

LEADER GUIDE



# *Evangelism Training*

by James Merritt

## *Dear Leader,*

Welcome to *The Best News* evangelism training course. This three-week training is designed to equip Christians to share the saving truth of the gospel through a simple method using an accompanying card. Your role as a facilitator is critical, and we want to make your job as simple as possible.

To help you feel comfortable leading this group, we have created this handbook to guide you through each week's gathering. Before you begin, make sure to read through the weekly format and preparation points. These sections contain everything you need to get ready for the first session.

Thank you for investing your time to help spread the best news in history!

## WEEKLY FORMAT

*We recommend using the following schedule to keep each gathering to a little more than one hour:*

### Week 1

**Introductions:** 10 minutes  
**Instructional Video:** 15 minutes  
**Intentional Prayer:** 15 minutes  
**Newscasting:** 20 minutes  
**Total:** 60 minutes

### Week 2

**Intentional Prayer:** 15 minutes  
**Instructional Video:** 15 minutes  
**Newscasting:** 30 minutes  
**Total:** 60 minutes

### Week 3

**Intentional Prayer:** 15 minutes  
**Instructional Video:** 20 minutes  
**Newscasting:** 25 minutes  
**Total:** 60 minutes

## TERMS

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Helping your group become acquainted with each other and feel comfortable is a necessary first step, but sometimes the simplest tasks prove to be the most difficult. When gathering a group like this, introductions can be especially tricky. Either participants will feel so uncomfortable they will avoid talking, or they will speak for so long that it will jeopardize the successive portions of the gathering. To reduce these risks, your introductions should be conducted with intentionality. Create some ground rules and stick to them. We offer some suggestions for how to make this portion of the gathering successful in Lesson 1.

**INTENTIONAL PRAYER:** Prayer for lost friends and family is indispensable to the task of evangelism. To model this for participants, we've built-in prayer time during each gathering. Remember, this is not a time for personal prayer requests, which are also important, but rather a time focused on those in our lives who need to believe the best news of the gospel.

**INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO:** This should be the easiest portion for you to facilitate. All you need to do is push play! Each video lesson is about 25 minutes long and features the teaching of James Merritt of Cross Pointe Church. The group should follow along with their participant guides, which include notes and fill-in-the-blank sections to help them capture and retain the information presented.

**NEWSCASTING:** This is the portion of each gathering where participants will put *The Best News* evangelism principles they've learned into practice through role playing and other activities. Each week's newscasting exercise is different. We've listed step-by-step instructions for each exercise in the sections that follow.

## PREPARATION POINTS

*The following bullets outline the foundational principles for this course. Make sure to read each one carefully, and if you are able, review them again prior to each gathering.*

### An evangelism training is not a Bible study.

This course is designed to train participants in the art of starting gospel conversations with friends, family members, neighbors and coworkers. The emphasis is on the practice of evangelism, not just the principles. Each week's lesson will be rooted in the scripture, but the training is not intended to replace personal Bible study time. In fact, facilitators should encourage participants to recommit to a regular Bible study practice during these three weeks as it will reinforce what they are learning during the gatherings.

## You are a reporter, not a newsmaker.

Your job as facilitator is to pass along the information provided and help participants implement them through practice. Think of yourself as a reporter, rather than a newsmaker. You don't have to create any of your own content or hold center-stage. Simply pass along the content to participants, and help them as they conduct the newscasting exercises.

## If you don't plan ahead, you'll fall behind.

The success of each week's gathering is dependent upon your ability to prepare before it takes place. A list of necessary materials will be provided for every lesson. We suggest reviewing this list at least three days before the scheduled gathering.

## Prayer must be a priority.

The Bible teaches that prayer makes a difference in this world and that often things don't happen because we refused to pray about them. Because the act of evangelism and conversion is a Spirit-driven process, prayer must be a priority. As the leader of this group, you must step out and model

this for the participants. This should include facilitating the intentional prayer section each week and also praying for your group weekly as they progress through the training.

## *The Best News* cards are critical, not optional.

It bears repeating that this course is built upon the practice and not just the principles, of evangelism. *The Best News* cards assist participants in starting and sustaining gospel conversations. If you have not done so already, order a packet of these from [nambstore.com](http://nambstore.com). These will be distributed during the second week.





## LESSON 1: MOTIVATION

### Materials Needed

Index Cards

Pens/Pencils

Computer

*The Best News* Training Kit

Participants Guides (make sure you have one for each attendee)

### Introductions

Welcome everyone to the course, and explain that the gathering will run a little more than an hour. To begin, tell them you want to help each member get to know everyone else through introductions. Pass out index cards and pens/pencils.

The introductions portion is critical, but it is also risky because it can unintentionally consume more than its fair share of time. Index cards are useful in this regard. Ask each person to write down their name on one line, what they do on the next line, what their greatest fear is in one word or phrase and what they hope to get out of this course in one sentence. Go around the room and read the

card to everyone else beginning with yourself to model how it is done. If anyone begins to offer lengthy commentary, politely encourage the process to keep moving for the sake of time.



## Listening Guide

Play the video, and ask the participant to fill in the blanks as they watch using the pens/pencils from the introductions portion.

HEADLINE:

**You'll never become excited to share the gospel's message until you become sure of the exclusivity of the gospel's message.**

***“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”***

JOHN 14:6A

1. Religion will not unlock a relationship with God.
2. Righteousness will not unlock a relationship with God.
3. Only a relationship is the way to God.

***“No one comes to the Father except through me”***

JOHN 14:6

The way to heaven is not a path, not a philosophy and not a practice. It is a person named Jesus.





## Intentional Prayer

Remind people that prayer is important for evangelism because only the Holy Spirit can convert a human heart. Reference James 5:16: “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” Have participants pair off and pray for four people—one in each of the following categories: family member, friend, neighbor and coworker. Keep an eye on the clock, and make sure this portion does not exceed the allotted time.

## Newscasting

Give people time to write down their personal stories of conversion. Encourage them to focus on three times in their lives:

- **Life Before Christ:** How did they feel or experience lostness and estrangement from God?
- **Transformative Encounter with the Gospel:** What was said and done that finally changed their heart? Include relevant details including the emotions they felt in this moment.
- **Life Now:** How is their life different as a result of knowing Christ and believing the gospel?

Before you close, encourage participants to memorize John 14:6 this week. They can write it on their bathroom mirror in dry-erase marker or scribble it on paper and post it at their workspace.

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***Congratulations on leading your first session of The Best News!***



## LESSON 2: EXPLANATION

### Materials Needed

Pens/Pencils

Computer

*The Best News* Training Kit

*The Best News* Cards (several cards per participant)

### Intentional Prayer

Remind people that prayer is not just helpful—it's central to the task of evangelism. As James 4:2 says, "You do not have because you do not ask God." Can you imagine what goodness in this world has been unrealized simply because Christians have not prayed for it? Have participants pair off and pray for four people—one in each of the following categories: family member, friend, neighbor and coworker. Keep an eye on the clock, and make sure this portion does not exceed the allotted time.

### Listening Guide

*Hand out pens/pencils. Play the video, and ask the participant to fill in the blanks as they watch.*

HEADLINE:

**JUSTIFICATION  
IS BY GRACE ALONE,  
IN CHRIST ALONE,  
THROUGH FAITH ALONE.**

Last week, we explained why we should start gospel conversations with people who are far from God. This week, we'll explore what those conversations should look like.





**THE BAD NEWS:** Our sin has separated us from God.

**THE WORSE NEWS:** We can do nothing to remove our sin.

**The Big Question:** How can sinful people be right with a sinless God?

**THE GOOD NEWS:** At the cross, Jesus did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves.

**Grace** is getting what you don't deserve.

**THE BEST NEWS:** Through faith, we freely receive forgiveness and eternal life.

## Newscasting

Hand out *The Best News* cards if you have not already done so.

The newscasting exercise this week is role-playing, which can be tricky. Rather than ask participants to pair off on their own, do this for them and try to create complementary pairs. This will help to create balance in each group.

- More outgoing, extroverted people might be partnered with those who are more introverted and shy.
- Naturally encouraging participants might be paired with those who seem a little more resistant to evangelism.

- New Christians may be matched with longtime converts.

Ask them to utilize *The Best News* cards in a simulated conversation. One partner should play the role of initiator, and the other should play the role of responder. Encourage the responder to interject or ask for clarification as a non-believer might naturally do so in real life. After the conversation concludes, the responder should evaluate the initiator and provide constructive criticism. Halfway through the allotted time, ask them to switch.

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***Congratulations on leading the second session of *The Best News*!***



## LESSON 3: IMPLEMENTATION

### Materials Needed

Pens/Pencils

Computer

*The Best News* Training Kit

*The Best News* Cards (for any participant who needs more)

### Intentional Prayer

Because this is the last week of the training course, some of your participants may be feeling a sense of apprehension. After all, they are being kicked out of the nest now and will not have the security of the leader and the group to make them feel supported.

Reassure them that they are not alone. The Spirit is always with us and has promised to give us all the wisdom we need if we ask. Remind them of the promise of James 1:5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

Have participants pair off and pray for four people—one in each of the following categories: family member, friend, neighbor and coworker. Keep an eye on the clock, and make sure this portion does not exceed the allotted time.



## Listening Guide

*Hand out pens/pencils. Play the video, and ask the participant to fill in the blanks as they watch.*

HEADLINE:

**In order to reach anyone, everyone must simply reach someone.**

**Week 1** explained why we should start gospel conversations with people who are far from God.

**Week 2** explored what those discussions should look like. This week, we'll examine how to engage in these conversations.

Two goals of the Manhattan Project: security and secrecy.

People who find Jesus find people who need to find Jesus.

We must become obsessed with this singular question: "Who is my one?"

You can involve someone in a gospel connection.

We must choose to be dominated by one of these two thoughts:

1. I matter the most to me.
2. People matter the most to God.

You can influence someone with a gospel conversation.

You can invite someone to have a gospel conversion.





## Newscasting

Many participants will not feel fully prepared for the task of evangelism. This is normal. No evangelism training course can prepare its participants for every possible objection that every type of conversation might raise. This course is the beginning, not the end, of the evangelism journey.

At the same time, it is helpful to develop a couple of tools to ease some of the nervousness they may feel.

- **Brainstorm Objections**

Before working on the tools, lead the group in brainstorming possible objections to the gospel message and have them record these in their participant guide. If they stall out, ask questions such as ...

- “How might a Muslim/Jew/Hindu/atheist object to the gospel?”
- “How might a young person/elderly person object to the gospel?”
- “How might a person who had a bad experience with religion object to the gospel?”
- “What objections did you have to the gospel before you became a Christian?”

- **Tool 1: Distraction Dismissal**

Help participants draft and memorize a statement—in their own words—that they can use when people attempt to distract from the issue at hand (e.g., extreme statements, jokes, etc). Ask someone to read the sample statement that’s printed in their participant guide, and then give the group time to draft their own.

**SAMPLE STATEMENT:**

*“I understand what you’re saying, and I get why you feel that way. Can I share something with you that has been helpful for me as I thought through this?”*

- **Tool 2: Retrieve and Return**

Many people have sincere objections for which the participants will not possess an immediate answer. Remind them that this is normal. They are not omniscient, after all. Help them draft and memorize a statement—in their own words—that they can use when legitimate objections are raised that leave them feeling rattled or unprepared. Ask someone to read the sample statement that’s printed in their participant guide, and then give the group time to draft their own.

**SAMPLE STATEMENT:**

*“That is a very good objection, and one that I honestly haven’t thought about before now. Would you mind if I take some time to think about it and research it a little bit?”*



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced, horizontal blue lines across the entire page. The background is white, and there are no margins, text, or other markings present.

[illegible]This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.