

An Evangelism-Discipleship Model



Matt Violassi

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
[1] baptizing them . . . [2] teaching them to obey all I commanded you."

- Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 28:19-20)

Here is a model that seems to have worked well for me in the marketplace . . .

1. Using the route of non-threatening, minimally confrontive "Friendship Evangelism."

First I get in touch with truly loving a person and caring about them and their world. I try to get to know them. I start asking them questions about their job and family and interests. Do they like their job? Why? Why not? Are they married/single? Where do they live? Where did they grow up? . . . etc.

We all have a need to be known. *It is love* to really find out about people, what they are all about, and what they are going-through. Most people really like and appreciate when someone really cares about them and their world - and asks them about it.

It is then usually easy to then be able to bring "God" up into the conversation and finally ask, "**Do you believe in God?**" Many times this will be a logical next question when someone is talking about themselves.

On some occasions, when I particularly feel the person I am interacting with is a Divine Appointment, and perhaps the time-window available to talk with them is small and limited, I will jump right in and usually ask them, "**Do you believe in God?**" Many times this is not *that* threatening of a question. If it truly Divine Appointment, they are usually not too shocked or offended by the question (because *it is* a big, deep, personal question!).

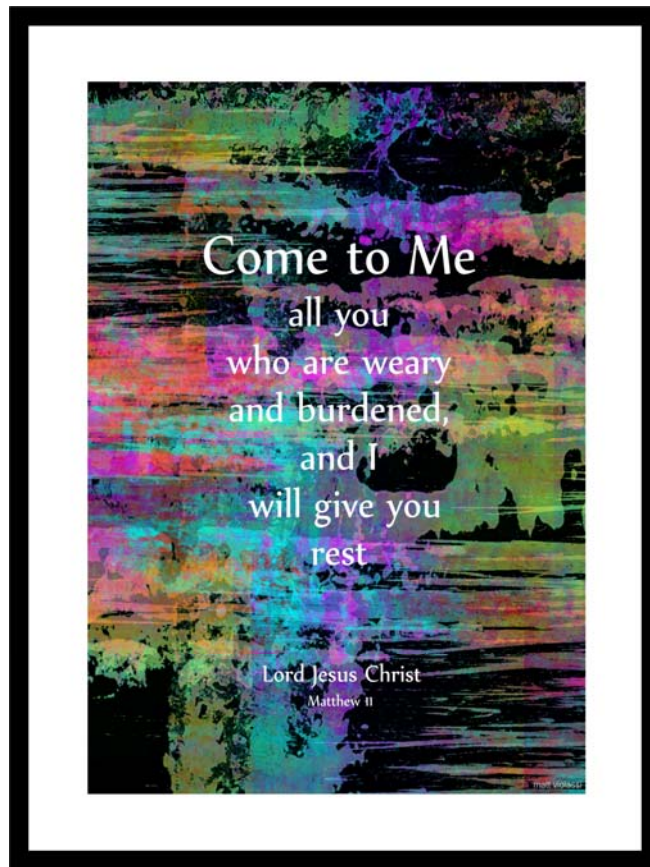
2. Do you believe in God? Yes/No

If they answer "No" - I will then ask them if they have ever heard of Jesus Christ, and then try to share the gospel with them (including not only that God loves them and has a plan for their life, but that they need to repent from all their sins, and live a life of loving and serving God - believing in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord).

I believe that people grow in faith and belief in God through answered prayer. Many people that have heard the gospel begin or continue to ask God for help in life's many trials. He helps. After so much help beyond statistical coincidence, people start trusting this person, God, more and more.

I try to give out this verse/card/or book to help keep reminding them/us - to continually "Come to Him."

This verse is about coming **to a Person** - who promises to give them help. *This is important.* It is NOT about trying to get them to come to my church - it is about getting them people to keep coming **TO A PERSON**. If they - and we - keep coming to this person Jesus Christ. . . and He keeps helping us . . . we will eventually keep growing *in trust and love* for this person Jesus Christ. He keeps proving what a wonderful friend and wonderful person He is . . .



If a person answers "Yes" to the question (do they believe in God), I will do more spiritual assessment . . .

We might be needing to ask which God they believe in! Perhaps we then can present the case of why Christianity is the best religion - the only religion where through the power of the Holy Spirit who now comes to live inside of us - do we have power to resist all sin in our lives! This is Good News! I have asked many people whether or not their religion has given them victory over a bad habit or sin they want to be free from. Asking the Holy Spirit of God to come and live inside of us now gives us this power.

3. Are you Saved / Born Again? Yes/No

Sometimes we then have to educate people on committing their complete life to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Repenting and committing to do the Greatest Commandment - "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.")

A lot of church-going, nominal Christians, who say they believe in God - have never committed or consecrated their lives to God. . . They cannot confess they are "Born Again" . . . or confess they are "Saved" and that *they know* they are going to heaven. They need to be Saved and Born Again.

You must be born again to enter the kingdom of heaven - Jesus Christ (John 3:5)

4. Are you Serving Him? Yes/No/Maybe

This is a loaded question because many people have different ideas of what serving God is. Many people equate serving God with going to church 2-3-4 times a week. Many who have had bad experiences with going to church reply, "I don't go to church and/or go to church as much as I should, **but I believe in God.**" Then I try to find-out why the breakdown. Some just quit going to dead church services - they couldn't take it any more. Others were wounded by one of the many types of legitimate bad church relationship experiences we have all had or heard about. I then try to convince them that more important than going to church is us living and guarding our own personal daily relationship with God. This is cultivated by, and grown primarily through regularly scheduled private times to seek God, pray to God, talk to God - and continuing to find, learn, and obey His revealed commandments to us.

I ask them if they own a red-letter Bible. I will give them one if they desire. I then try to instruct them how to use it **wisely** by primarily finding, learning, memorizing, and doing God's commands in the Bible, starting with Jesus's commands found in the red-letters of the 4 Gospels. The Christian world typically disciples people by telling them to just "read your Bible." Then, when it seems dry, dead, and boring, they quit reading it. We need to give them continued purposes and initiative for reading the Bible.

Often I find-out a person deep-down loves God and wants to please Him and wants to go to heaven (although they are not attending a church).

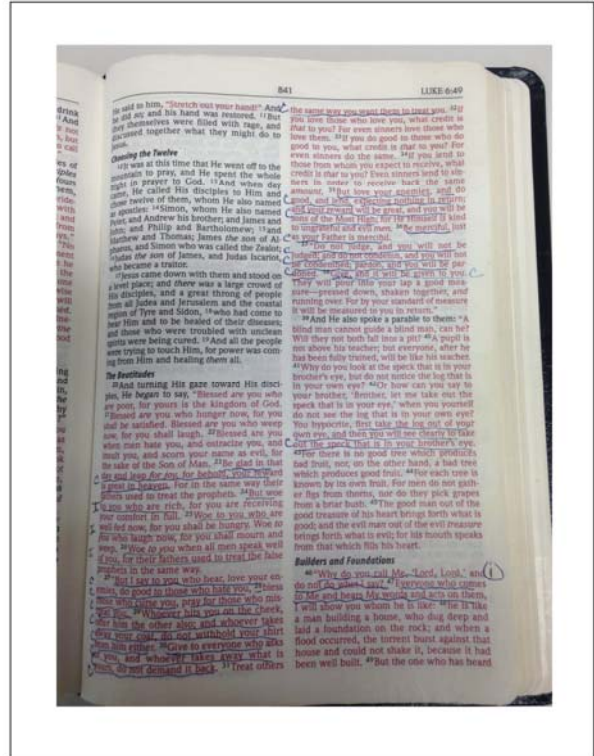
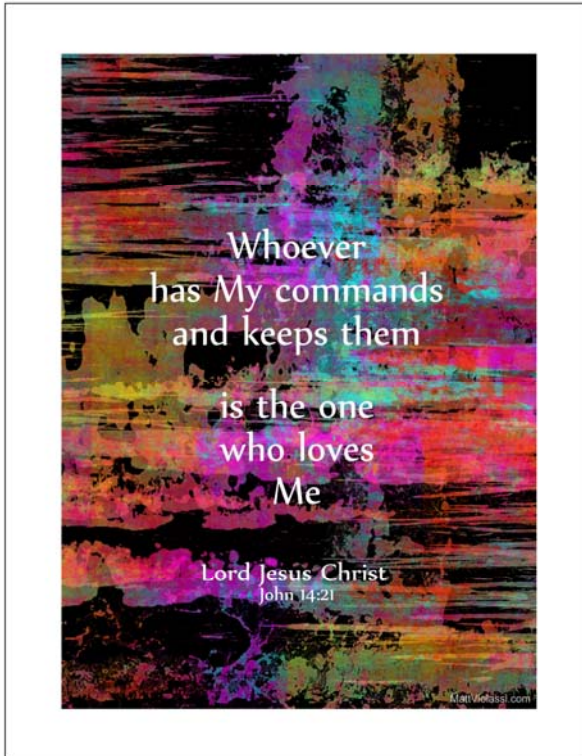
I try to introduce **JESUS'S DEFINITION OF WHO LOVES HIM:**



On judgment day, when He separates the sheep from the goats, Christians want to be in the group of sheep . . . **the group that loved Jesus - by His definition.** So now, the person I am talking with is excited to read the Bible, find & memorize His commands, and do them. Why? Because they want to love Him **by His definition**, and go to heaven. His definition includes nothing about how many times a week we go to church, how much money we give, how much we read the Bible, etc.!

They can love God, serve God, and please God . . . without going to church (at this time)! This is very freeing to people!

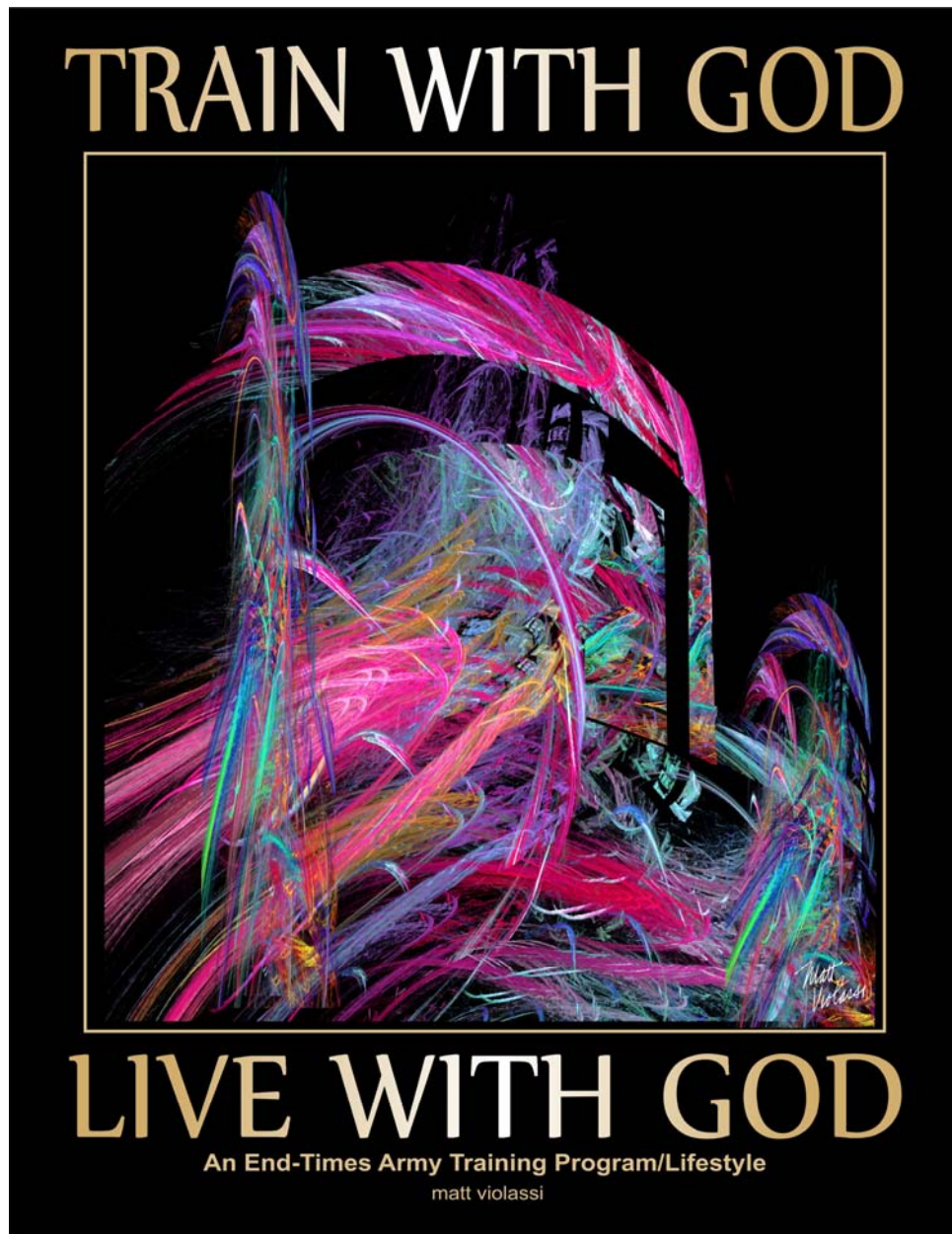
It is obvious that God would rather have 100 Christians who scheduled meaningful personal, private, closed-door times with Him, as top-life priority, and attended church only once a month, **versus**, 100 Christians who went to church all the time but seldom had personal, undistracted, purposed times to seek Him and interact with Him and His Word.



Pictured is front and back of a large book-marker I commonly get printed and stick in a Bible to hand out, so people are reminded **why** they are reading the Bible. I show them how to underline a command and mark a capital "C" next to it for easy review and memorization. This is fulfilling the Great Commission - "teaching them to obey all I commanded you." This makes prayerfully reading the bible more exciting. We are doing it to please God. It is an act of love to God. He likes it and appreciates it.

5. Train For God / Train With God? **Yes/No/Maybe**

If a person is saved/born-again and attends church (seems to be an active Christian), I try to get them to be the best Christian / Christian worker they can be. I leave them with a copy of "Train With God - Live With God" or an earlier or later version. I believe this book can greatly help us "be all we can be" for God, and greatly help keep us from needless personal damage and destruction and pain.



Summary

The biggest thing we can ever do for a person (act of love) is to help them get to heaven. The second biggest thing we can ever do for a person is to help them get to heaven *well*. (A person could be a Christian, but is trashing their life and bringing upon themselves and others needless personal damage and destruction.)

This is why we evangelize. If we truly love people, we are going to try help get them get their ticket to heaven, and then try to help them have a victorious Christian life.

Friendship Evangelism is a relatively easy and non-threatening way to bring people in relationship with God or help bring them further in their relationship with God. First we love and care about a person and begin to ask them questions about their life and about their world. We care about who they are, where they come from, how they live, what they are going through, etc. Through the course of getting to know them in a simple conversation, it is then easy to slip in the question of whether they "believe in God" or not.

Then we can ask other questions to try to assess where they are spiritually in their relationship with God.

If they are a non-Christian / non-believer, we can share with them the Good News. Through believing in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, a person not only procures eternal life in heaven, but the God of the Universe comes to live inside of them! Nothing is impossible through God, now! We now have the power, through God in us, over all sin and bondages! This is Good News! This beats any other religion or self-help program!

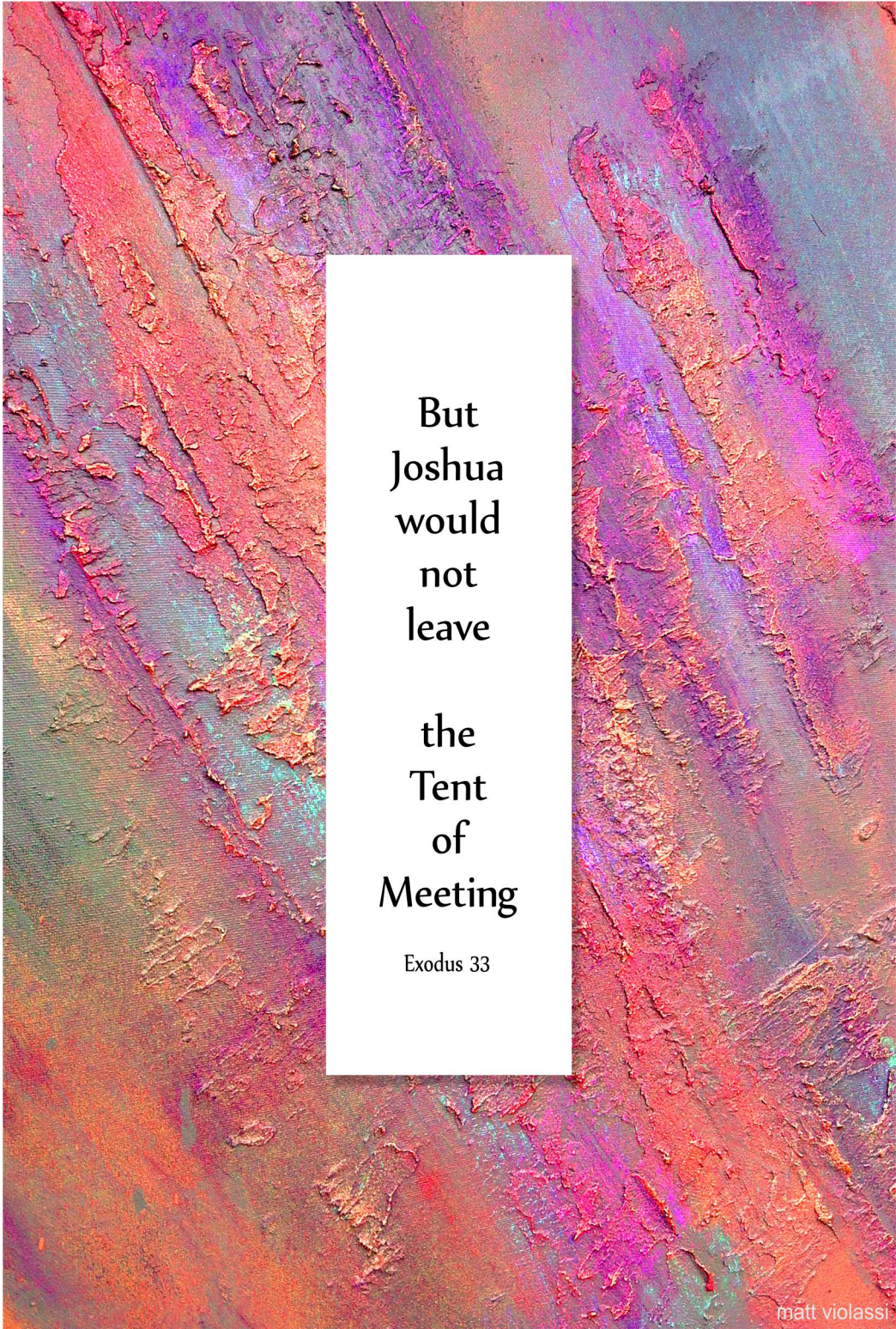
Even if a person is not ready for a salvation commitment, we can encourage them to keep "Coming to Him." We can encourage them to call to God/Jesus for help when they get into life's inevitable hard circumstances and "jams." This is one way He proves He is real . . . how He is trustworthy. . . He will help us when we aren't even loving or serving Him. **"Whoever asks receives."** - Jesus (Matt 7:8)

If a person already believes in Jesus, we then try to keep them connected to Him daily, by admonishing them actively cultivating their personal relationship with God by frequently "Coming to Him" and by scheduling personal private closed-door times to talk to Him and start learning and doing His commands. We try to get them using a red-letter Bible and learning Jesus's commands as top-priority.

If a person already has personal private God-times, we try to have individuals make these God - times more effective and **robust** through the use of different reminder and reference tools provided in "Train with God - Live with God."

Just a model.

matt violassi



But
Joshua
would
not
leave

the
Tent
of
Meeting

Exodus 33

matt violassi