**HOPE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**COURSE:** Relational Evangelism

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**A “ONE-SHOT” APPROACH VERSUS A MORE PATIENT APPROACH**

Advantages of one-shot method of evangelism, that is a 5-20 minute presentation of the Gospel with the aim of asking a person to make a decision for Jesus.

1. It is easier to learn.
2. It is quick.
3. It doesn’t take up much of your time.
4. You can do it anywhere.
5. You can do it with anyone.
6. You can do it with a lot more people.
7. You don’t have to get very involved with them.
8. It often results in irritation on the others part which you can translate into your being persecuted.
9. You can feel like you have done your job in “equipping the saints” and “preparing them to give an answer for the hope that lies in them.”
10. It is normally done with strangers.

Disadvantages of one-shot:

1. It is unrealistic to expect someone to give their life away to Jesus on such little information, unless the seed had already been previously planted.
2. They can’t understand what being a disciple means in that little time.
3. If it is a memorized presentation, the other person couldn’t repeat much of what you had shared even five minutes later if asked. They couldn’t quote one verse you used or even give its reference.
4. They aren’t allowed to think it through.
5. The odds of them having “buyer’s remorse” is great.
6. It is normally done with strangers. That approach isn’t going to work well with family, friends, etc.
7. It can “inoculate” them from future growth or contacts from other Christians reaching out to them. They feel like they don’t need to do anything else. They DID it one day in the past in a brief encounter with a Christian.
8. This approach can actually trivialize the seriousness of the Gospel.

Advantages of several meetings.

The IAAR consists of four lessons, normally done once a week for four weeks. This allows for many positive things:

1. It is a **patient** approach. There is no rush to get someone to make an immediate decision for Christ. Many aren’t ready. People like our being patient with them, it is a sign of respect.
2. It isn’t **pushy**. This is good for everyone involved. You can’t push someone into Jesus. You can walk along side of them. This is a non-confrontational approach. They are confronted with their need but that comes from God, not our pushy methods. People like that.
3. It is **respectful** of people and where they are in life. We don’t try to pressure anyone or force them to do something against their will or wants, people like that.
4. It is “If you are interested.” That puts the process in their hands. They are in control. If they don’t want to do it, we don’t do it. People like that.
5. It is **printed** out for them and you leave a copy for them. You only take a copy of each weeks’ lesson. Don’t give them the whole thing the first visit. They will have a copy of ALL the verses and thinking you use in the presentations. People like that.
6. It gives the **Holy Spirit** time to convict the people of their need for Christ.We are persuading people to Jesus. We share, we return and share more. There are well over 100 passages in the presentations. They get an excellent teaching in the Gospel.
7. Faith comes by **hearing** the Word of God, not your testimony, hearing about your great church, preacher or programs, etc. They hear the Word.
8. It gives you more opportunities to know the people.
9. It gives them more opportunities to build their trust in you and the message.
10. It gives you more opportunities to possibly be involved in their lives in other ways.
11. It gives you more opportunities to actually be with them on their turf, not on your turf such as a home Bible study at your place.
12. It gives you more time to get into depth as to what the Gospel is. Most people could attend church services or Bible studies for a year and not hear all the specific information they will hear in these four presentations specifically addressing the Gospel and their need for Jesus.
13. It gives use more opportunities to see what other questions, doubts or concerns they might have about Jesus, the Christian life or issues they are dealing with in their life allowing us to address those items. We can give them other materials to help them with their specific issues.
14. It will give you more opportunities and influence later to help get them growing in Christ and involved with other Christians.
15. With many, you will form lifelong friendships in Christ.

I use the following illustration to show one of the problems with the one-shot approach.

First, imagine that you have an 18-year-old single daughter. The family is having a barbeque in the back yard. The doorbell rings. Your daughter goes into the house to answer the door. She doesn’t come back for some time. She finally returns to the back yard holding onto the arm of a neatly dressed young man you have never seen before. You are curious. They join the rest of the family and with a huge smile on her face she introduces you to her new fiancé. You are stunned. You are speechless. You ask, “What? How long has this been going on? When did you meet? Why haven’t we met him before now? You have never even mentioned him!” She answers, “Oh, I just met him at the front door. He was going door-to-door looking for someone to ask to marry him. He asked me if I was married. I said no. He asked me if I ever planned on marrying. I said yes. He seemed to like the looks of me so he asked me if he could share four reasons with me why I should marry him. First he showed me a bunch of character references and letters attesting to his good character. Second, he showed me a letter confirming his employment. He told me that if I accepted his proposal he would show me his salary, too. I ended up accepting his proposal and he did show me and oh, his salary is great! Third, he showed me a picture of his house he is already purchasing. It is beautiful! It has a beautiful kitchen and a huge pool. And last, he showed me pictures of the two cars he has. One of them will be mine. And fourth, he told me I could do whatever I want when we marry. I can stay at home, study, work or whatever. Oh, and he showed me pictures of some of the places he goes to on vacation. Unbelievable! It is all so fantastic! How could I turn him down? So I accepted his proposal.”

Okay. now can you think of what you would be saying, thinking, or doing if that was your daughter? I’ll let you think that one through.

Here is the thought. Becoming a disciple of Jesus is a BIGGER decision than getting married. It has greater life implications and it is an eternal relationship. People need and deserve more than 15 minutes information before being asked to make that decision. We are doing that in using the IAAR and any other materials we provide them. It is a serious decision and life commitment.

Using the IAAR is not a quick hit method. I think that is obvious. We don’t force it on anyone. It is always, “If you would be interested.” It almost always starts the next week after making the offer and then setting up the time and place. We then do the first lesson and return for the next three weeks. So just to set up the presentations and then meeting to share them normally takes at least a month.

We often hand out other supplements during those weeks including a Gospel of John and *“More Than A Carpenter.”*

We have to be flexible to fit in with their schedule.

The presentations ALWAYS arise out of a relationship. It can be a newly-formed one over coffee or a long-time relationship as was the case with my father and a cousin of mine I hadn’t seen for 40 years. But it is NOT a quick hit method.

I also use the illustration or comparison of the quick hit method and the IAAR approach as going into a showdown at the O.K. Corral. Do you want to do it with a small one-bullet derringer or a six shooter? For me, the ONE SHOT method is just that. One shot and it is over. If the people don’t make a decision, about all you are left with is “Say, can we meet again in a few days and let me share this again to see if you have changed your mind?”

We teach Relational Evangelism. That is addressed every week in the online course in many different ways. To effectively do that we need to:

* BE PREPARED to share the Gospel,
* BE INTENTIONALLY SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES TO OFFER THE IAAR TO PEOPLE WE KNOW OR MEET, BE READY AT ANY MOMENT TO ENTER INTO A DISCUSSION WITH ANYONE, SEEING IF IT CAN LEAD US TO MAKING A OFFER OF “If you would be interested.”
* We have an AGENDA with everyone. We are Ambassadors. Paul wasn’t passive about this issue, he was passionate. He pled with people to accept Jesus. The rich man begged Abraham to send someone to his relatives to warn them about where he was.

My first concern is that others hear the Good News. For me that most often comes through the IAAR presentations.