

## FUNDAMENTAL FAITH FACTORS

### Keeping your FAITH ministry active and thriving

Thousands of churches across America have begun to implement the FAITH Sunday School Evangelism Strategy. Universally they are testifying that FAITH is making positive a difference in their ministry. Lifeway Church Resources wants to insure that that trend continues and grows. Even while all churches are reporting success with FAITH, some may not be achieving the results which are possible through FAITH. There are 3 major factors that will make a fundamental difference in the productivity of this strategy. One of the accounts attributed to the late Vince Lombardi is that at the beginning of each football season he led a gathering of all the members of the Green Bay Packers. As seasoned veterans and first year rookies listened, the coach began his session by saying “gentleman, this is a football.” In other words, there is no way that we can win unless we stick to the fundamentals of the game. That is the essence of what is presented here. These are the fundamentals without which FAITH cannot be implemented.

### **THE PASTOR’S LEADERSHIP ROLE**

No one can lead the church in the FAITH strategy as the pastor can. His role can be as extensive as his schedule permits, but there are certain irreducible minimums of that role.

- Teach Basic FAITH each semester. This positions the pastor as the key leader of evangelism in the church, as it should be. It also brings into direct relationship the pastor and everyone who learns FAITH in the church.
- Lead a FAITH team every semester. There is no greater benefit or example than the pastor pouring his heart and life into 4 others every year on a mentoring basis.

### **THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONNECTION**

Remember that FAITH is a strategy that functions through the Sunday School. FAITH is also a process. Your church may not yet have equipped enough leaders to have a FAITH team in each unit of Sunday School, but stick with the process. Here are some dos and don’ts.

- Do remember that FAITH IS Sunday School.
- Do be consistent in bringing new units on line in FAITH by equipping leaders to create teams in all units in your church.
- Do be alert to creating new SS units to promote growth and enhance new believer follow up and assimilation.
- Do insure that all FAITH teams are active members of the same Sunday School class when you have a leader ready for the class.
- Do be patient as you develop leaders for FAITH teams for all the classes.
- Don’t allow FAITH to become simply a substitute for weekly visitation. If this happens FAITH will simply become another program like so many others that will have a limited life span.
- Don’t neglect the weekly leadership meeting as a key part of identifying and assigning visitation needs.

### **THERE ARE NO SHORT CUTS TO EXCELLENCE AND SUCCESS**

FAITH has been working since 1985 exactly as you have been trained to do it by LifeWay in a clinic. You are not in a “pilot” project. Please remember also that FAITH did not materialize overnight at First Baptist Daytona Beach. In addition to functioning as taught for almost 15 years, FAITH took over 10 years in the development process. In other words, for 10 years all the ways NOT to do FAITH were discovered. Edison said that an important factor in inventing the light bulb was finding 1000 ways not to do it. LifeWay wants you to avoid the ways that will not work. Below are a few examples that have come to light in this

first year. If you have tried or are considering these or others, avoid short cuts. They will not produce.

- Split training. Do not separate FAITH teaching and visitation. This causes your people to do FAITH in 2 events weekly rather than one. It also divides the cognitive from the practical and some will only attend the part with which they are most comfortable. On the job training builds Great Commission Christians.
- Appointment visitation. Unless a specific prospect requests this, resist any tendency to appointment visitation. The rewards of open visitation are great. The negatives of appointments are burdensome.
- Short training semesters. Sixteen (16) weeks of teaching and OJT together is the only adequate method discovered over years of trial to build up your people. Time is required to insure that each team has opportunity to fully use and develop FAITH skills necessary to do ministry and grow leaders.
- Failure to use the FAITH Opinion Poll. The opinion poll offers one of the best ways to cover your “Jerusalem.” It should be used ministry wide on multiple times throughout the semester. Each FAITH team should have a geographical assignment in their packet for the semester. The opinion poll assures that each team will have opportunity to present the gospel. More professions of faith result from full use of the opinion poll. The opinion poll allows you to get out into the “pagan pool” so that you are not only fishing in the “fish bowl.”
- **REMEMBER THIS ABOUT SHORTCUTS.** They have been tried before and found unproductive in development and longevity. They represent ways NOT to do FAITH. When you indulge in them you may be doing something, but you are not doing FAITH. Bobby Welch, the originating pastor of FAITH, urges “do FAITH the way we teach in the clinic for 18 months, and you won’t want to do it any other way.” Short cuts are saying no for your people. We are finding that overwhelmingly lay persons are saying “let’s do it right.” **YOU HAVE COVENANTED “TO MODEL the FAITH Sunday School Evangelism Strategy at my church as it was modeled at the FAITH Training Clinic.”**

We are laborers together in a great kingdom venture as we enter the new century. Let’s capture a continent and win a world as we go house to house, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, and FAITH TO FAITH.

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