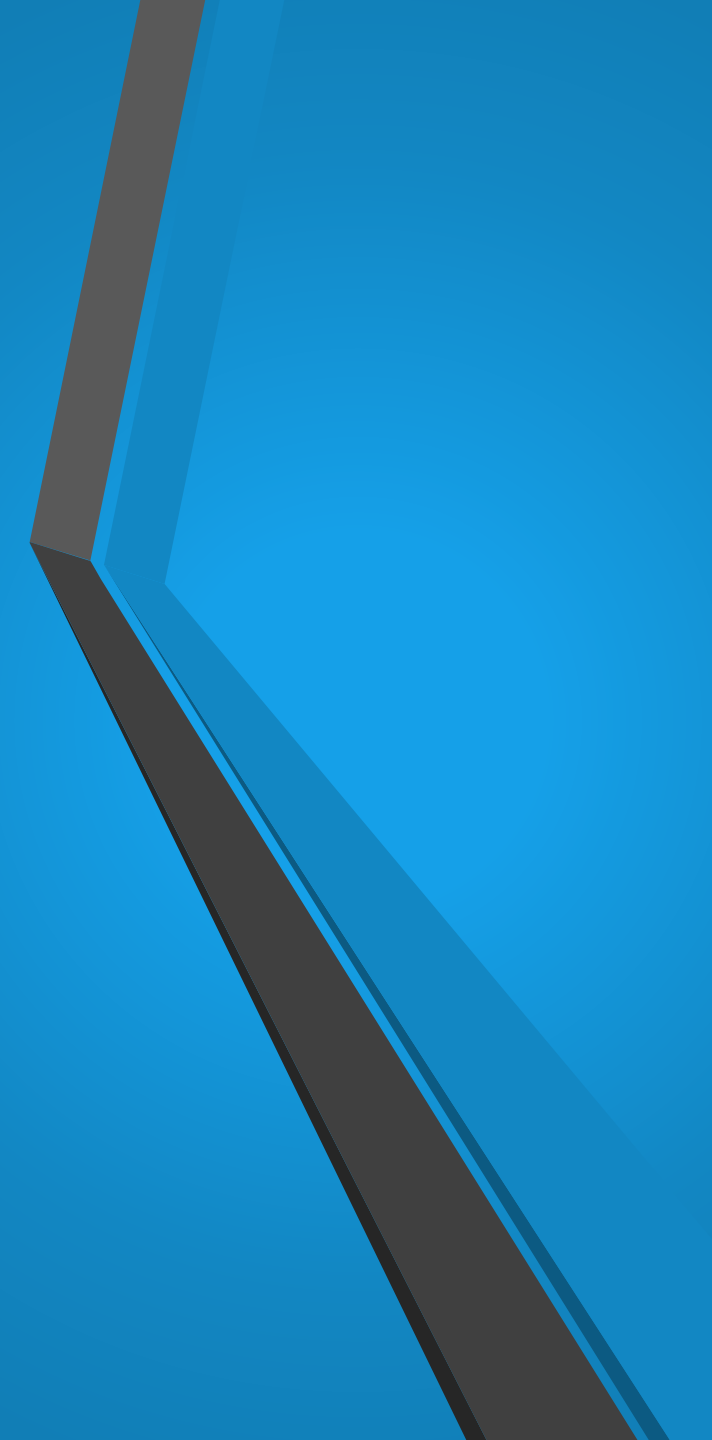
Brethren, do something; do something, do something! While committees waste their time over resolutions, do something! While Societies and Unions are making constitutions, let us win souls. Too often we discuss, and discuss, and discuss and Satan laughs in his sleeve. It is time we had done planning and sought something to plan. I pray you, be men of action all of you. Get to work . . . . Our one aim is to save sinners, and this we are not to talk about, but to do in the power of God!

– C. H. Spurgeon



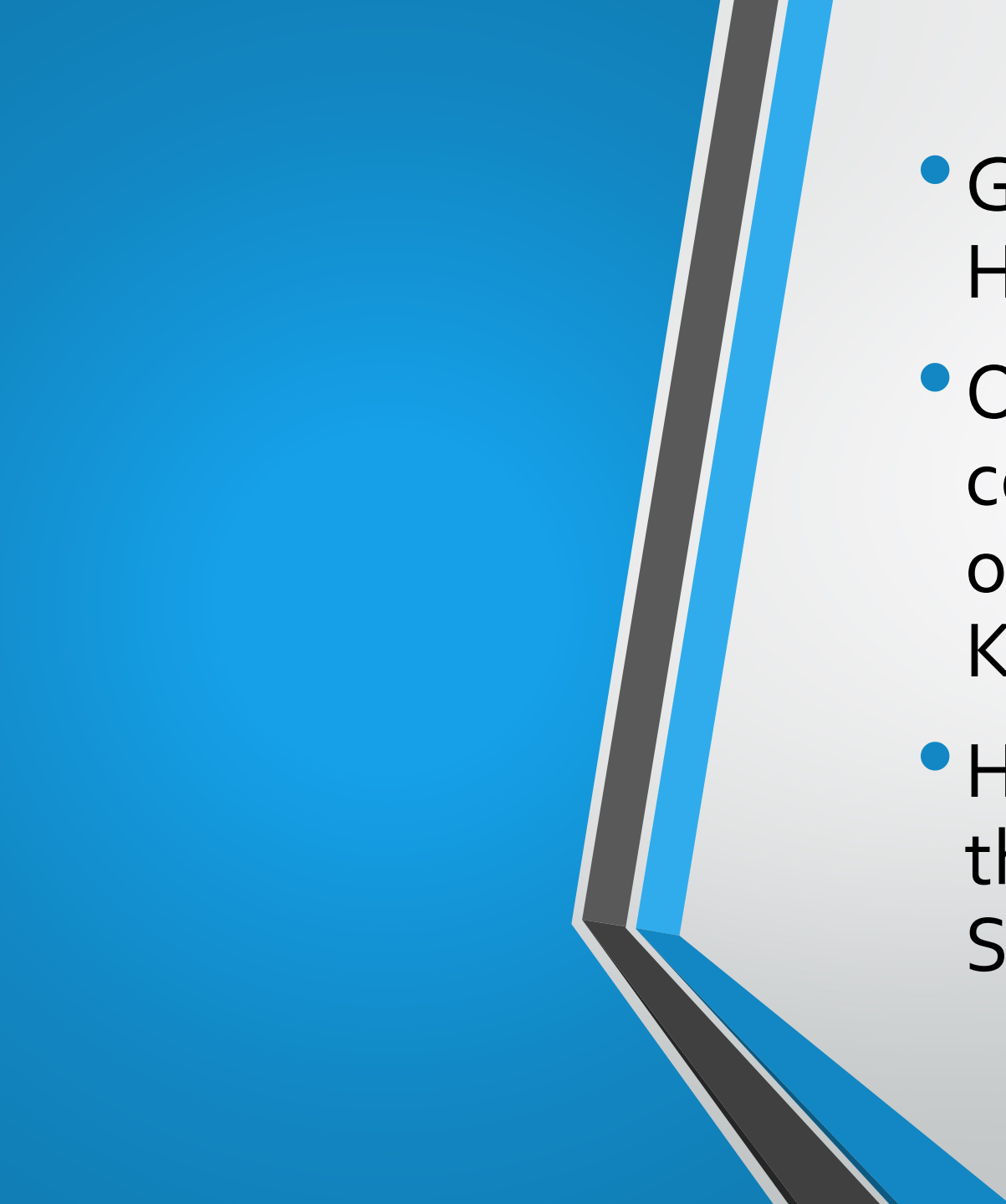
# What is the Culture of Your Church?

- Apathetic or Engaged?
- Maintaining Status Quo or Relevancy?



# How Does Your Church View the Condition of Humanity?

- Do you invite people to “come as they are” to seek love, help, and healing?
- Do you receive broken sinners in the midst of their pain?
- Does your church culture make it difficult for people to admit their hurts and faults until they are all better?
- Are you a “come and get clean” church, or a place for the “already clean”?

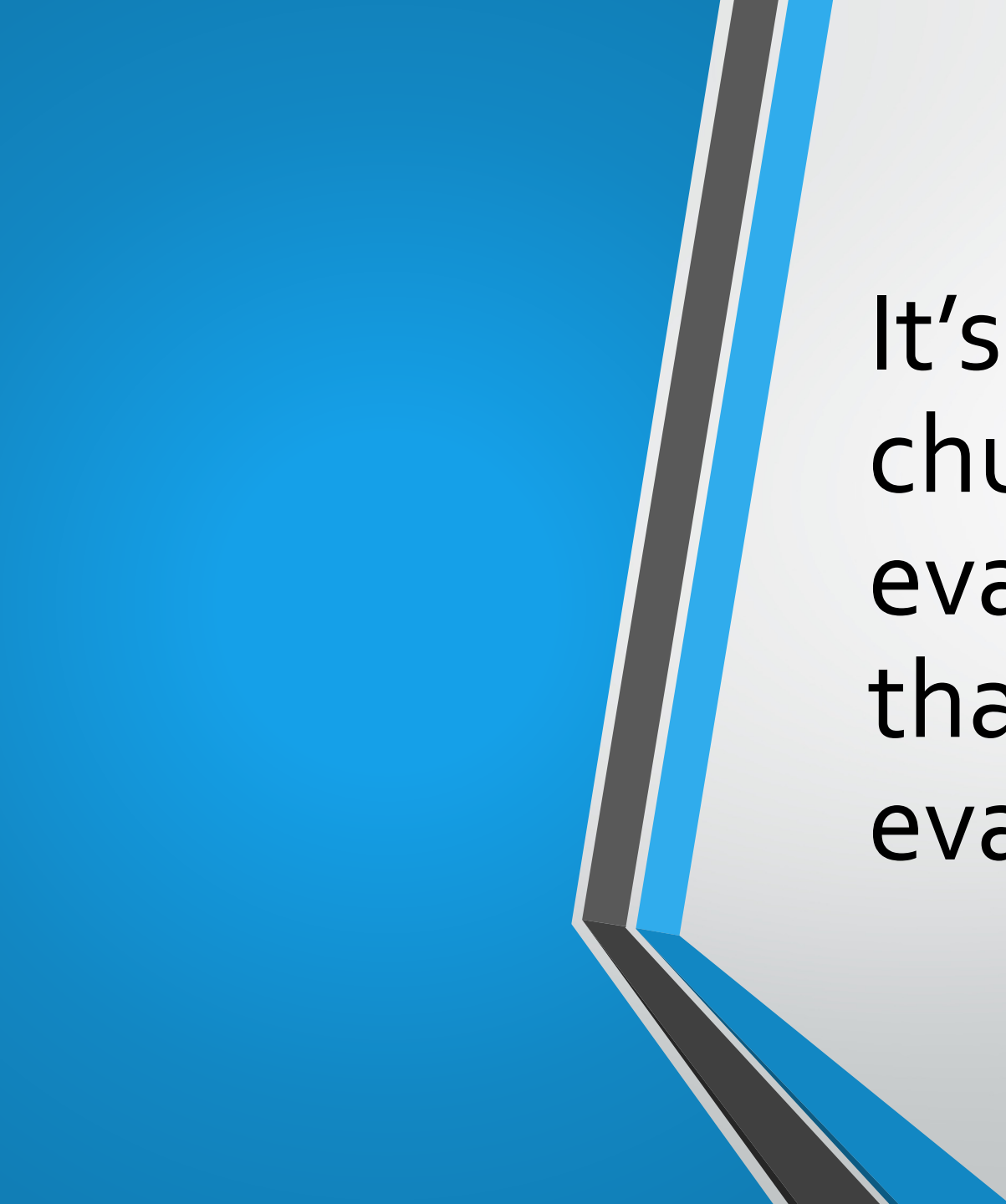
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- Grace and conversion are the Holy Spirit's business.
  - Our task as members is to cooperate with the Spirit in order to stay useful for God's Kingdom.
  - How do we create a culture that opens the door for the Spirit to work?





# What About Evangelistic Meetings?

- Leaders often ask what programs churches use to produce fully devoted disciples
- They want to know what *strategy* will make their church more evangelistic.



It's better for your church to have an evangelistic culture than just a series of evangelistic programs.



# What About Evangelistic Meetings?

- Evangelistic programming often has very little impact on increasing church membership.
- In a program-driven approach, sharing the gospel can become something reserved for certain people at certain times.





# An Evangelistic Culture

- Culture is the way of life of a group of people—behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.



# An Evangelistic Culture

- In a church with an evangelistic culture, each member is encouraged to play a role in reaching people with the message of salvation in Jesus.
- This becomes part of every believer's life.



# An Evangelistic Culture

- Sabbath school classes will take on an outreach project
- The entire congregation will pitch in to help community children to attend church schools
- Worship service and Sabbath school will be seeker-friendly



# An Evangelistic Culture

- Women's ministries will knit scarves for the area's homeless
- Neighbors will be invited to church socials and prayer breakfasts
- Friday night Bible studies will begin with a fellowship meal



# An Evangelistic Culture

- Potlucks are filled with guests
- The gym will be used for sport teams that have been advertised and begin with a devotional time
- The Pathfinder club will have a mix of neighborhood and church kids



# An Evangelistic Culture

- Members will host small group meetings in their homes, or facilitate Bible studies or morning prayers at their workplace
- Regular seminars will address community needs—financial independence, marriage, divorce recovery—and include invitations to worship together.





# An Evangelistic Culture

- Reaching the lost becomes a lifestyle
- “Every one, win one” is a personal motto
- Desire to know people individually
- Create an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness
- Look past stereotypes and imperfections

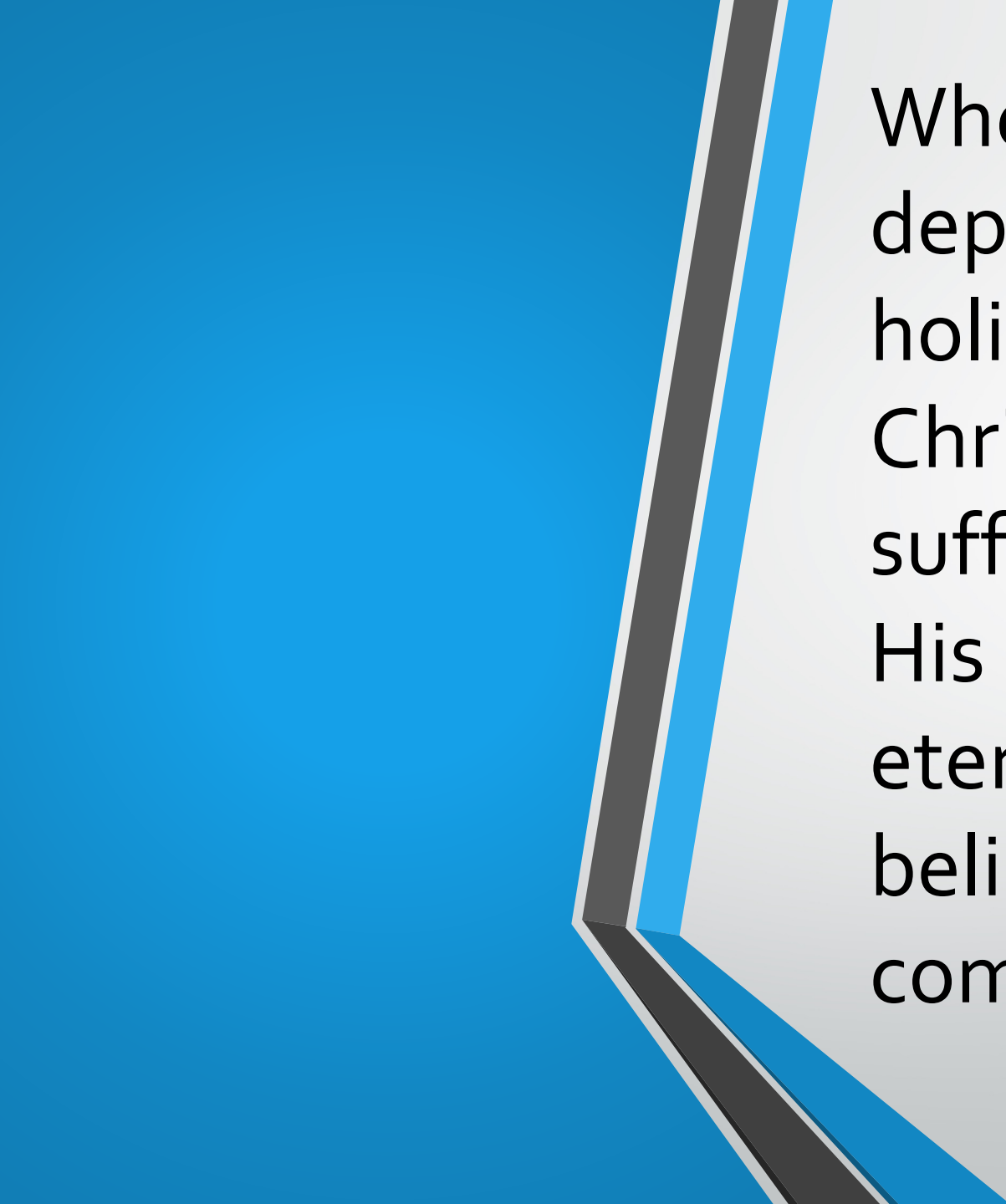


# Seven Ingredients of an Evangelistic Culture



# 1. The Gospel: The Fuel for an Evangelistic Culture

- First, we must help our members fall deeply in love with Christ
- They must understand the gospel message
- The beauty of this message must be on display each week in our churches



When Christians truly grasp the depth of their sin, the wonderful holiness of God, the perfection of Christ, and the depth of His suffering for them, the power of His resurrection, and the gift of eternal life for all who repent and believe, our affections, love, and commitment for Christ will grow.



# 1. The Gospel: The Fuel for an Evangelistic Culture

- The gospel frees us from motivations that might lead us to dislike evangelism
- We don't have to evangelize in order to earn God's love.
- Our position in God's family isn't dependent on how often or how well we share the gospel.



# 1. The Gospel: The Fuel for an Evangelistic Culture

- God's love frees us from the concern of the opinions of people that make us afraid to speak up about Jesus.
- Our job is to share the best of our ability
- The Holy Spirit's job is to convict and save
- If someone rejects the gospel, they are rejecting God, and not you.





# 1. The Gospel: The Fuel for an Evangelistic Culture

- The church's weekly gatherings should be centered around the gospel.
- Every text should be preached to exult and honor Christ.
- Songs should point to the cross
- Sin should be confessed, and thanks given for forgiveness.



## 2. Love and Acceptance: the Atmosphere of an Evangelistic Culture

- Acceptance of the gospel will lead us to love and accept others regardless of who they are.
- Story: “I want to come home!”
- A church’s culture can be changed by modeling what it looks like to love God’s children unconditionally.



## 2. Love and Acceptance: the Atmosphere of an Evangelistic Culture

- Don't be discouraged if you feel like it is taking your church too long to learn how to love.
- Keep preaching, educating, praying, and modeling love.
- Many will leave a church that is judgmental and unloving, but few will leave a church home in which they feel accepted.



### 3. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

- A church that is sharing the gospel must be committed to prayer
- Evangelism seems like a hopeless task.
- How are we going to equip and encourage people for that work?



The Saviour knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that His disciples must receive the heavenly endowment (the Holy Spirit); that the gospel would be effective only as it was proclaimed by hearts made warm and lips made eloquent by a living knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.





The work committed to the disciples would require great efficiency; for the tide of evil ran deep and strong against them. A vigilant, determined leader was in command of the forces of darkness, and the followers of Christ could battle for the right only through the help that God, by His Spirit, would give them.

— Ellen G. White

Acts of the Apostles, page 31





### 3. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

- In prayer, Christians go to the Lord with a confession of insufficiency for the task of evangelism, and His sufficient strength
- God alone can make the seeds that we sow spring up to eternal life in their hearts

### 3. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

- Prayer is essential.
- Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer.” (Matthew 21:13)
  - Not a house of preaching, or singing, or fellowship.
- Only in prayer are hearts softened and people brought to the throne of grace



### 3. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

- Prayer for each other and our loved ones should happen every day of the week!
- Share testimonies and pray for opportunities to share the gospel



### 3. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

- Make certain corporate prayers include praying for the lost!
- As the church begins to pray for the lost in her community, God often begins to demonstrate clear answers to those prayers.
- Pray with concern, not condescension.



## Corporate Prayer for the Lost...

1. Commits these people to the Lord, asking for His blessing and direction
2. Involves the whole church in sharing the gospel
3. Gives people a good place to begin reaching out to their neighbors and co-workers
4. Changes us to be more loving and accepting toward them



## 4. Training: the Blueprint for an Evangelistic Culture

- Remember—the goal is an evangelistic culture rather than evangelistic programs
- There is still room for organizing and equipping people to share the gospel!
- Love for the gospel and prayer will motivate Christians to want to be trained for a lifestyle of evangelism



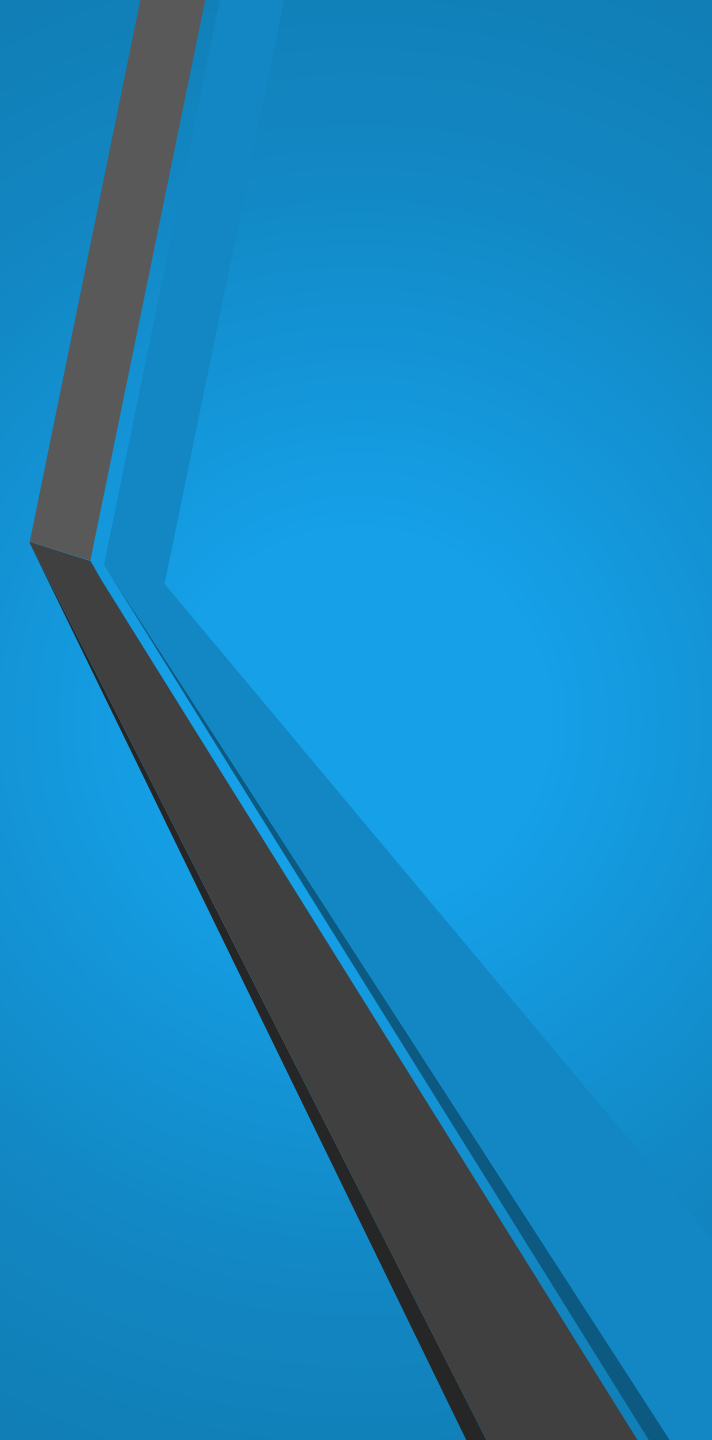
## 4. Training: the Blueprint for an Evangelistic Culture

- Train both leaders and members
- “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Paul trained Timothy, Timothy trained his leaders, those leaders train the next generation.



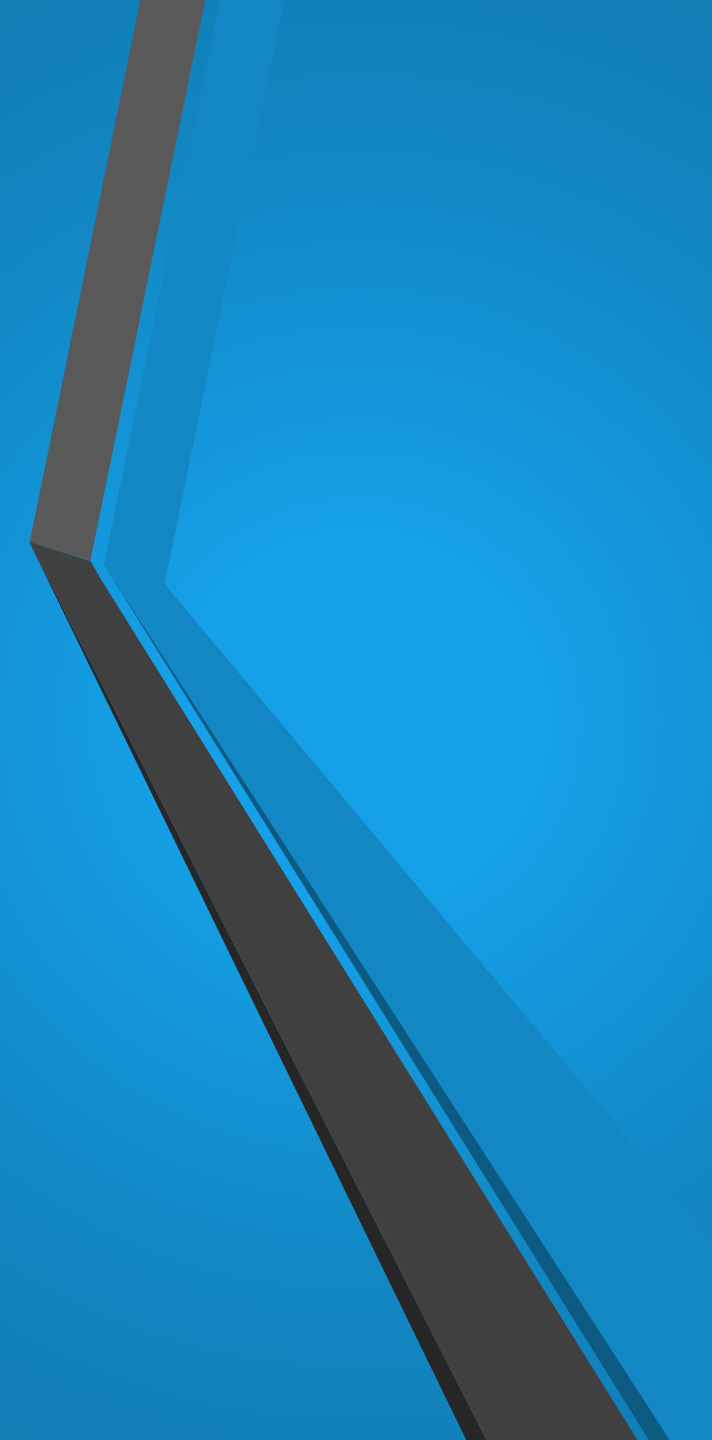
## 4. Training: the Blueprint for an Evangelistic Culture

- Talk openly and frequently about how to:
  - Meet people where they are
  - Give them spiritual comfort and hope
  - Lead them to a relationship with Jesus for eternity
- Many members do not evangelize because they were never taught how!



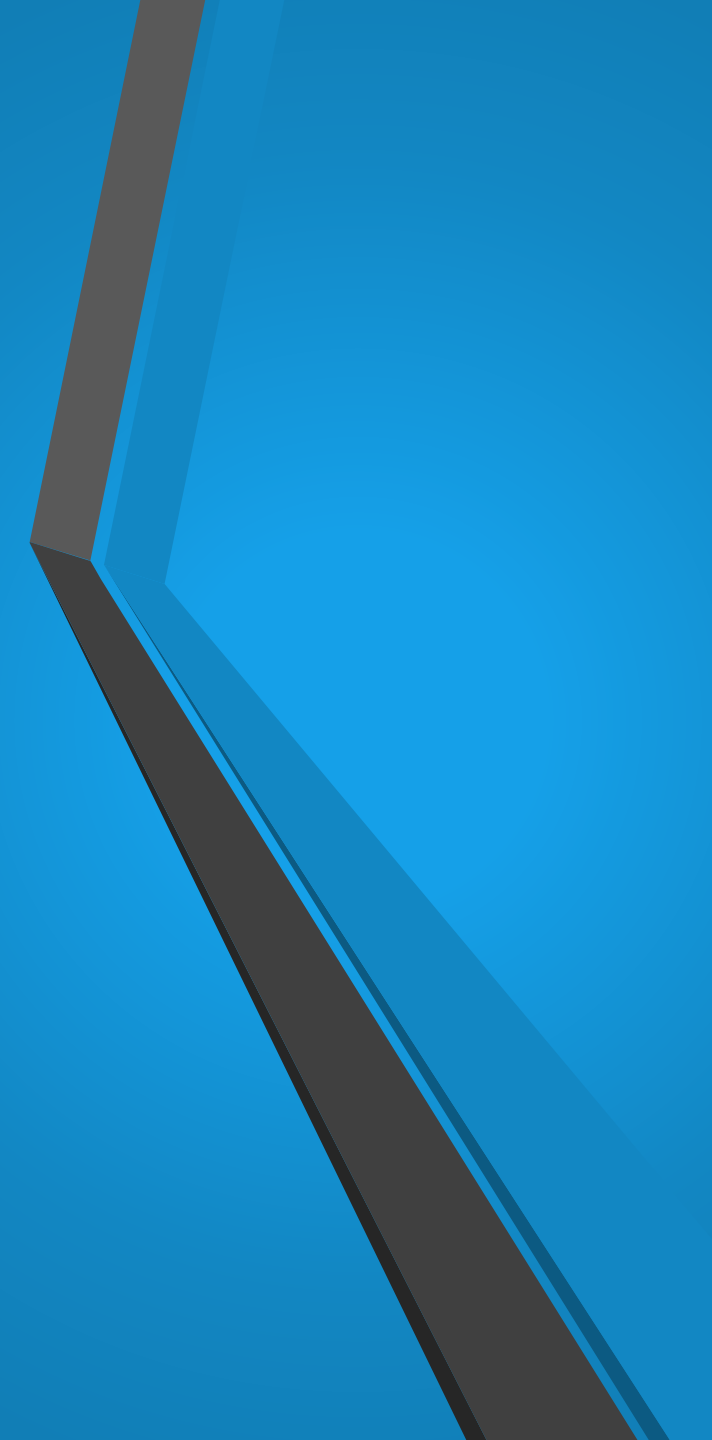
## 1. Train and Equip one another:

- “Every church should be a training school for Christian workers.” (Ellen White, Ministry of Healing, 149)
- Use Sabbath morning activities, prayer meetings, and small groups to facilitate training.
- Teach people how to put evangelism into practice every day of the week.



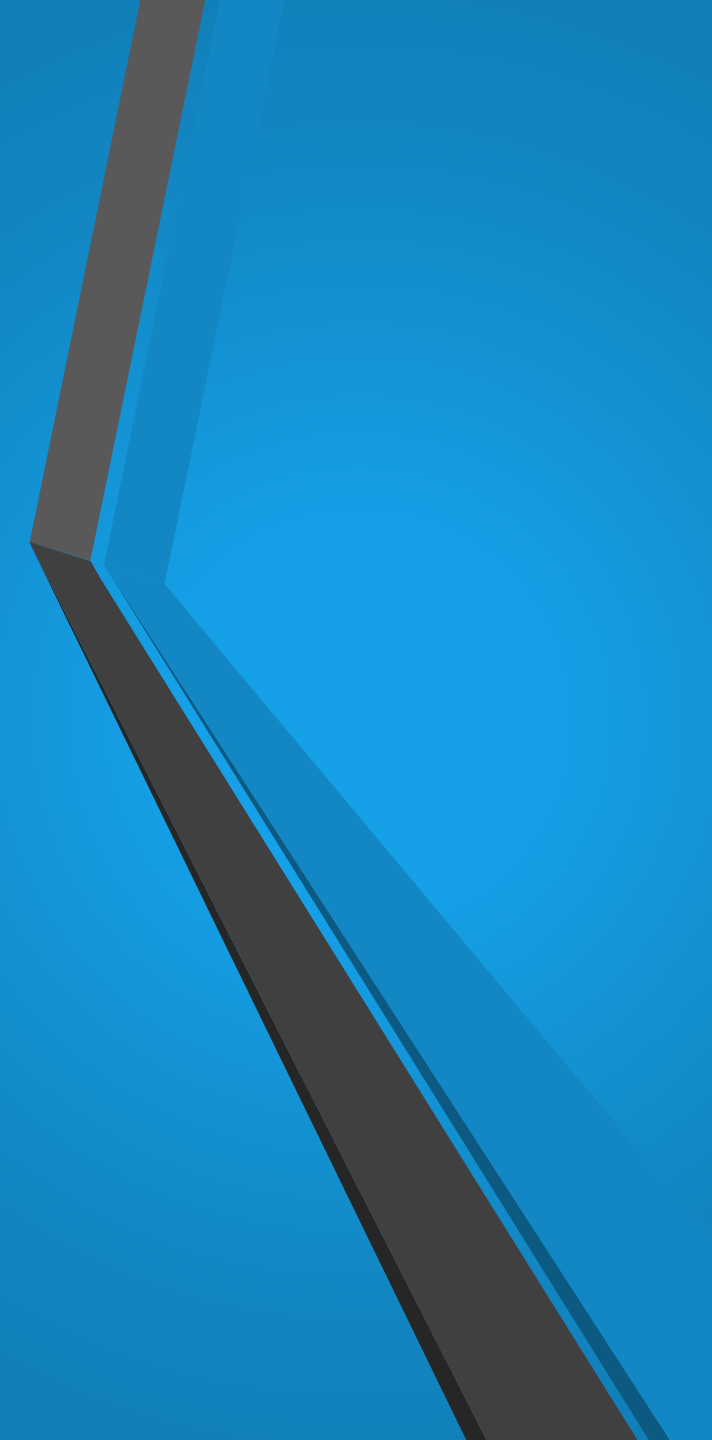
## 2. Provide tools for discipleship and evangelism.

- Offer Sabbath School classes on these topics
- Recommend good books, such as *Evangelism* and *Gospel Workers* by Ellen G. White



### 3. Highlight testimonies of people who are doing wonderful things through evangelism and ministry

- Have them share experiences about what has and has not worked
- This encourages others and inspires to do likewise.



4. Bring people with you when you have a chance to share the gospel.

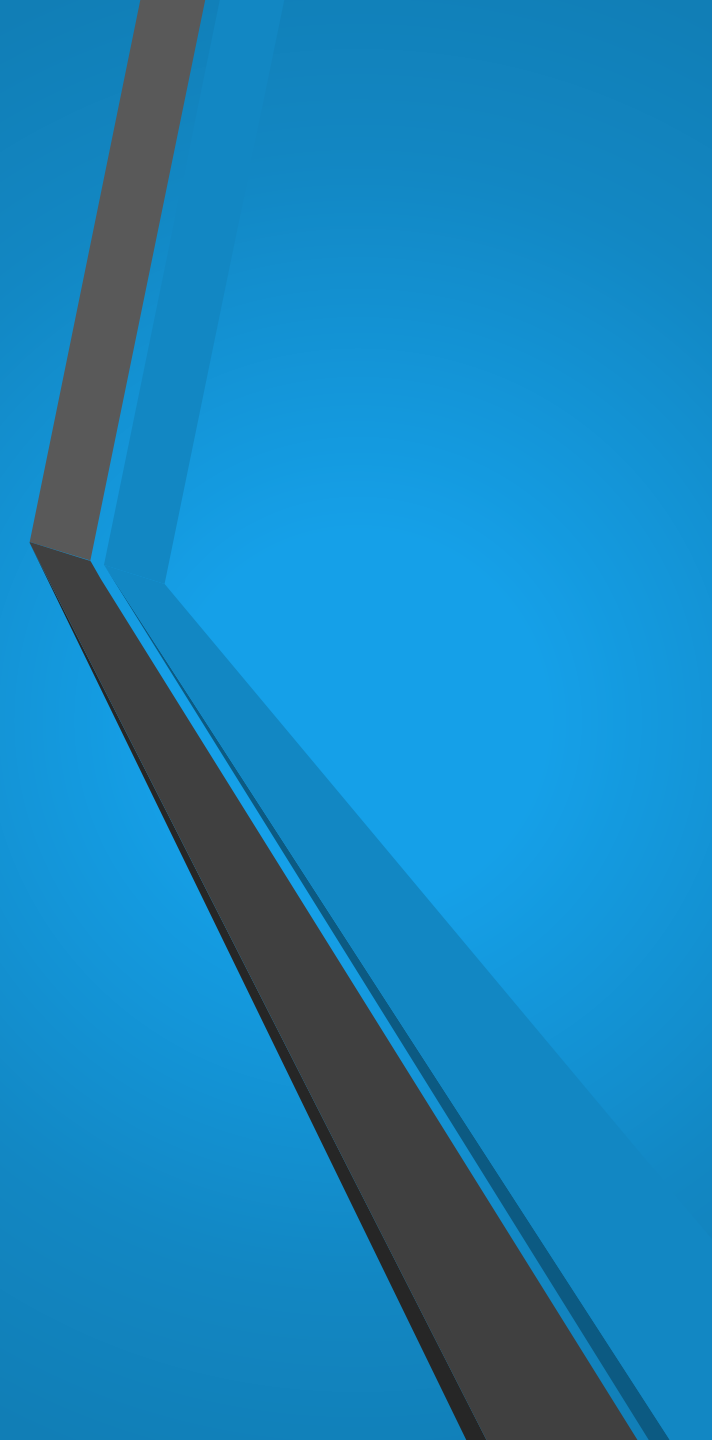
- Try to never do ministry and evangelism alone
- Take people with you to train them to witness and share their faith
- Model for them how to share the good news

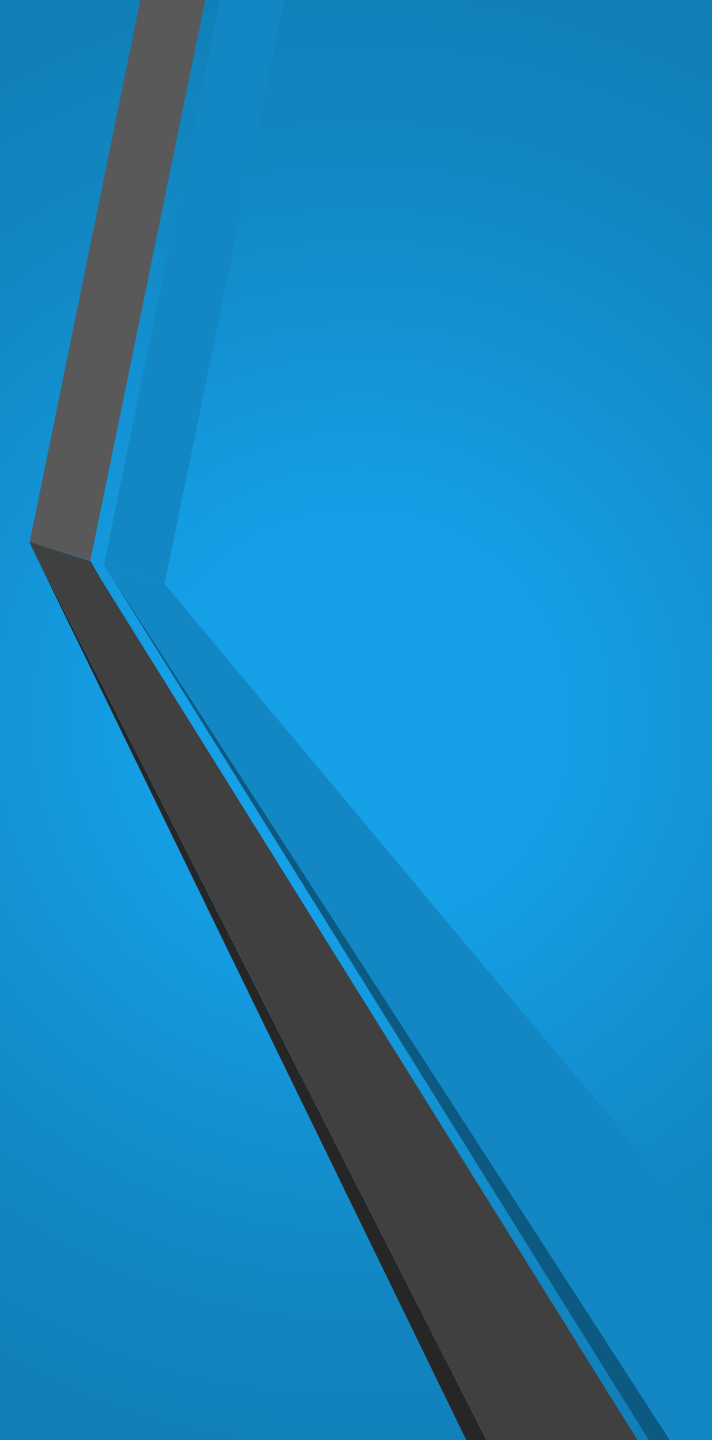




## 5. Address unbelievers in your sermons.

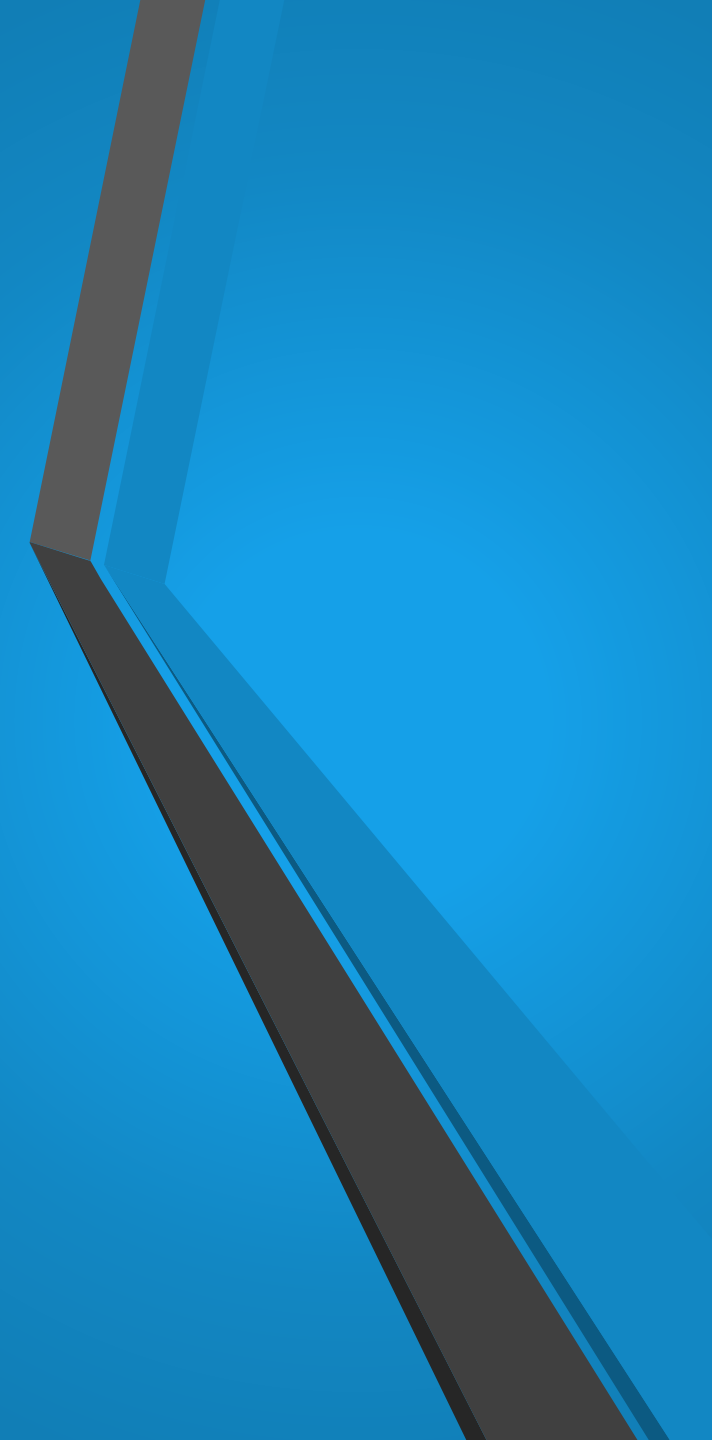
- Your people will learn and grow from listening to you engage people who don't know Jesus
- Thoughtfully consider objections an unbeliever might have to your sermon's messages, and speak to those issues
- If you speak to the seeker and educate the believers that the church is to seek and save the lost, the believers will come and bring their friends.

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6. Conduct evangelistic meetings where people can bring friends and practice getting comfortable sharing the gospel.
- Consider a café style meeting or program
  - Use seasonal days to build up momentum in your church, such as Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, and Thanksgiving.
  - Plan a great worship service and a meal, print attractive cards to advertise the event, and give some to each member.
  - That day, advertise a series that unchurched people are interested in and invite them.



## 7. Begin a small-scale evangelistic mentoring approach.

- Asking a person to mentor another person engenders accountability.
- When you mentor someone in sharing their faith, they will be able to mentor others and multiply the number of Christians who are sharing their faith effectively.



## 5. Lifestyle: the Heart of an Evangelistic Culture

- To create this culture, we need to think about helping others become disciples who love God passionately and obey Him wholeheartedly.
- Unbelievers will know we are Christ's disciples by our love for one another. (John 13:35)





I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

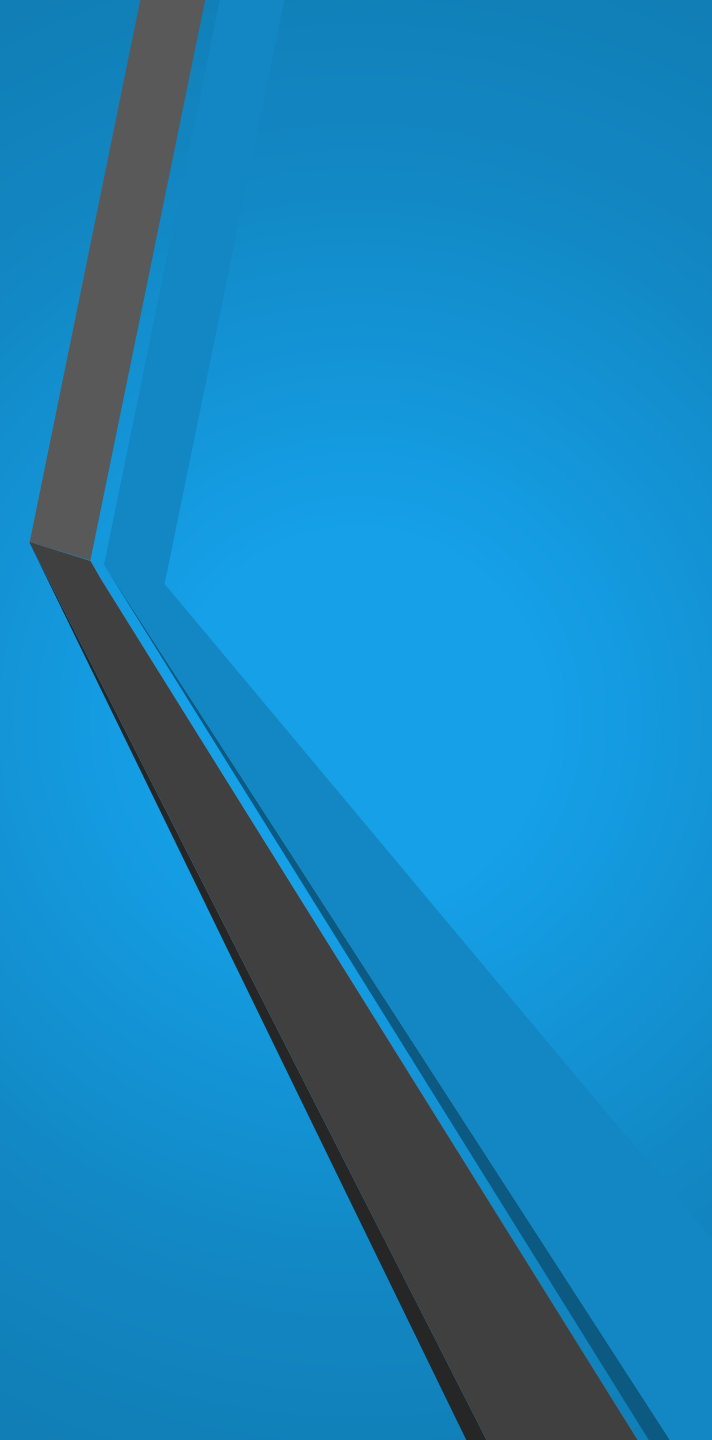
Ephesians 4:1-3

## 5. Lifestyle: the Heart of an Evangelistic Culture

- How do Christ-centered churches develop a culture of discipleship, evangelism, and mutual care?
  - Share with God's people who are in need.
  - Practice love and hospitality
  - Live as citizens worthy of the gospel, which means, "striving side by side for the faith of the gospel."

Philippians 1:27



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1. Model living out an evangelistic culture.
    - Humbly pray for opportunities to be a gospel witness in the community
    - Watch how God opens doors
    - Others will follow your leadership example



## 2. Be an example of joyful living.

- The way in which you carry yourself will also be a sign to others about what a relationship with God can do.
- Having a bad attitude makes people want to stay away from you *and* misrepresents the character of God.
- Be an example of the joy that comes with knowing acceptance in Christ.



Whatever is done to the glory of God is to be done with cheerfulness, not with sadness and gloom. There is nothing gloomy in the religion of Jesus. If Christians give the impression by a mournful attitude that they have been disappointed in their Lord, they misrepresent His character and put arguments into the mouth of His enemies. Though in words they may claim God as their Father, yet in gloom and sorrow they present to the world the aspect of orphans.

— Ellen G. White

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, page 88



## 5. Lifestyle: the Heart of an Evangelistic Culture

- Lifestyle is not programs. It is building uplifting and supportive relationships on the basis of love and hospitality.
- Give members opportunities by
  - Cancelling some church programs
  - Encouraging members to prioritize their schedules based on what it would look like if Jesus were in charge of their time.



## 5. Lifestyle: the Heart of an Evangelistic Culture

- Challenge members to devote 3 to 4 hours every week in community ministry
- Makes sure there are social events on the calendar that are welcoming to the unchurched.





## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Friendship is forming relationships that lead to a better understanding of each other.
- Friendship is breaking bread together, being a shoulder to cry on, a listening ear, and a cheerleader
- It is about rejoicing in personal victories and holding each other up when things fall apart.





## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Friendship is bringing cookies and casseroles to your neighbors.
- It's building awareness of other people and seeing them with the love of God's eyes.



## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Learn how to pursue and share the gospel with friends, family, coworkers, classmates, roommates, etc.
- Christians are usually less fearful of sharing the gospel with people they know.
- 75% of people who come to the Lord and the church come as a result of friendship evangelism.



## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Commit to the people you are ministering to.
- It can take up to three years after first contact with someone before they are ready to commit to Christ
- Most Christians were exposed to the gospel in multiple methods prior to their conversion



## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Unbelievers are exposed to the gospel through everyday relationships with Christians.
- We are instructed to make the best use of our time around seekers, acting wisely, speaking graciously, and giving informed answers about the gospel.

(Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:15-16)

## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Naaman, defying convention, was willing to seek out the prophet of God because of the recommendation of his wife's trustworthy slave girl. (2 Kings 5:1-5)
- The man from the Gerasenes went home and told his friends about the miracle he had experienced and how much Jesus had done for him. (Mark 5:19-20)

## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Andrew brought his brother Peter to Jesus, and Philip brought his friend Nathanael encouraging him to come and see what Jesus was doing. (John 1:40-51)
- The Samaritan woman told her whole town about her encounter with Jesus because she found in Him the acceptance she had been searching for. (John 4:28-42)





The example of Christ in linking Himself with the interests of humanity should be followed by all who preach His word, and by all who have received the gospel of His grace. We are not to renounce social communion. We should not seclude ourselves from others. In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are. They will seldom seek us of their own accord.



Not alone from the pulpit are the hearts of men touched by divine truth. There is another field of labor, humbler, it may be, but fully as promising. It is found in the home of the lowly, and in the mansion of the great; at the hospitable board, and in gatherings for innocent social enjoyment.

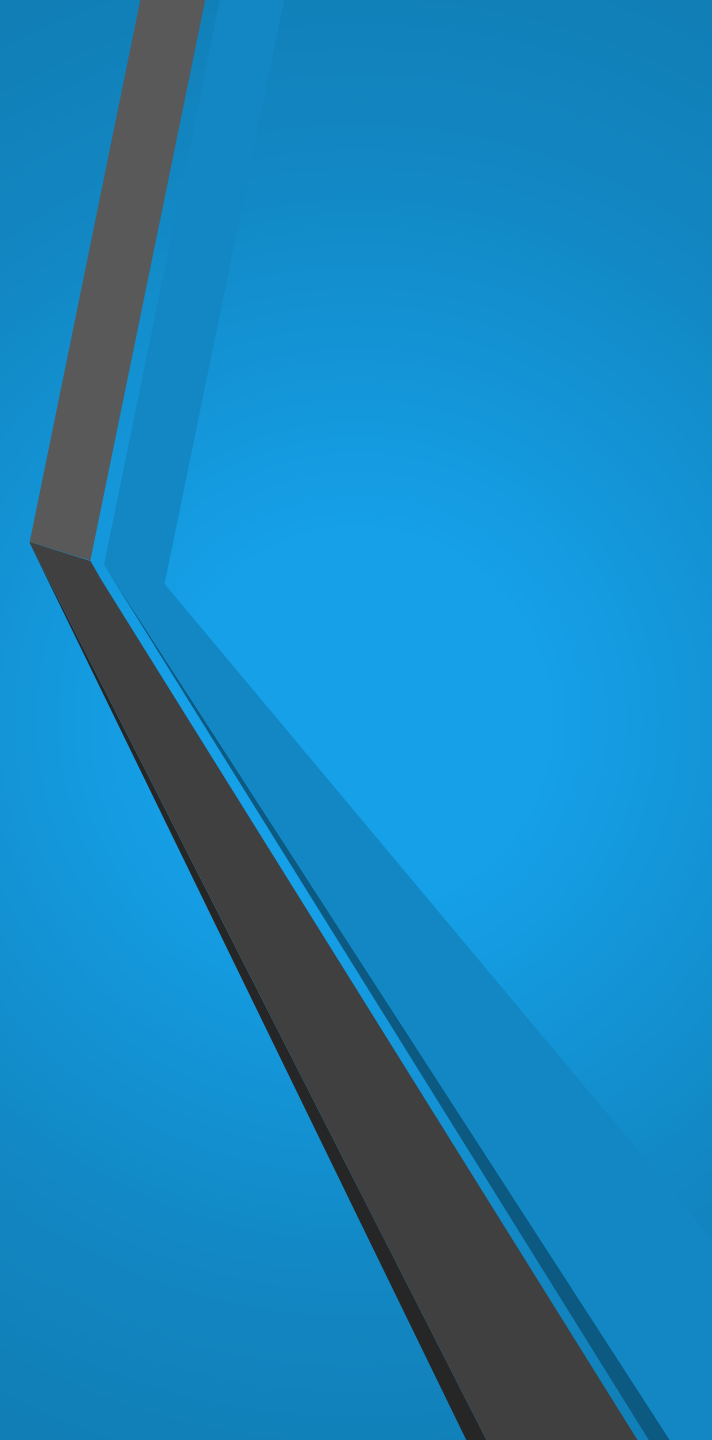
— Ellen G. White

The Desire of Ages, page 152



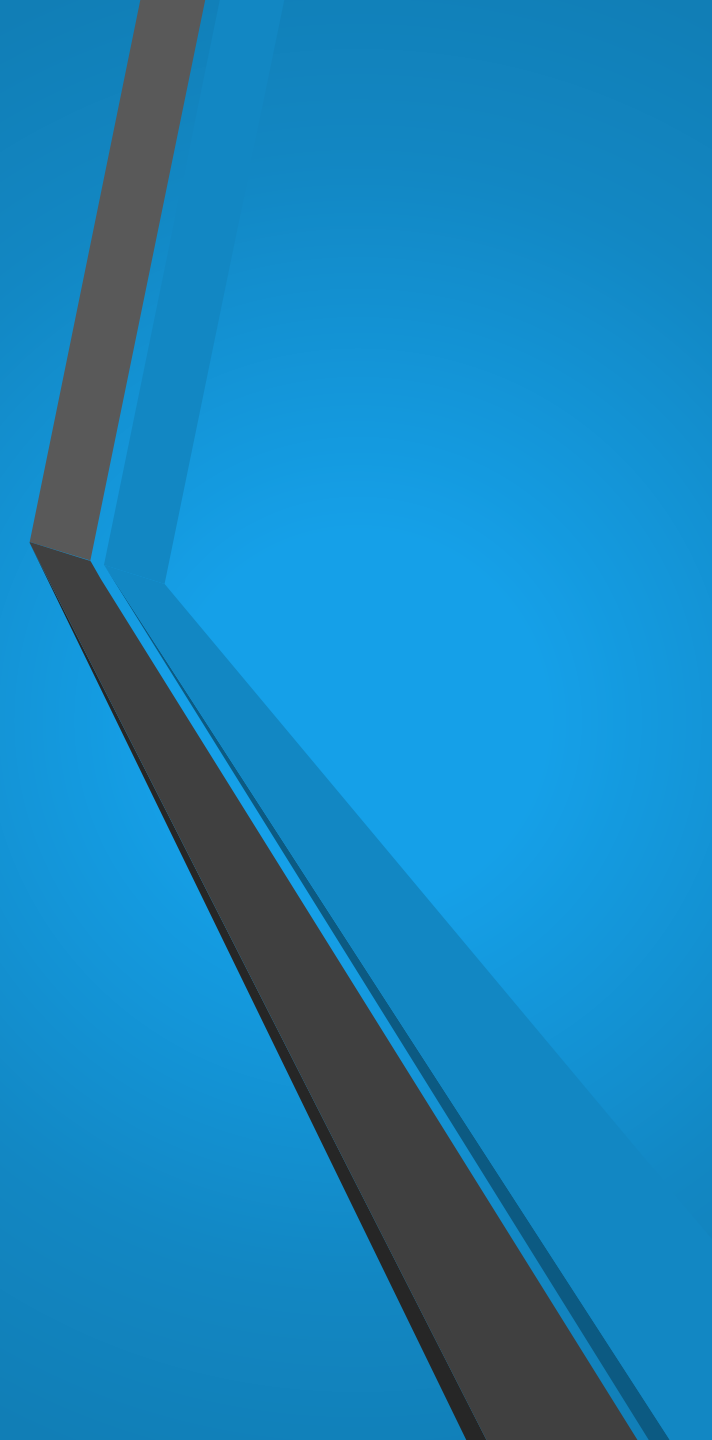
## 6. Friendship: the Glue of an Evangelistic Culture

- Don't be satisfied with confining the gospel proclamation to the church building. This places the burden upon the seeker to come to us for the gospel message
- Instead, go to them, partaking in the joy and blessings that come with hearing and sharing the transformational gospel message.



## 6. Testimonies: the Model and Inspiration of an Evangelistic Culture

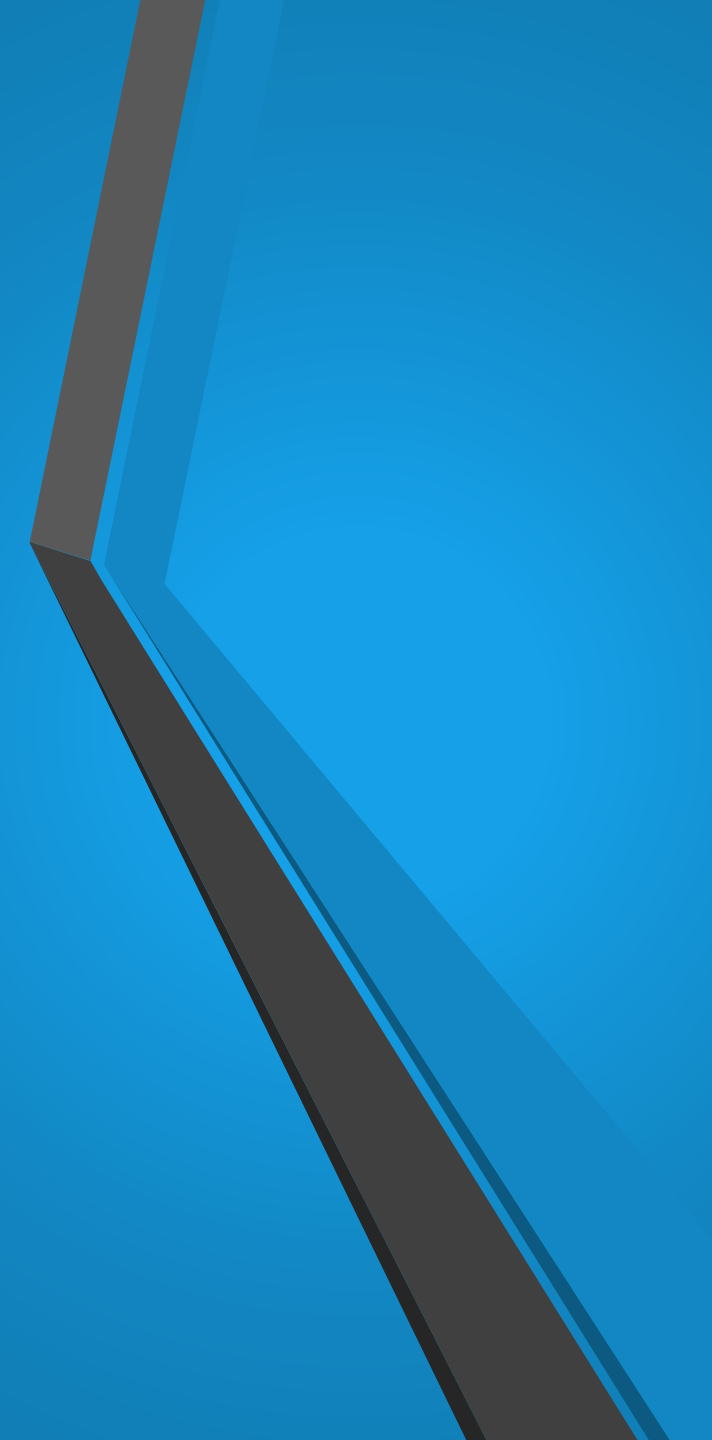
- Using testimonies regularly will create a culture ripe for evangelism.
- Even in a church of 25 adult worshippers, there are enough stories to fill every other Sabbath service for an entire year!
- Listen for stories that would be appropriate to share and would increase a culture of evangelism.
- Each person has a story of redemption and God's work in our lives!



## 6. Testimonies: the Model and Inspiration of an Evangelistic Culture

- Testimonies don't have to be reserved for the church service.
- Story: Tim and Michelle
- Story: Pam's cancer diagnosis





## 6. Testimonies: the Model and Inspiration of an Evangelistic Culture

- We are often most passionate about things at the point of discovery.
- People just coming to faith are often in the best position to speak.
- They still have a wide circle of unchurched and de-churched friends and are filled with awe and excitement that comes from newly meeting Jesus
- Be careful: tapping into their passion and witness could lead to revival!





# Conclusion

- A culture of evangelism involves both spiritual renewal and intentionality in all areas of your life.
- There is no program that can create an evangelistic culture in your church
- Instead, it will require church leaders to teach, model, and pray until members of the church realize that sharing the gospel is their privilege and responsibility.



# Conclusion

- A church with such a culture will be far more fruitful than a church with even the most effective programs and strategies.
- We want evangelism to become the normative experience of every believer in our churches and for them to share the gospel in the context of their everyday relationships.