

Paul H. Dixon: Thank you, young people. That was a blessing and most enjoyable. I love to hear saxophones. Appreciate your ministry this morning. I am grateful for the way you as a college family, pray for all of us who are out ministering. We do appreciate you praying as we leave. This is Dixon and I will leave right after chapel to catch a plane. We'll be over there for a conference that will begin Friday through Sunday. Be returning on next Monday.

I'd like to encourage you to take advantage of the emphasis this week in chapel, the opportunities in the two conferences, the conference on abortion, the Christian response. I do believe that all of us are appalled that we are averaging now more than one million abortions a year in this country. We have legalized the murder of babies.

As Christians, all of us who believe the Bible stand in opposition to this. We should let our voice be heard. We should do everything we can to see if we cannot get this law change. And I'm grateful for our young people, the student senate and the Timilatians, who've pulled all this together. They're bringing in some very fine speakers, not only for chapel but for some evening sessions as well. The Francis Schaeffer films, and I trust you'll take advantage of all of this to be better informed and to be more involved.

I also want to encourage you that this free enterprise conference also speaks to our philosophy as a college. We are committed to free enterprise. We believe that the basic principles of free enterprise flow from biblical principles, even though many who would be advocates of free enterprise would not even be believers, not even necessarily believe the scripture, and yet we believe that free enterprise centers and the worth of the individual and God has created us as individuals in his own image.

And so, I would encourage you to also make sure that you learn from this conference when we bring in someone like the president of Calspan. We bring in David [inaudible], who happens to be [inaudible] son, who was the commissioner of economic development for the state of Minnesota under Governor Quie. He's been encouraged to run for governor of the state at times. I was just with him about a week ago, a week ago, Saturday in Minneapolis.

And I know that the Reagan administration has expressed interest in him, but he's to this point decided to stay in his present work. That night, he was speaking for a fundraising event for 3,000 people. He was chairing that in the state of Minnesota. And you'll want to hear him on Friday night. He is astute on what's going on in world, the world economic scene. He has some strong convictions as to what needs to be done.

I would think you're interested in the economy, the economy and the country, the economy and the world. Our Christians, we should respond. Go to that banquet. Let's have a great turnout of faculty and students. Take advantage of the workshops on Saturday. Of course, there will be the chapel on Friday. We

have not only these I've mentioned, but we have Dr. Monroe and others and I'm sure it's going to be very profitable.

Charles Wagner, Dr. Wagner is the president of Northwest Seminary will be speaking next Monday and presenting the seminary. I happened to serve as a member of the board of trustees of this seminary and can recommend it to you very highly and encourage many of you to take advantage of talking to him and finding out more of what their objectives are at Northwest.

I'm not sure whether all of you are aware, but we now have the switchboard open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We trust that this will assist you and others who find it necessary to call in at various times and can't perhaps get reach you at your phone in your room. So, we've made this adjustment and trust it will work out quite well.

I had a blessed time yesterday at the Lindale Baptist Church in Cincinnati. Thank you for your prayer support. I held my first evangelistic meeting in that church back in 1958. So, it's a privilege to go back after 25 years and to speak in this church. We've had opportunity to be there on a number of occasions.

It was exciting yesterday to reminisce over those years in the various campaigns. I recall going back in 1959, I was 20 years old. I had just finished my sophomore year in college. And I held an evangelistic campaign and we had youth rallies. We had a youth choir. We had so many young people come. They had to actually put the choir, flow it out onto the platform. We had chairs back in the vestibule and the blessing of God. We had to extend the meeting and go into half of the next week just to go on and see what God would do.

And on yesterday as I spoke, we have some young people from that church and we had some other young people who came to also be in the services there in Cincinnati from the college. And we had a man and his wife come to the Lord yesterday morning. They'd been praying for this couple and we thanked the Lord for that. Had another man who came for assurance of salvation, had a young man I suppose of college age who'd been away from the Lord and came back to the Lord, had a boy I would imagine about nine or 10 who professed faith in Christ.

So, it was a blessed day, morning and evening. Thank you so much for your prayer support. We rejoice in what God is doing through the ministry of all of our people as we go out during the weeks and on the weekends.

We started a series on evangelism this quarter. This will be the last message for this quarter. Next week, Dr. Wagner will be speaking while I'm on my way back. And then the following Monday, we will have the dedication of our teams that will be out ministering and evangelism during the spring break. But as we reflect upon our emphasis this quarter and we will continue on evangelism in the spring quarter, we've talked about a motivation for evangelism to glorify God

because of the command of God and the love of God and the wrath of God, because that God makes us new creations because of his grace.

And then we started looking at the roadblocks to evangelism. And as we thought about these roadblocks to evangelism, you'll recall that we indicated that many do not get involved in evangelism because they have never received Jesus Christ as Savior. They may profess to know the Lord, but because they've not experienced the grace of God in essence, they have nothing to share. That would be obvious.

Then we notice that many do not share their faith in Christ because they're in a backslidden condition. And being in that condition, many times you do not tell anyone about the Lord because you don't even want them to know you're a Christian. When you're backslidden and you're out of fellowship with God, there is certainly no enthusiasm, no desire to get involved in someone's life at any level and especially when it comes to telling them about the Lord.

Then we talked about the matter of apathy. And when a person is apathetic, that in essence says nothing motivates them. We talk about the problem nationwide, apathy that characterizes young people. The idea seemingly being all young people are thinking about is getting an education, getting a job, making money, having the materialistic things that go with that, and unfortunately, that is carried over into our Christian colleges and it's apparent also in our churches that we are so self-centered, so self-seeking that we just don't spend a lot of time thinking about a world that's perishing around us and our responsibility to reach individuals and families for Jesus Christ.

I personally believe that there is a great opportunity today to be used of God. I do not believe there's ever been a day that I would have chosen to be alive preferable to this day. I would prefer this day, the 20th century, the '80s over the day that Moody lived or Spurgeon or any of the others, the opportunities we have to give out the gospel.

We also started thinking last week of how or the last time we met, many do not get involved in evangelism because they've had disappointing experiences. And we said that that takes several shapes such as we've been involved in communicating the gospel and someone is not treated us very well. We've been experienced rejection, so we tend to back off.

I frankly am not going to do it. I thought about doing it but asking how many of you have ever had an experience like that? I dare sir, that there wouldn't be many. Personally, though I do not claim to have been involved in evangelism at great extent, but what time I have spent in personal evangelism, very, very few times have I been ill received. I've basically have found folk fairly open to the presentation of the gospel.

We also talked about how people make false professions. And we get involved in someone's life, we take them to church, we share the gospel with them and they don't materialize for God. They aren't used of God. They don't mature. And so, we get discouraged and we think, "Hey, maybe someone else had better do it or maybe I'm just not doing it right." Or for whatever the reason, we say Evangelism's not for me.

If you've not read Spurgeon's lectures to his students, I would recommend it to you. And one of his chapters in is entitled, The Minister's Fainting Fits. And in that chapter, he indicates that perhaps that brings the most depression to him was the fact that people would receive Christ under his ministry and that's the last he would see them.

I don't think any of us should expect about a thousand, even as we look at our Lord and those he worked with all did not go on for him. Even as we look at the parable of the seed. If I study the parable of the seed and have interpreted it correctly, only 25% of those who make profession are going to go on for the Lord anyway. So, I think we become very unrealistic if we think I got involved in someone's life. I tried to follow the leading of the spirit. I tried to use good methodology, a good message, the best I knew everything was in place. They made a profession, yet they're not living for God today.

I think we just have to leave that with the Lord. We do have to reevaluate our message. We do have to reevaluate our methodology, but I don't think we should expect that all of them are going to be out and out Christians.

Another thing we discovered was that many, and this is a result of surveys that I've taken for the last 10 years, various age groups, many do not get involved in evangelism because of a misconception of what evangelism is. One misconception being it's the professional's responsibility. Let the evangelist do it. Have an evangelistic meeting once a year and do all of your evangelism. I don't think that's as prevalent today as it was 10 years ago, 20 years ago.

In fact, there used to be entire Baptist denominations would have simultaneous campaigns and every church in the convention would have an evangelistic meeting the same week of the year. And this was saying, we want to evangelize that week. And so, we have communicated, you bring in a professional and he evangelizes, or it's the pastor's job, or you hire a full-time visitation director will take care of it.

All of us appreciated Norm Nicholas. I think I appreciate two things especially about Norm Nicholas. Number one is compassion in his heart, but he's also very direct. He went to one of our seminaries recently, he was sharing this with me, and he addressed the seminary chapel. He said, "How many of you guys feel you have the gift of teaching?"

Wow. Almost every hand went up. I got the gift of teaching. Great. How many of you have the gift of evangelism? And he said, one kid looked around and about halfway, Norm looked at those prospective pastors and missionaries and said, "Who are you going to teach?"

Good question. Everyone wants to teach, who is going to evangelize? I go beyond those pastors and those missionaries. It has to be the future pastors and missionaries and businessmen and doctors and nurses and school teachers and housewives. We are going to have to reach this world for Christ from the pew as well as from the pulpit. And we must get away from this misconception that it is a professional's responsibility.

Also, we must get away from this idea that it's a cold Turkey, cram it down your throat, high pressure type of evangelism. We have all stereotyped this and I will grant you there is too much of that that goes on that dishonors the name of our Lord.

But I am even more concerned that in reacting to that extreme, most of our Christians in our churches are doing absolutely nothing. They are not making a mistake and being too aggressive. Their mistake is that there is no aggressiveness whatsoever. But what we endeavored to communicate to you is the concept presented in Joe Aldrich's book of a Lifestyle Evangelism, where it just becomes a part of our life that it's more than a Thursday night visitation. It's more than a Tuesday night visitation. Whatever it is where we have it programmed in our church, it just becomes part of our lives that we actually think it and pray about it and have a plan and a program in our lives and our families to reach people for Jesus Christ.

If I may move on to another roadblock to evangelism, I have found that many respond the reason I do not evangelize is because I do not have enough knowledge. I was amazed when I started this survey that one of the leading reasons people gave me and college students in my evangelism class at Cedarville, and I taught that for about seven years I believe, would say, I'm afraid someone's going to ask me a question and I won't have the answer.

Now, I'm sure all of us have thought about that. What if I start to communicate the gospel and then they ask me a question and I get all hung up and I can't answer it? Well, the obvious solution to that problem is to recognize that none of us have all the answers. And there's nothing wrong with saying, "Hey, that is a great question. I don't know I've ever been asked that one before. And if you'll get me some time, I'll try to dig out an answer for you and meet you next week." There's nothing wrong with someone asking us a question and we don't have the answer. In fact, that's a good experience for us.

I know Howie Hendricks at Dallas Seminary in trying to work with some of the guys, tells the story how he loves to take a young fella who thinks he has all the answers. This seminary student, who's got to handle all of it. And he likes to

throw him out onto a secular campus and let some of those secular kids nail him to the wall. Said, that's one of the greatest things that can ever happen to that kid.

So, let's not stay away from the firing line because we're afraid we're going to get some shots that we just can't handle. But I also happen to think that we anticipate that we're going to be spending most of our time witnessing to the Moonies, witnessing to the Hare Krishna's, and the Jehovah Witnesses, and they will just snow us with all of their questions.

Again, on a limited basis, I talk to strangers I meet. And I've been doing this for quite a few years, and I would dare say that less than 1% of the people I talk to are cultists. Meeting people wherever it might be, on a plane or in a store or whatever the occasion might be, I don't generally run into the cultist as I endeavor to share my faith with them. In fact, I find the cultist coming to me more than I'm going to the cultist. I find them coming to my door in Cedarville, especially the Jehovah Witnesses.

I tell the people out in the churches where I travel that I can't believe the Jehovah Witnesses who come to Kramer and to Scott and to Palmer. I live on Baptist Boulevard. I live in a subdivision with the head of the Bible department. I live in a subdivision with the head of the music department, and some more Bible faculty and the head of the physical education department. I mean, they're Baptists all over our area. If I were a Jehovah Witness, I'd skip those streets.

We don't scare them. They send their wives and their kids to us. I have had a mother with children to come with their literature from the Jehovah Witnesses. I've had two men to come. I've had young people to come. They come on a regular basis. They're coming to us. The problem is not us going to them without having the answers. So, I think that's a strong man. I'm not so sure that I even want to spend a great deal of time studying about the cults in order to evangelize them. Some may choose to, but personally that's not been a priority with me because I'm not generally talking to that many cultists.

But the other thing that comes to my mind when we talk about not having the answers, I'm in Orlando, Florida about 30 days ago. I'm holding an evangelistic meeting, the first one I've held away from the college in five years. And the reason was because John Pereira graduated from Cedarville College and since the leading of God in his life to preach when I held a meeting at the college back in the late '60s. And John asked if I would come and speak at his church, the Faith Baptist in Orlando. So, I did, a Sunday through a Wednesday.

There's a young man in that church who's there every night, at least a couple of the nights, has a guest with him who needs the Lord, who's a dynamic Christian, who's sharing his faith. He graduated from Annapolis with honors. He's 22 years old and he's teaching there on the base nuclear physics. Brilliant young man.

You know how long he's been saved? Six weeks. Roman Catholic background. Everything he knows he says about the Bible I have learned in six weeks He goes back home determined to witness to his father. The priest has him come over and for four hours grills him on why he is wrong and he has to handle all those questions and all of those objections.

He gave me some material from the priest. I have it in my file. I could not believe it. Why the Bible is errant? Why you should not trust the Bible? Now, he had to walk into a grilling like that and he's been saved six weeks and we've been saved six years, 16 years, 20 and 25 years, and we're afraid someone's going to ask us a question and we won't have the answer. We've memorized all kinds of verses, been in Sunday schools, preaching services, chapel services. Many of you have a Christian high school education as a background and we are afraid we're not going to have the answer.

I was preaching in the Cleveland area. Mrs. Dixon was with me and Scott. We were eating out in the home and I knocked on a door and usually when you go out to eat an evangelistic meeting, the Christians are inviting you. This young man opened the door, I guess in his early 20s. If I recall correctly, he was 23. Had a nice smile.

I walked in, his father and his mother, they were entertaining us. I said, "I haven't seen you in the evangelistic meeting this week." He said, "I haven't been there." Oh, I said, "You work at night?" Nope. I didn't ask anymore. I'm fairly discerning. I said, "He's not saved." Found out he'd been in the Navy. He's a male nurse. He works at a hospital.

We eat. I want to share Christ with him. I said, "You like guns, right?" Somehow, we got to talking about it. Yeah, "I like to hunt." I said, "I have a brand new. 410, 22 over and under out in the trunk. Would you like to see it?" He said, "I'd love to see it." We go out, open up the trunk, talk about hunting, talk about the guns.

I said, "May I ask you a personal question?" He said, "Sure." I said, "Have you ever had anyone share with you what it means to be born again?" He said, "I've never heard of that." I said, "Are you for real?" He said, "I don't know anything about that." I said, "Would you mind if I just took a few minutes and took my New Testament and shared that with you?" He said, "I'd like that."

So, I took a few minutes and worked through John 3 and shared some principles about the new birth. And I don't often do it this way. I don't always approach everyone the same way, but I looked at him and I said, "You know there are three things you can do with what you've just heard. Number one, you can say, 'I don't want anything to do with that and die and go to hell.' That's your choice. Number two, you can say, 'Hey, I'm interested, but I'd like to think about it,' and while you're thinking go to hell. Or number three, you can say, 'I'd like to receive Christ right now.'" He said, "Well, I sure don't want to go to hell."

And he said, "You know, I've been thinking about it for the last 15 minutes. Anything that is this serious and this important, I think that's long enough to think about it. I like to become a Christian." I said, "You would?" Yeah. I want to preface this. You'll hear people tell stories like this and you begin to think, "Oh, that's the way it works all the time. No, this is the only time it's ever happened to me like this. I can't duplicate this story. It doesn't often happen this way."

I got so scared that the guy didn't know what he was doing because I've always had this commitment that a person has to understand what they're doing. I said, "Well, whether you want to do it or not, I want you to think about it until church time. And I'm going to pray you won't die and go to hell and you come to the service tonight and listen to me preach and think it through, and then if you want to receive Christ, we'll give you the opportunity to do so in the invitation."

He said, "All right." He came the service that night. I preached, gave the invitation down the alley came, said, "I want to be saved." Came back the next night. You know what he told me? He said, "I went to work and I determined to share what Christ had done with me to every patient on my floor." I said, "I'm going to go to every room and every bed and tell them what Christ did for me."

And my first response when I had that thought is they're going to ask me questions and I won't have the answers, but I determine I'm going to do it anyway, because I at least know what Jesus Christ has done for me. And he said, "I had the opportunity to go to every one of those people. And Paul, would you believe that not a single person asked me a question that I wasn't able to give them some kind of an answer?"

I believe that we have built a straw man out there. Most of the people I'm talking to, they are hurting. They want someone to listen. They want someone to be interested. They want some answers. We may run into those who want to play intellectual gymnastics with us. We may find some honest seekers who have questions, but when those come, God will enable us I'm quite confident.

Number seven, there is a lack of know-how. Now, I'm making a distinction between a lack of knowledge and a lack of know-how. In essence, person says, "I don't have a plan. I don't know how to get started and I don't know how to finish." Let me suggest to you James Kennedy's book, *Evangelism Explosion*. That's the method that I taught in my class. Many of our faculty and evangelism use this. I would also recommend you read the companion volume, *Truths that Transform*, which is the doctrinal background for the plan, both by James Kennedy.

It's amazing to me how people are effective for the Lord though who don't even have a plan. I would encourage you to get a plan and to know how to get started, and we'll talk about that more as we move through the series in the spring quarter. And we'll talk about as things that we will want to do and as we deal with people and how we'll bring it to a conclusion and how we leave them.



But all of us who are here this morning, Christ has done something in our lives. We have a testimony, and the amazing thing is the churches I'm in, the most dynamic witnesses for Christ are the new converts, not those of us who have all the background and all the learning and all the verses, but they're people who've never been in an evangelism class, they've never been through a seminar, but they know the Lord and they're excited about the Lord and they want to see other people come to know Christ as well.

What I did in my survey is I would take every reason people would give as to why we are not witnessing Christians. I would put them on the blackboard and then I would have the group to vote on the number one reason. The number one reason never was we don't have a plan. That surprise you? It didn't even come close. The number one reason was we don't have the answer. No. That wasn't the reason. The number one reason was peer pressure. By a landslide, the reason the average Christian is not a witnessing Christian is that we are afraid of what people are going to say and what people are going to think about us.

Now, I will grant you that many of these other reasons are related to this one, but this is the number one reason. In fact, it's interesting as you go through the scripture how they had the same problem in the early church and as they talked about their fear, they prayed for boldness. Peer pressure is one of the greatest things you face and I face.

James Dobson uses an illustration of peer pressure. In this illustration, he did some surveys, and I forget the exact number, but let's say he take 12 young people, take one of those young people and he hold them outside the room. Bring the other 11 in and say, "Here are three lines on the board, A, B, and C."

Now I am going to ask the question, which is the longest line on the board? And I want you 11 kids to vote for B. You got that. Got it. Bring 12, number 12, teenager in. Sits down. All right. We're going to take a quiz. We're going to find out the longest line on the board. I want you to look up there. All right, which is the longest line on the board, is it A? No hands? You know the number 12, teenagers thinking, "Man, this is easy."

Obviously, C is the longest line on the board. Is it B? Eleven kids raised their hands. Number 12, teenagers says, "Man, there's something wrong with my eyesight? I can't believe this." C is the longest line on the board, but 11 kids can't be wrong, and they found that 80% of the time, number 12 will vote for the wrong one because the others are voting for it.

They can cut that to 50% if you can get one of the 11 not to vote and to vote with her or to vote with him. Incidentally, do you ever stop to think that maybe that's the reason our Lord sent them out two by twos to overcome this problem that we have, to give some moral support, to encourage one another. Hey, you know what peer pressure is, don't you?

That's like the young person who says, "Hey, I have a roommate who's listening to some real music that doesn't fit with the school and I don't like it. I want the administration to do something about it." No, Jack, Judy, why don't you do something about it? Why don't you say something to your roommate? Me? Hey, I couldn't do that. I should talk to my roommate, my friend, somebody else in the unit about the music, and we never do those things because we're afraid we'll lose our peer relationship.

I've had some young people, for instance, who've wanted to help with chapel department and there's some times when we need help. Someone told me recently that we even have some kids who have the gall to come in and sit down next to a faculty member and study for a test or read a book. I feel sorry for that kid when the chapel's over and that faculty member gets through with him, but evidently he's not afraid of that faculty member.

I've had kids to come and they'll say, "Hey, we have some pockets in chapel and kids talk and we need to do something about it." Great, go ahead and do it. "You want us to do it? You want us to go to our friends and talk to them about their behavior in chapel?" Sure. That's the best way to do it. I mean, if you're sitting around somebody and they're talking right now or not get off.

Hey man, I'm trying to listen to the chapel message. Now, if you don't want to listen, you're either going to move or I'm going to move, but I want to get the message. You start taking care of some of these problems yourselves with your peers, we'll solve the problem. I don't like new rules and things like that. Hey, that's not the way to go at it, but you see how this works in evangelism? Hey, it's just not your problem. Teenager's problem, college problem, faculty members have that problem. You want to see peer pressure, show up for a faculty meeting.

You will know what peer pressure is? Have some group of faculty or a group of staff and all of them are disagreeing with the president. One guy sitting there saying, "Hey, I'm for the president. You think you'll open this mountain? No way. No way."

You want to know what peer pressure is? Go to a pastor's meeting. Pastors are voting on whether the kid should wear slacks at camp, one of those major decisions. They spent two hours on whether the kids can wear slacks to camp. And there are two guys who know it ought to be okay to let them wear slacks to camp, but do you think they're going to speak up and be labeled a neo? No way.