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Sunday, August 6, 2017  
Did You Know?

## Friendship Evangelism

Did you know that according to statistics, Friendship Evangelism is the most effective and simplest way for Christians to bring people to the Lord? If we were to take a survey, 75% to 90% of people in most congregations would say that a friend or relative led them to Christ (*Church Growth Magazine* 9, Oct.-Dec., 1994).

Friendship Evangelism means caring for people; it means loving and caring for someone. We must think about them and talk with them so that we can establish a meaningful relationship with them. Did you know that most international students who studied in America never had an incident of meaningful contact with a genuine Christian? One study about international students in America says that 70% of them had never been invited to an American home during their stay and more than 85% were never invited to an American Church during an average stay of four years (ethniharvest.org). I think it's safe to assume that this is the same for Canada.

When researchers ask new converts, "What was the major influence in leading you to Christ and the Church?" They responded, "a family" or "a friend". According to this study in *Evangelism and Church Growth*, 86% came to Christ and were introduced to church by a friend or relative. What's also telling is that only 2% of people came to church through advertising, 6% because of the preacher and 6% through an organized evangelism program (Adapted from *Evangelism: The Why and How*, Elmer L. Towns).

Should "Friendship Evangelism" then become our model for sharing the Gospel? When Jesus appointed 72 disciples and then sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place he was about to go, He told them, "Go! I am sending you out like lambs among the wolves." (Luke 10:1-3). Jesus is saying to them and to us that we are to get comfortable with discomfort. Like the early disciples, we are called to be His witnesses in our own Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). We are to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20).

Let's, then, go out there and tell our friends and family members, but let us also remember to do what Jesus has mandated for us—to share His good news with anyone who has ears to hear.

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