

Mission Moments – September 21, 2007
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Handling “Door Knockers” in a Christian Manner
by Rev. Marty Brauer

How safe are you in your community? According to the crime statistics, the community in which I lived for over ten years was considered to be one of the safest communities in the nation. And it is--from one perspective. From the perspective of spiritual safety, though, it is a very dangerous place to live.

According to statistics provided by the community, over 60% of the people who claim to be Christians belong to a group we would not consider Christian. They attend a “church,” stake or temple where they are mentored, trained, equipped and motivated to sell you on their beliefs, to earn your trust, and to win you over to their side by knocking on your door and convincing you that they’re right and you’re wrong about who God is. Here’s the danger: they’re really, really good at it.

I know this all too well. A number of years ago a member of my flock was taken—stolen—right out from under my care. I can’t help but take it personally. I know God does. I promised God then that I would forever use the resources He gives to equip, strengthen, and arm the people of my flock to defend themselves against these kinds of spiritual attacks. I hope that what I offer in this article will help arm you, and help you arm your flock, as well.

Before engaging in conversation with a “door-knocker” about the one true God, you first have to know something about what they believe. I recommend the “*How To Respond . . .*” series from Concordia Publishing House. These small booklets are excellent resources for becoming more familiar with the faith you’re up against and learning how to handle questions about the differences between your Christian faith and theirs.

Here are some additional practical helps:

1. Don’t invite them in!

While hiding or arguing or pretending not to speak English are all practical avoidance tactics when someone comes knocking at your door, be assured it is okay not to be so nice and welcoming to everyone who comes knocking on your door. “*If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him*” (2 John 10).

The danger in inviting a door-knocker into your home is that many of these door-to-door “missionaries” are masters at using Christian terms and making you feel like you’re really all on the same page. You’re not! They don’t mean “grace,” “salvation,” “heaven,” and

“god” the way you do. That’s where you get trapped! In the midst of all the double-talk, it’s easy to fall prey to a missionary teaching plan that does not come from the hearts of the young people there at your door, now in your home, but created by some of the cleverest sales psychologists in the world.

2. Don’t try to win an argument! Try instead to win a soul!

“Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments . . . Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.” (2 Timothy 2:23-26)

My heart goes out to these who are deceived. They don’t know Jesus like we do. They don’t know His love and forgiveness. They don’t have assurance of salvation. Maybe your heart goes out to them too. But don’t try to argue them into believing what you believe. Instead, simply be prepared to speak what you know about God to be true. The best offense is a great defense!

3. Prepare your defense!

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” (1 Peter 3:15 – NIV)

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” (1 Peter 3:15 - NKJV)

4. Know what God says about himself!

Have the Scripture ready to back you up, especially that which supports the Holy Trinity and the grace of Jesus Christ. Ask your pastor for help with this.

5. Know key objections regarding the Trinity!
For example: “The name ‘Trinity’ isn’t in the Bible.”
Response: “But the teaching of the Trinity is!”

6. Pray!

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions...Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel” (Eph. 6:18-19).

We can’t stand before these trained door-knockers in our power alone. Their teachings are very tempting. Who doesn’t want to be a god; have your own planet on that side of eternity

and on this side, have a secret; have all the answers and be able to “reason” anything in Scripture?

Those who attempt to sway you from your Christian faith are often-times highly skilled at doing so. The next time someone knocks on your door, don't worry about winning an argument or even being articulate. Simply stand on the truths you know about God, see that person through the loving eyes of Jesus Christ and be open to God using you.

Rev. Brauer recently accepted a call to Good Shepherd Lutheran in Cedar Park, Texas. He previously served Bethlehem Lutheran in Santa Clarita, California, for ten years.

Moment Extras

Links

What about ... Jehovah's Witnesses (PDF)

http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/wa_jehovahswitnesses.pdf

Why people convert to Mormonism in the first place (The "Hook" of Mormonism)

<http://www.bible.ca/mor-convert-mormons.htm>

Mormonism Research Ministry

<http://www.mrm.org/>

The Importance of Definitions in Dealing with Mormons

<http://www.baptistpillar.com/bd0135.htm>

Five Don'ts for Dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses by Joel S. Peters

<http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/2002/0211fea6.asp>

What do Jehovah's Witnesses Believe? (A Biblical/Factual Response)

<http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/jwbeliefs.htm>

Resources from Concordia Publishing House

Go to cph.org and put “how to respond” in the search box.

How to Respond - The Latter-day Saints

How to Respond - Jehovah's Witnesses

News From the Center

For info on all seminars, see www.centerforusmissions.org.

Daughter Church Planting Seminar – Last chance to register!

October 5-6, 2007, Fond du Lac, WI. .

Church Planters Assessment Center scheduled for later this month has been rescheduled to January 18-21, 2008.

Conference on Revitalization Consultant Training, October 24-28, 2007, Milwaukee, WI. Registration closes Sept. 28th! This conference prepares participants for national certification as consultants in the Transforming Congregations Network (TCN). The conference will include major input from Paul Borden, author of *Hit the Bullseye*, and hands-on experience with actual consultations in Milwaukee area LCMS congregations.

Basic and Advanced Mission Planters Training, February 4-8, 2008, in New Braunfels, Texas. It's not too early to register!

Basic Mission Planters Training - [More info](#) - [Register](#) - [Pay](#)

Advanced Mission Planters Training - [More info](#) - [Register](#) - [Pay](#)

Also in New Braunfels the same week:

Mission Coach Certification Training, Feb. 6-7 - [More info & registration](#) - [Pay](#)

Developing Coaching Excellence, Feb. 4-5 - [More info & registration](#) - [Pay](#)

A personal word from the editor: With this issue, I take leave of the position of editor of *Mission Moments*. It has been a privilege to interact with the many skilled people who have written for this publication since its inception in January 2004. I am excited that God has called me to be Director of Volunteer Equipping at my home congregation, St. Peter Lutheran, Arlington Heights, Illinois, and I will continue my own volunteerism ministry for the church-at-large, but I will miss being part of the Center's team. I couldn't have worked with a better group of people. Always and forever, though, we remain . . .

Together in His service,

Karen Kogler, editor

Mission Moments, a biweekly electronic newsletter from the Center for U.S. Missions, brings information and encouragement to all who desire to share the God's great love in Jesus Christ with others. The Center for U.S. Missions provides research and training for mission work among unevangelized people in the United States. A partnership of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod World Missions, Concordia University in Irvine, California, and the North America Mission Executives of the LCMS, the Center serves all Christian denominations.

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