

Lost Cause | Week 1 - We Need a New Way to Evangelize!**Message Big Idea**

If we are going to fulfill the vision of Jesus (Acts 1:8), we must be about the mission of Jesus (Luke 19:10), and that means we must revive evangelism.

Scripture

Acts 1:8, Luke 19:10, Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 5:8 and Genesis 12:1-3

Series Overview

In our new series, Lost Cause, we will learn how to revive our hearts to share God's good news with others. Evangelism is not a lost cause, but a challenge given to all of us to adopt God's great passion and Jesus' personal mission as our own.

Opening Question

What's the most recent good news you've heard? How did you react when you heard it?

Bible Discussion

1. Read Acts 1:8, Luke 19:10 and Matthew 28:18-20. How do these three passages relate to one another, and in what ways do their missions challenge us today? If Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18-20), how should we respond to his commands?
2. In Romans 5:8, what does God remind us? How does this reveal God's passion for the lost cause or evangelism?
3. Read Genesis 12:1-3. Who did God say this to, and why? What word shows up most often in these verses? How did Jesus "go and bless"? Give specific examples of Jesus using the B.L.E.S.S. practices: B-begin with prayer, L-listen, E-eat, S-serve and S-share your story. How does Jesus' life and ministry help shape your approach to evangelism?

Life Application

4. Today, confusion abounds as to whether evangelism is even okay anymore. What are some of the factors that lead to our confusion? In what ways do you struggle to believe evangelism is appropriate in our society? How does it change your perspective and approach to remember that evangelism is meant to be a blessing? (Genesis 12:1-3)
5. It is God's passionate desire that all of us come to know Him. How did God first make Himself known to you? Who did He use to share His good news with you? What would be different in your life if that person had not shared the good news with you?
6. How do the B.L.E.S.S. practices differ from how you've historically done evangelism? What ideas do you have for implementing these practices into your evangelism? Consider the first step, "beginning with prayer" by listing the names of your eight closest neighbors, coworkers or friends and committing to pray for and interact more with them this week. Jesus promises to be with us as we share his good news and carry out the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:18-20)

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Points to Keep In Mind

1. You can find this entire new series, Lost Cause, on RightNow Media complete with compelling video from our very own Dave Ferguson and additional study material for you to use in your group if you'd like. RightNow Media is an excellent resource for small groups, and it's free to all COMMUNITY attenders. Each of your group members can register at communitychristian.org/rightnowmedia to enjoy all of its benefits.
2. These three passages in Acts, Luke, and Matthew support one another in how the lost cause, or evangelism, is God's passion, Jesus' mission, and our commission. For these three reasons alone, we cannot give up on "helping people find their way back to God."
3. When Paul says in Romans, "But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us," he tells us that we are God's great passion. He loves us so much that while we were still in the very act of sinning (rejecting him), Jesus died for us. His demonstrated love shows God's passion for the lost cause!
4. God said to Abram in Genesis 12:1-3 to go and bless others. God's first strategy for reaching the world was a "blessing" strategy. In this passage, God asks Abram to leave his own country and people and journey to an undesignated land, where Abram will become the founder of a new nation, the land of Canaan, present-day Israel.
5. Jesus used simple practices to bless the people in his life. These practices are reflected in the BLESS strategy: B-begin with prayer, L-listen, E-eat, S-serve, and S-share your story. In Luke 6:12, Jesus went out on a mountain and prayed. One example of Jesus listening is in Luke 18:41, where he asks the blind man, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus liked to eat! In Matthew 9:10, he had dinner with Matthew. Jesus' entire life was about serving (Matthew 20:28) and continually sharing his story (John 14:6).

Additional Questions and Resources

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism
4. What have you been learning from the Community Daily? communitychristian.org/daily
5. If someone is seeking professional counseling, you can always refer them to our resource page: communitychristian.org/mentalhealth/
6. Find out more about having a YOU+ conversation by visiting: youplus.info