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The making of an evangelist

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This chapter will take in at least four areas of study for edification and help in the pursuit of evangelistic outreach. These four sections are:

1. Advertising and evangelism.
2. Hints on media methods.
3. Shop evangelism.
4. Factory evangelism and/or saw mill evangelism.

It is necessary to remind ourselves that these ideas and all others in this presuppose the fact that we have sought the face and wisdom of God and the guidance of God's Holy Spirit if we are to be successful in what we do. In Proverbs 19:2, it says, 'Also the soul be without knowledge it is not good; and he that hasteneth with his feet sinneth'.

God is warning in that the way ahead can be a way of danger and a way of sin if we do not consult Him. In Psalm 37:5, by way of contrast, it says, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass'. So why take a risk by not consulting God?

Advertising in evangelism

It certainly is a puzzle to see the attitude of some Christians who seem to believe it is almost too mechanical to use some modern forms of advertising. It seems as though some consider it less than spiritual. I find this hard to understand.

If we tell someone about an evangelistic meeting, or write a letter about it, or speaking on the phone, we are actually using various types of advertising. Public announcement system announcements are telling somebody about the meeting; written letters or a printed leaflet is doing exactly the same thing; and phoning, radio and TV announcements are doing the same thing. Again, why should Satan and his servants use all the modern techniques. These techniques are amoral - not evil or bad. It depends on how we use them. Sometimes our theories can be quite out of the will of God.

I read an amusing story once about a man who had very fixed ideas on the 'holiness' question. He believed that holiness was an extra blessing to redemption. It was pointed out to him that Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:30, 'But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption'. When confronted with this text he made the mind boggling reply: 'That's the first time I knew that Paul was astray in the holiness question. It seems to me that some of us Christians can be more particular than the Holy Spirit in matters of blessing and teaching'. According to him, Paul was wrong about the 'holiness' question. Accordingly, in the matter of advertising and evangelism, sometimes our biases can cause us to miss out on a very useful way of letting people know about the good news of salvation. And yet, in my ministry, I have been hindered by some Christians from doing a simple and effective way of advertising because it was considered by them to be too mechanical.
When we talk about advertising and promotion, we need to consider some of the items set out below.

• There is value in advertising

In the New Testament we read of ordinary people advertising something worth talking about. The Scriptures say, ‘and they published it abroad’, and we can see the results of some of this in the crowds who gathered. In modern times, the value of advertising has been demonstrated by both secular business and Christian organisations and churches alike.

• The cost factor

This is often queried, especially in bigger crusades or evangelistic efforts. The usual argument is that it is too costly as exercise. However, this is not so, in my judgment. Take it on the soul saved or rededication basis. The number of souls known to be saved and divide that into the number of dollars spent and then compare it with the total cost of running a church, including stipends(?) etc. For the number of souls saved or rededication, it would be found that the special items are less costly by comparison.

• The methods of advertising

Advertising can be divided into three areas for effective administration purposes although, strictly speaking, the word advertising can cover all three. These are:

1. Advertising - is paid for and is aimed primarily at outside people.
2. Publicity (the free type) - is aimed primarily at outside people.
3. Promotion - is basically low cost and is aimed at awakening awareness of the program and enthusiasm for it.

Advertising (paid for)

Avenues open are city and country newspapers as well as district, free distribution papers; radio spots and TV spots.

In places where there are many bicycles, a light board wired onto a frame with posters pasted on either side is a good idea. This is especially good on school children's bikes.

I have tried and proven this method and have built a normal crowd of about 300 to a counted audience of 1,200 people. The interesting thing was the number of non-church people who attended - much to the amazement of their church-attending mates. It is not a bad plan to make the advertising leaflets a little larger than usual. This in itself attracts attention and can be used as mini-posters in shop windows, lifts, buses, bus stop sheds, notice boards in shopping centres and similar places where the people gather.

Another method of course is T-shirt advertising sold to church people and beyond at a small cost. Posters, placards and calico signs can be used in strategic yards near main roads, especially where traffic has to stop at lights, stop signs, give-way signs and T junctions.
It is basic to go advertising. Think where the people are and where they are most likely to be stopped long enough to read the advertisement.

In major, city-wide crusades, advertising on buses (which would need to be paid for), has been proven to be very successful. The best places for the ads are inside the bus or on the outside under the driver’s window.

In my work as the Queensland Director of Billy Graham Crusades and other major Queensland crusades, large calico posters in church grounds, opposite the City Hall, in the railway station, or wherever the masses congregate were also successful.

In Brisbane, opposite the City Hall, the Lord Mayor of that time decided we have to pull down the sign or cover it up. After some good advice, we covered it up, but the material we used was partly 'see through' and people were all asking where the covered sign was, and it was estimated that because of the sun shining through the back of the sign by day, and an electric light behind it in the church grounds at night, the sign was able to be read – giving us about 10 times the publicity value.

It was featured in newspapers both pictured and cartoon-based on the 'covering up'.

Another method I used as publicity officer for a famous evangelistic team of two brothers - Rev. Charles and Laurie Taylor. This method brought packed crowds to the auditorium with people coming one to two hours early and eating their evening meals standing on the footpath or front steps in a queue so as to get a seat. The method used was a 'Come Along' method. It even managed to get the newspaper staff all interested enough to ask who are the Taylor Brothers?

In the entertainment column of the newspaper, using 12 point type, in about six different places we placed the following words:

First week Taylor Brothers
Second week Taylor Brothers?
Third week Who are Taylor Brothers?
Fourth week International Taylor Brothers
Fifth week Taylor Brothers - Evangelists extraordinary
Sixth week Taylor Brothers - Where?

After a few weeks along this kind of line, we grouped the same amount of column space in an ad with more and more information and each week leaving a little space to awaken curiosity.

Ú Ú”•Promotion (to awaken church interest•ṅ

This can be used along the same line as the Taylor Brothers. For almost two months before a crusade, have cardboard signs building up at eye level on walls where people gather. For example, near the coffee break table, or over a doorway, etc. Built these up gradually to a proper announcement of the special meetings. Don't forget to do this in every room where church groups meet for their usual meetings. This 'come along' advertising is more effective. It is like telling people over and over again about the special functions.
Free-type publicity

This is often given by mass media because of news worthiness. It demands that we do not show the whole of our hand too soon. Remember, this old and true advertising cliche: 'If a dog bites a man that is not news, but if a man bites a dog, that is news'. I actually saw a newspaper report that bears this out. It said a dog bit the postman [not news], but the postman got angry and bit the dog on the tail [that was news].

I was once asked to help a Christian group to get into the mass media publicity areas. For example, newspapers, radio and television. The Christian group tried but couldn't get on - yet their visiting international speaker was very news worthy and had received great publicity all over the world.

When asked what they had told the mass media, they said 'We have an overseas missionary speaker coming'. They had been saying it along the lines of 'a dog bites a man' because to many non-church-going newsmen, missionaries are of little news value, although that certainly is not the opinion of committed Christians.

So they pressed me to see what I could do to help. I went to the same newspaper, radio and TV stations about the same overseas speaker. The only difference was I tried a different approach. I approached from a 'what would be news to this media' angle. I had found out some of these things the hard way.

The name of the international speaker was Dr Oswald Smith, missionary statesman and evangelist of Canada, most people would hasten to say how newsworthy he was.

What were the things that made him newsworthy. Having decided on these, I then made the approach along the following lines.

Initially, when contact was being made, the approach was, 'There is an international visitor coming. His name and work is featured in news media all over the world where he travels. You ought to get something on him and you won't be sorry'. Each time they gave me an appointment to every radio, TV station and newspaper I contacted.

When I got there, I kept the newsworthy things about Dr Smith to the fore (that is, newsworthy from the mass media point of view). To me, these were the main things of interest to them:

1. He is internationally famous and somewhat unique in his work. He is an author and has been printed in many languages, including Russian, which was the newsworthy country in those days. He is a song writer, poet and an adviser to many countries who are doing the same kind of work as himself.

When those interviewing me were getting more and more interested, they asked, 'Who is he? What does he do?'.

Then I told them his name, and that he was an internationally famous missionary statesman whose church gave more money to missionary work than all the churches in his city put together.
I told them, 'He is a most fascinating man with a unique and wonderful ministry somewhat different from the usual - a pioneer in many ways. He is very articulate and has a broad knowledge of countries of the world, and all I've told you is only a little of what he is and has done. Needless to say when he comes to Brisbane, crowds will come to hear what he has to say'.

Then my interviewer said, 'Sounds good. When is he coming and when does he arrive and where?'. After giving him full details I know that there would be cameras, microphones, reports, and interviews, and best of all for the Christian group - free and wide reaching publicity wherever he went.

To put it in everyday language, Dr Oswald Smith was 'saleable' to the mass media, but we always need to know what constitutes 'news' to the media, in order to give it to them.

The kinds of equipment (available for advertising)

Some kinds of advertising are to be avoided at all costs, especially subliminal advertising, which brings people under its power, often without knowing why they do things. It has been banned in a number of countries, and Christians should not touch it either.

People should not be asked to do anything, especially giving their lives to Christ, when they do not know why they are doing it. Other types are those which violate Christian principles and teachings. These statements above apply to whatever equipment you are using.

Some equipment which is modern in the business would can be equally applied to Christian advertising. Equipment is amoral. It is what we do with it that makes it moral or immoral. Why should only Satan have the benefit of all these techniques?

It is difficult to keep up with some of these things, so apart from a few ideas here, scan the bookshelves of bookstores for books on the subject. On my shelves, I have a great number of books with a Christian slant which deal with advertising, but it is always essential to update.


Although the two books mentioned were published some years ago, they are very good examples of what I have been trying to say.

Here are a few clues as to what types of equipment are available and where to use them.

People using all sorts of ways of serving Christ in evangelism; in various types of mission work; in different countries of the world; will all need to see what type of equipment is best for them.

Some of the more modern equipment available:

* Computers and word processors.
* Photocopiers – black and white or colour.

* Offset printing.

* Laser printing.

* Letraset.

* Overhead projection equipment is great for use in promotion purposes.

* Equipment for making mock-ups for printing leaflets, bulletins, advertising sheets or brochures. (See your well-equipped stationer about this, or a friend in graphic art or modern printing should be able to help you.

There are groups like Media GM in South Australia who have artists and printed headings suitable to many kinds of printing work – especially church bulletins and church newsletters. There are other groups who also do similar work, and it is all first-class.

* Audio tapes.

* Video tapes.

Most of these types of equipment can be used for both promotion and advertising evangelistic outreach efforts.

Both printers and stationers can give you further hints. So keep your eyes and ears open as you seek information on equipment and its use.

Hints on media methodsœ

• Radioœ

Some years ago there was a tremendously popular Christian radio broadcaster on morning devotions. His name was Rev. Vernon Turner and he was a Presbyterian minister, and the Director of the Christian Radio Broadcasting Association Ltd.

It was nothing to walk along a street and hear almost every person turned in to morning devotions with Rev. Vernon Turner.

His book, “The Art of Christian Broadcasting”, printed by Jordan Books, Sydney, Australia, went through a number of editions. As with many books of its kind, some parts would need to be updated because personnel, station policies, laws can change, but this book still remains a good basic outline for Christian broadcasting.
My wife and I knew Rev. Turner personally, and on one occasion, we were interviewed by him in his studio at Five Dock, Sydney. His set up at that time was really very fine.

The hints I am giving in this chapter are from my own experience in broadcasting, and are just general. If you want to keep up with the times, get an appointment with a radio station manager or broadcaster who is sympathetic enough to help make Christian broadcasting better.

Some years ago, when I was doing regular broadcasting with sometimes quite a number of programs per week, relayed to stations in Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory of Australia, I was desirous of learning how to communicate better. I decided to go and see a radio station manager whom I knew.

I asked him about microphone techniques. He told me something of great interest. He said that ministers of religion usually have a couple of basic flaws in broadcasting.

1. They either speak in a singsong 'spiritual' voice instead of in an everyday natural way. Or,

2. They speak to the audience of 80,000 people (or whatever the audience is), conscious they are speaking to a crowd. He said, 'Be natural and speak as though you are speaking to someone in a room where the radio is. It is a one to one media'.

I took his advice and started to talk as a friend talking to a friend about things that mattered. To keep it on a one to one basis, as though I was in their home having a chat with them, and used the microphone as if I was not talking into equipment but to a real person.

The result was both amazing and humorous. One day when walking down a main street, a lady came up to me and said a most peculiar thing. She said, 'You are Mr Jarrott aren't you?'. When I said that I was she went on to say, 'You know me, I am a regular listener to your radio program'.

I went to the radio station manager and said what a queer thing to say. He replied that she thought I did know her for I am the friend who comes to her home to talk to her about answers from God for her given situation.

Some other areas that need attention are set out below with brief comments.

• The areas which you will need to cover, I have found in my experience.

1. What aim do you have in broadcasting?
   (a) Reaching the lost;
   (b) Reaching the Christian;
   (c) Seeking to comfort troubled mankind.

Define clearly, your own aim for each program.

2. Concentrate on what you want to be a Christian radio .....
(a) Your voice. You should speak like the telephone exchange girls – with a smile in your voice. Of course there will be times when the subject matter may determine how your voice will be used.

(b) Speak clearly and distinctly. Some of your hearers could be hard of hearing.

(c) Don't be hypocritical in what you say. What comes across must have the ring of sincerity and truth.

(d) Have a genuine loving concern for your audience.

3. The program for your session in the studio.

(a) Carefully and prayerfully plan your program and work your plan.

(b) This involves timing your speaking, readings and music. Tune everything you do. On radio, it has been said, the average person speaks about 140 words per minute. On TV, it should be about 100 words per minute to allow for video clips. On discs or tapes, often the time has been put on for each item. However, you should work out the time if is is not on.

(c) Do your sermon notes in good clear type and in double line spacing. This all makes for better presentation.

(d) Give a copy of your program to the station's announcer so as to follow through his part.

4. The program session in a church or other building.

(a) Always use first-class microphones. Stations are very careful about theirs, so they are OK if they belong to the radio station.

(b) Positioning of microphones for speaker, choir, soloist and congregational singing is important because many churches and halls have bad acoustics.

(c) If you are in a very large hall or in the open, you may need to check for voice time lag between the front and back of the audience.

(d) Of course some of the ideas for the studio broadcasting will also apply.

(e) Occasionally it may be necessary to use building material to 'deaden' or 'liven' a wall to get better sound. Some walls 'bounce' and need a more absorbent material and vice versa.

(f) Talk over the program with the technician and announcer so that each knows what is going on. Get suggestions to help make the broadcast better.

*Television*
Many of the hints given on radio ministry can also apply to TV, but there are a number of observations which seem necessary also. Often Christian TV programs fall into a few categories. Namely:

(a) Half-hour;
(b) The more popular one-minute spots;
(c) Five minute spots.

A common mistake is to feel that one minute spots don't take much preparation when the speaker has less than 100 words to give the whole message, plus the necessary video scenes or cartoons.

I have known one of these spots to have taken me about two hours from start to finish, plus travelling time.

It takes careful preparation to give a whole message and to be effective in such a short time of about 45-50 seconds. However, these spots can be very effective. One used in Queensland by the Christian Television Association was very powerful, and portions of Scripture offered to viewers caused a large response. The portions of Scripture came from every State in Australia and still more were required. These had to be obtained from Asia.

In the presentation of the programs, often there are three cameras used and the speaker can only tell by the red lights which camera is 'on' him.

The TV staff will give help where needed, and will be responsible for TV make-up so as to counteract deep shadows caused by the powerful studio lights. The make-up covers defects and makes us, as one wag said, 'Look what we ain't'.

The Christian Television Association of Queensland had a booklet on television which gave a lot of do's and don'ts and was a very great help. If you are interested, their address and phone number is listed below:

Christian Television Association of Queensland,
24 Little Edward Street,
Spring Hill, Qld 4000
Phone: (07) 931 7088

•Shop evangelism

some of this has been touched elsewhere in this book, but a brief statement and some examples are given for your consideration. Often in strategic places in a suburban or city area there is an opportunity of using an empty shop, or cafe for evangelistic outreach.

There can be two uses at least for an empty shop:

1. Decorated window display with Christian posters, books, tracts and signs suggesting where help can be obtained for problems in life.

2. Can be used as a meeting place for those who would not care to go into a church.
In my work as an evangelist in different states and territory areas of Australia, I have been able to reach people in:

1. Shopping malls.

2. In a semi-slum area where some people would not come to church because they had a drinking or some other problem and felt they were not good enough to go inside a church. In a small shop in a suburban area of an Australian city, around 90-100 people were packed in to hear the Gospel, and take some action concerning it.

3. In a thriving business in a cafe, we were granted permission to decorate a window with Christian materials, and to give a type of sacred concert entertainment to the patrons in the coffee shop. There were solos, a variety of approaches, and the Word given from the Bible.

4. In a small, empty shop in a mining town, the ladies decided to put in a special kind of luncheon, and invited women from the district. The place was filled to capacity with some of us having to sit on chairs on the footpath outside the front door. A little thought would bring other ideas.

• Factory evangelism

The manager of a clothing factory was a deeply committed Christian who had a burden for the souls of his employees. I was invited to address the staff in their working time.

He shut down the machines, and told his employees who I was and that he would like them to hear an important message I had to give them about life. He said they would still be paid as usual and that he would bear the expense of the break in working hours. He requested that they listen and give serious thought to what was said. Prayer was offered for them and in invitation to speak to the owner about these things, if they cared to do so later on.

Other types of 'factory' evangelism have been conducted in lunch hours in a railway workshop forum and a sawmill as men sat having their lunch.

One other type was to go onto the wharves in the lunch hour and to see men respond for Christ as they sat on sacks listening to the message given by a fellow evangelist.

Whilst not strictly factory workers, I have spoken in a couple of parks where people from offices and other occupations gathered for lunch and listened to the Word of God. There were some who decided for Christ and some who apparently rejected Christ. Either way, it was successful because we delivered our souls of the blood of their people before God.

There are Christian bookstores which have booklets with many ideas for evangelistic outreach.

You may find some critics who do not like what you do in evangelising the lost. Evangelist D.L. Moody's reply is good enough for me. He was told that someone did not like the way he did his evangelism. Mr Moody said, 'I like the way I'm doing it better than the way you're not doing it'.
Seek God's face and then go with God to reach the lost sheep.