

Evangelism Boot Camp  
New York City  
May 2006

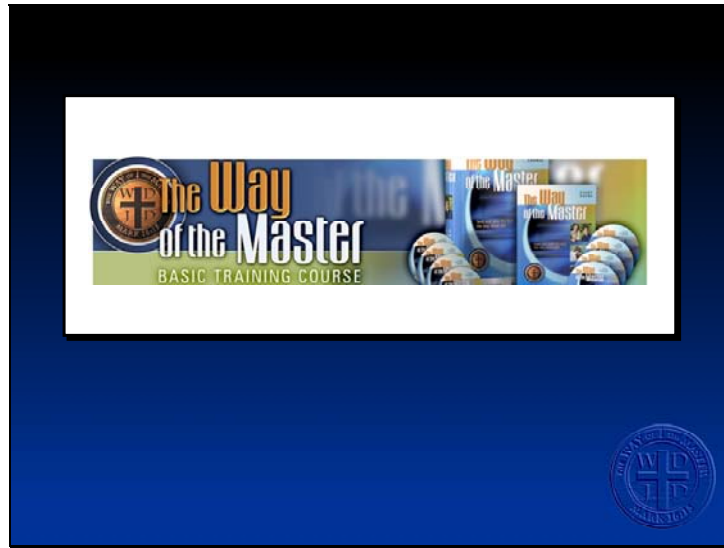
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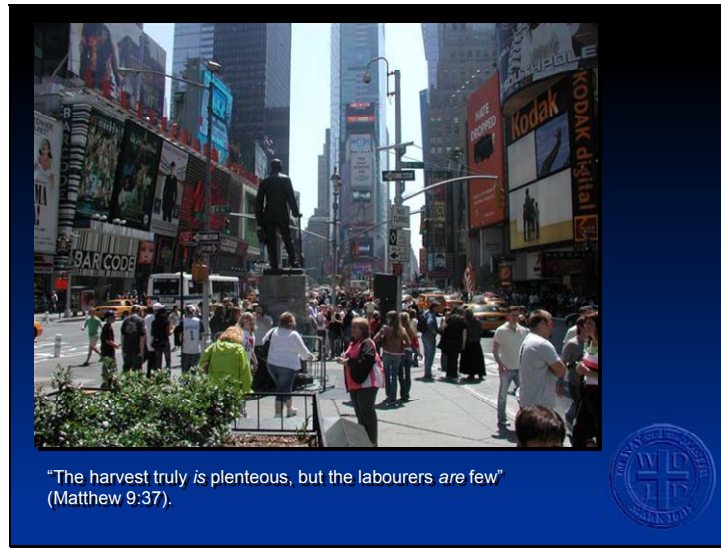


For years I've been receiving an e-newsletter from "The Way of the Master" ministry. Fantastic ministry! Without a doubt the best evangelism training I have encountered in my years as a Christian. A few years ago the Way of the Master spawned a sister ministry called "The Great News Network." The Great News Network puts together "Evangelism Boot Camps" where teams are sent out to do what Jesus did – preach the gospel in the open air as well as one-to-one.

I've often thought that I'd love to go, and this past May God opened the door for me to finally attend one of these Boot Camps. This one was the very first GNN Boot Camp in New York City.



One of the unique aspects of GNN is that they use the Biblical principles taught by The Way of the Master. More of that starting next week when we begin the excellent 8-week “Basic Training Course.”



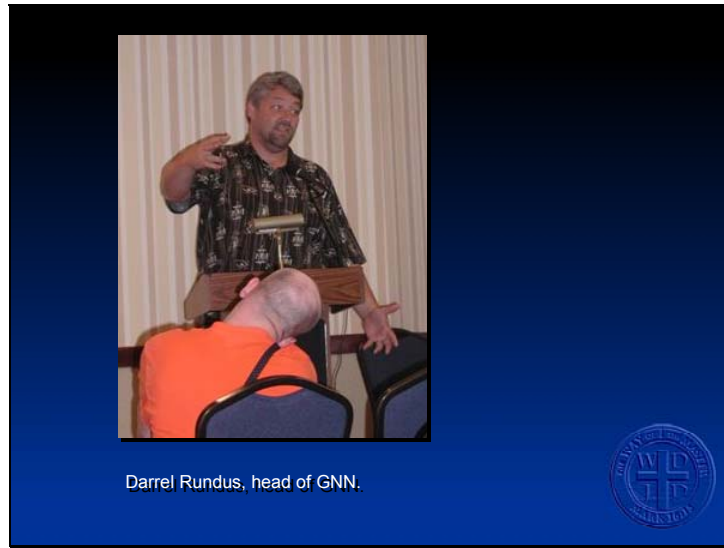
I didn't really know what to expect going into this, but I knew that God wanted me to be here. Reaching out to the lost should always be one of our primary concerns as Christians. How sad that people are dying without forgiveness. How sad that people have no idea that they're in store for a very rude awakening when they die. It just breaks my heart.

I had the privilege and honor to see many miracles.



Wednesday I arrived at the hotel in NYC and met everyone. Such nice sweet people. Many friendships were formed immediately.

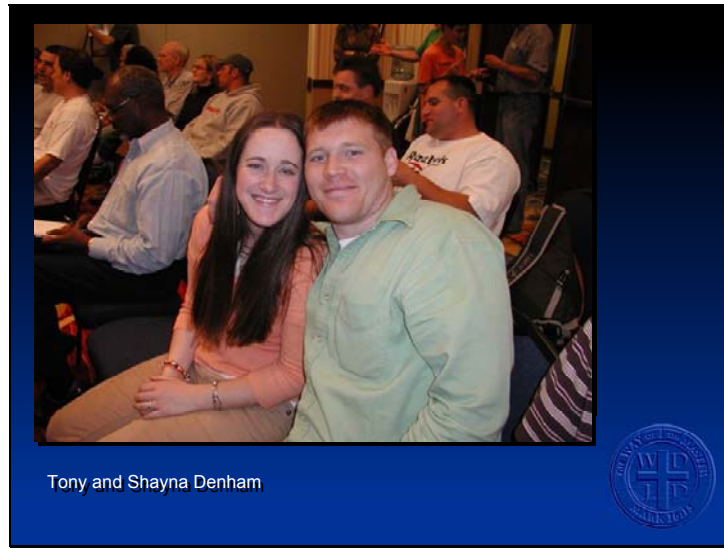
I want to spend a few minutes introducing you to just a handful of the people I met.



Darrel Rundus, head of GNN.

Darrel Rundus is the head of GNN and apparently he only owns Hawaiian shirts!

Darrel has a great testimony of how he became a self-made millionaire and then got saved. Ray Comfort asked him to head up The Great News Network and now he runs these Boot Camps, subsidized partly by his business.



Tony and Shayna Denham

I met Tony and Shayna Denham. I got a kick out of the fact that Shayna had a Jewish name. Shayna means “beautiful” in Hebrew. So I told Tony he could call his wife his “Shayna Maidel” (Pretty Girl) or “Shayna Punim” (Pretty face.) He appreciated the tip! I’ve since learned that these 2 bring groups out to do evangelism just about every week.



This is the "EH" team. This has a double-meaning. There were three people from Canada on the group, and Canadians always say "eh." Also, "Eh" stands for "Evangelistic Hope."

Hiding in the back is Durk, a former missionary to Israel. He brought his 12-year-old son, Caleb. Caleb! I told him I missed my Caleb so I might end up hugging him! This Caleb ended up open-air preaching in the middle of Times Square. I pray that my Caleb will be so bold and empowered!

On the right is Irving, an older black man from Louisiana, who told me that where he comes from, if it moves, they eat it!

He invited me down to the bayou for crawfish and shrimp!





The RIOT Team!

This is the fantastic team God provided me – the RIOT team.

Steve, Todd, Gabe, Phyllis, Carl, Me, Steve, Rhonda, Donna.

Steve, the large tall man with a bald head and a goatee, served in the Military with the Israeli army and looks like something from Wrestlemania! What a nice tender man though.



This was the “Bite” group, that wanted to “take a bite out of the Big Apple.”

To illustrate how prejudiced my heart is, when I saw Jose here hanging out in the lobby on the first day, I was convinced he wasn’t with our group and I wanted to share a tract with him. I based this on his appearance.

Jose has an amazing ministry where he’s from. Many times a week he goes out at night to witness to people who do drugs and hang out in bars. Amazing testimony!

“For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).



On the bottom-left is Tiffany, a spunky NYC native who talked so fast and had such great stories, that even me with my big mouth was silent listening.

On the first day she had me dizzy with plans she had for us. She was the first one to tell me that we would be preaching open-air in the subway cars and on the Staten Island Ferry. I felt like a wounded kitten next to her and her lion-like boldness! “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs 28:1).



The Wing Span Team!

On the top-left was Glen, my roommate. He's from Tennessee. Also, in the back middle is Geraldine, a newlywed from Manchester England. So people came from all over!

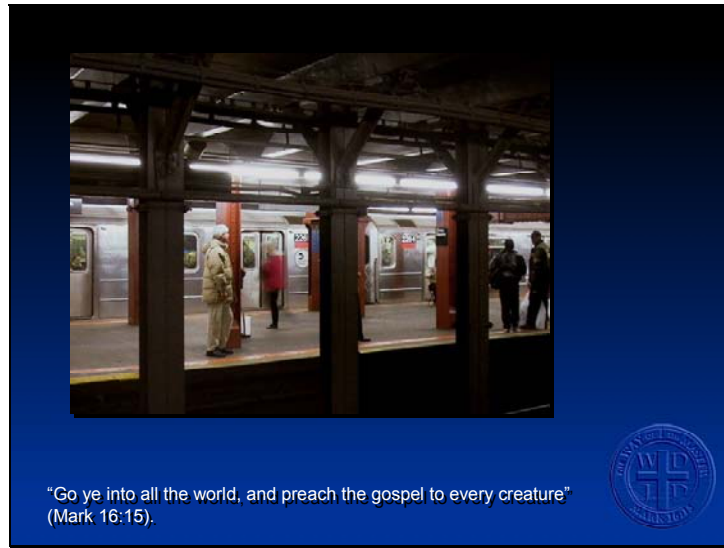


In the middle is Jennifer is a Long-Island Italian who got involved with a bad cult, the International Church of Christ. When she left that cult, the leaders got her in a room and bullied her into saying three times: “I am not a Christian, I am going to hell.” She says that that experience makes her appreciate the true Gospel of Jesus Christ all the more! She’s a college professor in Orlando and she’s not allowed to talk about her faith to her students unless they ask. So she always gives biographical info about herself to her students and always just “drops in” that she was once part of a cult. She says that the students can’t help themselves. Many come to her after class and ask about that and then she can share the true gospel. What a testimony God has given her!



A large number of boot-campers!

What struck me was how different we all were. Different ages, different skin colors, different parts of the country, and from other countries. Yet we had such a strong sincere bond because Christ truly makes us one. There was a wonderful unity in the group, and a true love among us. I praise Jesus for that!



Then Thursday morning we started doing what we were here to do - hit the streets and share the vital news of our dire need for forgiveness. And was I nervous? You betcha!

Perhaps it's my Jewish upbringing, but I don't like getting "in your face" about Spiritual things. It makes me uncomfortable, yet this was exactly what Jesus did and I know it honors Him to do the same.



We took a bus to the subway, then took the subway into town. While on the subway, I watched my friends and colleagues preach in the subway car while we traveled into town. People were much more receptive than I would have imagined. People listened, some asked good questions, and many took our pamphlets.

I did open-air preaching for the first time.

I particularly learned from Mike, a guy on my team. He's hilarious! He's a very funny guy and has a warmth and true caring for people.

So this was basically the spiel I used:

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Mark, and I have something very important to share with you. It will only take a few moments.

I've heard that New York City has the nicest people in the world. Can anyone recommend a good plastic surgeon? Seriously, I need a plastic surgeon. Anyone know a good one?

I asked mine what I could do to improve my looks, and he said the only thing that could help me was this! (and then I showed a plastic big-nose and mustache and glasses gag - like Groucho Marx!)

(this was supposed to be a joke! people laughed)

Seriously, have you noticed that so many of us are so concerned about how we look? This amazing city has large billboards filled with beautiful people from *Vogue* and *GQ*.

We are so concerned about how we look on the outside.

But have you considered that what is much more important is how we look on the inside?



You might ask, How do we tell what we look like on the inside? The answer is to look into the mirror.

Not the mirror in your apartment or hotel room, but the mirror of God's Law - the Ten Commandments. God has given us these commandments to show us what we look like on the inside. And none of us look very good.

Now I'm not here to judge you, but I ask you to judge yourself based on the standards of God's Law, because that's the standard God will use to judge us all someday.

"Thou shalt not steal."

Have we ever taken anything that doesn't belong to us? The value doesn't matter. What does that make us? A thief.

Have we ever lied? Of course we have. What does that make us? A Liar.

Have we ever used God's name as a swear word? When we hit our hand with a hammer, we don't yell "Oh Hitler!" "Oh Osama!" No! We yell "Jesus" or "God!" We take God's name and demean it lower than Osama bin Laden's name. That is blasphemy and that makes us a blasphemer.

The Bible says that no liars, thieves or blasphemers will enter heaven, but will have their place in the lake of fire. This is serious stuff.

The Bible says "it is appointed unto man once to die, and then the judgment." One thing that makes you and I the same is that we will all surely die. 10 out of 10 people die - it's the ultimate statistic. And when we die, we will be judged. And when God judges us based on the 10 Commandments, we will all fall very short and be justly sent to hell.

So why am I standing up here in front of you? It's not because I like it. I'm actually uncomfortable doing this. But I'm doing it because I care. I don't want you to go to hell, and you don't want to go there either.

Most of us think we're good people, but not when we compare ourselves against the Ten Commandments, God's Law, and this is the standard God will use on Judgment Day.

I implore you to look into the mirror of God's perfect commandments to see how short we have all fallen. None of us are good when we measure ourselves the way God measures us. It's like this. Imagine you were caught speeding and were given a \$250 fine. You're standing before the judge and you say, "But Judge. I'm sorry. I confess and repent and I won't do it again."

Will the Judge still make you pay the fine even though you're sorry? Of course he will. If he didn't, he'd be a crooked Judge.

You and I have broken God's Law and we owe a fine to God that we can't pay. He must and will send us to hell. We can confess and repent all we want, but unless our fine is paid, we can not be set free.

But here's the great news! God came to earth as a man to pay the penalty for the Law we broke! That's why Jesus died like a thief even though He wasn't a thief. That's why Jesus died like a murderer even though He was not a murderer. That's why He died - to pay the fine we couldn't pay.

But like any gift, it's only good if you accept it. I can give you a Ferrari, but unless you sit in it and turn the key, it does you no good.

Knowing you're a sinner deserving of hell and knowing that Jesus paid your fine is not good enough.

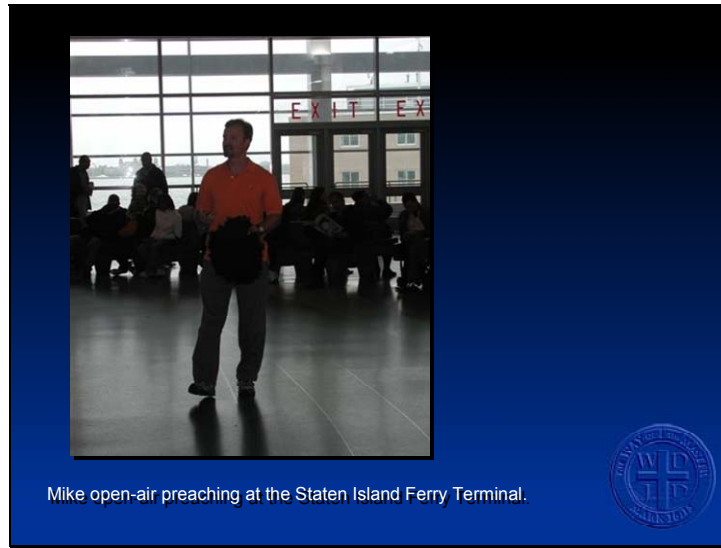
If we were in a plane and about to crash, and I gave you a parachute, it would do no good for you to believe that the parachute could save you. It's only helpful if you actually put it on!

Lots of people say they believe in God or even believe in Jesus, but that does you no good unless you "put it on," which you do by believing Jesus paid your fine, repenting of your sin, and making Him Lord of your life.

So I beg you, we will all face God on Judgment Day, so put on the parachute of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can stand before God based on your works and be condemned, or you can stand before God based on Jesus' works, and be saved.

Thank you so much for attention.

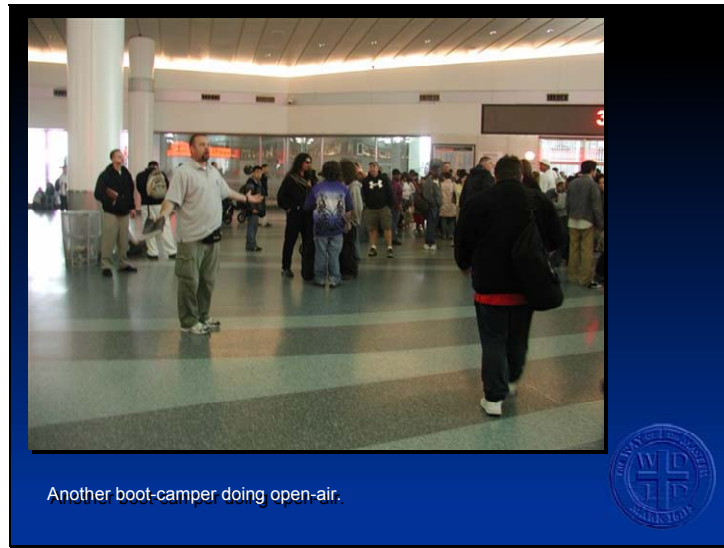
So what did people think of this message? Some ignored me. Some listened intently. Some yelled and swore.



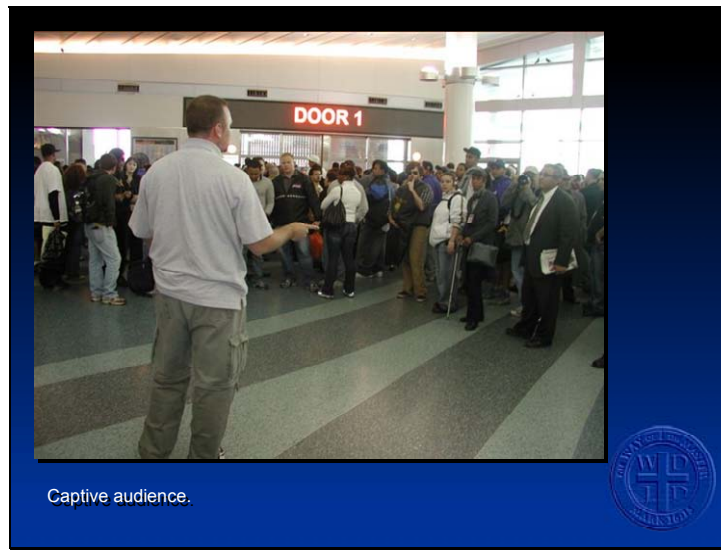
Here's Mike, a guy on my team I told you about.

He got the crowd's attention by wearing that huge afro wig and asking if anyone in the room was a barber.

Then he swung into the spiritual. Very effective.



I really liked the Staten Island Ferry terminal. A new boat leaves every 15 minutes or so, so you get a fresh crowd that is captive for a solid 15 minutes. Then you get a whole new crowd!

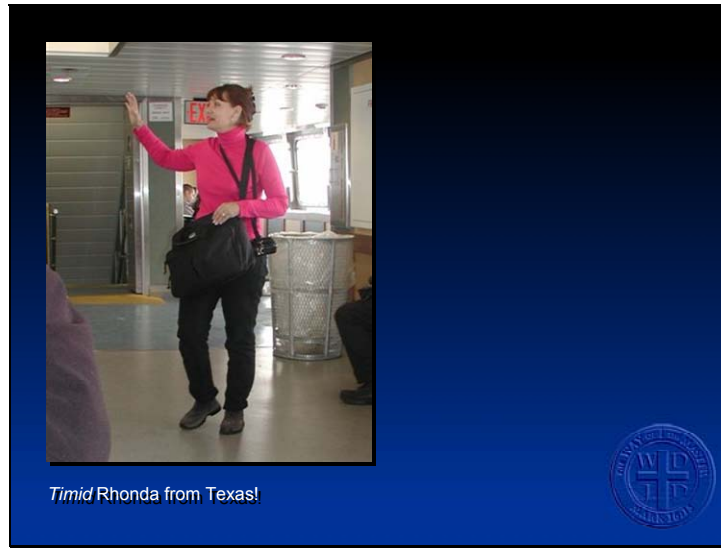


You can see that the place can fill with a lot of people quickly!

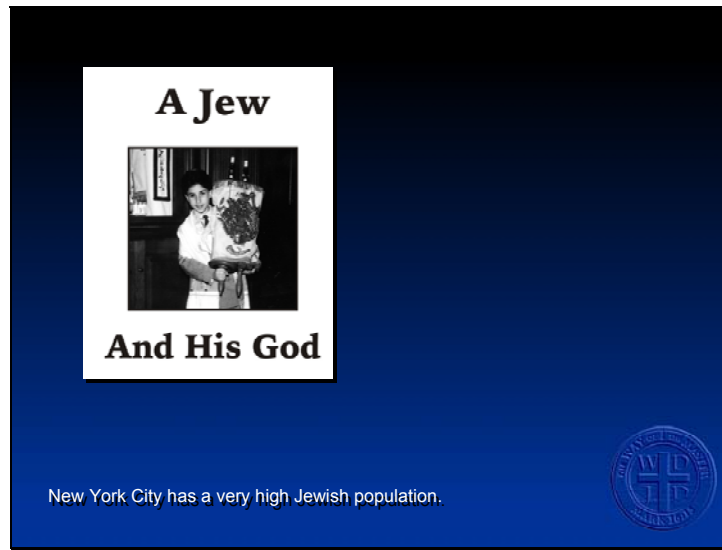


We rode the ferry back and forth a few times and did open-air on the ferry and handed out tracts.

The Staten Island Ferry goes right by the Statue of Liberty.



This is Rhonda from Texas. She is so soft-spoken and sweet. This was her first open-air, and God was faithful. She was a heckler magnet. Every time she open-air'ed big guys would be rude to her! Such cowards. But she continued to do it, praise God.



I brought about 500 copies of my tract "A Jew and His God" with me to NYC because I knew that there would be a lot of Jews there.

Funny story. Most of the Boot Campers are Gentiles from Texas and Wisconsin and Oregon and for them to see a Jewish person where they live is like seeing an American Bald Eagle! So many of them would come up to me all excited and say, "Mark, I got to share with a Jewish person. I gave them your tract." And I'd say, "You ran into a Jewish person? In NYC? NO!?"

So many Boot Campers kept pulling me aside for advice about talking to unsaved Jewish people, that I asked Darrel Rundus if I could give a quick "pointers for witnessing to Jewish people" talk, and he was nice enough to let me. So Thursday night I did just that. Everybody was really interested and thankful for the info.

And it's so ironic to me because so often Jews mistakenly think that Christians hate the Jews. But I saw such love and compassion from my fellow boot campers. They truly love the Jewish people because they love the Jewish Savior!

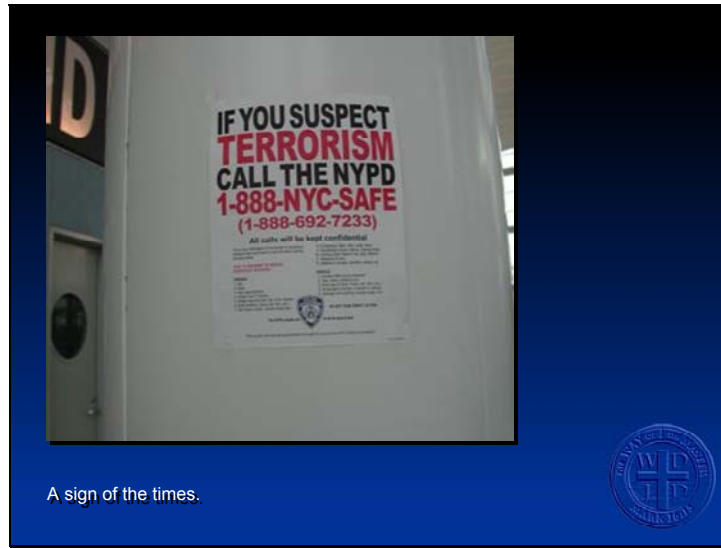
Another Jewish story:

On the ferry I noticed a young lady reading a book in Hebrew. So I started a conversation with her. She was from Israel, and was on exchange for a year. She worked for the government over there.



When I told her I am a Jew and I believe that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, she said, “We have conflict then.”

I think she used the wrong word, as her English wasn't that good. I say that because she did not talk with me in a condemning or hostile way at all. So I think she meant “disagreement.” We had a nice chat and I shared that it is very Jewish to believe in Jesus. In fact, what could be **more Jewish** than believing in the Jewish Messiah? Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David - they all looked forward with great anticipation to Jesus. I gave her a copy of my tract, *A Jew and His God*, and she said she'd read it. So please pray for her. Her name was Savannah.



A sign of the times.

This sign serves as a good reminder that 10 out of 10 people die.





There's the famous Brooklyn Bridge. Anyone want to buy it?



And there's the World Headquarters for the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society – the Jehovah's Witnesses.

I ran into quite a few Jehovah's Witnesses while in NYC.

For more info on Jehovah's Witnesses, and how to Biblically refute their claims, go to <http://resources.sohmer.net>



The sign is wrong... Nathan already came – and there he is!



No comment.



This sign was near Washington Square Park.

I liked this sign. "Unnecessary Noise Prohibited." The whole city was full of unnecessary noise!

On Friday we went to Washington Square Park, which is right across from New York University. This was the "intellectual" crowd, and **BY FAR** the rudest! The Bible says: "Knowledge puffeth up" (1 Corinthians 8:1) and that was definitely evident outside NYU.

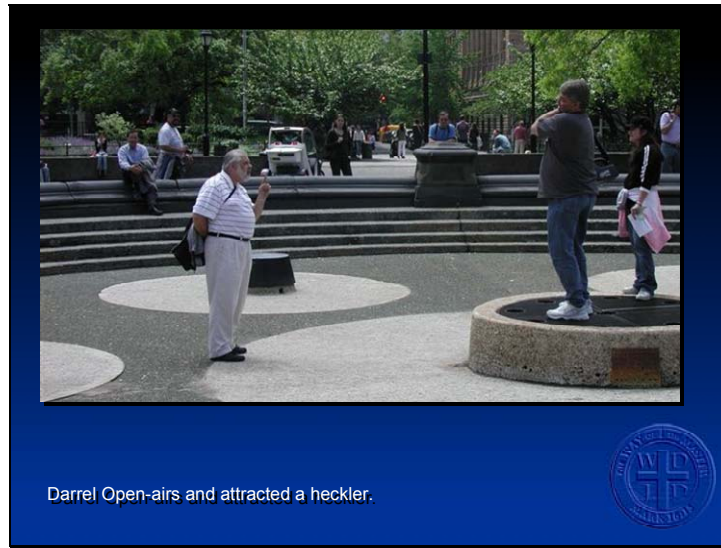
This was the place where I saw NYC at its most depraved.

I met a homeless man who said that he didn't worry about what happens after you die because he doesn't plan on ever dying. He said if you don't want to die, you don't have to. He was very sad, and obviously mentally ill.

I also met a young guy who claimed to be God. So I asked him if he wouldn't mind performing a miracle, to which he responded, "life is a miracle."

I asked him if he wouldn't mind performing one a bit more concrete. After all, Jesus proved His claims to deity by healing, raising people from the dead (including Himself!), turning water into wine, feeding thousands with a tiny bit of food, et cetera.

He told me I "didn't understand."



Darrel Open-airs and attracted a heckler.

Darrel was open-air preaching and had a small crowd. Anyhow, when Darrel was showing from the Bible that none of us are good, this older Roman Catholic man just about lost his mind! Roman Catholics do not like to hear that they're not good - after all, their whole salvation is based on THEIR works. But God's word teaches that "there is none good but one, that is, God" (Matthew 19:17) and "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). This guy was very upset and yelled for quite some time. He did not like the fact that the Ten Commandments showed that he was not a good person, and rather than getting right with God about it, he took it out on the messenger. Very sad. It would have been much better for him to seek God's remedy for the situation, which is repentance and trusting in Christ for His righteousness to cover our unrighteousness.

At this point I want to share with you how it was that Darrel gathered a crowd. He had a small portable amplification system which you can see over his right shoulder. And he announced that he'd be giving away money to people who could answer trivia questions. Easy ones like "Which and does the Statue of Liberty hold her torch?" "Who was the 40<sup>th</sup> President?" "Who's on the \$20 bill?"



And he gave one dollar to whoever could answer the question. Then he said, let's go for \$20. I'll give 20 dollars to anyone who can prove they are a good person.

So you bring them through the 10 Commandments and you show them that they are not a good person because God sees them as a liar, a thief, a blasphemer, an adulterer, etc.

But then Daryl does this: He says, "You did not pass the test. You did not earn the \$20, but to illustrate a principle that the Bible calls grace, I'm going to give you the \$20. You didn't earn it and you don't deserve it, but you can have it if you claim it.

1 of 2 things happens here:

The person comes and gets it, in which case you say, salvation is like that. It's not yours unless you actually make a decision to step out and take it.

The person refuses to take it, in which case you point out that many of us are like this person. God offers us a free gift but because of our embarrassment or stubbornness we refuse to accept it and it does us no good.

So either way the point is made!

As for the heckler, please pray for him. I didn't get his name, but he was very angry. I thought he would have a heart attack he was yelling so tensely.

But as Ray Comfort has said, pray for a good heckler because a good heckler will draw a crowd. A good heckler will turn a crowd of 20 into 200 in seconds.



I did open-air preaching in the park and got the worst tribulation I got the whole time in NYC. I met up with this guy. He wore a sign that said: "6 foot 7 inch Jew will freestyle rap 4 you!" He began heckling me.

I had a number of people yelling at me to shut the (expletive) up, and I had a bare-chested young man join the Jewish rapper in heckling. It was rough, but I know the stakes are very high for them, and they must be warned of the wrath to come. I was getting yelled at from a number of people at once. That was discouraging, but it's much worse for them than me.

I spent most of my time there handing out tracts and doing 1-to-1 witnessing. This was met with lots of hostility as well.

One man dressed impressively in a business suit yelled at me when he saw I was handing out gospel tracts, "Don't you sin? Don't you (expletive)?" he yelled. And he made an obscene gesture with his hand!

That reminded me of the words of our Savior: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed

appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matthew 23:27-28).

Not everyone was angry.

I had a long conversation with a nice chap from England named Alex. He was 18-years old and smoked 3 cigarettes in the time I was chatting with him. He said he considered himself a good person, and that good people should go to heaven. I took him through God's Law to show that he is not good and no one is. He agreed that given the standard of God's Law, he's not good. I asked him if that concerned him, but he said, "No" because he was "a good person." Ugh. Okay, let's try this again. According to God's standards, no one is good. He agreed. He's not good. He agreed. He deserves hell. He agreed. But he's not worried about it because he's a "good person."

The Bible says: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Alex was a perfect example of this blindness. He just could not see the truth. He was blinded. So sad.

Victoria, a gentle woman from Oregon, was sharing the gospel with a young man named Scott at the park. She was going through the Commandments with him, and she asked him "Have you ever stolen anything?" He took his hat off and hung his head in shame. He said, "I stole this hat this morning."

She talked with him for a while about God's standards, and it humbled him. He said he couldn't understand how God could love him, since he was so bad.

Finally, she said, “I’m hungry. Are you hungry? Let’s get some lunch” and she bough him lunch. He said he was not used to people being nice to him like this.

He had just experienced a taste of unconditional love, and God used that to change him.

After spilling his guts about all the awful things he had done, including running away form home, stealing, doing drugs, etc., he said he wanted to talk to his mom. So Victoria gave him her cell phone and he called his mom. The boy and his mom cried for a long time. Scott kept saying “I’m so sorry Mom, I’m so sorry mom.”

Finally the Mom talked with Victoria and thanked her so much. She said she didn’t even know if her son was alive, and she was praying that her son would run into a Christian who would share the gospel with him. How amazing is that?

This is one of the reasons we do evangelism - because the world needs it!

So Victoria told this story on Friday night and me and the rest of the room were in tears!

Also on Friday night, while we were waiting for our bus, I gave a tract to an older lady who looked to me to be Jewish. She thanked me for the tract and told me she was a Jewish Christian. I told her I was too, and we had a lovely conversation. Her name is Lily, and she told me that I really encouraged her. She thanked me for my witness. I praise God for her!



3 handsome guys (especially the one on the left!)





On Saturday we headed into Times Square - the hub of New York City! On the way in, I was open-air preaching on the train, and I was heckled by a Jehovah's Witness. This gentleman (I didn't get his name) told me that I shouldn't tell people about hell because there is no hell (Jehovah's Witnesses deny the existence of hell, despite Jesus teaching it many many times.)

So I showed him my Jehovah's Witness False Prophecy packet and he wouldn't even look at it. I mean, he physically looked away like Superman would look away from Kryptonite.

I know that Jehovah's Witnesses are taught not to look at materials from other religions, but these are photocopies from THEIR literature throughout the years that made some embarrassing false prophecies.

I felt so sorry for this man who wouldn't even look at the pages that showed in black-and-white how his organization has lied to him.

When we got to Times Square, we saw a LOT of people! We handed out lots of tracts, talked to lots of people, and preached in the open-air.



Ray Comfort preaching in Times Square.

A real treat for me was to watch Ray Comfort open-air preach. I've been listening to his sermons for almost 10 years and he's a real hero in the faith to me.



A very sad and strange heckler.



Scotty was giving out money to the crowd when a large black man with strange clothing approached him and began yelling gibberish.

(click on yellow speaker to hear the man)





Drawing a crowd with "a dead guy."

One of the boot campers gathered a crowd with the help of a "dead guy" on the ground. It makes the point – we all die.



Ray begged me for a photo with him.  
Well, okay, maybe I did the asking!





Mark Spence and "the dead guy."





I began to open-air at Times Square, but it was at a time when there weren't a lot of people. So this hip-hop dance group showed up and offered to draw a crowd for us!

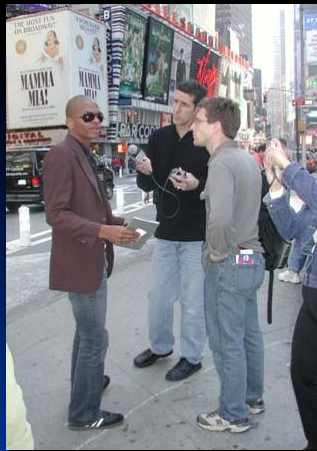


This is funny. Ray was preaching on his milk crate when the Police came and told him he couldn't do that. Ray politely informed the officers that he had a permit to speak in the open air at Times Square. But they told him he couldn't speak on a raised platform. (It was a milk crate!) So this is what Ray did!



Todd Friel of *The Way of the Master Radio Show* got to witness to this guy, The "Naked Cowboy!"





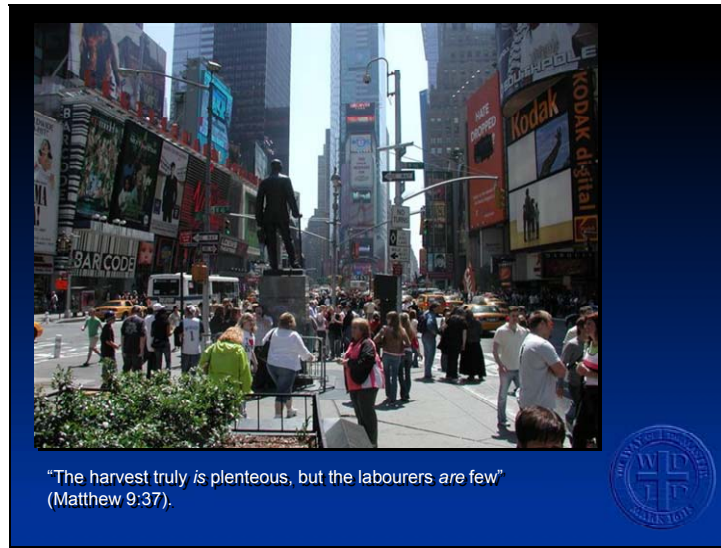
Brian witnesses to a Muslim while Todd Friel records it for *The Way of the Master* Radio Show.





For those of you who supported me financially. Your money didn't just go to airfare and lodging and tracts. I paid \$1 to get my photo taken with the "human robot."





I had a great conversation with a Scientologist named Alysha. Alysha was a very attractive 18-22-year old African American woman. I had recently taught a class on Scientology so I had knowledge of some of their *bizarre* beliefs that they don't tell new initiates. I asked Alysha if she was "Clear," a term meaning one of the primary levels one reaches in Scientology. She said she was not yet "Clear." This means she is pretty new to Scientology and they won't tell her yet about their beliefs about the Intergalactic Ruler Xenu and some of their other strange rituals.

I mentioned to her that they'll keep stuff from her until she rises in levels and she challenged how I knew that. "Had I ever been a Scientologist?" she asked me.

I said, "no," but there is ample corroborated evidence from multiple sources of people who have left Scientology and all told the same information about the doctrines of that church.

Alysha maintained that unless you were there, you couldn't know.

So I asked her if Sadaam Hussain had killed anyone. She said that he had. I said, "Were you there? How do you know he did that?"

She said, "Everyone knows that!"

"Ah," I said, "So you don't have to be there to know."

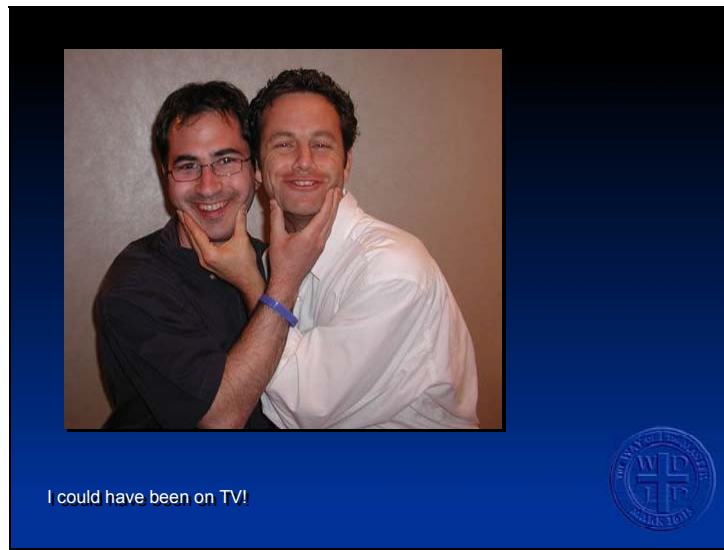
I asked her to remember our conversation, so one day, when she finally reaches "Clear" and then proceeds to "Operating Thetan 1" and "Operating Thetan 2" and higher to "Operating Thetan 3" and they finally tell her about Xenu, that she'll remember that I warned her and that she should flee Scientology. I just hope it doesn't ruin her emotionally, financially, and most of all spiritually before she reaches that level.

On a good note about Scientology, someone on my team prayed with a Scientologist to receive Christ as his savior! So I praise God for that!!!

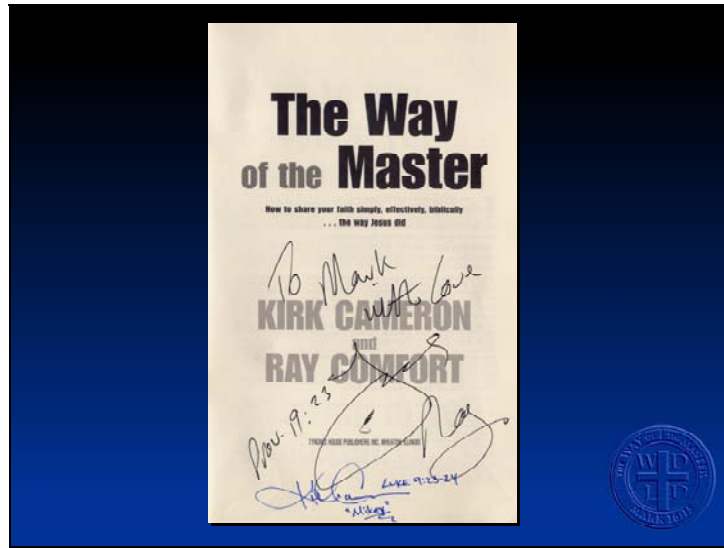


Finally, when the day was over, we took the train into New Jersey to attend a fund-raising dinner for the “Way of the Master” radio show. What a night!

First of all, I ended up starting a conversation with a well-dressed gentleman named Harold and his lovely wife. It turns out that Harold is a Jewish Christian, and he thanked me for chatting with him. We got along very well, and exchanged email addresses. I praise God for cool encounters like that!



I got to meet Kirk Cameron at the banquet. That was fun. When I met him, I said, "Hey yo Mikey" in honor of his character "Mike Seaver" from "Growing Pains." I then told him that my wife advised me not to say that, but Ray Comfort advised me to say it. I took Ray's advice over Shelby's. But Kirk thought it was funny, and he autographed one of my books that he co-wrote, and wrote under the autograph "Mikey." Like Ray, Kirk is a real down-to-earth guy who sincerely loves the Lord.



And there it is!



Erneal "E.Z." Zwayne spoke to us.





Todd "freakishly tall" Friel also spoke.





Kirk shared his testimony on how he learned to use the Law in evangelism. Fascinating.

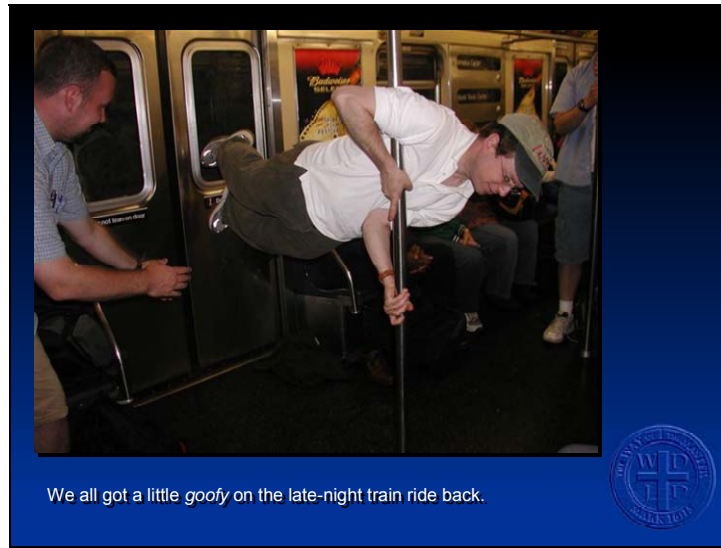






Ray shared his heart on evangelism as well.



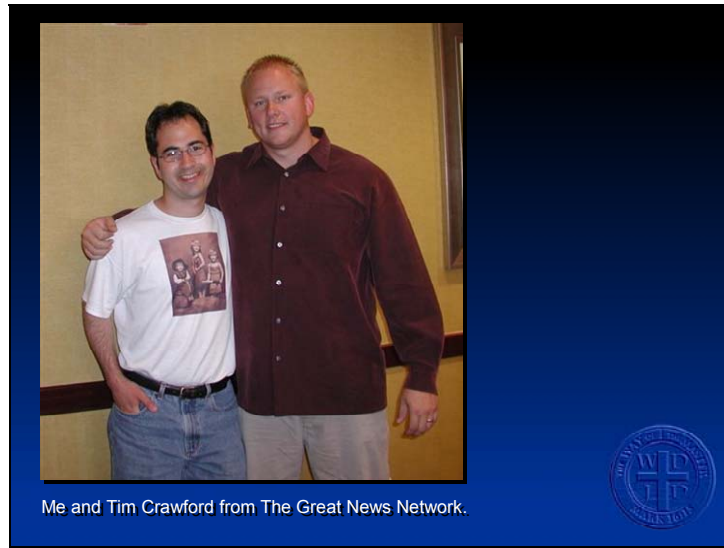


We all got a little *goofy* on the late-night train ride back.

The dinner was over about 11PM, and we still had a 2-hour train/bus ride back to the hotel. But we were all pretty pumped. I walked right by the location of the World Trade Center, and it was sobering. There was a mass grave for over 3,000 people who all went to work that day thinking it would be another day. We never know when our life will be taken from us.

On the train ride back Phyllis had give out some gospel tracts to the people sitting near us. I sat next to a young couple and asked them what they thought. The man was very mind, and said something like, “Oh, I think this is great. I totally understand what you’re doing, but it’s not for us. It’s great for you, but we’re Jewish, so Jesus doesn’t apply to us. You wouldn’t understand.”

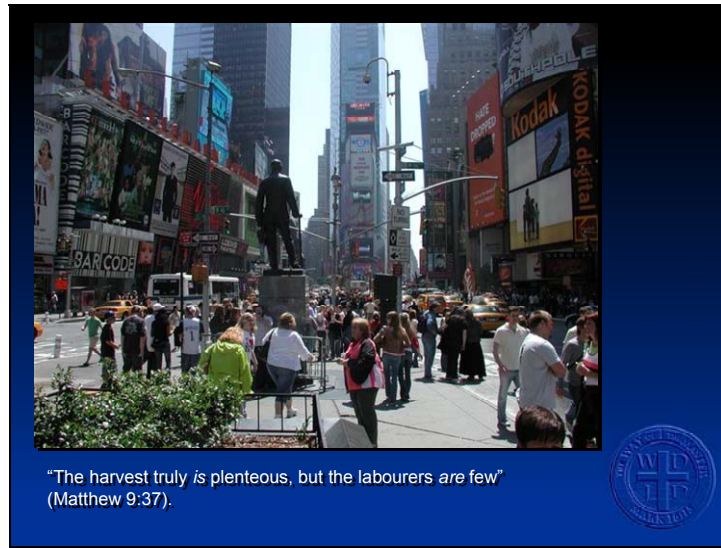
I said, “I understand better than you think I do. You see, I’m Jewish too and I’ve looked into it and concluded that Jesus is definitely the Messiah, and there’s nothing more Jewish than believing in the Jewish Messiah.” Then I gave them each my “A Jew and His God” tract and they said they’d read it.



Sunday morning was emotional because we were all leaving one another. God had done so many miracles through us all and bonded us all together as a team.

We had a prayer and worship time, and then the leaders said something nice about each of the members of the team. And we each got “graduation certificates.”

After lots of hugs and prayers, I was off to the airport and back to New Hampshire, a bit different than when I left.



In NYC God renewed my passion for helping those who are so desperately lost. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11).

On the way back, I gave both pilots, both stewardesses, and every passenger on the plane a 1 million dollar bill that has a gospel message on the back. The stewardesses loved them! It's an easy way to share the gospel, and I give all the glory to God.

After getting up and open-airing on a NYC subway, handing out a tract doesn't seem so intimidating anymore!

Also, a few words about racial differences. It became evident to me after about a day that Blacks and Hispanics were overwhelmingly more likely to take a tract from me than Caucasians. I asked some others who have more experience with this, and they agreed with my observation. The Blacks and Hispanics were much more likely to take a tract, and also much more likely to smile and say "Thank you."

I'm not going to analyze that - just wanted to record the observation for what it is worth.

Oh, and a word about Gospel Tracts. I never used to like them or believe in their effectiveness. But I was really wrong about that. They are very effective because they are a seed that God may choose to water and take root.

I praise God that I was able to personally hand out easily over 1,000 gospel tracts!

Darrel said something one of the nights. He said, "You can count the number of seeds in an apple, but you can't count the number of apples in a seed."

And isn't that so true about open-air preaching and handing out tracts and doing 1-on-1 evangelism? You don't know what God will do if He decides to have one of those seeds take root and produce fruit immeasurable!

And anyone can do this! Satan wants us to think that only the super-spiritual can do this, but that's a lie!

Timid people like Rhonda did it, and a 12-year old did it, and I did it and you can do it. Paul said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (1 Corinthians 2:3).

People think "Oh he or she has the gift of evangelism but I don't. He's outgoing, but I'm shy." That's a lie. I'm outgoing, but I get shy when it comes to evangelism. It's hard for everyone. Ray Comfort told me that he still gets scared every time he witnesses, and this is a guy who has been doing it every day for almost 30 years!

We're all scared. But our compassion must swallow our fears.

Also, every single thing we do we learned. Nobody learned to walk intuitively. You practiced. You fell. You tried again. It's the same with evangelism. We must go out of our way to deliberately train ourselves how to share the gospel, and we must practice. It doesn't come intuitively – nothing does. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

That begins next week with the "Basic Training Course."

To give you an idea, here's what I've been doing lately:

When I'm at the deli or the checkout or at a restaurant, I ask the person if they wouldn't mind helping my wife and I settle an argument. She thinks our kids look like her and I think they look like me. Then I show this photo:



Then I say, aren't they good looking?

Then I might follow it up with:

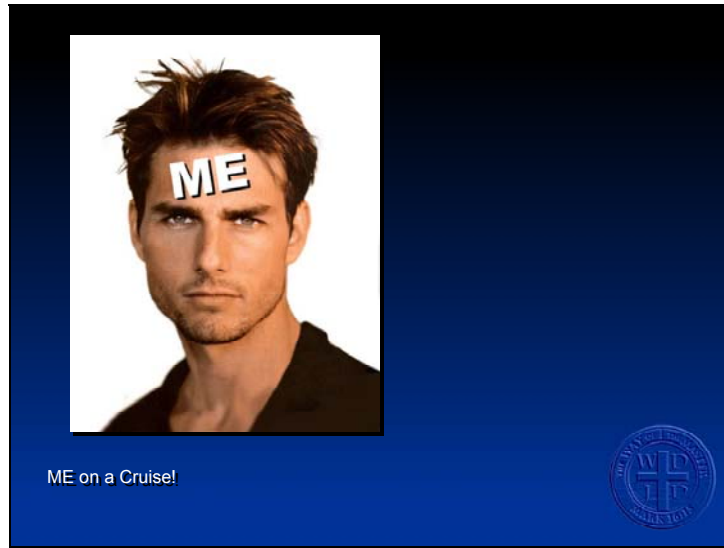


If people ask me how I did this, I tell them, it really hurt. I had a headache for weeks!

Then I might follow it up by asking them if they want to see a picture of me on a cruise.

I show them:





Me on a Cruise.

Then I say, Want to see my Pride and Joy?



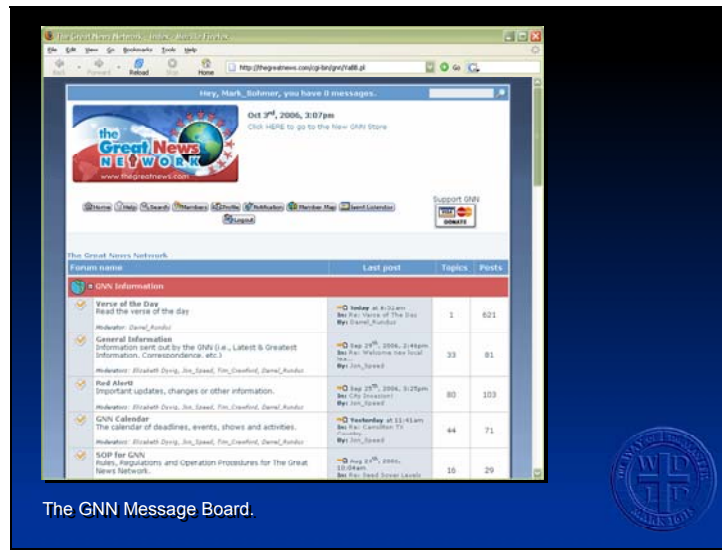
Or maybe I'll give hem a Million Dollar Bill and say "You're doing a great job. Thanks a million."

Both of these have the gospel message on the back.

I tell them they can keep it and there's an Important message on the back. They usually say, "Really? I can keep it? Thanks!"

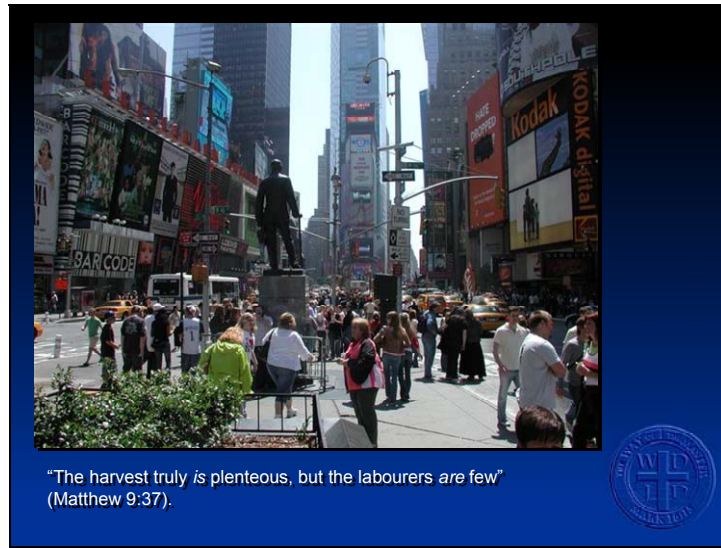
You can do this! We can all do this. This is the point of our existence. Paul said "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:10).



Do I recommend boot camp to Christians? You betcha! Go check out [www.thegreatnews.com](http://www.thegreatnews.com) and sign on up!

When you do, you have access to their message board where you can ask evangelism questions and find encouragement and ideas.



At one point I was chatting with Donna, a woman on my team. I said that I was disappointed that I hadn't lead anyone to Christ. She told me I was wrong. She said I had lead EVERYBODY I had talked to to Christ, from the hecklers to the contrite. Perhaps I wasn't the one who said a prayer with them, but I lead them to Christ. It's up to God to do the work of putting the truth into someone's heart. All we do is tell the message faithfully. I was so encouraged by that simple truth!

My mom asked me how people reacted to our evangelism. The answer is that different people reacted differently.

Some were encouraged.

Some were angry!

Some cried when they heard the 10 Commandments and realized they had broken them.

Some Christians realized they should be doing what we were doing.

Some scoffed.

Some received salvation through Christ!

Everybody heard the gospel.

There was an expression we used at boot camp. As Christians, we don't want to receive glory, so instead of saying "thank you" we'd say "I thank God for you." And you know, that expression sums up so well the emotions I went through at boot camp. I thank God for Ray, and Kirk, and Darrel, and Tim, and my team, and the other boot campers, and my wife, and my church, for all contributing to this amazing week. I thank God that I could be changed and be used to change others.

At the banquet, EZ with Living Waters made a good point. In the world, it is an insult to be "used" by someone. You say with disgust, "that person used me." But as Christians, there is no greater honor than to be used by our Lord Jesus Christ. What a privilege to be a Christian. God bless you and I thank God for you.

See you next week!