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This week at First Central:

This week as we continue our series in the book of John, Pastor Mark's message is "The Exalted Order of the Towel" from John 13:1-17. Did you know you can see a video preview of each Sunday's message on Pastor Mark's blog? [Click here](#) to sign up.

There are three ways to watch the service if you are unable to attend in person.

- You can watch the services live on Facebook [here](#).
- You can view the service (after the fact) on Pastor Mark's [blog](#).
- You can also view the service (again, after the fact) on the church website, www.firstcentral.church.



"Outside the Walls" Ministry

Have you ever felt led to share the Gospel?
Have you ever wished there was a group of people who felt the same way as you?

We're looking for YOU!

We are starting a simple outreach to the people "outside the walls" of our church and *we want you to join us!* We are meeting in the lower fellowship hall on Tuesday, March 7th at 7 PM to discuss our first event.

Come with what the Holy Spirit has put on your heart!

Contact: Dave Piela at 413-734-6779

You can also pick up an informational flyer from the foyer or second floor hallway table.

Spain 2023 ministry trip

We begin our training this Sunday, 2/19. Our training will include Scripture memory, reading John Piper's book *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*, cross-cultural learning experiences, and preparing for what we will be doing in Spain. Please pray for good health, focus, a servant's heart, and for God's provision of the finances.



to Peg Martin. Her birthday is tomorrow, February 18.

(Our apologies for not getting this into the newsletter last week.) Your (belated) birthday greetings would still be appreciated.

16 Watson St. Chicopee MA 01020



Giving back to God:

DATE	BUDGET	GIVING
February 12	\$9,519	\$8,962
Year-to-date:	\$66,633	\$63,852

Thank you for your faithful giving.

"Sharing your faith" should not be a system of arguments to convince people to join you. Instead one should live a genuine Christian life, and with real love, hope, and authenticity that draws people.

Below are some tips to help you change your thinking. These are derived from Pastor-Dr. Timothy Keller, who writes that if 20% of Christians did this, we would see a steady growth in Christianity.

1. Let people around you know you are a Christian (in a natural, unforced way)

Don't throw this into every conversation, but mention that you went to church. Perhaps hang a Bible verse or quote in your cubicle, or post it on Facebook.

2. Ask friends about their faith – and just listen!

Don't critique their statement, or launch into a barrage railing them for being a heathen. Just listen to build trust, to let them know that you won't judge them, and won't look down upon them for their views (or lack of) on faith.

3. Listen to your friends problems – maybe offer to pray for them

Sometimes we want to have an instant result, but God's timing is different. Your friend may not want to talk about faith most of the time, but may be very open during a period of suffering. Be there to listen and offer a few encouraging words.

4. Share your problems with others – testify to how your faith helps you

One of the biggest errors of Christians is our failure to explain that we are also weak and sinful. Many unbelievers assume we think we are without sin, and only they are sinful. They feel we think we are better. So explain you too are sinful, weak, and in need of God. Talk about how Jesus has helped you overcome something.

5. Give them a book to read

Some great books are Tim Keller's *'Reason For God'* and N.T. Wright's *'Simply Christian.'* In fact, you can give a film (go to one with them) or a website as well. One website that is really great is www.christianityexplored.org *Note: you can also check out "Finding Faith in a Skeptical World" by our own Chet Galaska.*

6. Share your story

Talk about your personal journey of faith and how Jesus has led you from unbelief/doubt to faith. Even if you were raised in a Christian home, you need to have a personal life testimony of meeting Jesus and what he has done.

7. Answer objections and questions

One thing I heard a great deal in discussions with others is that they don't know answers to hard questions. I recommend you to read a few books (*Reason for God* will bring you up to speed). Once you have answers (or know where they are found), you can provide them.

8. Invite them to a church event

It doesn't need to be a Sunday morning service, it could be a small group, a concert or some other event.

9. Offer to read the Bible with them

Many unbelievers are curious about the Bible, and if you see they have questions about the Bible, offer to go through it with them. A year ago God saved a business associate and I simply opened the gospel of John and spent an hour reading and explaining what it meant. It was very simple, no Greek words or advanced hermeneutics required.