

Davis: Open a new window to evangelize_111703

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LUBBOCK—Have a life worth viewing, and then open a window to it.

That is the recipe for lifestyle evangelism in the 21st century, reported Rick Davis, who was quoting postmodern Christian strategist Andrew Jones.

Davis, director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Center for Strategic Evangelism, led a breakout session on evangelization during the BGCT annual session in Lubbock Nov. 10.

Evangelization is a two-fold process involving missions and evangelism, Davis said. By living out the love of Christ through missions, believers earn the right to declare the message of Christ, he added.

In an increasingly secular and biblically illiterate culture, “the demonstration of the gospel will be more necessary than ever,” Davis said.

He encouraged churches and believers to “plan to show and tell, not just tell. “An evangelism strategy that has only declaration is destined for problems,” he advised.

One of the emerging areas of evangelization in Texas will be through “advocacy evangelism,” Davis predicted. This will involve becoming advocates for millions of immigrants who need help adjusting to life in America and may also need to hear the Christian gospel.

Other unique areas churches ought to consider in developing evangelization strategies, Davis said, include reaching out to non-traditional families and connecting with 11-, 12- and 13-year-olds.

He cited research that early teens identify more closely with grandparents than with parents, siblings or peers.

That's a built-in opportunity for any Baptist church with a large number of senior adults to create a surrogate grandparent program, he said. “If you're in a church that's heavy with senior adults, you ought to be cruising the local junior high.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.