A List of Prospects
Lesson I: Good Neighbor Evangelism

Intro:

- last series, four introductory lessons: Personal Work and Personal Evangelism — something congregation very interested in doing more actively
  - Lesson 1: Be a good neighbor — paradigm, view, perspective, way of thinking
    - live by the golden rule: have compassion for people, move to show mercy
    - “good neighbor” personal work
    - “good neighbor” evangelism
    - compliment congregation
      - “good neighbor” attitudes that exist
    - personal work that is occurring: encouragement, meals to sick
      - e.g., all the encouragement and help given me and my family
      - illus: received two card in the mail last week, as have before, both totally made my day
  - Lesson 2: Don’t worry, just do it!
    - sometimes we are afraid of rejection, afraid we’re not perfect
      - solution: believe that the battle belongs to the Lord — its not about you, its about God
      - don’t worry, just do it — God already equipped you, know you can do it
      - e.g., David and Goliath — the battle belongs to the Lord
  - Lesson 3: What works today, to bring people to Christ?
    - authority for this discussion: apostolic examples, use expediencies to take the gospel to others
    - recent history of expediencies used by brethren:
      - gospel meeting, cottage meeting
    - visitor’s meeting works today
  - Lesson 4: Good personal workers are good stewards!
    - careful to be good stewards of our personal resources (time, energy, $), spend some of them to build relationships and reach the lost

- this series, four lessons: Good Neighbor Evangelism — first three lessons relate to the flow chart — review chart — next series will get more into specifics
  - Lesson 1: A List of Prospects
  - Lesson 2: Build Bridges — four steps
  - Lesson 3: Let the Traffic Flow, Share the Gospel — four steps
    - relate to the Visitor’s Meeting, above
  - Lesson 4: A Lesson You Can Share
#1 What is a prospect list?

→ **It is an essential first step.**
  - One of the very first steps in reaching people, is developing a prospect list.
  - A list of people who are potentially interested with what we have to offer, that we have a chance to reach.
  - **illus.: In business, it can be the difference between success and failure.**
    - if a business person waists time talking to people who aren’t interested in his product, he will go broke.

→ **It is:**
  - a list of people with whom we can potentially develop a relationship, and share the gospel.
  - We may not be the one who teaches them, but simply introduce them to others who can teach them.

→ **It’s not:**
  - an exclusive list, that prevents us from sharing the gospel with anyone, whether they’re on the list or not.


#2 Why is a list of prospects (flow chart) helpful?

→ The prospect list helps us avail ourselves of God’s providence, as He works in peoples’ lives.

- God opens doors, giving us opportunities to meet people and teach them
  - Read - 1 Cor. 16:8-9 God opened up a wide door for Paul in Ephesus
  - Read - 2 Cor. 2:12-13 God opened a door for Paul in Troas, that he couldn’t take advantage of at that time
  - Application: the prospect list / flow chart, helps us make the best use of God’s open doors

- We must be prepared, before God uses us and opens doors to teach others
  - Read - Rev. 3:8 brethren in Philadelphia were prepared for God to open doors
  - Read - 2 Tim. 2:19-21 God will use us to bring the lost to Christ, if we prepare ourselves “For every good work”
  - Application: the prospect list / flow chart helps to prepare ourselves to be useful in God’s service, and do our best when God opens doors (opportunities to teach the lost)

- God’s providence brings teachers in contact with people willing to obey His word.
  - illus.: Acts 8, persecution of Christians caused the gospel to spread throughout the world quickly
  - illus.: Acts 8, Philip was sent toward Gaza where he would meet the Ethiopian Eunuch
  - illus.: Acts 9, the Lord sent Ananias to preach to Saul
  - illus.: Acts 10, the Lord sent Peter to Cornelius
  - illus.: Acts 16, Paul had a vision and perceived that God wanted him to preach in Macedonia
  - illus.: Acts 18, Apollos preached in Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila heard him, took him aside, explained to him the way of God more accurately
  - Application: a prospect list and flow chart helps us work the hardest we can, with those God brings us in contact with

→ The prospect list helps us prepare to sow God’s word, in the hearts of men.

- parable of the sower:
  - Read - Lk. 8:4-8 parable
  - Read - Lk. 8:11-15 Jesus’ explanation

- lessons:
  - our job is to sow and water the seed
    - Read - 1 Cor. 3:5-9 sow and water, God gives increase, receive reward, God’s fellow workers
  - we don’t have to be polished experts to do our part — sow and water
    - Read - Is. 55:10-11 power is God’s word: it doesn’t return to Him empty, it accomplishes and succeeds
    - Quote - Rom. 1:16 (power God’s word) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
  - accountability:
    - sower and water: do our job, best of our ability (cf. Matt. 25:14-20, parable of the talents)
    - ground (men): hear, good and honest heart, bear fruit (obey)

next: cont. reasons prospect list helps - concentrate our efforts
The prospect list helps us stay in our priorities.

- It helps us remain **prayerful**:
  - **Read - Col. 4:2-4** devoted to prayer, open door, make God’s word clear to others
  - **Quote - Rom. 10:1** (Paul’s example, pray for lost) Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

- It helps us **make the best of our time**:
  - **Read - Eph. 5:15-16** make most of your time; i.e., stay in your priorities
  - **Quote - Matt. 22:39** (Jesus, second greatest command) 'The second is like it, `YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'
  - **illus:** we all know that we perform better when we use lists - e.g., PDA, to do lists

The prospect list helps us avoid discouragement.

- Satan has always used “discouragement” against God’s children.
  - **Quote - Num. 32:9** (Moses, regarding Israel entering the Promise Land) For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them.
  - **Quote - Ezra 4:4-5** (rebuilding the temple) Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.
  - **Quote - Neh. 6:9** (rebuilding Jerusalem’s wall) For all of them were trying to frighten us, thinking, "They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

- How does the prospect list / flow chart help us from becoming discouraged?
  - helps us chart our progress and glorify God for the “small” successes
    - process to bring one to Christ can take years, this helps us stay positive through the process
    - e.g., Farler and McGough, baptized later in life
  - we’re encouraged by doing the best we can do — making the most of our time
    - stay positive as sower and water, patient for the increase from God (above)
  - keeps us working together as brethren, to bring people to Christ
    - part of the process is using one another in the congregation to help us with our friends, to expose them to the church (body of Christ)

What’s this mean to you — using the prospect list / flow chart?

- you’ll be much more successful with personal evangelism if you have a list of folks to concentrate your efforts, and work in a systematic fashion
- you’ll stay encouraged / become less discouraged
- you’ll make better use of your time
- you’ll bring lost souls to Christ

next: suggestions for setting up a prospect list
#3 Suggestions for setting up a list of prospects:

- **Pray for wisdom.** Ask God to help setting up the list of priorities.
  - *Quote - Ja. 1:5* But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

- **Make a broad list, which you can narrow down later.** Include:
  - your family, friends, and neighbors
  - visitors at church
  - spouses of members
  - new residents in your neighborhood
  - relatives of members
  - unfaithful members
  - friends of members
  - coworkers
  - children of members
  - prospects furnished by recent converts
  - classmates at school
  - people you’ve talked to recently that have shown interest, but you’ve not followed up

- **Sift through the list and determine whom to give priority first.** Keep the list so that you can add other to the priority list later. Include:
  - People you believe are closest to obeying the gospel.
  - People with whom you have open communication.
  - People who have shown spiritual interest (but are “unchurched”).
    - The unchurched are often easier to bring to Christ.
  - People whose respect and friendship you have already gained.
  - People for whom you have been praying regularly.
  - People you may have a limited time to reach.
    - They might be moving from your area.
    - They may not have long to live, according to human reasoning.
  - People who have a Christian spouse.
  - People in whom others have already invested some “sowing” and “watering”.
  - People who seem to repeatedly come across your path.
    - This may be God’s providence, opening a door.
  - People for whom you have the greatest concern

- **If your list is more than 10 (+/-) people, narrow it down.** Keep the list to add other to the flow chart later.
  - These are the people (no more than about 10), you feel are your best prospects.
  - Keep this list in some prominent place where you will see it daily.
    - e.g., Allan, make a flow chart on a single index card, put on my dresser

- **Summary:**
  - once we prayerfully have a list of the folks we have the most influence over, we can start working toward bring them to Christ with the gospel

next: How do we get started, bring these folks to Christ with the gospel?
#4  How do we get started, bring these people to Christ with the gospel?

- Start by praying for these people, daily. — assignment
  
  - Ask God for opportunity to be of service to these people.
    
    - **Quote - 1 Cor. 3:5-7** What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.
    
    - **Quote - Col. 4:2-3a** Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word. . . .

- Ask God for wisdom to make the most of your opportunities.
  
  - **Quote - Col. 4:5-6** Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

- Ask God for boldness to share the gospel when the right opportunity avails itself.
  
  - **Read - Eph. 6:18-20** Paul needed prayer, we need prayer — boldness, share gospel with others

- **What’s this mean to you?**
  
  - everyone, young or old, can do this work to bring people to Christ
  
  - need everyone’s participation
    
    - **Quote - Ja. 5:16b** The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
      
      - more than anything, we need prayer - ourselves, the lost
    
    - when we have someone obey the gospel, it is because of your work - in and outside of the congregation
    
    - **saying:** it takes a congregation, to bring people to Christ, for the saving of their souls

Inv.:

- if you are here, not saved, opportunity
- What has Jesus commanded you to do?

Audio sermon notes:

- ➤ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.