

Urged to become e-churches focused on evangelism

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WACO—Every church should become an “e-church,” Bryant Lee, pastor of Higher Expectations Church in Humble, told Texas Baptists at a workshop on effective evangelism strategies.

An e-church is one that is wholly committed to evangelism, Lee explained to the session, held in conjunction with Texas Baptists’ annual meeting in Waco.

“Evangelism must be the primary focus of the local church,” Lee said. “We do a lot of things as the church, but evangelism must be our main focus.”

A life radically transformed

Lee opened the session by telling about how he came to faith in Christ. Growing up in St. Louis, he was introduced to Black nationalism and radical Islam at a young age.

One Sunday, Lee recalled, he made plans to attend a local Pentecostal church. With a knife hidden in his boot, he intended to approach the pastor at the end of the worship service and cut his throat as an act of terrorism.

Lee’s plans became radically altered when he found himself captivated by the pastor’s simple gospel message from John 3:16-17.

“For some reason, unexplainable to me, in a room about this size, I got up and walked down those aisles with tears in my eyes,” he said. “I was just thinking, ‘I’ve got to figure out who this Jesus is.’”

His life changed in a second, he explained, and he never looked back. His personal experience makes Lee passionate to see every Texas Baptist church utterly committed to evangelism.

“There is no such thing as an unreachable person. Everyone is reachable with the gospel,” he said.

Becoming an e-church

A church’s transformation into an e-church begins with leaders and members alike who are compelled to reach men and women for Christ.

Being compelled means Christians are deeply motivated by the gospel to reach others for God’s kingdom, Lee explained. They can see and explain how the gospel has affected their own lives, and they want spiritually lost people to partake in that blessing, too.

“We often get together inside our nice, air-conditioned buildings, and if we’re not careful, this cool air will completely smother the fires in our hearts,” said Lee, reminding attendees that sharing the gospel does not often happen inside the church building. Rather, the church must be compelled to go out to lost people with the good news of Christ.

The second step in becoming an e-church, Lee explained, is for church leaders to lead by example.

“Pastors, elders, deacons and the like, if you are not leading the charge for evangelism, your church won’t be an e-church. Never ask people to do something you are unwilling to do,” Lee preached.

Finally, to be an e-church, leaders must empower church members to be evangelists along with them.

“Every person is an evangelist. Don’t let people say, ‘I don’t have the gift.’

That's foolishness," he asserted. "Jesus says we've all been called to tell others about him. We all have the gift. We can all share our testimony."

Practical applications

Lee suggested practical ways to become e-churches, including providing members with tangible resources for engaging with the community, such as prayer cards, door hangers and invitation cards.

"These are all inexpensive, effective ways to empower church members to communicate about your church," said Lee.

He also strongly encouraged churches to have websites that are easy to navigate, welcoming and engaging.

"I like to call this your Internet real-estate. Ninety percent of people will go to your website before they enter your doors, so make sure it looks good," Lee said. "If you don't have a contact link in the top corner, then you're doing your community a disservice."

Lee also described educational materials churches can use to train both leaders and members for evangelism. First, he explained the 4×4 Challenge, a model that teaches believers to identify, intercede, invite and invest in four people they know.

He also talked about the 3 Circles: Life Conversation Guide, which provides a variety of resources to teach believers how to share their faith quickly and clearly. He strongly suggested that churches use the free 3 Circles app to train members.

Other practical applications of evangelism in the community include water bottle outreach programs, block parties, school adoptions, Celebrate Recovery groups and Higher Expectations Church's own Pray/Care/Share model.

Lee reminded workshop attendees that evangelism starts with one person.

“Who is your one? Right now, this is not rhetorical. I’m looking you in the eye and asking,” Lee said. “This person has to be in the places that you live, work, play and stay. Someone you can sit eye-to-eye with and share the gospel. Can you name this person? Just one.”

To see Lee’s full presentation on e-churches and begin reaching people for the gospel one person at a time, click [here](#).

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