

What Others are Saying

“Somehow somewhere along the journey of Southern Baptists, our Sunday schools became introspective nurture groups for disciples; training unions changed to home groups continuing to nurture us into ingrown cliques. Next, our revival meetings went away because the unsaved seemed not to attend. Now neighborhood witnessing is passé, and some say it simply does not work. Yet alternatives like forms of relational evangelism, as it is called, seem so open-ended that a person relates so indefinitely to lost friends that Christ is not made central to the relationship at the beginning, so that it seems like an eternity to get to the gospel, perhaps even the lost person’s eternity.

1X Evangelism returns to the basics and encourages believers to begin again. Shifted awareness of lostness, a message to share, and a Savior to save are as simple as they get. This timely piece brings a fresh awareness of the simple back into light with biblical panache.”

—Dr. Keith Eitel

Dean, Roy Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

“It’s been said that you can’t expect what you don’t inspect. When it comes to the paramount spiritual discipline of personal evangelism, every Christian stands in need of accountability. Having utilized over a dozen methods in my personal witnessing and having studied many others in the academia of methodology, I have yet to discover a strategy that will run your strategy—that is, until *1X*. Regardless of the structure that best fits your personality or your church, Rothra’s *1X* provides simplistic and strategic impetus to maximize your evangelistic efforts and increase your witnessing effectiveness.”

—Dr. Glynn Stone

Pastor, Mobberly Baptist Church, Longview, Texas
Treasurer, Southern Baptist Convention

“The evangelistic methodologies of the past no longer work...or so claim many of today’s esteemed ‘experts.’ Desiring to offer a contemporary, evangelistic strategy reflecting historic, evangelistic methodologies, John Rothra has penned *1X Evangelism*. As someone who finds both value for and success in the historic evangelism practices of the Southern Baptist Convention, I especially appreciate Rothra’s treatment of the subject in Section 1. Pastors will find the *1X Evangelism* strategy helpful, providing that they do not merely oversee but actively participate in this evangelistic methodology. George Santayana once said, ‘Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.’

In *1X Evangelism*, John Rothra dares to believe that those who remember the evangelistic successes of the past become capable of seeing them repeated.”

—Dr. Matt Queen

L. R. Scarborough Chair of Evangelism, Associate Professor of Evangelism Associate
Dean for Doctoral Programs, Roy Fish School of Evangelism and Missions,
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Most believers understand at least intellectually that the Great Commission is more than a Great Suggestion. But most rarely ever actually seek to make disciples themselves by sharing the Good News of Jesus with others. John Rothra has developed a practical, helpful, and doable approach to sharing Christ and making disciples that can help your church move forward in evangelistic impact. Most of us know far more about Jesus than we actually put to practice. John helps you to do the latter!”

—Dr. Alvin L. Reid

Professor of Evangelism and Student Ministry, Bailey Smith Chair of Evangelism,
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Pastor to Young Professionals, Richland Creek Community Church, Wake Forest, North
Carolina

JOHN L. ROTHRA

1X EVANGELISM

*A Kingdom Growth Strategy for the Local
Church*

1X Evangelism: A Kingdom Growth Strategy for the Local Church

Revised edition

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To

Olivia Rothra, my wife, best friend, and partner, for your patience, love, and support,
Lauren, Lindsay, and David, our wonderful children, for bringing joy and laughter to our
lives,

and

Chris and Letha Burton,
for your support, prayers, and love in helping me publish this work.

Foreword

One of the greatest contributions to the spiritual development of my life has come from the influence of those who have exhibited a deep passion for the lost. It has shaped my philosophy of evangelism and for the ministry of the local church. Scripture teaches “he who wins souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30). This biblical truth is an imperative of both the Old and New Covenants that God’s redemptive plan for mankind should be expressed through the proclamation of the gospel message and the personal witness of His people. Every Christian knows of the reality of his task. Every pastor should be deeply concerned with providing guidelines to his local flock for an effective approach to sharing the gospel message.

Yet, the reality in most evangelical churches is a continued decline with regard to the evangelization of the next generation. Not only is there a lack of passion for the unrepentant soul but a lack of emphasis as well as a lack of training on how to incorporate lifestyle evangelism into the daily walk of today’s believer. This trend must be reversed. John L. Rothra’s work, *1X Evangelism: A Kingdom Growth Strategy for the Local Church*, is a fresh approach to local church evangelism that is both biblical and practical. His research revealed that the decline in evangelistic decisions within the church today is directly proportionate to the reality that the normal church-going-believer Christian is less likely to share his faith than ever before. Thus, revitalization toward intentional outreach evangelism is the only remedy to reverse the trend of declining evangelism in the contemporary church of the twenty-first century.

John Rothra’s *1X Evangelism* is unique in its approach to highlighting the various methods used by the Southern Baptist Convention throughout its history in answering the question of local church evangelism. From his historical analysis, Rothra revealed how God has raised up unique individuals at specific times to create effective avenues for sharing the gospel message. With his simple design, *1X Evangelism* can be adapted to every church size, whether small, medium, or large. All the guidelines and responsibilities for establishing a fresh approach to effective outreach evangelism for the local church are expressed in this work.

The text that helped make personal evangelism a common practice among Southern Baptists in the last half of the twentieth century was *Basic Evangelism* by C. E. Autrey. What *Basic Evangelism* was in bringing a revival of evangelism to Southern Baptists in the past is what John L. Rothra’s *1X Evangelism: A Kingdom Growth Strategy for the Local Church* could be for Southern Baptists of the future.

—J. Denny Autrey, PhD, DMin
Dean and Professor of Pastoral Ministries, Harvard School for Theological Studies
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Houston, Texas

Preface

While serving as pastor of a small country church in North Texas, one of the most difficult tasks was trying to find a way for church members to reach out to the community with the gospel of Christ. The surrounding neighborhoods were not conducive to traditional door-to-door outreach, and published evangelism programs were not easily adaptable to small churches.

Asking members to simply share the gospel was not enough because many were unsure how to go about it and often felt that personal evangelism left them on their own. Evangelism was intimidating. However, evangelism is something God desires and believers should practice, yet many Christians fail to share the gospel, or even invite others to church. LifeWay Research found that in 2012, 61 percent of Christians had not shared their faith in the previous six months.¹ Studies done in 2013, published in 2014, found that 78 percent had not evangelized in six months.² Despite programs, seminars, outreach ministries, vision statements, and title changes by local churches and denominations, Christians simply are not sharing Jesus.

During my doctoral studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, I had the blessed privilege of studying under the late Dr. Roy J. Fish. In one of the seminars he led, we examined church growth in relation to contemporary issues. As part of my research, I investigated the history of evangelism training in Southern Baptist churches, hoping to understand what had been done before so that future training can build upon that history, yet be applicable today. My research introduced me to some of the men who helped shape the evangelistic outreach of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) since its establishment in 1845. Two men in particular stood out among the crowd: Roland Q. Leavell and Cassius Elijah (C. E.) Autrey. Leavell's strategy placed significant emphasis on personal evangelism by every believer, something not as common in his day (others placed greater emphasis on Sunday school evangelism rather than every-believer personal evangelism). Autrey, too, had a passion for personal evangelism, leading him to develop a method of training believers to engage in relational personal evangelism.

God began working in my heart and mind using my research and pastoral experience to inspire me to discover ways that twenty-first century churches can become more evangelistic. Many popular programs were overwhelming or overly complex. Evangelism training was ineffective. Something was needed that worked in a new era yet reflected historical efforts.

After many years of prayer, thought, and study, God gave me the strategy called "1X Evangelistic Strategy." This strategy, influenced greatly by the works of Leavell and Autrey, provides a way for believers to engage in personal evangelism without the fear of being alone in the task. Furthermore, it is flexible enough to adapt to a church of any

size in any setting.

This book explains the 1X strategy by showing first the history of evangelism training in SBC churches. Section 1 is the paper I authored in Dr. Fish's seminar in the fall of 2009 and is revised for this book. It reveals three eras of evangelism training in SBC churches: institutional, revivalistic, and programmatic. Section 2 outlines the 1X strategy derived in large part from that history, including 1X's biblical and philosophical foundations, the 1X method, recommended church organizations, and the 1X Fellowship.

If you are looking for strategy of churchwide personal evangelism that is adaptable to your church, offers low administrative overhead, yet challenges individuals to regularly engage in personal evangelism, then welcome to 1X Evangelism. May God bless your work as you strive to be used by Him in proclaiming the gospel to your community and to the world.

—John L. Rothra, PhD

SECTION ONE

The History of Personal Evangelism Training within Local Churches of the Southern Baptist Convention

The content of this section is a revision of a doctoral paper with the same title that I authored in 2011. The 1X strategy is greatly influenced by the SBC's history of evangelism training and outreach strategies that are outlined in this work. Thus, it is included here to provide the historical basis for 1X.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Evangelism and the Southern Baptist Convention

There is no higher calling than to be a child of the King of kings and Lord of lords. There is no greater pleasure than to serve the God who saves those who earned death (cf. Rom 3:23; 6:23) and to bring glory and honor to His name. Christians are blessed in these ways: blessed to be God’s child and blessed to serve Him. The question then is how one can serve God. The answer is evangelism.

Paul teaches that believers are united with Christ in His resurrection for the purpose of a new way of living, that is, a new mission and purpose: “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:4). He also indicates that an individual is saved not merely to escape condemnation (cf. John 3:18), but in order to live out a mission God already foreordained: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:10). That “newness of life” and those “good works” are the Great Commission, namely, evangelism (cf. Matt 28:18–20).

Throughout the history of the church—from its birth in a small Jerusalem room to the global institution of the twenty-first century—various elements of religious and social expression became tools for making the gospel known to others. Although preaching was the predominant method, Christians and churches used small groups, family gatherings, music, and artwork to share Jesus.¹ Cathedrals across Europe and North America display intricately created windows illustrating Jesus’ birth, ministry, death, and resurrection. Following in the footsteps of Niceta of Remesiana, Francis of Assisi, and Martin Luther, musicians continue to compose songs for worship and evangelistic proclamation.² Additionally, voluminous small group Bible studies are published yearly, each designed to share the gospel and apply it to various life situations. Today television and the Internet—especially social media—are used for gospel proclamation.

Evangelism has been, and continues to be, a central tenet of the Christian faith. Although the precise methods may have changed over time, the core message of Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice and resurrection, of salvation by the grace of God alone, received by faith alone, remain constant.³ According to research done by the Barna Group in January 2013, a majority of Christian adults affirm their “responsibility to tell other people my religious beliefs.”⁴ Not only does the gospel define the Christian faith, but evangelism also helps define the Christian life, especially among Southern Baptists.

Since its establishment in 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention continually

emphasized evangelism as one of its core values, including it as the twenty-third article in the 1925 Baptist Faith and Message, and adopting the informal name “Great Commission Baptists” in 2012.⁵ Throughout its history, Southern Baptist evangelism took on many forms both in its methodology and training practice. Section 1 of this book highlights the various methods historically used by the SBC and Southern Baptist churches to train individual believers in personal evangelism. It shows that throughout its history, Southern Baptist evangelism has so far revolved around three specific methods of training and outreach, each receiving greater focus at specific times: Sunday school, revival meetings, and training programs.⁶ As a result, three distinct eras emerge: the Institutional Era (1845–1947), the Revivalistic Era (1947–1971), and the Programmatic Era (1971–present).⁷ The first era focused on evangelism through the institution or organism of the SBC;⁸ the second focused on evangelism through revival services; the final era focused on programs and schools.

Chapter 2

Institutional Era: Sunday School as Primary Method (1845–1947)

Sunday School Evangelism: A Historical Review

Developed in the 1780s by Robert Raikes and considered the “progenitor” of the public school system,¹ Sunday school was originally not part of the church’s work, but a vehicle for educating children for free using paid teachers. Many eighteenth-century Baptists opposed the idea as “unscriptural” and “the devil’s work.” Ironically, though, when the interdenominational Sunday School Society was formed in 1785, “Baptist merchant” William Fox served as its first leader. By the turn of the century, Baptists warmed to the potential of Sunday school as a tool for the church, establishing the first Sunday school in the South in 1803 at the Second Baptist Church of Baltimore, Maryland. The school was organized less around evangelism, choosing instead to focus on religious education as its sole objective. Within fifteen years, Sunday schools were formed in Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.²

When the Southern Baptist Convention was formed in 1845, members established the Domestic Mission Board (later named the Home Mission Board and presently the North American Mission Board) and “included Sunday School promotion” along with church planting³ as the primary tools for evangelism.⁴ As a result, the number of Sunday schools multiplied from 468 in 1845 to 1,460 ten years later.⁵ Seeing the potential of Sunday school to serve as a means toward “educational evangelism,”⁶ in 1863, Basil Manly, Jr. pushed the Southern Baptist Convention to emphasize Sunday school as “an agency for promoting evangelism, missions, Bible teaching, and training.” That year, the first Sunday School Board was formed in Greenville, South Carolina, electing Manly as president and John A. Broadus as secretary. The newly established board soon began publishing various materials to (1) train church leaders in Sunday school administration and (2) train students in the Bible and church doctrine.⁷ Unlike early Sunday schools, Southern Baptists attempted to reach unchurched adults and children. However, while most adult students were already members of the church, over half of their children were unchurched.⁸ Manly and Broadus’ work contributed to the rapid growth of Southern Baptist Sunday schools, growing from 4,333 to 8,378 by 1870.⁹

A permanent Sunday School Board was established in 1891.¹⁰ Envisioning Sunday school as a vehicle for evangelism, the Board operated on the principle that the local church was responsible for reaching the lost and unchurched individuals in their communities. Hence, those who were not enrolled in Sunday school became prospects for Southern Baptist Sunday school membership. The methodology was centripetal: get

people into Sunday school where they consequently would be evangelized.¹¹ This approach, however, required properly trained teachers and well-organized schools. Three methods of training were developed to facilitate these needs: trained field workers, formal training classes, and Sunday school administration literature.

The board created the position of “field worker” in 1901 to help facilitate Sunday school growth throughout the SBC. Field workers were trained Board employees “who went into the field to assist states, associations, or churches” in starting and operating effective Sunday schools, work that was done previously by only “a few state Baptist conventions and independent Sunday School organizations.” The first field worker was Bernard W. Spilman, whose primary order of business was to make Sunday schools truly Southern Baptist entities, abandoning the nondenominational strategies and resources previously used.¹² Field workers promoted a uniform structure for Sunday school following a “nine-point Standard of Excellence for Sunday School.”¹³

The board created the position of “field worker” in 1901 to help the Board encouraged field workers and pastors to establish Sunday school institutes and protracted training schools to ensure teachers were properly equipped to teach the Bible and evangelize students. Sunday school institutes were “three-day meetings consisting of inspirational addresses” designed to motivate teachers for evangelistic outreach. The protracted schools generally lasted one to two weeks with “lectures on the Bible and methods each morning, training sessions in the afternoon, and inspirational addresses each night.” The first protracted school was held in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1906 and “was met with instant success,” thus, becoming the preferred training method throughout the South. By 1916, the Sunday School Board “issue[d] over 35,000 awards in thirty-four states and six foreign countries.”¹⁴

Under the leadership of Basil Manly, Jr. and John Broadus, the Sunday School Board published a variety of materials in the late nineteenth century, including *The Sunday School Primer* (a booklet developed to assist children with basic education and literacy), a children’s newspaper called *Kind Words*, and grade-based Sunday school literature consisting of *The Child’s Gem*, *Primary Quarterly*, *Intermediate Quarterly*, and *Advanced Quarterly*.

After the SBC established the Sunday School Board as a permanent organization, the Board published a Sunday school administration series in 1902 called *Normal Studies for Sunday School Workers*, a series designed to train pastors and teachers in Sunday school operations and evangelistic outreach. By 1915, the series expanded to eight volumes. In 1905, the *Superintendent’s Quarterly* was introduced and was later renamed *The Sunday School Builder*. The year 1910 saw the arrival of the *Home Department Magazine*, a periodical intended “to encourage Bible study at home and to minister to persons unable to attend Sunday school.”¹⁵

Sunday schools grew rapidly both in enrollment and the number of schools. Between 1901 and 1916, the percentage of Southern Baptist churches with Sunday schools increased from 50 percent to 75 percent; in that same time period, the total number of

SBC Sunday schools doubled. Additionally, enrollment nearly tripled during that time with a record of 1,784,992 individuals enrolled. Between 1917 and 1930, little changed regarding the basic emphasis and structure of Sunday school, and materials were updated or added merely to address specific needs and changing cultures.

The only major adjustment came in 1920 when the convention adopted the evangelistic Sunday school philosophy of Arthur Flake. Flake envisioned Sunday school as the primary “outreach arm of the church”¹⁶ and developed a five-step “formula for growth” known as “Flake’s Formula”: (1) find the prospects, (2) design the Sunday school to accommodate them, (3) provide facilities to teach, (4) enlist and train teachers, and (5) visit and enlist more people.¹⁷ As a result of the adoption of Flake’s formula, promotion of the “Enlargement Campaign” in 1923 and the introduction of Vacation Bible School (VBS) in 1924, SBC Sunday school enrollment multiplied to 2,691,828 by 1925, a growth of approximately 40 percent in five years.¹⁸ Another push to increase Sunday school enrollment came in 1954 with the “Million More in ’54” movement, a campaign developed by J. N. Barnette intended to enroll one million more individuals in Sunday school. However, only about one half of those desired were reached that year.¹⁹

Sunday school enrollment peaked at 7,671,165 in 1964 followed by annual decline from 1965–1971. The following five years saw a slight increase in Sunday enrollment, but a steady decline returned starting in 1977. Despite the disinterest in Sunday school, Southern Baptists continued to view the organization as key to its evangelistic outreach. During that time, materials were updated regularly, and multiple enrollment pushes were instituted, each of which included further training of teachers and church leaders in evangelism.

Some of the leading Sunday school outreach programs used by SBC churches included “People-to-People,” “Reach Out,” and “Metro Reach.” The most prominent training and outreach program in the 1970s was called “ACTION: A Reach Out Enrollment Plan for Sunday School.” According to Lynn E. May, ACTION resulted in Sunday school enrollment increases from 1972 to 1976 with an average growth of 18 percent the final year.²⁰ Although Sunday school was the primary means of evangelism, the SBC also developed additional outreach strategies, i.e., Training Union and auxiliary organizations designed to complement Sunday school.

Training Union and Auxiliary Organizations

Along with Sunday school, two auxiliary groups arose to serve the purpose of the church and especially the Sunday school program: Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) and the Baptist Young People’s Union (BYPU). The Woman’s Missionary Union was formed in 1888 when a “small group of women organized [the Union as an] auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.” The goal was to train lay women in missions and promote missionary activity. WMU soon initiated fundraising campaigns to support missionaries overseas and at home: the Lottie Moon Offering in 1918 to support foreign

missions and the Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions in 1934.²¹

The Baptist Young People's Union entered the scene circa 1891 and was formally established as an auxiliary to the Sunday School Board in 1896. Its purpose was to train youth in how to "explain their faith" and help them grow spiritually. By 1898, churches held "hundreds of study classes," and the Sunday School Board published materials specially designed for the BYPU. Classes generally were held on Sunday evenings to supplement, not conflict with, Sunday school. BYPU changed its name to Baptist Training Union in 1934 and expanded to all age groups.²²

No radical changes were made to the training union structure until 1968. Rather, the Training Union Department of the Sunday School Board added or edited literature and adjusted the program based merely on changing needs and cultures. Following the Second World War, the Training Union curriculum expanded to include age-graded materials spanning seventy-five volumes in order to cover a wider selection of topics within Baptist life. The first major change occurred between 1968 and 1970 when control over the lessons shifted from the Training Union Department to the local church. While the older, already published material was still available, the focus moved to topic-based, undated resources from which churches selected based on their individual training needs. This was followed by the Training Union changing its name to the Church Training Department in the 1970s and a decade later to the Discipleship Training Department.²³

In the 1980s, despite Sunday school no longer serving as the main vehicle for Southern Baptist evangelism training, the Discipleship Training Department released a discipleship and evangelism series called *LIFE*. The *LIFE* series served as an

in-depth training program in five ministry areas of church life: (1) Worship/Intercession, (2) Nurture, (3) Service, (4) Teaching/Preaching, and (5) Evangelism. The *LIFE* series now includes: MasterLife, Experiencing God, Disciple's Prayer Life, Wise Counsel, Decision Time, Master Builder, Parenting by Grace, Christian Self-esteem, Covenant Marriage, Communication and Intimacy, Master Design, Bible Guide, Step by Step through the Old Testament, [and] Step by Step through the New Testament.²⁴

The SBC recognized that in order to improve its evangelism training in local churches, small groups, auxiliary organizations, and publications were insufficient. It needed to formally advocate evangelistic outreach training. This led to the formation of the Department of Evangelism under the visionary leadership of Roland Q. Leavell.

Department of Evangelism and Roland Q. Leavell

The Southern Baptist Convention formed the Department of Evangelism in 1906 as a division of the Home Mission Board as a means to further the denomination's gospel outreach and enhance its training methods. It was believed that the Department would help local churches evangelize their communities more effectively through regular

revival meetings.²⁵ The department employed a lead evangelist charged with implementing the program of recurring revival meetings.

The Department developed the “Fisherman” program in 1913 in order to train individuals to serve as associate evangelists within specific assigned areas under the authority of the lead evangelist. Their mission was to help local pastors learn how to conduct revival meetings, raise money, and organize the church for meeting promotion.²⁶ The revival meetings went beyond multiple worship services by including sessions for training participants in evangelism. These seminars, however, were primarily “a study in contextualized education” rather than personal evangelism training. Furthermore, Sunday school continued as the primary means of evangelistic training, although that training was limited to Sunday school teachers and church staff.²⁷

In 1936, the convention chose Roland Q. Leavell to head the Department of Evangelism, in part because he was one of the first Southern Baptists to emphasize lay personal evangelism. Just prior to taking over the Evangelism Department, Leavell authored a training manual called *Winning Others to Christ*, published in 1936.²⁸ The contents of this work were later published for training Southern Baptists throughout the convention under the title *Helping Others to Become Christians*.

Soon after taking the reins, Leavell terminated many of the associate evangelist positions and steered the Department to focus more on local church evangelism through personal evangelistic efforts rather than through mass revivals. It is unclear, though, whether such an overhaul was motivated by Leavell’s methodological and doctrinal convictions, the economic hardships of the Great Depression, or both. Whatever the reasons, Leavell chose local churches over paid evangelists as the preferred method for evangelism.²⁹

As one examines Leavell’s ministry and work with the Department of Evangelism, it appears that his emphasis on personal evangelism made him a visionary and a man ahead of his time. Based on John 1:41, Leavell envisioned an “Andrew Club” in every church, in which pastors would train a small group to share the gospel who, in turn, would each train two or three others, who would then train more. However, this idea never came to fruition convention-wide.³⁰ Nevertheless, he continued to promote lay personal evangelism; he “wrote books, developed training programs, and led evangelism clinics to motivate Southern Baptists to share their faith.” He recruited others to write “articles for the many Southern Baptist periodicals, study courses, tracts, pamphlets, and books” in order to further train the laity on how to evangelize.³¹

In his work *Helping Others to Become Christians*—a training resource developed for the Southern Baptist Convention that captures the content of his seminal work, *Winning Others to Christ*—Leavell argues that evangelism is the mission of every believer. In order to do personal evangelism, one must first be transformed by the Holy Spirit (a true believer), prayer for the lost must be “a necessity,” they must possess a “passion” for locating and interacting with the lost, and finally they must share a biblical plan of

salvation.³²

In order to help Christians clearly articulate the plan of salvation, Leavell developed a basic gospel presentation that became popular among Southern Baptists. The presentation depended greatly on Scripture and revolved around three points:

1. Salvation needed
 - a. All have sinned (Rom 3:23d)
 - b. Sin brings death (Rom 6:23)
2. Salvation provided
 - a. Sin wiped away (1 John 1:7)
 - b. Whoever will can be saved (John 3:16)
 - c. Salvation is a free gift of grace (Eph 2:8)
3. Salvation accepted
 - a. Through repentance and faith (Acts 20:21)
 - b. Repent or die (Luke 13:3)
 - c. Believe or end up in hell (John 3:18, 36)³³

In his training manual, *Helping Others*, Leavell followed his gospel presentation chapter with sections addressing topics such as dangers to avoid, scriptural responses to common excuses, and the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism.³⁴ It is worth noting that in this work Leavell placed personal evangelism (chapter 2) before his discussion on mass evangelism (chapter 3). Based on his overall ministry, this order is likely due to his emphasis on personal evangelism over revival meeting evangelism. This does not mean, nevertheless, that he opposed revival meetings as a viable tool for evangelism.

In 1939, Leavell authored a booklet, *A Handbook for the Southwide Baptist Revival of 1939*, intended to guide churches on how to organize and participate in a “cooperative, coordinated, comprehensive campaign for souls” using massive revival meetings.³⁵ In his handbook, Leavell discussed three types of biblical evangelism: personal, mass (revival meetings), and home evangelism (sharing the gospel with family and close friends). Describing the value of all three, Leavell wrote, “No one way will win all. No scriptural way can be omitted without loss... The ‘Eight Mighty Objectives’ of the Southwide Baptist Revival plans encourage the use of each of these scriptural methods.”³⁶ Thus, Leavell strove to incorporate all forms of evangelism, though his vision incorporated personal evangelism to a greater extent than did the plans of his predecessors.

Despite his best efforts to promote personal evangelism and train the laity to share the gospel, evangelism remained in the purview of Sunday school and revival meetings; training, similarly, continued to be reserved for the leadership and was done primarily through Sunday school and its auxiliaries. Leavell’s vision of a convention-wide focus on personal evangelism training would not come to pass for another thirty-five years, but instead, the SBC would experience a shift from institutional evangelism training (mostly Sunday school) to a revivalistic method.

SECTION TWO

The 1X Evangelism Strategy

Chapter 6

Foundations of 1X Evangelism

Ever since its formation in 1845, the SBC has considered evangelistic outreach as a defining characteristic of the convention and its local churches. Training in lay personal evangelism, however, did not become a priority until the 1960s and 1970s, wherein training entered the programmatic era dominated by multiple evangelism schools and published educational programs. Despite some initial successes and the SBC's emphasis on personal evangelism, most Christians are not sharing the gospel on a regular basis.

Southern Baptist leaders such as Roland Q. Leavell and C. E. Autrey, both visionaries, recognized the importance of regular lay personal evangelism. Their visions were built on multiple scriptures commanding Christians to be evangelistic and passages emphasizing the need to be gospel-centered. As such, they strove to find ways to increase evangelism among the laity. Like Leavell and Autrey's plans, 1X Evangelism affirms, based on Scripture, that personal evangelism is both a biblical mandate, a divine joy, and the Christian mission.

Scriptural Foundation

1X Evangelism is founded on the teachings found throughout the Scripture. Most notable of these are the commandments to love God and love neighbor as well as the instructions to be disciple-makers. Herein are some of the passages on which 1X Evangelism is founded.

1X and the Greatest Commandments

The 1X strategy for personal evangelism is based on Jesus' commands to love God and love man by making disciples. Evangelism is an act of our love for God because by sharing the gospel, we show our love for Him by doing what Jesus did:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. – *Deuteronomy 6:5*

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." – *Luke 9:23*

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. – *John 14:15*

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." – *John 14:23*

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My lambs.” He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep.” – *John 21:15–17*

Not only does 1X help us live out our love for God, but it also helps us show our love for others. Evangelism is an act of our love for man because by sharing the gospel, we give them the news they need to be saved and to live a life that glorifies God:

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.– *Leviticus 19:18*

The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. – *Leviticus 19:34*

He who despises his neighbor sins, but happy is he who is gracious to the poor. – *Proverbs 14:21*

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. – *Romans 13:8*

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. – *James 1:27*

1X and the Great Commission

1X is about living a gospel-centered life; it is about personal evangelism. As such, 1X is not only based on the great commandments to love God and love neighbor, but it is also based on Jesus’ commands for us to be evangelistic disciple-makers.

Evangelism is an act of obedience to God in that Jesus commanded us to share the gospel and make disciples:

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” – *Matthew 28:18–20*

And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” – *Mark 16:15–16*

And He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” – *Luke 24:46–49*

So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” – *John 20:21*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. – *Acts 1:8*

The passages above are a sample of what God tells us in His Word. The Scripture clearly teaches us to live out our love for God and for others. It further teaches us that we show love through gospel-centered living, that is, through sharing the gospel of Jesus with others. 1X is based upon these teachings, but that is not the only foundation; it is also based on certain philosophical principles.

Philosophical Foundation

When developing 1X Evangelism, certain specific philosophical principles were adopted that guide how the strategy operates. These principles help ensure that 1X is not one more evangelism program, but that it is a flexible, usable, and manageable strategy for personal evangelism. In total, there are five philosophical principles underlying the 1X strategy.

Principle 1: Challenging yet achievable goals

The 1X strategy sets goals for outreach that any believer will find challenging, yet every believer can achieve. The challenge is found (1) in the individual’s continuously improving outreach methods and (2) in the increasing frequency with which the believer shares the gospel.

Principle 2: Adaptable to any church

The 1X strategy is designed with every church size in mind. Rather than outlining a method for larger churches and asking smaller churches to somehow adapt it to their congregations—which may not always be simple or effective—1X takes the opposite approach. It develops a method for smaller churches that is easily adaptable to churches

of any size.

No matter whether you're in a small church in the country, a medium church in the suburbs, or a megachurch in the city, 1X can be adapted to your specific setting. Furthermore, 1X provides recommended structures based on the size of the church to help with this adaptation.

Principle 3: Emphasize personal evangelism

1X Participants will engage in personal evangelism in order to achieve defined goals. When it comes to sharing the gospel, no specific evangelistic presentation is required, allowing the believer and local church to choose the presentation that best fits them.¹ For those churches or individuals not familiar with various ways to share their faith, some evangelism training resources are recommended in the 1X program.

Principle 4: Provide support from the local church as a whole

Believers are not left on their own, but have the support of others in their church through small groups and churchwide fellowship. 1X uses small groups as the primary mode of support where believers will assist each other in their personal evangelism.

Principle 5: Promote stronger relationships and discipleship

The small groups not only serve as a way of support, but they are also designed to promote strong relationships between believers. Furthermore, 1X fosters discipleship through its emphasis on prayer, Bible study, and believers helping each other in their spiritual walk and work.