

Evangelism Training

Disaster Relief



Liberty Association of Baptists

Mobile Laundry Unit

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Introduction

Purpose of the Liberty Association

Evangelism Team

To assist churches in fulfilling the Great Commission and to be an Acts 1:8 Church



Objective of this Module

- Develop evangelistic skills that lead to an effective presentation of the Gospel
- Equip individuals with evangelistic tools enabling them to share the gospel in a variety of settings

Goals of this module

- Team members will be able to initiate conversations that open the door for an evangelistic encounter
- Team members will be capable of sharing the gospel in both propositional and narrative formats
- Team members will be able to lead others to a faith decision
- Team members will be able to provide spiritual encouragement and direction to those in crisis situations



Exploration

Before we are able to help lead anyone to Christ, it is important to know his/her current condition and circumstances physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Being a good listener is often times the most effective way to communicate your genuine interest and concern. Listening is also the best way to connect with them as we seek to connect them to Christ.

In this portion of our training, we will learn how to initiate “exploration conversations” with people we meet. We will also explore three different case studies that present us with examples of conditions and circumstances persons might be finding themselves in as we enter their lives. While each case study is potent, we know the power of Christ and the hope we have through Him is not only what we need to offer these people but also what we can draw our strength from as we seek to ask the right questions, learn to listen with our hearts, and meet them where they are.

Exploration Conversations

In our encounters with persons affected by the disaster at-hand, we hope to impact their lives in a positive way for Christ far beyond their physical need for clean clothes. Being a good listener starts with creating an inviting atmosphere for someone to share what they are going through. Below are a few conversation starters that point us in the right direction and remind us that helping them with their laundry is really only a means by which we can enter their lives and offer them hope.

- 1) My name is _____ & I live in _____. (Invite them to share their name & information as well.) It’s nice to meet you. I’m so sorry for all you are going through right now. What was life like before the storm/disaster?
- 2) Hey, there. How are you holding up? My name’s _____; what’s yours? Can you tell me a little bit about what the last few days/weeks have held for you?

Mental Health Considerations for Natural Disaster Response

Perhaps the above conversations will result in the person sharing information with which you can readily identify and naturally respond to. However, in some cases, these conversations will open up issues and complicated difficulties involving mental health that require thoughtful preparation to readily respond in the most helpful and confident way.

The aim of the following information is to assist the volunteer in developing an awareness of mental health considerations, specifically post-disaster stress reactions of victims of natural disasters. Taking time to reflect now in training on how you would respond when presented with various, often complex traumatic responses can further equip you and build your confidence for the journey God has called you to in this ministry.

Below are three case studies. All have similarities and differences but represent the most common mental health conditions across different populations of people. You will be challenged to picture yourself as a helper/volunteer to the following victims of natural disasters.

Case Study One

Sara, age 31 is a single mother of two children. Her oldest son is 7 and her youngest son is 10 months old. Sara has worked part-time at a local fast food restaurant for two years. Her total income includes her wages plus child support she occasionally receives from her ex-husband, the children's father. She qualifies for some government services. Her mother whom she was close to died of cancer one year ago. She has two friends she tells you are there for her sometimes. She explains to you that they are not good influences. She attended church off and on as a child and reports that she went once to the church down the street a few months ago. She and her children are displaced after the tornado last week. They lived in an apartment complex that has been destroyed.

Sara shares all of this personal history with you. What are you going to say in this moment of opportunity God has given you? Below are some questions to ask yourself.

- What are your initial thoughts/concerns for Sara and her children? **(Take inventory of what you believe her needs are and your ideas about how you can minister to her in the capacity you are there to serve. Taking into consideration the brief time you have with her.)**
- What do you see as Sara's most pressing, immediate ("felt") needs?
Spiritual needs?
- Is there anything you are uncertain about while engaging in conversation with her?
- What other emergency or Disaster Relief services as well as spiritual resources would you want to make sure Sara knows about?

Case Study Two

Joe, age 62, comes to you with his wife Virginia and his two grandsons whom they are raising. Joe tells you that his son, Steve, has been in and out of drug addiction recovery for years and is unable to raise his sons. Their mother, Steve's wife, left him and the children several years ago after Steve refused to get help for his drug addiction. Joe and Virginia are considered middle-class Americans. Joe suffered from post traumatic stress disorder after serving in the Vietnam war. He tells you he has struggled with depression "on and off". His wife is very concerned about him because she reports he has been very emotional since the hurricane three weeks ago. Joe and Virginia have been able to salvage many of their belongings but their home is a total loss. Joe and Virginia are sharing this personal history with you and both of them are emotional as evidenced by their crying while sharing their heart with you.

Again, questions for consideration after this sweet couple have reached out to you for help.

- What are your initial thoughts/concerns for Joe and his family? **(Take inventory again.)**
- Is Joe under the care of a doctor to address his depression and PTSD?
- Have Joe & Virginia ever heard the Gospel? Attend church? Have supportive friends?
- Do Joe & Virginia have hope that their future will be brighter and that they can make it through this difficult time?
- What other emergency or Disaster Relief services and spiritual resources would you want to make sure Joe & Virginia know about?

Intro to Case Study Three

Below is a 3rd case study that will introduce the problem of suicide. It is very common for people to consider suicide as a way out of their impending circumstances. Because natural disasters and many other life crises can evoke traumatic responses from individuals, it is important as a volunteer to consider how you would respond if you encounter someone who tells you they are considering suicide.

Case Study Three

Mark, age 34 is recently divorced and has a daughter age 10. He and his ex-wife are currently in a custody battle. Mark and his wife were married for 13 years. He tells you he is devastated that their marriage is over. He further explains he has a history of suicide attempts. As a teenager, he overdosed on his mother's anxiety medication and was transported to the local hospital where he was treated and released the next day. Shortly after he was married, he lost his job, and he and his wife experienced major financial problems. Again, he saw suicide as a way out. He attempted suicide by overdose again, being treated and released from the local hospital. He further tells you that 2 years ago, he had thoughts of suicide but did not act on them. Currently, because his home has been ravaged by a tornado and he has no home to bring his daughter to, he tells you he often has thoughts of ending his life.

- What are your initial thoughts/concerns for Mark? **(Take inventory again)**

After having time to think through the circumstances and consider the seriousness of the situation, if you don't feel comfortable continuing to help, don't be discouraged. Seek the immediate help of your team leader. Know that God has used you to link the person up with someone else who can help.

- Since Mark has told you he is having thoughts of ending his life, it would be crucial to ask, "Mark have you thought about how you might hurt yourself?" If he answers yes and proceeds with details, there are several steps you should take.

- First, tell him that you are very concerned for his safety.
- Look for things he has previously told you that you can focus on to help him find hope. Remind him of his daughter and how much she needs him. Most importantly share Scripture that reminds Mark that God has an amazing plan for his life; to know Him (e.g. John 3:16, Ephesians 1:4-5).
- Thirdly, seek out the immediate help of your team leader in transporting him to the local hospital with his permission. If he refuses to cooperate and will not go to the local hospital, you must inform local law enforcement officials of the threats he made. Because he told you of past suicidal attempts, it makes Mark even more vulnerable to actually carry through with his plan to end his life.

It is very common for people to consider suicide as a way out of their problems.

Many people who have a high vulnerability to consider suicide fall into one of the following categories or groups who traditionally experience low socio-economic status:

- 1) minorities
- 2) woman-headed households
- 3) the elderly
- 4) the unemployed
- 5) the illiterate or uneducated
- 6) the ill or handicapped.

Masozera, Bailey & Kerchner (2006) assert that lack of access to economic or human resources or knowledge can limit the ability of some socio-economic groups to respond adequately to a disaster. We are honored & humbled to be used by God to meet these persons in their hour of need with such needed resources and knowledge to help them as they respond.

Conclusion

In all three case studies, each family is displaced and is in crisis due to their immediate circumstances. Sara, John and Virginia, and Mark are most likely experiencing panic and shock as they are responsible to continue to provide for their families. Several factors increase their vulnerability during natural disasters. Sara's low income, lack of family and social support and recent death of her mother complicate her current crisis. John having a history of depression, raising his grandchildren and the fact that he has experienced past traumatic events during war make him more vulnerable. Mark having a history of suicide attempts, recent divorce and current custody battle are likely causing him to feel hopeless.

Helping a person in any crisis can seem like an overwhelming task. However, the best way to comfort an individual in similar circumstances while volunteering on the field can be quite simple and summed up in two words: simply listen. Grant & Madrid (2008) report of aiding individuals following hurricane Katrina. Most of the people he and his group encountered in temporary shelters were grateful to have the opportunity to express their feelings and concerns in a supportive and validating environment. Additionally, he reports that this opportunity was sufficient to help alleviate some of the immediate stress they experienced.

The value of hope can never be over-stated. Our opportunity to offer reassurance is powerful. As we remind them of the reality that help has come and is there for them, we meet a great need. As we focus on God's promises through the Gospel & psalms of faithfulness, His provision, His presence through crises, we have the great opportunity to show them how He is keeping those promises through all the folks and different types of aide He has sent in their time of need. We help them to see that God is meeting them right where they are.

In order to do this, we must also take inventory of available services for each site. Look to your team leader to help you with this as he/she coordinates with KBC DR & other emergency services.

Taking the opportunity to engage in prayer with every natural disaster victim you encounter communicates the deeper concern you have for them. The following are some general questions for you to ask that would be helpful in any conversation with victims. Each question leads you to a better understanding of his/her current needs and how you should assist him/her in getting additional help.

- How do you usually cope with stress in your life? (Do they need additional resources?)
- Who in your life can you trust? (Can you assist them in calling a friend or family member?)
- What about all of this that has happened troubles you the most? (You can encourage them to seek counseling by a local pastor or Christian counselor.)
- Despite these difficult circumstances, do you have hope for your future? (Has this question led to them making suicidal comments? If so, refer to the previous section.)

Furthermore, this question is a great gateway to sharing the Gospel.

Presentation

Transition

While these case studies represent more dire situations and responses to the disaster at hand, each person that we encounter will have a story to tell that requires our caring attention and concern. Building a bridge between their world and God's Word is perhaps the most difficult yet crucial task in the evangelistic encounter. Asking permission to share the hope of the gospel paves the way to a non-confrontational presentation and allows the listener to maintain a sense of control within the conversation.

1. Looking for a place to cross – What doors might have been opened during the exploration conversation? Is there profound loss? Have they lost a sense of security? Is there uncertainty concerning the future? These may be good stepping-stones to help introduce the gospel.
2. Sharing your own story – This is not the time to share your own full-blown testimony, but it is an opportunity to identify with your friend in those areas that you share in common. At times we have all felt the emotions of fear, uncertainty, and anger. Where did you find help and hope?
3. Asking the right questions – Can I share with you what has given me hope in tough times? Do you know what to do if you ever came to the place where you wanted to give your life to Christ? May I share with you what the Bible says we must do, so that when you are ready, you will know?

Presentation

In this section, you will find two types of presentations: propositional and narrative. Three primary factors will determine which presentation of the gospel will be most effective. We trust that the Holy Spirit is already at work in the life of the individual and that He will give us wisdom for every situation. First, remain sensitive to His leading. Secondly, a person's familiarity with the Scriptures and biblical truth may dictate which presentation to utilize. Thirdly, sometimes whether a person is familiar with the Scriptures' claims or not, they may be most receptive to learn through information presented orally (e.g. in story format using repetition and vivid imagery). The opposite of this would be a highly-literate person who enjoys learning new information from reading, lists, etc. (more of a "just the facts" type approach).

1. Propositional Presentation – This format follows a pattern such as the Roman’s Road, F.A.I.T.H., the EvangeCube, Salvation Bracelet, or Four Spiritual Laws. It assumes that the person may have some sense of biblical truth and believes at some level the authority of Scripture.

- God’s purpose is to give us life – Life abundant and life eternal

*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. **John 10:10, KJV***

*The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. **John 10:10, NLT***

- Man’s problem is his sin

Our condition – We are sinners by nature and by choice

*As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one **Rom 3:10, KJV***

*As the Scriptures say, “No one is righteous—not even one. **Rom 3:10, NLT***

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. **Rom 3:23, KJV***

*For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. **Rom 3:23 NLT***

Our consequence – We are separated from God now and forever

*For the wages of sin is death. **Rom 6:23, KJV***

*For the wages of sin is death. **Rom 6:23, NLT***

*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. **Rev 20:15, KJV***

*And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. **Rev 20:15, NLT***

- God’s provision is Jesus Christ

His perfect life

His substitutionary death

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. **Isa 53:5-6, KJV***

But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

*6 All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. **Isa 53:5-6, NLT***

His glorious resurrection

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. **1 Cor 15:3-4, KJV***

*I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. **4** He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. **1Cor 15:3-4 NLT***

- God's promise of salvation

The demonstration of repentance

*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. **Luke 13:3, KJV***

And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God.

Luke 13:3, NLT

The exercise of faith

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. **John 3:16, KJV***

*For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16, NLT***

*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. **John 1:12, KJV***

*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. **John 1:12, NLT***

* A team member is free to use an alternative propositional presentation

2. Narrative Presentation – The Bible has one overarching story – a grand meta-narrative. Redemption flows through the Bible from Creation to Revelation – every page drips with God’s move toward the rescue and restoration of all creation. God is the ultimate storyteller. Sharing God’s redemptive story in narrative form is an avenue the church can use to evangelize and disciple the lost in any context. The following stories are those that we might regard as essential as we share the gospel with those who need to hear. They may be shared together in a single setting or across several sessions. *Source: Spread Truth Ministries, Inc. (www.viewthestory.com)*

- **Part 1: How did it all begin?**

- i. God

- 1. The story begins with God, who has always been. He has always existed and will always exist as He is now. If it seems confusing, it’s because He is beyond anything anyone could ever fully comprehend.

- “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” **Psalm 90:2***

- ii. Creation

- 1. In the beginning, God spoke and everything came into existence. By His command, the entire universe was created and filled with a dramatic display of galaxies, stars, and planets-including Earth, on which was a perfect garden of paradise called Eden. Of all the beauty He created, the masterpiece was a man and a woman. God made Adam and Eve in His image to reflect Him. They were created with the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying relationship with Him.

- “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” **Gen. 1:1***

- iii. Harmony

- 1. By God’s Design, all of creation was in harmony and was exactly the way it was supposed to be. During this time there was no pain, suffering, sickness or death. There was complete love, acceptance, and intimacy between God and man, between Adam and Eve, and throughout creation. *But something tragic happened...*

- **Part 2: What went wrong? (the fall)**

- i. Disobedience

1. Adam and Eve were far from being equal to God, yet He lovingly placed them in charge of all He had created in Eden. He gave them the freedom to make decisions and govern the earth with one rule: not to eat fruit from a specific tree. One day, God's enemy, a fallen angel named Satan, wanted to overthrow God so he took the form of a serpent and lied to Adam and Eve. He deceived them into thinking God was not good and did not have their best interest in mind. As a result, they knowingly disobeyed God. In rebellion, Adam and Eve ate the fruit, deciding that they, not God, would determine right and wrong.

"There is none righteous, no, not one." **Rom. 3:10**

- ii. Consequence

1. The consequences of their actions were devastating! Like a virus, sin entered into all of creation and into the hearts of Adam and Eve. Sin, suffering, and pain were passed down from generation to generation; all of creation was distorted from its original design. We have all read or heard the stories of war, poverty, disease, greed, and scandals that plague our world today. Those are all big-picture results of sin's entrance in the picture.

"all the world may become guilty before God." **Rom. 3:19**

- iii. Need

1. When we think about the perfection and love that existed at the beginning of creation, we realize we are far more flawed and far more sinful than we can dare imagine. Just think of the grudges we've held, the lies we've told, the thoughts we'd never say aloud. An honest glance into our own hearts reveals the truth: We are all guilty. Everyone has sinned, and the ultimate consequence, even worse than physical death, is eternal separation from a loving God, in terrible misery and unhappiness. Because of all this, we need to consider the questions: *Can anything be done? Is there hope?*

- **Part 3: The Rescue**

- i. Promise Made

1. God removed Adam and Eve from Eden as a result of their sin but left them with a promise of rescue and hope. He promised them one of their descendants would someday rescue mankind from sin. Over the next centuries, God prepared the way for this person who would become the Savior of the world. Exact details of His birth, life, and death were recorded in the Bible many centuries before His coming. In fact, the whole Bible ultimately points to this one person as the focal point of all human history. His purpose in coming was “*to seek and to save what was lost*” **Luke 19:10** *So who was He?*

- ii. Promise Kept

1. The promised Savior, simply, was God. God became human in the person of Jesus Christ around 2,000 years ago, fulfilling all the predictions in the Bible. Jesus’ birth was miraculous since His mother was a virgin. His life was unique: He **NEVER** sinned. And His death was a sacrifice that rescued us from sin and Satan. He willingly, obediently, and sufficiently died an agonizing death on a cross for the sins of all mankind in the greatest display of mercy and grace the world has and will ever know. The perfectly innocent died to rescue the hopelessly guilty. He took the place on a cross rightfully meant for us, to pay for sins we’ve committed and will commit against God. But the grave couldn’t hold Him! Three days later Jesus emerged from His tomb, fulfilling His earthly mission to defeat sin by dying on the cross and to defeat death by rising from the dead – just as God promised. Forty days later He returned to Heaven where He reigns as the rightful King. *But the story doesn’t end there...*

*“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” **1 Peter 3:18***

*“(Jesus) gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” **Gal. 1:4***

- **Part 4: The Restoration**

- i. All Things New

1. For all those who trust in Jesus alone, God has also promised He will make all things new. The new heaven and new earth will be completely free of sin and selfishness – a place of perfect friendship with God, others, and all creation. No more shattering earthquakes, devastating tsunamis or violent storms will plague the earth. No more pain, broken hearts, sickness or death to trouble us. Everything will be restored the way it was meant to be. The new earth will once again be the perfect home God intended for His creation. God’s original purpose will flourish, as those who trust in His rescue will enter into the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying relationship with Him forever.

- ii. Forever with God

1. The most wonderful part of this new world is that we will be with God forever, experiencing complete joy. We will be restored to a perfect relationship with the One who created, loved, and died for us. C.S. Lewis, scholar and author, compared the first step into this new world as “Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

*“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea...And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” **Rev. 21:1, 3-4***

- **Part 5: Conclusion**

- ii. What's Your Part in the Story?

- 1. God is writing an amazing story from creation to restoration. He created you to be a part of that story to worship Him, serve Him, and enjoy relationship with Him. By joining God in His story, you will find forgiveness, purpose, and satisfaction as you come to know the Author of life.

- iii. Rescue by Faith Alone

- 1. Faith is simple trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you. It means instead of believing you can rescue yourself from sin & its consequences, you transfer your trust to the rescue He purchased for you by His death. Your allegiance is now to Jesus, the King. Those who place their trust in anything other than Jesus will find themselves forever separated from the loving God who gave His one and only Son to set us free from the bondage of sin. This painful separation is called Hell.

- “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” **Eph. 2:8-9***

- iii. Forgiveness & Repentance

- 1. Since our sin has left us with devastating consequences, the worst of which is being separated from God, God grants us the chance to come to Him and express our need for Him. As we acknowledge that need, we are recognizing our sin that has left us separated from God and how we are powerless to overcome sin or its consequences. This gift of repentance is just what we need to let go of our sin, express our faith in Him, and receive the forgiveness and salvation He alone can bring.

- “Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.” Acts 3:19*

Invitation

Preparing for a Response

Jesus told His disciples to compel people to respond to the message (Luke 14:23). If there is a clear sense of receptivity to the gospel ask whether they are ready to trust Christ as Savior and invite Him to take control of their life.

If the answer
is “no”

1. Thank them for the opportunity to share and ask if you can pray for them and their immediate needs. You may also have information about local church(es) they could reach out to in the future, should the Lord bring them to a response later on. Your job has been to set the stage for the next person to share & bring them closer to Christ.

If they are
uncertain

2. They may still have questions or, like the rich young ruler, are not yet ready to release things in the world. While they may be concerned, the presence of conviction may not yet have finished its work. Ask if they have thought about the things you’ve said before, & if they’d like to talk more about them.

If the answer
is “yes”

3. Remind them of the necessity of repentance, faith, and surrender. Encourage them to pray a personal salvation prayer (Rom 10:13) or to follow you while you pray.

- Connect them to Christ – Keep their faith focused on Him
- Connect them to a local congregation – Continuation of their faith

Expectation

How to Remain Effective

Paul admonished every believer that in whatever you do, do it to the glory of God (Col 3:17). To this end we must not only prepare to be effective but continually evaluate our effectiveness.

1. Make sure that your own salvation is secure (2 Peter 1:10).
2. Live a consistent, Christ-like lifestyle (Eph 5:15).
3. Depend on the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18).
4. Share your faith locally (2 Tim 4:5) – Team members should practice presenting both evangelistic presentations within the context of their local church before arriving on the field.
5. Report the results (Acts 14:26-27) – Fill out the Evangelism Report Form to be shared with local churches in the disaster area for follow up, the KBC, and Liberty Association. (See appendix for the Form)

Conclusion

On the behalf of those who do not yet know that disaster will strike them or that they will desperately need your help and the hope of a Savior, we thank you. Thank you for taking the time to prepare. We pray your preparation will be ongoing so that you may be effective whenever disaster may strike. We trust that God's investment in your life as you prepare and serve will result in a wonderful ministry as you're deployed in the future!

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