

Market Evangelism

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Market Evangelism consists of distributing literature in market-type environments. Books and other literature can be given away free of charge, on a donation basis, or sold for a definite price.

By their nature, “markets” are places where people gather to look at products with the possibility of purchasing some of them. Those who come to such places tend to be more open than normal to random purchases and impulse buying.

There are several types of markets at which this can be done. One example would be **country fairs**. **Craft shows** would be another.

You set up a booth, display your books and give them free, on a donation basis, or sell them.

You can also go to such events and hand out tracts and books to people as you pass them—without renting a booth space.

Another market-type of environment is the **sidewalk** of a locality where there are many shops and have, what the experts call, “high foot travel”; that is, where many people are passing to and fro. Literature can easily be distributed in such areas.

But **booth- or table-type evangelism** has decided advantages: The people come to you, pause, and consider what you have. This gives you time to speak to them and silently pray, as the Holy Spirit convicts their hearts to obtain what you are offering them.

In addition, at a table or booth you can display several different books. In a less hurried manner, you can present what you have to those who express some interest.

Although the totally disinterested will quickly leave, those with a definite interest in religious matters will pause to consider what you desire to show them.

The simplest way to do this is to set up a **folding card table**, spread a white cloth over it, lay several books on it, place a box or two of additional books and your lunch underneath the table, open up a folding chair, sit down—and you are in business.

One friend of ours does this every Sunday at a flea market in North Carolina. He has done it for years; and he has had great success distributing our books to those who had a definite interest in

reading the Advent message.

Seated at a **single card table** with a white tablecloth over it, he offers the books for a small donation which covers the cost of the books; so he can obtain more from us.

Another way is to **set up a booth**. What is a “booth”? The table in it may be two or three folding card tables arranged in a rectangle or a board supported by boxes, etc. A clean, white bed sheet can be used to cover it and drape over the front side.

Vertical boards, with signs printed or handwritten on them, can be on either side of the booth and on the back.

Another locality for market evangelism is a **mall**. In my exhaustive book on how to canvass books from door to door, and elsewhere, *The Colporteur Handbook*, I describe one way you can obtain permission to set up your card table in front of, or inside, a mall. It is **blood-pressure evangelism**.

You would need to purchase a blood-pressure gauge, learn how to use it, so you can offer to check people’s blood pressure. In that book, I explain in detail how to do this, plus providing you with basic blood-pressure facts, so that you will be able to speak like a professional. Keep in mind that anyone can check blood pressure; no degree or certification is required.

One individual uses the blood-pressure approach in this manner: First, he asks the mall for permission to set up the table at the entrance or, better yet, inside a hallway. (Always ask permission first—or you will be quickly evicted!)

The mall manager is likely to be happy with the idea—because it helps to bring people into the mall. *Mention that fact* when you request permission.

This individual then sets up a single card table, covers it with a clean, white cloth, and sets the blood-pressure cuff and gauge on the table (along with copies of *Ministry of Healing*, *Desire of Ages*, and *Christ’s Object Lessons*).

Sitting in a folding chair at the table, with another chair for prospects, in a conversational voice, he checks their pressures and offers books free or for a small donation. Many people are very blood-pressure conscious and appreciate every opportunity to get it checked. Copies can also be given away.

The problem with mall tables is that you cannot offer controverted books, such as *Great Controversy*.

Then there is **flea market evangelism**. This is quite different! First, you can offer anything. No one is going to object to the property owner about the books you are displaying. Second, there is likely to be a greater amount of traffic, with many people passing by who might be interested in what you have. Third, not only can you give books away, but you can also sell them.

Of course, in a flea market setting you could also offer the blood-pressure check as an additional way to gain attention. But keep in mind that, to do it, you need to be sitting at a low table (the height of a card table); and there should be a second chair for the person who is having his pressure tested.

One advantage accruing from pressure checking is that those who undergo it respect you. Because you have spoken in a warm, kindly manner, they tend to consider you something of a professional; and they are more willing to listen to whatever you begin telling them about health. After checking their blood pressure, you would do well to pick up a copy of our *Fourth Edition* of the *Natural Remedies Encyclopedia*—and open to pages 418-419 (In our *Spanish Edition*, it is pages 385 and 386). Open the book, *with the words facing them*; first point to the chapter title, then to the chapter table of contents, and then (on page 419 in the English), to the words: “heart Attack - Emergency!” Pointing down below that title, briefly explain what they should do (the cough method) if they actually experience a heart attack. By the time you have finished explaining that, they will want to buy the Encyclopedia from you!

The blood-pressure check is also a good lead-in for presentation of *Ministry of Healing*, *Vaccination Crisis*, and other health-oriented books.

At the present time, one of the simplest and best ways to meet many people (be able to present whatever you want and be able to either give it free, on a donation basis, or as a sale) is **flea market evangelism**.

So let us discuss this in some detail:

At the present time, there are flea markets all across the nation; and more are starting every month. Many are outdoors; and booths and tables can be set up under the sunshine or under pole sheds (roofs with only pole supports and no outer walls). But others are inside actual buildings.

Check out every flea market in your locality; there is probably at least one not far away. If possible, try to set up your display area in an indoor

building. This will protect you from rain, in the summer, and cold weather in the winter. In addition, more people are likely to regularly visit an indoor flea market all year long.

When you are able to do so, secure a corner booth area. This will double the table space you will have for display. Another helpful locating feature is being close to a bathroom, food concessions, or the main entrance of the flea market. This will provide you with the greatest amount of foot traffic.

Try to rent space for a month at a time. If you have your booth open at regular times, you will meet those who return to visit—and tell you how your books have helped them.

How often should you be at the booth? It is well if you can do it at least once or twice a week. Saturday and Sunday are always the biggest days for shopping and touring flea markets. You do well to be open every Sunday. (Some also attend the booth on Sabbath afternoons and give away literature.)

The booth is “open” when you lay out your products and are present. The booth is closed when you are gone and only the fixtures which are nailed down remain. You might find that you can leave the signs in place, along with a displayed note that the booth is closed.

If the booth is in a locked building, when everyone is gone, the books do not need to be removed at night—if you intend to be there again the next morning.

Place your books on a table in stacks of three or four in a row close to the aisle, so passersby can view them.

Increasingly, Advent believers are setting up booths in flea markets in, and near, many cities and towns in the nation.

Through gradual trial-and-error experimentation, here is how one group has arranged their booth:

They have, what is called an “outside corner” booth, inside the building. Because of this, the workers inside stand and work in a square of useable space, and visitors can stand at both corners and look inside at the displays.

Both sides of the corner have full-width, standing height (about 42 inches high) display decks. Small signs have been placed on these “tables” that say “Free Books.” This is because many people do not look up and see the “Free Books” signs on posts, rear and side walls, and overhead banners.

Underneath the table cloth, or white sheet covering the table, are boxes of additional books. Four chairs are inside the booth which can be used when traffic is light.

1 In the most central location on a table, they have
2 placed a small 18-inch podium (diagonal platform)
9 with a large (large) Bible that is always open to Psalm
7 119. A narrow-focus spotlight has been placed above
it, behind an overhead banner, so the light only falls
on the Bible—with no glare in the eyes of the visi-
tors, and little on the workers.

On a lengthy banner above the Bible is lettered
in large print: “*Spotlight on the Bible.*” This is the
theme for their booth.

They found a firm in town (*Poster Digital* in
Chattanooga, TN) which will print signs on special,
firm vinylized plastic. (I am told there are similar
firms throughout the nation.) The resulting banner
does not sag. The plastic comes in 30-foot wide rolls.
Their banners are 8-foot by 18-inch and 10-foot by
24-inch in size.

They paid about \$50 for the smaller banner and
\$62 for the larger one—complete with the jet-ink
printing, to meet their specifications. Their banners
are printed with red, yellow, and black ink; but any
colors could be requested. They decided how they
wanted the lettering arranged and which type fonts
should be used.

High up on a rear corner, this group placed a
video cassette recorder and television screen, which
continually plays Doug Batchelor doing a *Bible An-
swers* presentation. This provides a “talking face”
on the screen all the time; but the sound volume is
low, so it will not interfere with conversations with
visitors. Because the screen is high, the heads of
the workers rarely obstruct its view.

Books and Bible course enrollment cards are
on display, along with a variety of our books. They
have decided that they prefer offering people books
because they are more likely to be taken home, read,
shared, and not thrown away—as is done with so
much literature that could be offered them. By the
way, they have found that many people only want
books with Bible quotations in the KJV.

Next to the enrollment cards is the first lesson
(only) and a large sign by them: “Amazing Facts Bible
Course - Free.”

Leaning against a deep, transparent vase is a
cardboard sign: “Donations Gratefully Accepted.”
They are careful to keep bills, placed in the vase,
pushed to the bottom. Many times these donations
cover the monthly booth rent.

This particular group rotates Sabbaths, so that
one person will always be there on Sabbath after-
noons to give away free books on this special buy-
ing day of the week. (Some other groups keep it
closed on Sabbath.)

When possible, have two working at the booth
at the same time. They encourage and help one an-

other.

This group has checked over every possible
source of missionary books, with the decision to
only use the best quality ones available at the low-
est boxful price. As a result, they use Harvestime
Books. But there are others which you may prefer.
This group has found that it is not difficult to give
away 10,000 to 20,000 free books a month.

Sales of the *Natural Remedies Encyclopedia*
can cover a large part of this expense or all of it.
Many Hispanics come to flea markets; and now our
new *Spanish Natural Remedies Encyclopedia*—
with the same high margin of profit—is now avail-
able. There is no other natural remedies book, cov-
ering so many diseases and containing so many
natural remedies—anywhere. The book almost sells
itself. In addition, we now have four Spanish-lan-
guage missionary paperbacks: *Great Controversy*,
Desire of Ages, *Ministry of Healing*, and *World Cri-
sis Foretold*.

If you have enough workers, the booth can be
manned throughout the week; but if there are only
one or two workers, you will probably find you can
only do it one or two days a week.

Flea market evangelism is a powerful way to
bring our books to the world. It is a low-cost, rela-
tively easy way to place books in the hands of those
who so much need these last-day messages.

If you also display the *English* and *Spanish edi-
tions* of our *Natural Remedies Encyclopedia*, the
sales from those books will greatly help defray the
costs of the free books you hand out.

We have discussed a variety of ways to distrib-
ute books. But we don't want to forget those who
own stores. Whatever it may be, health food, gro-
cery, tire repair, etc.: If you own a store, you can
display, sell, or give away missionary books.

There is no end of possibilities. We have been
told that the literature work is extremely impor-
tant. It is urgent that we take hold of this work.
Little time remains before the Final Crisis of the
National Sunday Law breaks upon us all. —*vf*

***Do not underestimate the crucial impor-
tance of the book work! Read this:***

“In a large degree through our publishing houses
is to be accomplished the work of that other angel
who comes down from heaven with great power,
and who lightens the earth with his glory.”

—7 Testimonies, 140

***But the missionary publishing house can
do little without your faithful help—so the
books can be printed and circulated.***

Our Special Work: Literature Evangelism

Statements about the importance of the colporteur (canvassing) work would also apply to all who faithfully distribute the final messages in printed form to the people in these last days.

“If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting our publications before the public, thus leading them to search the Scriptures.”—*Christian Service*, 145.

“Let every Seventh-day Adventist ask himself, ‘What can I do to proclaim the third angel’s message?’ Christ came to this world to give this message to His servant to give to the churches. It is to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. How are we to give it? The distribution of our literature is one means by which the message is to be proclaimed.”—*The Publishing Ministry*, 349.

“Papers and books are the Lord’s means of keeping the message for this time continually before the people. In enlightening and confirming souls in the truth, the publications will do a far greater work than can be accomplished by the ministry of the word alone. The silent messengers that are placed in the homes of the people through the work of the canvasser will strengthen the gospel ministry in every way; for the Holy Spirit will impress minds as they read the books, just as He impresses the minds of those who listen to the preaching of the Word. The same ministry of angels attends the books that contain the truth as attends the work of the minister.”—*6 Testimonies*, 315-316.

“The world is to receive the light of truth through an evangelizing ministry of the word in our books and periodicals. Our publications are to show that the end of all things is at hand.”—*The Colporteur Ministry*, 145.

“God calls upon His people to act like living men, and not be indolent, sluggish, and indifferent. We must carry the publications to the people and urge them to accept.”—*Christian Service*, 146.

“Our publications are now sowing the gospel seed, and are instrumental in bringing as many souls to Christ as the preached word. Whole churches have been raised up as the result of their circulation. In this work every disciple of Christ can act a part.”—*Review*, June 10, 1880.

“The book work should be the means of quickly

giving the sacred light of present truth to the world.”—*9 Testimonies*, 69.

“Church members, awake to the importance of the circulation of our literature, and devote more time to this work. Place in the homes of the people papers, tracts, and books that will preach the gospel in its several lines. There is no time to be lost. Let many give themselves willingly and unselfishly to the canvassing work, and thus help to sound a warning that is greatly needed. When the church takes up her appointed work, she will go forth ‘fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.’”—*Counsels on Health*, 464.

“The light of truth is shedding its bright beams upon the world through missionary effort. The press is an instrumentality by which many are reached whom it would be impossible to reach by ministerial effort.”—*5 Testimonies*, 388.

“The night of trial is nearly spent. Satan is bringing in his masterly power because he knoweth that his time is short. The chastisement of God is upon the world, to call all who know the truth to hide in the cleft of the Rock and view the glory of God. The truth must not be muffled now. Plain statements must be made. Unvarnished truth must be spoken, in leaflets and pamphlets, and these must be scattered like the leaves of autumn.”—*9 Testimonies*, 230-231.

“Canvassers are needed to take up the work of carrying these silent messengers of truth to the people,—canvassers who feel a burden for souls, and who can speak words in season to those who are seeking for light. Some may say, ‘I am not a minister; I cannot preach to the people.’ You may not be able to preach, but you can be an evangelist, ministering to the needs of those with whom you come in contact; you can be God’s helping hand, working as the disciples worked; you can ask those you meet if they love the Lord Jesus.”—*The Publishing Ministry*, 306.

“Let not the canvassing work be left to languish. Let the books containing the light on present truth be placed before as many as possible. The presidents of our conferences and others in responsible positions have a duty to do in this matter.”—*6 Testimonies*, 329.