

Includes 13-Week Study and Discussion Guide



Evangelism
WITHOUT
ADDITIVES

What if sharing your faith
meant just being yourself?

JIM HENDERSON

FOREWORD BY BRIAN MCLAREN

Previously released as *a.k.a. "Lost"*



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WATERBROOK
PRESS

EVANGELISM WITHOUT ADDITIVES
PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS
12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921
A division of Random House, Inc.

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ISBN 978-1-4000-7377-1

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The Library of Congress has cataloged the original edition as follows:

Henderson, Jim, 1947–

A.k.a. "lost" : discovering ways to connect with the people Jesus misses most / Jim Henderson.—1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 1-57856-914-1

1. Witness bearing (Christianity). I. Title: Also known as "lost." II. Title.

BV4520.H45 2005

248'.5—dc22

2004030272

Printed in the United States of America
2007

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Jim Henderson has long maintained that evangelistically minded Christians need to listen to, and learn from, nonbelievers. He put his money where his mouth is when he bid more than five hundred dollars to win an eBay auction to send an atheist to church. He arranged it so that Hemant Mehta, the atheist in question, would visit a variety of churches and post his observations on Henderson's Web site (www.off-the-map.org), thus giving Christians a chance to see themselves and Christian faith through the eyes of a nonbeliever.

Mehta credits Henderson with providing a crash course in Christianity that enriched his churchgoing experiment. Mehta has even written a book, *I Sold My Soul on eBay*, which tells about Henderson winning the auction and all that followed. Mehta's relationship with Henderson confirms that the approach described in *Evangelism Without Additives* really does connect Christians with nonbelievers.

An important side note is that with this re-release of *Evangelism Without Additives* (previously released as *a.k.a. "Lost"*) we have added a discussion guide to make the book even more useful to groups. Now, individuals and groups can both go deeper in exploring no-additive evangelism.

CONTENTS

Foreword by Brian McLaren	ix
Acknowledgments	xiii
Introduction: Evangelism Isn't Normal	1
1 Boldness Is Overrated	5
<i>Try Free Attention Giveaways</i>	
2 The People Formerly Known as "Lost"	17
<i>What's in a Name</i>	
3 Ordinary Makes a Comeback	27
<i>Maybe We Aren't the Problem</i>	
4 The Gospel According to You	39
<i>Practice Being Yourself</i>	
5 Count Conversations, Not Conversions	51
<i>The True Size of Small Talk</i>	
6 Evangelize with Your Ears	63
<i>Jesus Asked Great Questions</i>	
7 Do What's Doable	73
<i>It's All You're Really Going to Do Anyway</i>	
8 Out of Religion and into Reality	81
<i>Dump the Religion Business</i>	

9	The New Habit of Being Real	93
	<i>Get Better Reality</i>	
10	Have You Lusted Lately?	103
	<i>Good Intentions Count Too</i>	
11	Who's Lost—Us or Them?	115
	<i>They Can't Locate God; We Can't Locate Them</i>	
12	a.k.a. "Found"	131
	<i>Conversion by Conversation</i>	
Discussion Guide: Going Deeper with		
	No-Additive Evangelism.	141
	Appendix A: Ordinary Attempts Practice Guide	159
	Appendix B: Pay Someone to Critique Your Church	163
	Survey	167
	Notes	171

FOREWORD

Today I was interviewed on a Christian talk-radio program. The interview was supposed to focus on my book *A Generous Orthodoxy*. It was clear from somewhere halfway through the second sentence (right after “Today on our show we have noted author and pastor Brian D. McLaren...”) that the talk-show host didn’t like the word *generous* in the title of my book. He was suspicious about it, as if being generous would soon lead to not believing in absolute, objective truth.

So the interviewer steered the conversation away from my book and toward my own orthodoxy, which he was unsure about. His questions focused on my personal beliefs—test questions, you’d call them. Test after test followed, and although I apparently didn’t flunk, he never felt comfortable enough about me to shift back to talking about the book. I wondered if he was trying to protect his listeners from me and would rather expose me than let my ideas be given a hearing on his show.

Soon I found myself feeling physically shaky, and my voice even got a little trembly. During a commercial break (for premium replacement windows at rock-bottom prices, as I recall), I wondered if interviewees were allowed to get off a live radio show early.

After the break, the radio-show host asked, “Tell me this. If you’re talking to someone who doesn’t believe in Jesus, will you or will you not tell him he’s going to hell?”

I answered his question with a question: “Why would you want me to say that? In my experience, if you begin by condemning people,

it doesn't normally make them want to believe what you believe. It makes them feel intimidated, rejected, insulted, and dehumanized." (What I didn't add was, "It makes them feel the way I feel as your guest on this show.") The experience reminded me once again how it must feel for non-Christian persons to have an overconfident, argumentative, pushy, insensitive, and domineering Christian try to "witness" to them.

As serious as the problem of overpushy witnesses may be, a related problem may be even more serious: the number of Christians who simply keep their faith to themselves and never share it with anyone. Often, these people are deeply afraid of being perceived like the radio talk-show host I met today. They don't want to be overly dogmatic. They don't want friends to run the other way when they walk into a room. They don't want to become judgmental or arrogant. They don't want to hurt anybody.

Maybe they've tried "doing evangelism" before by memorizing spiritual sales pitches, handing out leaflets, taking fake surveys, trying to "close the deal" with a prayer. And maybe they felt horrible doing so and vowed never to get close to evangelism again. They love God. They love other people. They want to help people. But they don't want to be a religious jerk, a church fanatic, or a spiritual pest—the ecclesiastic counterpart of a mealtime telemarketer or e-mail spammer barraging people with unwanted messages.

Meanwhile, there are thousands of people—no, millions—who wish they had a friend they could talk to about their questions, their doubts, their spiritual experiences, their hopes, and their prayers, answered and unanswered. But they can't risk sharing with anyone who will try to fix them, judge them, insult them, manipulate them, or otherwise treat them with something less than gentleness and respect.

So on the one side, we have people of faith, some of whom are overconfident and unwilling to listen and others who lack confidence and are unable to speak. And on the other side, we have people seeking faith who wish there were people of faith to serve as their respectful conversation partners, their gentle guides, their spiritual consultants and confidants.

Jim Henderson's book is just what all these people need. If the overconfident read it, they just might learn some sensitivity. If the underconfident read it, they may discover that life sharing—which includes faith sharing—is doable after all, that it can be a gloriously normal part of ordinary life.

And if that happens, people seeking faith will have more friends around who can help them discover what they're seeking.

I've known Jim for several years. I've been part of several of his Off The Map events and am impressed with his leadership, instincts, energy, and good humor. I've met a lot of people whose lives have been enriched and changed through Jim's influence and through the influence of those he has influenced. I know this book isn't just theory for Jim. It's the way he lives. He is exactly the kind of person spiritual seekers need to meet, but there's only one of him, and we need tens of thousands. So by reading *Evangelism Without Additives*, perhaps you'll become the answer to somebody's first fledgling prayers: "God, please help me find someone to talk to about my questions and doubts and..."

I wasn't very successful in my radio interview today. I suppose it ended well enough; after the commercial break, the host's tone softened a bit.

"That's all the time we have. Thank you, Brian, for being with us."

"It's been a pleasure," I said, which, thinking back on it, wasn't

quite honest. I stayed on the phone long enough to hear the host say, “Now for someone I know you’ll agree with...John Slate of John Slate Ford. He can meet all your new-car and used-car needs.”

I’m not going to say anything snide about used-car salespeople, especially after being compared unfavorably to one. But I think we all wish that people who are sent into the world to represent Jesus Christ would be able to do so at least a little more faithfully and humanely—less like salespeople and more like the original bearer of good news. That’s my prayer, and that’s Jim’s goal in the book you’re now holding. I hope you’ll read it and share it with some Christian friends. Discuss it together and try the activities and exercises Jim offers. Your life will be richer, and you’ll be a blessing to the people formerly known as “lost.”

—Brian McLaren, pastor (crcc.org),
author (anewkindofchristian.com),
leader in emergent (emergentvillage.com)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Michelangelo didn't paint the Sistine Chapel by himself. He had lots of help. Thirteen highly qualified artists worked with him to get the job done. The truth is, no one accomplishes anything significant alone. Hillary Clinton was right—it *does* take a village. It certainly has in my case.

This book is the result of almost ten years of research by a cohort of people who passionately love Jesus and want to contribute something toward seeing his kingdom come on earth. I am one of the wealthiest people I know. I have too many good friends. Many of them helped craft this thing we've come to know as Ordinary Attempts.

People like Ken and Cherese Sutton, Rich and Rose Swetman, and Mike and Val O'Neil traipsed all over the country with me, meeting leaders and visiting churches we thought we could glean from. Others like Leigh Buchan, her daughter Ingrid, and Suzanne Timmerman contributed great stories and new ways of thinking to our little research group.

About six years ago Dave and Sharon Richards joined us. Dave and I went on to become cofounders of Off The Map, our vehicle for taking the story of Ordinary Attempts public. Sharon loves to connect with the people Jesus misses most and is one of the very best at being unusually interested in others. Frankly, without Dave's friendship, counsel, wisdom, and strategic insight, this book and the ideas found in it would not have become a reality. He has been a true partner and generous to a fault.

The Off The Map production team—Chris Marshall, Bob

Bowen, Craig Spinks, John Barce, Brent Shock and Gabe Drake, Elaine Hansen, Joe Myers, and Elizabeth DiCandilo—have helped create live events that are more like a concert than a conference and leave people feeling and thinking differently about the people formerly known as lost.

Doug Murren, Steve Sjogren, Tri Robinson, Bill Clark, and Bob McGee have greatly influenced my thinking and invested significant time in my life—for which I'm grateful. Young leaders like Ryan Beattie, Rachelle Mee Chapman, Kelly Bean, Jason Clark, Kevin Rains, and Posido, Nuc, and April Vega have graciously allowed me into their lives as a friend and have enriched me.

Todd Hunter and Brian McLaren have generously given me more time, brain power, and interest than they should have. They are two of the most respected Christian leaders on the national scene today, and I'm honored to be able to call them friends. Many of the things I've written I basically stole from one or both of them.

Sometimes good things happen to bad people. How else can I explain how this book came into being? A couple of years ago, I had the good fortune of having coffee with Kevin Miller. This was the first time we had met, and he was kindly listening to me go on and on about my ideas when suddenly a gentleman named Ron Lee walked by.

Ron was a complete stranger to me, but not to Kevin, and Kevin said, "Hey, Ron, would you be interested in a book on evangelism?"

Ron said, "Maybe, if we didn't have to use that word," at which point I spouted off, "I think I can help you with that."

Ron is a senior editor for WaterBrook Press, the publisher of this book, and has been a very helpful, creative, and encouraging guide through this project called *Evangelism Without Additives*.

Finally, I want to thank two women who have influenced me

more than anyone else in life: my mom, Jacqueline Lee Wallace, the bravest, smartest, and most articulate woman I know, and my wife, Barbara, the wisest and most authentically spiritual person I have ever known. She remains tenaciously committed to me and our accomplished children, Joshua, Sarah, and Judah.

Jesus changed my life by giving me a completely new point of view. I am proud to follow Jesus—the very best leader ever. Without him I would simply have no incentive to live.

May God use this book to inspire many redefinitions of evangelism so that ordinary Christians will regain—or perhaps experience for the first time—the fun, the passion, and the creativity that are uniquely experienced whenever we connect with the people Jesus misses most.

“...if anyone gives even a cup of cold water...he will certainly not lose his reward.”

—Matthew 10:42

INTRODUCTION

EVANGELISM ISN'T NORMAL

I'm convinced that I would've become a Christian at age twelve if someone had just asked me. As it turned out, another nine years passed before I heard about Jesus. A lot of bad stuff can happen to a person between the ages of twelve and twenty-one.

It wasn't that I was actively looking for God. My family was too busy surviving the daily realities of life to consider a side issue like religion. My parents survived World War II, but they couldn't survive each other. At the age of ten, I was told they would be getting a divorce. My dad never showed up to explain why our happy home was coming apart.

Mom, my three sisters, and I headed off to another type of freedom. We were now free to wonder where our next meal would come from, free to worry about paying the light bill, and free from being a

typical two-parent family. And my mom was “free” to work for slave wages at a factory. It was ugly.

At age twelve I moved with my family to Portland, Oregon, where we had relatives. We rented a house there in a working-class neighborhood. Unbeknownst to me, our house was situated within walking distance of three of Portland’s largest Christian organizations, one of which was Multnomah School of the Bible, filled with what must have been hundreds of “on-fire” believers just itching to tell someone about Jesus.

But I never answered a knock at the door to meet one of them. I never heard the gospel presented in our neighborhood. I didn’t even know that large Christian organizations were operating in my part of town. How could my broken family have lived at the epicenter of Portland’s leading Christian institutions and not have had an opportunity to hear about Jesus?

Here’s how: Evangelism isn’t normal. It’s a program, a presentation, a memorized script. It’s formalized and structured, and as a result, Christians have to work up a lot of nerve just to do it. That helps explain why most Christians only do evangelism about once a year. Then they do nothing until their church holds its next evangelism workshop.

Let’s face it, traditional evangelism is simply too hard for normal Christians. It’s really designed for extroverts, those with the gift of evangelism, and the few who were created to be salespeople. That leaves us ordinary types out of the game.

John Fremont was an explorer who showed people how to get to California. Everybody already knew California was there; it’s just that no one knew how to get there safely.

The Pathfinder, as Fremont was called, made maps. His maps of

the already known but unexplored West helped open the door for one of the greatest migrations in American history.

This book is a map of sorts. You already know about evangelism, but if you're like most people, it remains largely unexplored territory. Getting there from where you are is just too daunting, and way too strange. You need a map that shows you how to move your passion for sharing good news to a place where doing that is as normal as breathing.

Connecting with the people Jesus misses most—those formerly known as “lost”—is really not complicated. It's not even threatening. You can do it without having to memorize anything, without following a script, and without writing down a carefully prepared speech. In this book we're not going to talk about programmatic evangelism. Instead, we'll explore something that has been there all along, but that too few Christians have ventured into.

Ordinary Christians who want to connect with the people Jesus misses most need a map. We can see the destination; we just don't know how to get there. You'll be glad to know that getting there is simply a matter of living a little more intentionally. It involves being yourself and focusing on others. It's based on everyday things, such as asking questions, listening, giving away your attention, and praying behind people's backs. Each of these perfectly sane activities helps communicate the gospel. And they are things anyone can do. In fact, you're already doing them. You just didn't know it counted!

As you read this book, you'll find yourself moving a step closer to the people Jesus misses most—those who are distant from him but are more open than you think to being shown the way back to God.

CHAPTER 1

BOLDNESS IS OVERRATED

Try Free Attention Giveaways

W*itnessing.* Few words strike more fear into the heart of the average Christian.

What is witnessing, exactly, and how do you do it? What happens if you forget what to say or get tongue-tied or don't know the answer if the person asks you a question?

I know the feeling. I became a Christian at age twenty-one during the Jesus movement. Witnessing? Wasn't that something you did in court?

"Don't worry," my long-haired Jesus-people mentors told me. "We'll show you what it's all about."

They showed me the ropes of evangelizing as we witnessed our way through clouds of cannabis smoke at an outdoor rock concert.

Just a few weeks earlier, I'd been part of the "target audience." Now I was the targeter. I was told that this is what it meant to *be a Christian*. If you weren't finagling a way to steer the conversation toward Jesus, you were "selling out." If you weren't feeling uncomfortable at least once a day due to your boldness for the cause of Christ, it was doubtful that you were really saved.

When I was a new Christian protected by my closed hippie-Christian culture, it all seemed so simple. Go out, witness to as many people as you can, come back to the bible study, and tell everyone about your exploits. When you do this, you're rewarded with kudos and assurances that anyone who rejected you rejected God. You can shake that experience off like so much dirt on your shoes. Their blood is no longer on your hands. On to the next target!

In time I became a professional Christian and started acting like one. Pastors learn not to do radical things, such as walk up to people on the street and ask them for a few minutes to explain Jesus, God, sin, and hell. Instead, we find culturally appropriate ways to "present" the gospel. We do it at special church programs, or we sneak it into the talks we give at weddings and funerals. We don't want to come off like the door-to-door guys. We become more sophisticated in the way we go about sharing our faith. And sadly, many of us stop altogether.

Sure, in public we keep it up. We still remind the "troops" to go out and share the gospel with their neighbors. We read the latest demographics so that we know where our target markets are located. We even hold seminars and commit a few weeks every year to teach on evangelism. But we pretty much know that nothing is going to come of it.

I speak not as an outsider but as one who has been there and done

that. I was a busy pastor, preaching, leading meetings, and coming up with mission statements. Yet I couldn't make myself stop thinking about evangelism. I couldn't live with it and I couldn't live without it. So I buried that voice.

But still I could hear it call to me. I've been intrigued, frustrated, and energized by the issue of evangelism all of my Christian life. I'm not an evangelist. I am more a student of the game we call evangelism. It may be because it's one topic that's guaranteed to irritate both Christians and non-Christians. I have been told that one of my spiritual gifts is *provocateur*, which may help explain the connection.

I'm a late bloomer. I didn't succeed in my thirties or forties. As I turned fifty I had a slight inkling as to what I wanted to do when I grew up. I took heart in studying the lives of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Harry Truman, and Mother Teresa, all of whom really got started around age fifty. The sense of mortality has a huge upside: It helps you stop worrying about trying to become something you aren't and get on with being who you really are—warts and all—because this is as good as it's going to get.

Someone has said, "We change when the pain of changing is less than the pain of staying the same." I finally realized that my evangelism fixation wasn't going to go away. I had buried the memory of it, but it was buried alive, and it was rising from the dead to haunt me.

YOU'RE NOT BRAVE? GREAT!

Some of us are born salesmen. Most of us aren't. Some of us are born leaders, taking our place at the front of the charge and ready to accept the casualties. But again, most of us aren't. So it's a good thing that

connecting with the people Jesus misses most doesn't require a Type A personality.

In his counterintuitive book *Leading Quietly*, Harvard professor Joseph Badaracco steers us away from the well-worn leaders-as-heroes path and onto the road less traveled, where ordinary people get things done. Delving into the decision-making experiences of several quiet leaders, Badaracco takes a closer look at their thinking. "The most effective leaders are rarely public heroes," he writes. "These men and women aren't high profile champions of causes and *don't want to be*."¹

The book of Joshua opens with these startling words: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you..." (1:2). Just as Joshua had to learn to lead in ways that differed significantly from Moses's approach, we have to learn to connect with the people Jesus misses most in our own way. I'm sure Joshua wanted Moses to stick around just as we want those who are more gifted than we are to go ahead and do the work of evangelizing others. But eventually it falls to us to get it done, in our own way.

Even though Moses got all the press, Joshua may have been a better leader. Moses did stuff for others; Joshua did his work through others. Moses led the Israelites across the Red Sea; Joshua followed them across the Jordan River. Moses saw the Promised Land; Joshua lived in it.

PEOPLE PREFER PRAYER

Fortunately for those of us who lack boldness, it's not all that hard to connect with the people Jesus misses most. If you can pray, you can preach. John from Mount Vernon, Washington, tells about a time he and his wife resorted to prayer:

Thirteen years ago my wife and I moved to Portland for a job. We didn't have a place to move to, so my brother offered to put us up while we looked for a house.

My brother didn't sound too hopeful [about us finding a place], especially since my job didn't start for a couple of weeks. We went out anyway and fell in love with the first place we visited. The landlord was inside painting. He asked me about the job and also asked if I had ever done that type of work before (I hadn't). He was very skeptical but accepted an application anyway, telling us he had several other applicants, all of whom he said were better prospects as tenants.... Taking applications for rentals wasn't a common practice where I came from, and I was quite intimidated by the whole process.

Anyway, we had a feeling about this, so Jeanette and I prayed that God would bring us to this man's mind every time he looked at the applications. The next morning we received a call; it was the landlord telling us he had decided to rent to us. He set up a meeting for later that morning. When we arrived, he said we would have to make arrangements for the first month's rent and deposit. We had the money to meet those requirements! Then he told us that each time he looked at the pile of rental applications, he was drawn toward ours, even though he was inclined against it from a logical point of view.

I told him we had prayed that very thing would happen. My landlord, it turned out, was something of an agnostic, but he laughed and told us that took the responsibility off him, he supposed.

Anyway, we visited our landlord and his wife when we

were down in Portland last summer. They invited us for a meal, and they prayed beforehand. It seems they had left some of their agnosticism behind.

Here's one thing John's story tell us: The people formerly known as "lost" prefer prayer to preaching. John and Jeanette weren't preachers, but they did know how to pray.

If you're not a bold evangelist, you're in the majority. In fact, you're in great company—including Saint Peter, the ultimate Green Beret who became the world's biggest Christian chicken. Under pressure he uttered curses and denied that he even knew who Jesus was (see Mark 14:66-71). At that point he had hit bottom (see Mark 14:72; Luke 22:62).

Peter was the man who boldly declared his willingness to die for Jesus (see Luke 22:33). But after the Crucifixion, he began using his leadership skills to lead the other disciples back into the fishing business. Jesus was dead, and Peter didn't know what else to do. At least fishing was something he understood.

Peter was out on the lake in a boat when he heard that familiar voice: "Come and have breakfast" (John 21:12). Immediately he knew it was Jesus. Once onshore, Peter steeled himself for Jesus's seminar on the eternal fate of compromisers and backsliders. *But it never came.*

Instead, Peter walked in on a three-part series titled "Do you love me?" Like the brilliant preacher he was, Jesus repeated himself over and over again. Some read a rebuke in these words, I assume because of the repetitive use of the phrase "Do you love me?" But if you hadn't been taught that interpretation by someone who knew ancient Greek, I would suggest that you might not have come to that conclusion. Perhaps my point of view is too hopeful, but I see it this way:

When Jesus found Peter, he didn't rebuke him; he *reminded* Peter that they loved each other and that Peter's life had purpose and meaning in serving others. Peter already knew what he should be doing. Jesus gave him the hope and motivation to do it by giving him what he needed rather than what he deserved. Cowards make great leaders when they're loved. Finding the people Jesus misses most isn't about boldness; it's about love.

ORDINARY ATTEMPTS

I resigned from witnessing in 1996. I knew I could never go back to the same old programs, the contrived joviality, or the fake evangelistic caring. But what would I replace them with?

In the church I was leading at the time, many of us decided to do what was doable and to count what really counts. We decided to count all the small attempts we made to connect with the people Jesus misses most and to do it in ways that were natural and had context in our ordinary, everyday lives. We decided to call these practices Ordinary Attempts.

An Ordinary Attempt is just what the name implies. It's something that anyone can do. You don't need special skills or experience; you just have to be aware and available. It's an *attempt*, not an accomplishment, so no extra credit is awarded for succeeding and no demerits are given for failing. Ordinary Attempts are this easy: They are nothing more than *free attention giveaways*.

People crave attention. In our cultural setting it's like the cup of cold water Jesus referred to in Matthew 10:42, where he said, "If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple...he will certainly not lose his reward." When we

pay attention to people because we want to nudge them toward Jesus, it refreshes them. It becomes the connecting bridge between them and God. Best of all, instead of *asking* them for something—their time, attention, and interest—we *give* them something—our time, attention, and interest. We serve them a small taste of Jesus’s desire to attend to them.

This attempt to connect with the people Jesus misses most *is* evangelism. Here is my paraphrase of Matthew 10:42:

If anyone...even cowards for Jesus
 Gives even...small things *are* the big things
 A cup of cold water...ordinary things are the *real* things
 Because he is my disciple...good intentions count too
 He will not lose his reward...it counts, and God will multiply
 its effectiveness.

Jesus made it clear that when people see him, they’ve seen the Father. This is what I see when I look at Jesus and, through him, his Father:

- He asked great questions.
- He wasn’t frenzied when it came to moving people closer to the kingdom.
- He operated in a relatively small geographical and cultural space.
- “Sinners” found him approachable. They liked him.

I want to be like Jesus. I want to be friends with the people Jesus misses most, the people formerly known as “lost.” I want missing people to like me, to want to hang out with me. I want to partner with Jesus in seeing them cross the starting line into the kingdom of God.

Christians are the freest people on earth. Our past, present, and future are completely secure through the love of Jesus. Not only do we have eternal security; we have *internal security*. In a word, we have nothing to lose. We can risk, attempt, and fail, and we'll still go to heaven.

When it comes to evangelism, we can be our ordinary selves, and it turns out to be good enough. It turns out that all Jesus needs are the five loaves and two fish of our lives—something we *already* have. Rather than trying to escape the ordinary, we should exploit it and attempt something small for God, something ordinary.

Here's an Ordinary Attempt my wife and I got involved in while in a grocery store. See if you think it counts as evangelism.

A woman ran up to the checker just as our items were moving down the conveyor belt.

"Can I get a calling card?" she asked, clearly frazzled. "My son is stuck in Italy, and his phone card won't work, so he can't call his credit-card company to get his debit card to work."

"Man, been there, done that," we said. My wife and I let the woman cut in front of us. *Should I offer to pray for her? No, that would be too weird*, I thought. She got a calling card and headed off, and we continued getting our purchases scanned.

But I did pray for her, secretly. I hoped she would come back just one more time. Surprisingly, she returned to ask the clerk for a little more help.

"What's your son's name?" I inquired.

"Colin. He's in Italy and..." She had that scared-parent look.

"Listen, I'll pray for him."

"You'll what?"

"I'll pray for Colin that he gets out of Italy."

A warm smile spread across the woman's face. "Thank you!" she said and left the store. That took all of ninety seconds.

You might be wondering: *Just how does that count as evangelism?* I would have wondered the same thing several years ago, and I still find myself wondering even now. But...what are the odds that the worried mother has *ever once* had someone stop her in a grocery store and spontaneously offer to pray for her? For that matter, when was the last time it happened to you? Since Jesus and I are partnering and he had already been working in the woman's life, I simply offered a "cup of cold water" to her and then left it up to Jesus to do the hard part of bringing her closer to his kingdom. And I really believe he will.

ATTEMPTING THE ORDINARY

Throughout this book we'll tell the stories of people who are practicing Ordinary Attempts. And at the end of each chapter, you will find suggestions for ways you can begin to connect with others in perfectly ordinary ways. These ideas can also be used with a partner, in a small group, or with your prayer group.

To begin, here are two ideas that will make your evangelistic life easier, especially if you're not the bold type.

- This week, ask someone this question: “How are you?”
Now here's the tricky part. When the person begins to answer, actually listen. Don't interrupt with your own story. Spend a few minutes being unusually interested in the person, and leave it at that. Don't witness, preach, or say anything religious.
- For those who find that idea too risky, try this: Practice noticing the people God has put around you. Here's how: Take a small notebook or tape recorder with you this week and begin to write down observations (or record oral notes) about the people you notice whom you've never “seen” before—kind of like relational peripheral vision. Ask God to give you new ideas about how you could serve these people. Doing this will give you time to warm up to the “How are you?” question above.