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## EVANGELISM TODAY

What do we need to embrace and what do we need to avoid now?

### Hosted by:

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### Guests:

**Merv Budd**

*Lead Pastor, North Burlington Baptist  
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**Shaila Visser**

*National Director, Alpha Canada*

**Paul Lam**

*Church Life and Leadership Associate*

Churches are finding that their mission agendas are turned upside down as a result of the pandemic.

Merv Budd got us started by encouraging us to ask: “Where are we seeing the Kingdom?” As we get in the habit of sharing those stories in our churches, they will naturally carry over into our everyday conversations.

Merv continued, “One of the gifts we can give to people who don’t yet believe is the ability to see where or how God may be working in their lives and share that with them. I find that people are way more open to talk about God working in their lives, than simply talking conceptually about the work of God.”

### When it comes to evangelism, what are we talking about?

- Shaila Visser quoted Darrell Johnson, FBC Vancouver: “Evangelism is joining a conversation that the Holy Spirit is already having with another person.” This definition invites us to participate, even enjoy, rather than being motivated by guilt. Anytime that “should” and “evangelism” are in the same sentence, a bad definition is about to emerge.
- Merv defines evangelism as faithful communication of the Gospel for the Kingdom, encouraging us to focus on the Great Commandment before the Great Commission. The mission of God, beyond evangelism, is the redemption of all creation. But the heart of the mission is evangelistic and when it ceases to be evangelistic it is no longer the mission of God.

### Are there any do’s and don’ts ?

- Don’t wait... Go
- Don’t edit (your internal guest list)... Invite
- Don’t tell... Model
- Don’t just do... Pray, pray, pray
- Don’t assume God’s not working.
- Don’t preach... Ask and let people articulate for themselves
- Ask what God is like, not what plan works
- Aim for progress, not a decision
- Be yourself
- Be curious! Jesus asked many, many more questions that he answered.

## What role does making an emotional connection play in evangelism?

- It's important to make a relevant connection. People can have a deep yearning for the love and forgiveness we speak about. We need to allow them to experience the presence of God, his love, peace, joy, wisdom through us. Allow them to taste and see.
- "If we make a person a project we will never win them, but if we love them we'll never let them go."  
—Merv Budd

## We have heard that a (misquoted) Francis of Assisi said, "Preach at all times, and if necessary use words." Why do words matter right now?

- Communication is not complete without words. Jesus demonstrated **and** used words. Both are necessary.
- This is a dangerous statement because we use it as an excuse.
- Of course our behaviour matters, but it is not enough.

## The key to evangelism is understanding the context. What does this moment demand ?

- "I think that, in light of the evangelical fiasco in the States, we need to speak and live with great humility and humour," Merv Budd.
- We need to expand the table of Jesus to include everyone

## THE LAST WORD

"If you want to equip your people well for evangelistic engagement, don't start with the pragmatic question of what works? Start with the theological question of what does it mean to be faithful? Shape your church and your people to be evangelistic rather than simply equipping for evangelistic tasks."

"This season is about voice recognition—the whisper of the Holy Spirit, and the voices of those around us.

"We are fat on authors and podcasts – what we need is to be fat on the word of God."

—Shaila Visser

## THE MOMENT IS NOW - DON'T MISS IT!

### Resources:

Sam Chan: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/evangelism-skeptical-world/#introduction>

James Choung's four circles video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uW5ISnneP30>

Tim Downs, *Finding Common Ground*

Randy Newman, *Questioning Evangelism*

Don Everetts, *I Once Was Lost*

## UPCOMING SESSIONS

### EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN A PANDEMIC

March 11, 10:00 am

How can you help your community engage with your church and its message?

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Stay tuned for more topics!

## CONTACT

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