

Schedule

9:00 – 10:00 am	Evangelistic Wisdom in Difficult Conversation (Main Dialogue Teaching)
10:00 – 10:30 am	Role-Play Exercise
10:30 – 11:00 am	Beit Chesed Lesson
11:00 – 11:20 am	Break
11:20 – 12:00 am	Questions & Prayer
12:00 -	Lunch

Introduction

A. The Goal of our Communication

1. To deliver an ambassador's message, to help others become right with God (2 Cor. 5:18-6:2; Eph. 6:19-20; 1 Pet. 3:14-16)
2. To edify others (Eph. 4:15, 25, 29)
3. To bless with gracious treatment (Col. 4:6; Prov. 25:11)
4. To give warnings or instruction as an act of love (1 Tim. 1:5; "Listen my son" in Proverbs)
5. Our communication is a central weapon of spiritual warfare (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:

B. The Difficulty of Communication and the Need for Wisdom

1. The quagmire of knowing what to say (Prov. 25:11; 26:4-5)
2. Our speech (as a mouthpiece of the heart) is subject to temptations to sinful communication: slander, cursing, lying, issuing selfish demands or lording personal standards over others (James 3:4-12; Mark 7:21-23)
3. Proneness to become ensnared or engage in foolish communication (2 Tim.
4. Fear of offending, sounding foolish, or being rejected (1 Cor. 1:21-31)
5. The devil would love to steal our message by our loss of credibility, integrity, or by saying something foolish (not a neutral battle)
6. We are called at times to speak when we might rather be silent

C. The Source and Model of our Wisdom

1. God. "If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God..." (James 1:5; 3:15, 17)
2. The Scripture (Prov. 3:13-22; 2 Tim. 3:14-17)
3. Jesus's Model. Jesus is the ultimate model of evangelistic wisdom in his interactions with others, perfect love for God and love for man in every case, with every word and absence of word.

Evangelistic Wisdom Precepts from 2 Timothy

- A. Don't be ashamed of the Lord and his gospel (2 Tim. 1:8); instead be strengthened by the grace of Christ (2 Tim. 2:1)

Paul contrasts those who demonstrated shame for the Lord by deserting him (e.g., “all who are in Asia,” including Phygelus, and Hermogenes, 1:14) with those who showed commitment to the Lord by their commitment to Paul (e.g., Onesiphorus, 1:16), and encourages Timothy to be like the latter by coming to him before winter (2 Tim. 4:20)

B. Don't only hold the gospel yourself; instead entrust it to others (2 Tim. 2:2)

1. This means that you need to know the gospel well

a. Biblical Outline

- i. The Scripture foretold through particular promises that God would send a ruler into the world to deal with mankind's sin
- ii. That ruler is Jesus
- iii. To provide a way of escaping God's wrath for our sin, he died and was buried according to the Scripture
- iv. He rose from the dead and was seen alive by witness according to the Scriptures
- v. He has been exalted to God's right hand as the unique Son of God and Lord of the living and the dead
- vi. He will come again as Judge and Savior of mankind

b. Practical Outline

- i. Who is God?
- ii. What is man's problem?
- iii. Who is Jesus?
- iv. How should we respond?

c. Call to Respond

Responding appropriately to this message would include that we:

Believe/Express Faith

- i. Agree with God about our condition as sinners in need of forgiveness and salvation
- ii. Affirm the identity of Jesus and his activity on our behalf
- iii. Accept the claim that his substitutionary death and triumphant resurrection was sufficient to deal with our sin against God so that we may be forgiven, walk in newness of life, and have the hope of heaven with God
- iv. Announce what Jesus has done for you in obedience to the great commission

Repent/Submit to Obedience

- i. Renounce loyalties to personal desires, allegiances, and ways of life that do not honor God
- ii. Turn from the inside out toward that which honors God

2. This means that you make the effort to make disciples in obedience to Jesus's great commission (Matt. 28:18-20)
- C. Don't expect ease in your efforts to be evangelistically wise in difficult conversations; instead, be prepared to suffer and exert your energies (2 Tim. 2:3-13; 4:4-8)
- D. Do not quarrel with those who would like to revise the clear message of Scripture (2 Tim. 2:14); instead, do your best to cut a straight path to the gospel (2 Tim. 2:15)
- E. Avoid irreverent babble (2 Tim. 2:16-18); instead, be ready to honor the Lord and be used by the Lord (2 Tim. 2:19-21)
- F. Flee youthful passions to argue (2 Tim. 2:22); instead, pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace (2 Tim. 2:22)
Instead of trying to be right in a conversation or argument, seek to be righteous and to help the other person in the conversation also be right with God.
- G. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies (because the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome (2 Timothy 2:23-24); instead, that God may grant others repentance and the knowledge of the truth, be (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
 - Kind to everyone
 - Able to teach
 - Patiently enduring evil (not returning evil for evil)
 - Correcting opponents with gentleness
- H. Recognize the urgency and the prevalence of difficult conversations in the last days (2 Tim. 3:1-5) and avoid those who are bent to corrupt others (2 Tim. 3:5-9); and instead, recognize godly teaching and continue to follow after mentors of godly living (2 Tim. 3:10-15)
- I. Even though many will reject it (2 Tim. 4:3-4), the Scripture must continue to be your standard for teaching/reproving/correcting/and training others in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:14-3:2)

Evangelistic Wisdom Precepts from Selected Scripture

- A. The Strategy of a Soft Answer. "A harsh word stirs up strife, but a soft answer turns away wrath" (Prov. 15:1)
 - Consider your tone—do you sound frustrated, annoyed, or angry?
 - Consider whether your vocabulary is helpful—is there another way you can say the same thing?
2. Start a conversation or make your first reply *a question*.

Jesus often used questions to quickly turn the conversation in the right direction, toward the condition of the heart of the person with whom he was speaking. “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? *Why do you call me good?*”

Questions can also turn an adversarial conversation between two viewpoints into a partnership to answer the same core question.

3. Remember that conversations involve (at least) two people and therefore listening is also necessary. Listening is especially needed so that you do not assume or accuse another of something that they are not actually guilty of (Prov. 18:13, 15, 17)

4. Speak personally. Remember that your own testimony or your own wrestling with the difficulties is a powerful tool to help humanize (not just a matter of issues) the conversation and Jesus came to save people, not issues or current events.

5. Keep pointing the conversation back to the gospel, a personal relationship with God, and the personal need to be made right with God.

The Current Dangers

1. The call to weep with those who weep, even if the source of loss is sin

2. Lamenting injustice, while disagreeing with expectations for justice

3. Critical Race Theory

A system of thought that operates under the following presumptions:

- a. People identify others first according to their racial identity
- b. Having a racial identity places you in a racial grouping
- c. You either are empowered by being a member of a racial grouping or are oppressed by those having power
- d. Those having power have used it to oppress others to such an extent that racial oppression is embedded into the very structures of society (meaning that those who are oppressed have no possibility of exiting that oppression)
- e. The only solution to structural racial oppression (“racism”) is for those who are oppressed to seize the power from the oppressors to remake society more equitably

4. Intersectionality. A system of thought that identifies persons having layers of oppression or victimhood who should be the lone voices speaking and offering solutions.

5. Extreme Pressures of the COVID pandemic

6. Being a good American Citizen in the midst of revisionist history, and facing national sins, praying for and supporting leaders as Christians

Role-Play Exercise

Prompts

If you don't wear a mask, you don't care about killing people!

If you don't protest, you are a racist!

Organized religion is a source of oppression

If you don't support LGBTQ+, you are a homophobe, or someone engaging in a hate crime

How could you vote for _____?