**E-Team Orientation:**

**Introduction:** *The first day in a college course is always interesting, because the students in the class generally have no idea what to expect from the professor, unless they have had him in a class before, and the professor has no idea as to the potential of the students. (That is kind of where we are at tonight) So, in this session of orientation, I’m going to give you an overview of what E-Team is all about, and what I expect out of those who choose to continue as a part of E-Team after tonight. Basically, I’m going to throw a bunch of mud at the wall and pray that some of it sticks—please note—I will not always be giving a lecture!*

*After tonight, if you sign up to join E-Team, there will be handouts of all the teaching. (I had no idea or expectations of how many handouts to prepare for tonight, but tonight’s handouts will be available at next week’s meeting for all who join the team)*

* Tonight I want to answer the following questions: (The first set of questions deal with the Theology of Evangelism. Please note that the Theology of Evangelism is important—so much so, that entire seminary courses teach on the subject; and some seminaries have entire departments set aside for instruction and strategic thinking concerning Evangelism)
  1. What is Evangelism?
  2. Why should the Church make Evangelism a priority?
  3. Why should every Believer be involved in Evangelism?
* The second set of questions are a bit more pedestrian and pertain specifically to the E-Team itself:
  1. What is the primary goal of E-Team?
  2. Is E-Team a class or a ministry team?
  3. What are the qualifications necessary in order for an individual to be a part of E-Team?

**What is Evangelism?** The word or term “Evangelism” is a word that is unique to Christianity. It comes from the Greek Word: **εὐαγγέλιον**  yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on. This word is used in the New Testament 77 times, and is directly related to the Jesus message. (The Jesus message would include the life and teachings of Christ)

* Every time you read the word “gospel” in the New Testament it is this word “yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on.” It literally means “the good news,” but not just any good bit of news—specifically, it is the good news concerning God’s plan of redemption and the atoning work of Jesus.
* So, let’s talk about the very first Evangelist. (An Evangelist is someone who is declaring the Gospel) The very first Evangelist was Jesus. Before Jesus, there was no Gospel. Even John the Baptist didn’t bring the Gospel message. The Gospel of Mark begins by declaring itself to be the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus (1:1). Then the narrative takes us to the ministry of John the Baptist who was, “preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” (1:4) Finally, Jesus is baptized and starts His public ministry. **Mark 1:14-15 (NKJV) *14  Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15  and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."*** What is Jesus saying?
  1. Firstly, the Kingdom of God is at hand. In other words, I am here. Everything that you have been waiting for, everything that you have been promised is right here before you in the flesh. The fulfillment of the prophets is at hand!
  2. Secondly, you need to believe in the gospel. The promises of a Messiah and a Savior are not fairy tales—you need to believe. Believe in the promises. Believe in what God has said. Believe in the One God has sent. Believe in Me!
* In the Gospel of Mark, not only does Jesus start with the gospel, He ends with it as well: **Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV) *15  And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16  He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”*** There are a couple of things that I want to point out from these verses:
  1. The idea of Evangelism—which is the declaration of the gospel—is a commandment given by the head of the Church. (I’m going to be saying more about that in a few moments)
  2. Secondly, you may have noticed that gospel message is almost always accompanied with a call to “believe.”
* Additional “Believe” Verses:

**Romans 10:9 (NKJV) I**f you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Acts 16:30-31 (NKJV)** 30  And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31  So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

**John 1:12 (NKJV)** 12  But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

* Evangelism is declaring the Gospel. It is connecting people to the Christ message. Effective Evangelism is declaring the Gospel in such a way that people believe. (We need persuasive communications) Now I know that the first thing that goes through my mind is that you can’t make people believe. That is true! God is the source of our faith…and yet, if people don’t hear the Gospel they cannot respond to the message. (This is where, God in His sovereignty uses us in His plan of salvation) Listen to the Apostle Paul laying out this theological concept:

**Romans 10:14-17 (NKJV)** 14  How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15  And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: *"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,* *Who bring glad tidings of good things!"* 16  But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, *"Lord, who has believed our report?"* 17  So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (A few points)

* People must hear the gospel to believe.
* God sends “preachers” to declare the message. In this passage preacher = evangelist.
* Not everyone who hears the message believes.
* Faith comes by hearing the word of God. (This is either “the” or “a” way that God births faith in the heart of man)

**Why should the Church make Evangelism a priority**? It is a command by the Head of the Church. And it is further validated by the other writers of the New Testament and verified by the actions of the early church.

* Jesus words of “Go into all the world and preach the gospel” is clear.
* Peter preached the gospel on the day of Pentecost.
* The early church prayed for boldness to declare the gospel.
* James calls us to be prepared with an answer for the faith that resides in us.
* Paul called on Timothy to do the work of an Evangelist.
* Paul proclaimed that he was not ashamed of the gospel.
* The Church has been called to be “the light of the world.” We have been called to be the “salt of the earth.” We cannot be what Jesus has called us to be without a proclamation of the gospel.

***Do you want arguments for soul winning? Look up to Heaven, and ask yourself how sinners can ever reach those harps of gold and learn their everlasting song, unless they have someone to tell them of Jesus, who is mighty to save. But the best argument of all is to be found in the wounds of Jesus. You want to honor Him, you desire to put many crowns upon His head, and this you can best do by winning souls for Him. These are the spoils that He covets, these are the trophies for which He fights, these are the jewels that shall be His best adornment…If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.*** Charles Spurgeon

**Why should every Believer be involved in Evangelism?** Let me start by saying that you don’t need a special calling of God to be involved in evangelism. An Evangelist is a special calling of God—but, all of us should be involved in the work of an evangelist.

“We email, Facebook, tweet and text with people who are going to spend eternity in either heaven or hell. Our lives are too short to waste on mere temporal conversations when massive eternal realities hang in the balance. Just as you and I have no guarantee that we will live through the day, the people around us are not guaranteed tomorrow either. So let's be intentional about sewing the threads of the gospel into the fabric of our conversations every day, knowing that it will not always be easy, yet believing that eternity will always be worth it.” ― [**David Platt**](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/846687.David_Platt)

“Have you ever wondered what it feels like to have a love for the lost? This is a term we use as part of our Christian jargon. Many believers search their hearts in condemnation, looking for the arrival of some feeling of benevolence that will propel them into bold evangelism. It will never happen. It is impossible to love “the lost”. You can’t feel deeply for an abstraction or a concept. You would find it impossible to love deeply an unfamiliar individual portrayed in a photograph, let alone a nation or a race or something as vague as “all lost people”. Don’t wait for a feeling or love in order to share Christ with a stranger. You already love your heavenly Father, and you know that this stranger is created by Him, but separated from Him, so take those first steps in evangelism because you love God. It is not primarily out of compassion for humanity that we share our faith or pray for the lost; it is first of all, love for God.” ― [**John Piper**](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/25423.John_Piper)

* Leave it up to John Piper to jerk us around a bit! I agree with part of his sentiment. The love of God should be the greatest point of motivation in all that we do! In the words of Louie Giglio, “God doesn’t exist for me, I exist for God.” And if I love God, everything that I do should be done for the glory of God…and that includes sharing the gospel.
* Now let me challenge John Piper on this one concept. I believe that as we grow in God—and are transformed into His image—we begin to emulate God, all the way down to the deep emotions of agape. And when agape begins to dominate the way we think and feel—we will experience a love for those that are lost, because we are aligned with God. (Heart, soul, mind and strength)

**So, let me get to the questions concerning E-Team:**

**What is the primary goal of E-Team?** *Generally speaking, it is to build a team from Believers Church that is involved in Evangelism. Specifically, it is to develop a team or teams of individuals, who are highly trained to share the gospel; to be a team of individuals who act as an evangelistic think tank developing strategies to reach lost people and/or Believers who are unchurched; to be a team of individuals who are developing and producing media and materials designed to proclaim the gospel; to be a team of individuals who develop projects, programs and events that proclaim the gospel and build bridges of communication with people who do not know or believe in Jesus.*

**Is E-Team a class or a ministry team?** *It is a mixture. On the front end there will be a lot of teaching and training. As time goes on, it will become less of a teaching time and more of a doing time. Actual team activities, strategy meetings, project proposals, production time... It is my hope to develop an effective team—with established leadership—that is up and running on its own, and that I have an opportunity to take another group or groups through the process in the future.*

**What are the qualifications necessary in order for an individual to be a part of E-Team?** *Many things developed in a church setting are elective, in the sense that people choose to come or not. (Like Sunday School or Small Groups) The standard needs to be “Much” higher for participation on the E-Team.*

* “If we can’t count on you, we can’t count on you.” We cannot build a team with unfaithful people. It simply doesn’t work!
* **2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NKJV)** 1  You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2  And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
* So, the basic requirement is faithfulness. The way to get removed from the team is unfaithfulness.
* The consistently best team in the NFL is the New England Patriots. In building a great team, Bill Belichick demands accountability. If a player is 5 minutes late to a meeting, they are locked out of the meeting and not allowed to play in the game on Sunday. The message that he is sending to the team is this: “What we are doing is important, treat it as important!”
* I’m not paying you to be on the E-Team, so I won’t be locking you out of meetings, but you will need to treat both attendance and assignments as if they are important. In terms of being on time—be as on time for meetings as you can be. Give me and the E-Team the best that you have to give!

Next Session: The Importance of Personal Evangelism.