

LAY EVANGELIST

A MINISTRY DESCRIPTION FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Introduction

The lay evangelist dates to the time when Jesus sent out the seventy to minister in areas that He and the disciples would be unable to reach during His brief ministry (Luke 10:1-17). Just as these lay evangelists went out preaching the gospel of Jesus at His first coming, you are called to go and preach the gospel of His second coming. In the modern setting the lay evangelist reaches areas where the pastor or conference evangelist may never have the opportunity or budget to set foot. As a volunteer you can establish a work there.

The church serves the Lord in praise, serves one another in love, and serves the world in humility. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Jesus, in His last words before ascending to Heaven, gave the commission to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . ." (Matt. 28:19): For the lay evangelist the target audience is the world, beginning at the doorstep of his or her home.

Duties of the Lay Evangelist

The work of the lay evangelist is varied, but some of the specific functions include the following:

1. *Hold public evangelistic meetings.* Meetings could be in your town or in a nearby town where no formal Seventh-day Adventist work has been started. You could do all the preaching yourself, or organize a team to share the preaching duties. Don't overlook the possibilities of holding meetings for individuals in retirement centers, or for structuring your outreach to a specific ethnic group in your community. A series of meetings for the hearing impaired or other handicapped individuals who have special needs (that are often overlooked by regular outreach events) could be very rewarding.
2. *Conduct Revelation seminars.* This form of public evangelism has been particularly effective in recent years with church members leading out. There is also material available to hold Daniel seminars which open up even more Bible prophecy to your hearers.
3. *Assist the pastor.* The lay evangelist can assist the pastor in evangelistic meetings or by preaching. Especially in a district with more than one church, the pastor needs the help of a lay minister to fill speaking appointments for Sabbath worship services and mid-week meetings from time to time. The pastor may also seek your assistance for visiting individuals who have shown an interest in learning more about Adventists.
4. *Organize neighborhood outreach.* In cooperation with your church ministries leader, help plan outreach activities for your community, especially when laying the groundwork for evangelistic meetings with entry events, such as stop-smoking seminars, cooking and nutrition classes, etc.
5. *Recruit volunteers.* You will have the opportunity in your projects to minister to others in your church family by giving them the opportunity to become involved in active witnessing. Build a network of persons around you who also have a burden for soul-winning. Help train them for outreach ministry and encourage them to stay actively involved in witnessing.
6. *Small group evangelism.* Once called "cottage meetings," this form of outreach provides opportunities to teach the gospel to two, three or a dozen individuals in a less formal situation. You may find this a good way to begin.

Resource Materials

The following resources are recommended for your ministry. You can purchase these by calling AdventSource (800-328-0525), the Adventist Book Center (800-765-6955) or your local Christian bookstore.

Decisions. The object of all evangelism is to help individuals make decisions for Christ. This book by Mark Finley and published by the Ministerial Association discusses the delicate art of leading men and women to Christ. It gives direction on how to impart conviction, how to increase desire, and how to help people overcome habits.

Evangelism, by Ellen G. White discusses principles that will guide you in all aspects of your evangelistic outreach. Though written many years ago, the principles still are valid today.

Evangelism in Today's World, by Earl Cameron. How to attract evangelistic audiences in a secular society.

Gaining Decision for Christ, by Louis Torres. State of the art secrets for leading souls to Christ.

Great Stories and How to Tell Them, by Steven Mosley. Explains how to take profound biblical truths and crystallize them in narrative form; includes a collection of heart-gripping stories which illustrate each of the 27 fundamental beliefs.

How To Win A Soul. This practical guide by R. A. White gives guidelines for sharing the gospel by telling you what to say, why to say it, when to say it, and how to say it.

Lay Evangelist's Handbook. Produced to provide a how-to book for church members who volunteer to conduct public evangelism. Subjects covered include organization, preparing the field, budget, finances, publicity and follow-up.

Persuasion, by Mark Finley. How to help people decide for Christ.

Power Witnessing: How to Witness to Different Personalities, by David Farmer. Explains temperament theory and how to tailor one's witness to individual personalities so as to appeal to their unique worldview.

Radical Disciples for Revolutionary Churches, by Russell Burrill. The author explores what it takes to produce church members who want to be participants, not spectators, and proposes a major change in how to "do evangelism."

Rekindling a Lost Passion: Recreating a Church Planting Movement, by Russell Burrill. The author supplies the nuts and bolts of planting new churches and issues an urgent call to recapture that same passion for the lost that Christ has.

Revolution in the Church, by Russell Burrill. Believing that both pastors and laity have strayed far from their biblically assigned roles, the author proposes a radical change in how Adventists "do church."

Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century, by Russell Burrill. Experience the explosive power of a church built on relationships.

Search for Certainty Bible Study Guides, by Mark Finley. Presents traditional Adventist doctrines in a clear, carefully reasoned, faith-building way—30 lessons in a set, available by the set or in packs of 100 per title. (It Is Written)

Studying Together, by Mark Finley. This ready-reference Bible handbook assists you in studying Christ-centered truths with friends and neighbors

The Psychology of Witnessing, by Jard DeVille.

Winning—Lay Bible Ministry Handbook, by Dan E. Caslow. Contains the basic how-to information of planning public meetings.

Visit AdventSource On-Line at www.adventsource.org for a complete list of the latest resources available for local church leaders. You can place an order or request a catalog by calling 1-800-328-0525.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call the Adventist Plusline at 1-800-732-7587 or visit them on-line at www.plusline.org.