

# THE GREAT COMMISSION IN RUSSIAN CONTEXT

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## Introduction

Political, economic and spiritual changes from 2005-2010 have challenged former normative models of evangelism in Russia. The Russian government has increased control over all spheres of social and religious life. Yet, ironically, one of the means for accomplishing this task was through the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church as the only legitimate religious entity in the country. Russian evangelicals have increasingly found themselves in a marginal position in society. The Orthodox Church and the governing local administrations have begun to use mass media to an even greater extent to castigate evangelicals as totalitarian, destructive sects. These political changes have created a climate rendering it virtually impossible to conduct mass evangelism campaigns in most parts of the country. Door-to-door visitation evangelism, street evangelism, open-air revival meetings, and even public invitations to church services in order to hear the gospel, have all become increasingly difficult as a result of suspicion toward anyone who is disloyal to the Russian Orthodox Church. Personal relationship-based evangelism, however, has not been affected much by the political changes. Evangelical believers are still able to talk about spiritual issues privately with their relatives, friends, colleagues, classmates, neighbors, and coworkers without much backlash. In fact, the politicization of religion in Russia has ironically created more opportunities for personal evangelism, making the gospel message a “forbidden fruit.” Discussing spiritual matters has become appealing to some for the simple reason that it is a taboo subject. Like all things forbidden, the gospel has become more desirable in spite of its political marginalization.

Worsening economic conditions have also had an impact on more public forms of evangelism. The cost of living in Russia has increased greatly. Moscow became one of the most expensive cities in the world to live in, and it has held that position for a few years. People are spending more time in their job, thus leaving less time for other activities. People are experiencing hardships from high prices and are longing to have more material things. They appear to be less interested in the appeal of churches, religious organizations, and programs on Christian radio and television. Adding to the pressure on evangelicals, it has become more expensive to organize various evangelistic campaigns due to the increasing expense of printing materials, travel, meals and lodging. Many long-term residential missionaries have been forced to leave Russia because of the increased cost of living and visa restrictions imposed by the increasingly suspicious government. Personal/relational evangelism, however, has not been affected much by economic changes, because believers continue to meet and interact with people in their

circle of influence. In fact, those economic changes have created more opportunities for personal evangelism, as people have become more stressed and desperate and had more questions about the real meaning of life and its priorities.

Spiritually, people in Russia have been increasingly bombarded with the worldly values of wealth, glamour, fame and independence apart from God. Many have become involved in occult practices such as horoscopes, fortune telling, divination, and card-reading. The spiritual vacuum created by the government is being filled by these hollow replacements to the Russian population through daily secular radio, television, the Internet, magazines and newspapers. Christian mass media and resources in Russia have become scarce. Again, personal/relational evangelism has not been adversely affected by these spiritual challenges. Believers are still able to communicate with people in their circle of influence. In fact, those spiritual changes have served to create more opportunities for personal evangelism, because the population is in search of real answers to their spiritual needs. Some are realizing their need for Jesus Christ to set them free from the bondage of sin that pervades (Eph. 2:1-3).

Thus, the past models of public and mass evangelism in Russia have been challenged by political, economic and spiritual changes. Former common methods of evangelism (mass evangelism, evangelism to strangers through door-to-door visits, street and open-air evangelism, invitation to church for hearing the gospel message, organized campaigns of short-term missionaries, ministry of foreign missionaries and evangelists, and work of Christian mass media) have all become less effective and even less possible in the current Russian context. Those changes in Russia have led to an increasing importance of personal evangelism. Based upon the preceding factors, it appears that it will be necessary to shift from these common approaches of public and mass evangelism to an increasing reliance upon personal relationship-based evangelism.

The Bible teaches that, "There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:10) Yet, one of the greatest crippling fears for many believers is sharing the gospel with someone they know. Most believers need training to have a clear understanding of the power of the gospel. Most Russian Christians need a more positive attitude toward personal evangelism. They require encouragement for intentional sharing of the gospel and for expecting positive results. If training can produce these changes in the believers, then they will be more active and effective in reaching people for Christ. As more new believers are added, the increase will lead to growth in current churches, and, eventually, it will lead to the planting of new churches. If every believer takes responsibility to share the gospel with others, it will be possible to reach the whole country of Russia and beyond with the Good News of Christ in our lifetime.

What follows forms the basis for an evaluative study performed on the evangelism training implemented through e3 Partners ministry in the Russian context. For more details on the study see Appendix A.

### **Biblical Foundation for Personal Evangelism: What Russian Evangelicals Need to Know**

First, it is important for believers to understand the content of the gospel, the means by which people are saved, and assurance of their salvation. These establish for

the believer the biblical foundation for personal evangelism. The Bible is clear on the nature of the gospel and its content being centered on the sacrificial and substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of humanity. In the process of evangelism, there are three parties involved: God, non-believers, and believers (John 4:35–38). The non-believers are the harvest. The believers do evangelism. God saves non-believers and sends out believers to be witnesses about Himself (John 20:21). In order for Russian evangelicals to become more effective at personal relationship-based evangelism, they are going to need to be equipped to understand the gospel, as well as their role in its advance.

### *Knowing the Gospel*

The Apostle Paul addressed the issue of knowing the true gospel in his letters. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminded the believers of the gospel he had preached to them, which they received and in which they stood (1 Cor. 15:1). The Apostle used four key verbs regarding Jesus Christ to outline the gospel that he preached: He *died*, was *buried*, was *raised* and then *appeared*. The death and resurrection of Christ are central ideas in Paul's definition. The fact that Jesus was buried supports the fact of Christ's death. The fact that Jesus appeared to people supports the fact of Christ's resurrection. In other words, Christ's death, burial and resurrection for our sins, which were affirmed by more than five hundred eyewitnesses, is the core content of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:2–6).

In his letter to the believers in Galatia, Paul contrasted the content and the meaning of the gospel with false ideas that arose among believers. He defined the gospel message related to the Law of Moses because of the Jewish believers who taught Galatians that to be saved one still needed to observe the regulations of the Mosaic Law in addition to their faith in Jesus Christ. According to Paul, the gospel message was justification from sin through faith in Jesus Christ and not by the Law, since by the works of the Law no flesh is justified. Contrasting the gospel message to the Law, Paul wrote, "A man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ." (Gal. 2:16) Paul had already stated his argument that neither circumcision (Gal. 2:3), the dietary laws (Gal. 2:11–14), nor man's origin (Gal. 2:15 and 3:28) will justify a believer. Only through faith in Jesus Christ is a man justified. The preposition "through" designates faith in Christ as the means of justification. This was significant to state, because there were no other means of salvation other than faith in Christ. Paul did not present that faith as the means of justification was a new idea, but he took his readers in Galatia back to the time of Abraham (Gal. 3:6), and showed them that "the Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham." (Gal. 3:8) So, justification by faith came before the Law of Moses and could not be invalidated by the Law that came later (Gal. 3:17). Therefore, justification by faith was not a new concept for the Jews, nor was the fact that the Gentiles are justified by faith a new idea, because Abraham received the promise that in him "all the nations will be blessed." (Gal. 3:8) What was new, then? What was so hard for the Jews to understand in the gospel message, and why were they enforcing the Law of Moses on the believers in Galatia and elsewhere? The content of their faith was new. Jesus Christ, as the content of faith by means of which justification was granted, was the new concept.

When God revealed Himself to Abraham, Abraham believed God, and the Lord

imputed righteousness to him. “Abraham would have known little about Christ, but he responded in faith to the revelation of God and was saved. Similarly, under the Law God promised life through faith. Whereas the Israelite under the Law knew about the importance of the blood sacrifice, his knowledge of a suffering Messiah was still limited—but he was saved by faith (Hab. 2:4).” As revelation of God increased, people were able to realize that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 2:16). Paul argued that, even in Abraham, the potential of justification through faith in Christ was present but not revealed (Gal. 3:16) until the coming of the faith (Gal. 3:23, 25). With the coming of faith in Christ, the promise to Abraham was realized (Gal. 3:29).

Even though the gospel message is evident from the Scriptures, many believers are not clear on what the gospel is. Martha Reese comments that lack of knowledge on what the gospel is and how to present the gospel is the easiest barrier to break down.

### *Understanding How People Are Saved*

The answer to a question about exactly what a person must believe to be saved is confusing for many Christians today. Such confusion opens wide the doors to miscommunication of the gospel and to various additional conditions that are not a part of the gospel at all, repeating, in a sense, the situation among the Galatian churches. It is clear from the first three chapters of the letter to Galatians that to be saved, a person must believe in the substitutional sacrificial death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

First of all, a person must believe in the substitutional sacrificial death of Christ. Paul is writing that Christ “gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.” (Gal. 1:4) Christ died for our sins. He rescued us from the power of evil. Christ died for us. It was His sacrifice for us. He did not have to die, but He died in our place according to the will of God. “Christ’s self-obligation not only procures for his people for forgiveness of their past sins; it delivers them from the realm in which sin is irresistible in the realm where he himself is the Lord.” Paul continues this thought, writing that Christ “loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (Gal. 2:20) Finally, he adds “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law.” (Gal. 3:13) That redemption and rescue was done by the cost of His life that He gave for us, dying in our place. He died to provide righteousness for us (Gal. 2:21). Thus, the fact of the substitutional sacrificial death of Jesus Christ is what a person must believe in order to be saved.

Secondly, to be saved, a person must believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is true that resurrection is not the main idea of the letter to the Galatians, and Paul is not writing about it, paying more attention to the death of Christ as our Savior. However, in the very first verse of the epistle to Galatians, Paul states that resurrection made it possible for Paul to be an apostle “not from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.” (Gal. 1:1) Introducing himself in the letter, Paul roots the authority of his call and teaching in the fact that Christ is risen. He is not dead; He is alive. Moreover, through the whole epistle to the Galatians, Paul talks about Jesus Christ as a living person (Gal. 1:1, 3, 6, 10, 12; 2:4, 16, 17, 20; 3:27, 29; etc.). For Paul, Christ died, and He was raised. “For Paul, belief in Jesus Christ entails identifying with Christ’s death and resurrection. . . For Paul the Christian life is one of conformity to Christ, of being ‘in Christ,’ of ‘dying with Christ,’

and so being raised with Christ.” This notion of resurrection as a vital part of the gospel message is seen more clearly in the first of Paul’s letters to the believers in Corinth (1 Cor. 15:1–8), where he defines the gospel as the news that Jesus Christ died (1 Cor. 15:3) and rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:4). Thus, to be saved, a person must believe in the substitutional sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is biblical understanding.

### *How and Where are People Saved When They Hear the Gospel?*

Some people trust Christ when they hear the gospel message during a church service. George Barna, however, argues that personal evangelism is the primary mechanism for salvation decisions. Nevertheless, how the believer communicates the message is important. “Whatever the setting in which one-on-one evangelism takes place, it will be ineffective, if believers do not understand the meaning of salvation, have not experienced it, or are not able to explain how it changed their lives.” It is important for the believer to communicate God’s love. Iain Murray points out that “no one will be concerned about himself until he learns about God. Only in the light of the moral perfections of God—his infinite excellence and goodness—can man learn his true condition. Men serve themselves and love themselves (Rom 1:25).”

Robert Coleman, in his classic work on evangelism, underscores the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in communicating the gospel. It is only the Spirit of God who enables one to carry on the redemptive mission of evangelism. “By his power the disciples were promised the very ability to do the works of their Lord (John 14:12). In this light, evangelism was not interpreted as a human undertaking, but as a divine project which had been going on from the beginning and would continue until God’s purpose was fulfilled.” Will Hayes McRaney specifically distinguishes the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism. He points out that, for the believer, the Holy Spirit precedes the witness, leads and enables the witness, and empowers the witness, giving him or her strength and boldness. In the non-believer, the Holy Spirit leads him, reveals the truth, and convinces of truth. In conversion, the Holy Spirit brings a non-believer from death to life, seals the new believer, and gives him the gifts of the Spirit. Charles Chaney also stresses correctly the power and role of the Holy Spirit in communicating the gospel. “We are to implore Him to do His work through us, to anoint and empower us, to be both faithful and effective in our evangelistic effort.”

Discussing how people are saved, Murray elaborates on two systems of belief. The Jews, who rejected Christ, are the permanent representatives of one system. Their position is characterized by the Apostle Paul as “seeking to establish their own righteousness.” (Rom. 10:3) They looked for acceptance from God on the basis of their own personal lives and characters. They believed that they could be right with God based on what they did and what they were. In contrast with that belief, the New Testament represents the Christian way of entrance into God’s favor as having no dependence at all on man’s doing. Our acceptance by God is not by any moral or religious efforts of our own. It is due solely to the righteousness of God, provided by God, “the gift of righteousness.” (Rom 5:17) “Righteousness not performed by us but imputed to us and received by us freely from God through faith in Jesus Christ. There is no third system.” For this reason, Scripture tells us that “Christ had to suffer.” (Acts 17:3) He had to suffer, because He is the substitute who met the full penalty of the divine law on behalf of others

(Isa. 53:6, 11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; 3:24; Gal. 3:13).

Masumi Toyotome and Jerry Savelle affirm that the desired result of evangelism is someone's trust in Christ. But if that does not happen, as long as the believer planted the seed, God's Word will not return void (Isa. 55:11). One may do the planting, someone else the watering. If one will do the planting, that makes him a winner, because it is God who gives the increase. Once the Word is sown, God will not allow it to return to Him void. That makes the sharer a winner with every person with whom he shares the gospel of Jesus. Whether we see a person trust Christ while in our presence is not the determining factor in successful, effective witnessing. The important thing is that we share the Word with others and that we believe God will cause it to bring results. Toyotome insists that a commitment, a deliberate decision of the will, irrevocable, involving a risk, needs to be seen in the new Christian. "A commitment is important in evangelism because the goal of evangelism is to bring the non-Christian to an on-going personal relationship with living Christ. A true personal relationship cannot begin without a commitment."

According to Hunter, people become Christians as a result of a "chain of experiences" over time. The chain of experiences in the person's life is orchestrated by God to make faith possible. Quoting Charles G. Finley, Hunter affirms that the experiences in the chain come from four sources: God (He also works through the three other sources), Christians (love, sharing good news), Christian truth (books, conversations, radio, etc.), and the convert himself or herself (his or her God-given personality). Lewis Drummond discusses at length the role of God in evangelism. He comes from the Trinitarian approach, fundamentally describing God the Father as author and creator of evangelism, God the Son as provider and means for evangelism, and God the Holy Spirit as the implementer of evangelism. Royal Speidel states that "evangelism happens through relationships. God uses one-on-one relationships, where people share their stories. Through continued contact, where the persons of faith witness both through their Christ-like living and friendly conversation, the one without Jesus is moved toward seeking a relationship with God." After hearing the gospel, one is to make his personal decision to trust Christ. As Udo Schnell correctly observed in the Scriptures, "Jesus' discourses and miracles do not work automatically or magically; despite their character of revelation they require a decision from the human side." It is in response to the gospel that the non-Christian should have saving faith.

Larry Moyer summarizes well the answer to the question, "What is saving faith?" The object of saving faith is Jesus Christ. Saving faith in Christ includes three basic elements. First, saving faith involves knowledge of who Christ is (John 5:24, Rom. 10:24, Acts 18:8, Eph. 1:13). Non-believers must know about Christ's humanity, His deity, His death and resurrection. Second, saving faith involves acceptance of Christ's person and work. The non-Christian needs to know that Jesus is the person who accomplished what was necessary for salvation and believe in it, being convinced of it as being true. Third, saving faith involves trust in Christ only for salvation. The non-Christian needs to realize, that his own good works cannot save him. It is trusting in Christ and Christ alone that will save him. At the same time, after making a decision for Christ, it is imperative to have assurance of salvation.

*Having Assurance of Salvation*

When a person trusts in Christ, his or her eternal security in Christ becomes a spiritual reality, whether or not one understands it or believes it. If we have trusted in Christ for personal salvation, security is a fact. Assurance is the certain recognition of that security. It is the understanding that, in Christ, the person has forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and God's protection here on earth.

J. Hampton Keathley gives five reasons why Christians may lack assurance: they cannot remember or point to a specific time when they trusted Christ; they question the procedure they went through when they trusted Christ; they have struggles with certain sins; they lack faith in the finished work of Christ; and they have heard wrong teaching that they should look to themselves and their works as the primary proof of their salvation.

Murray notes, "where the gospel is presented solely as forgiveness, only as a change of status before God, it may appeal to the self-interest of the unregenerate. The person may believe that message with his head, but not with his heart. There is no change in his conscience. There must also be a change of nature, a deliverance from self, a new life." When that happens, the person will have assurance of salvation.

Murray also raises a question about the meaning of submitting to the righteousness of God (Rom. 10:3) as part of assurance of salvation. Submitting to the righteousness of God cannot mean acceptance of God's holy character, for it is the recognition of God's holiness that makes the condemnation of sinners certain. But Paul is speaking of a righteousness which secures the very opposite of condemnation. It is the good news of the "righteousness of God revealed from heaven" as a gift that is a sure provision against the wrath of God (Rom. 1:17–18). The gift is Christ himself. Christ is the center of the doctrine of justification. God does not save sinners by overlooking their sin or lowering the demands of his righteousness. It is not love at the expense of justice. It is not mercy overriding law and setting it aside. Such a procedure would be a denial of the character of God. Thus, the character of God is the foundation for security of the believer's salvation. Because of God's character, a believer can have assurance of salvation.

On a practical note, it is helpful to take into consideration the suggestions from Keathley. He writes that there are three sources that we can use for our assurance. These are God's Word, the work of Christ, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. The assurance of our salvation from sin should come not from our feelings and works, but from the facts of Scripture and God's work in our lives.

Larry Moyer observes that there are those who struggle with assurance of salvation. That could be the case if they never understood the gospel as substitutional sacrifice of Christ for their sins (John 11:25–26), if they never grasped eternal security and continue to trust in their own works to get them to heaven (John 5:24, 10:28; Eph. 2:8–9), if they have been victims of unbiblical teaching (1 John 4:20), or if they are those who doubt everything (1 John 5:13).

Joseph Stowell summarizes it well when he states, "You and I could lose everything in this world and yet be fully certain about the world to come. Such certainty shelters us from consuming despair (Rom. 8:38–39)." Our sense of security is bolstered by the fact that the kingdom is a safe place to dwell, and all who are transferred into the kingdom find ultimate safety in the King.

Michael Cocoris points out that conversation about the assurance of salvation

should immediately follow the conversion of a person. It should be discussed based on the key biblical verses, such as 1 John 5:13. Cocoris suggests, however, using diagnostic questions before turning to the biblical text, in order to realize what is happening in the mind of the new believer.

Moyer is correct, saying that many new believers start out strong but struggle when a friend challenges their experience, difficulties arise, doubt springs up, or Satan sets out to deceive them. He elaborates on three characteristics of our salvation that give assurance to a new believer. First, God's saving love is not based on our performance, but on Christ's sacrifice on the cross (2 Cor. 5:21, Rom. 4:5). Second, the free offer of eternal life is just that—free (John 4:10; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 3:24, 11:29). Third, God's gift of eternal life is backed by a promise (John 10:28–29). “What ultimately solidifies our assurance is the fact that we are saved and secured by the work of Christ as testified in Scripture and promised by God.”

### **Conclusion: Evangelism Training is Vital**

The literature study and the Bible help to identify the main issues and content of personal evangelism and lead to addressing them in evaluation of the e3 Partners model of personal evangelism training. Evangelism is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Not all believers in Christ are equally gifted with respect to evangelism; however, all believers are commanded to do evangelism. We witness and proclaim the gospel in our lives and in our words. Evangelism is considered by some authors as an event, but other authors argue persuasively that it is a process of bringing Jesus to a pre-Christian. Evangelism should be creative to engage a modern-day person, whether in Russia or in any other context. The evangelist should not only give information about God, sin, man and salvation, but also present the unbeliever with an invitation to make a decision to put faith in Christ. The church is God's agent for proclaiming the gospel, and that proclamation is most effectively done by trained believers who are faithful in sharing the gospel with the people they know and meet in the course of their daily lives.

## **APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF SUPPORTING RESEARCH**

### **Purpose of the Study**

An applied research project was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the training seminar (methods and content) developed by e3 Partners for training believers in personal evangelism. The project took place in a real ministry context of e3 Partners in Russia in the years 2008 and 2009. e3 Partners is a church-planting ministry that equips believers to evangelize people in the world and to establish believers in their personal growth. e3 Partners empowers national spiritual leadership in various countries, including Russia, to equip and mobilize their churches to evangelize their nation by establishing thousands of multiplying churches. In light of the changes in Russia, personal evangelism by local believers has an increasing role to play in reaching the people of Russia for Christ.

It is not rare, however, for local evangelical believers in Baptist churches to have



only a vague understanding of the content of the gospel and, therefore, not to have good skills or confidence in communicating the gospel. When they talk to people they know, believers often try to tell them all they know about the Bible at once. They are prone to discussing some minor details of the biblical stories, missing the central point of the Bible's message to unsaved people. They may give biblical information, but they hesitate to give the needed invitation for the listener to make a commitment by trusting Christ as personal Savior. Believers also sometimes have pessimistic attitudes toward evangelism because of the increased opposition to and rejection of the gospel and evangelical teaching in their society. As a result, believers often are not eager to share the gospel on a regular basis. They share the gospel on occasion. After receiving a negative response, they may be more confirmed in their pessimistic view of sharing the gospel with non-believers. Christians often do not expect an affirmative response from people, even when they do share the good news of Jesus Christ with an unbeliever and offer an invitation to trust Christ. This research project sought to evaluate the effectiveness of personal evangelism training conducted by e3 Partners Ministry as a model for personal evangelism training in contemporary Russia.

By evaluating the personal evangelism training seminar of e3 Partners, it was possible to see that such training meets the needs of local believers in Russia by giving clear knowledge of the gospel content, improving the attitudes of the believers toward presenting the gospel, mobilizing them for sharing the gospel on a regular basis, and helping them to anticipate positive results from communicating the gospel. At the same time, the project led to formulation of some suggestions that would help to improve personal evangelism training in Russia, based on the evaluations received from those who received the training seminars conducted by e3 Partners.

In order to reach out to more people, believers need to try to share the gospel on a more regular basis and to be creative in their approach to people in their circle of influence. Believers need to have a sense of expectancy that some non-believers will respond positively to the gospel and will repent of their sins and make Jesus Christ their Savior and Lord. Ultimately, it is God who convicts, convinces, and saves sinners (Rom. 10:13, Eph. 2:8–9), but it is our part to communicate the gospel message to the world (Rom. 10:15). We are to bring the message of a Savior to the lost, and God will bring the lost to the Savior. We are God's fellow workers (1 Cor. 3:9) in the labor of bringing the gospel message to people. What a privilege that is! Many believers, however, miss this privilege because they are unprepared to give a clear presentation of the gospel and an invitation to respond.

### **Approach**

The effectiveness of a seminar can be assessed by the degree of desired change produced in the trainees as the result of the training. If the training seminar was effective, change can be seen, measured and evaluated. At the same time, evaluation and measurement of the results of the training seminar can demonstrate its weak aspects or even ineffectiveness. The latter would help to make needed changes in the training seminar itself to make it better and more effective.

To be able to measure the effectiveness of e3 Partners personal evangelism training seminar, a research instrument was developed. The research instrument is a survey that covers four categories of knowledge and skills that contribute to useful

change in the trainees. In this research project it was important to identify the rationale for the procedures in the research, the process used in developing the instrument, as well as the audience to whom the instrument would be administered, parameters to be measured, and, finally, the instructions and procedures to be used in administering the survey.

#### *Rationale for the Process of Instrument Development*

This instrument is needed to measure the effectiveness of the e3 Partners personal evangelism training seminar. My hypotheses for the project include the following four areas of interest. First, after personal evangelism training, believers will know the biblical foundations for personal evangelism and the content of the gospel. Second, after evangelism training, believers will have a more positive attitude toward personal evangelism. Third, after evangelism training, believers will intend to do personal evangelism on a more regular basis. Fourth, after evangelism training, believers will aspire to achieve better results when doing personal evangelism. First the instrument measures what the audience knows as well people's attitudes, intentions and aspirations toward the personal evangelism before the personal evangelism seminar. Then, the personal evangelism training seminar takes place for a group of people. After the training, the instrument measures what the audience knows, as well people's attitudes, intentions, and aspirations toward personal evangelism.

The process of the instrument development is reflected, first of all, in the areas that are addressed during the seminar training. The key elements of the gospel, its content, preparations, and presentation are addressed in the survey. The other survey statements deal with the practical aspects of gospel presentation, information about rejection, various stages of spiritual readiness to respond to the gospel, issues of methodology, and assurance of salvation.

#### *The Process of Instrument Development*

The process of instrument development included two main steps, namely identification of the areas of research and separation of the key concepts for studying each area. The first step was to identify the areas that I wanted to assess. These are found in the hypotheses. Each area included in the hypotheses was identified. According to the hypotheses stated above, the following four categories of research were listed:

1. **Knowledge of personal evangelism.** The training seminar is effective when, as one of its results, the trainees know the biblical foundations of personal evangelism better and understand more deeply the meaning and the content of the gospel.
2. **Attitude toward personal evangelism.** The training seminar is effective when, as one of its results, the trainees have a more positive attitude toward doing personal evangelism.
3. **Intentions to do personal evangelism.** The training seminar is effective when, as one of its results, the trainees are going to increasingly be intentional in doing personal evangelism after the seminar.
4. **Aspirations for achieving better results.** The training seminar is effective when, as one of its results, the trainees have the expectancy of people responding to the gospel in repentance and belief.

### *Identification of the Target Audience*

Believers in the Russian Baptist churches are the primary audience for the research. They are not a homogeneous group. Men and women (although mostly women) and young adults of various ages and ethnicity compose a normal Baptist church in Russia. They all speak Russian and consider themselves Russians. Some of them may have been church members for twenty to thirty years. Others trusted Christ and joined the church two or three years ago. Some of them hear sound messages from God's Word every Sunday. Others may have no pastor, and they read the Bible together trying to understand it and apply it to their lives. Some of them have less education, but all can read. e3 Partners invites them to the personal evangelism seminar to train and equip them with the "Evangelcube," an instrument for sharing the gospel.

### *Measurable Elements of the Research*

By measuring the elements of the research, it is possible to assess whether there was a change in the audience. For the first category of the perceived knowledge, where multiple-choice statements are used, it is possible to determine whether the respondents knew the right answers. The number of the right answers before and after the seminar can be compared. In the rest of the survey for the other three categories, it is possible to measure how the answers changed as a result of the training seminar. The goal of the seminar is to produce positive change. The analysis of the responses to the survey intends to measure that change in knowledge, attitudes, intentions, and aspirations toward personal evangelism. This article deals only with the knowledge aspect of the study.

## **Conclusion**

The research procedure and evaluation of the results demonstrated that personal evangelism training of e3 Partners addresses the issues of the nature of the gospel and clarity of the gospel presentation. e3 training encourages intentionality in presenting the gospel to the people and leads to aspirations of positive results in gospel presentations.

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