

# Developing a Passion for the Unchurched



Church Renewal Resource  
Evangelism Ministries USA/Canada Region  
Church of the Nazarene

# Acknowledgments

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Evangelism Ministries

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<http://www.usacanadanazarene.org/training-modules>

# Preparation Checklist

The following information will help you prepare to instruct this module.

- Review the material and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis.
- Check to ensure the following materials are available:
  - PowerPoint presentations
  - Participant booklet (copy as needed)
- Gather the following materials:
  - Pens and/or pencils
  - Other material you want to use
- Check the classroom for:
  - Projector
  - Sufficient number of tables and chairs for the participants
- Arrange the room so that each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

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## Developing a Passion for the Unchurched

The table below identifies each module section, the time allotted for each section, and a brief description of the section's objective. When you are familiar with this module, you may want to teach from this page rather than the detailed information.

SECTION	TIME	PAGE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
I. Module Introduction	5 mins.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce module, objectives, and outline.</li> </ul>
II. Lecture	25 mins.	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator shares ways to increase the passion for the unchurched.</li> </ul>
III. Small Group Exercise	20 mins.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator leads discussion of ways to increase passion in your heart.</li> </ul>
IV. Discussion	5 mins.	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants share thoughts about the information presented and insights about how the information will assist in their leadership.</li> </ul>
V. Action Planning	15 mins.	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants begin preparing their homework assignments.</li> </ul>
VI. Module Wrap-up	5 mins.	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close the module with your final comments regarding the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Module Time: 75 mins.</b>			

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# I. Module Introduction

(5 Minutes)

Notes

Distribute participant material. Let the participants know the material is theirs to keep and encourage them to take notes.

The participant material includes:

- Purpose
- Objectives
- “Fill-in-the-blanks” for the lecture
- Application exercises

*The purpose of this module is to **help us discover practical steps to increase our passion for the unchurched.***

*The objective for this module are:*

- To share practical steps to increase our own passion for those who are away from Christ and His Church.**

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## II. Lecture

(25 minutes)

### I. Introduction

- A. Ask the participants to write the answer to the following question in their participant material: **On a scale of one to ten (ten being highest), how would you rate your personal concern for the spiritual condition of the unchurched people living near you?**

B. Illustration:

Having found Christ at an early age, Ryan, a teenager, wanted to do just what God desired. Having heard his pastor talk about the importance of telling others about Jesus, he longed to share the Good News and see people come to Christ. But how? Talking to his high school classmates about Jesus was tough. When he tried, some made fun of him. Others tried to argue. After early attempts seemed to backfire, he feared speaking up even more. He seemed not to get anywhere with this witnessing thing. No one seemed willing to listen.

But knowing he needed to witness and others needed Christ, he came up with a new idea. He would carry tracts telling about Jesus in his school notebook. And when no one was around, he would leave these small pamphlets on the sink in the restrooms. He figured others would find and read the tracts, and then turn to Christ. So, in his eagerness to win others to Christ, he tried his new plan.

This method proved not to be a raging success. As a matter of fact, many times, Ryan returned only to find the tracts either water-soaked or scattered on the dirty floor. No one was being helped by his efforts. Mostly, the tracts were being wasted.

- C. This story isn't being told to discuss or debate the effectiveness of various methods of telling others about Jesus. Rather, Ryan's efforts highlight the concern this teen had for those who did not yet know Jesus. He wanted to tell others. He wanted his classmates to find Jesus. He wanted to do good. He was trying. He had a passion for those who did not know Jesus.
- D. And despite the weaknesses of his feeble attempts at witnessing, what this teen was doing was more than some ever have.
1. We have all heard messages and read Scripture that calls us

## II. Lecture (cont.)

to the mission of reaching out to those who don't yet know Jesus.

2. We may be inclined to mentally assign this responsibility to others who surely know more than we do about how to share Christ effectively. We excuse ourselves from the effort.
- E. And like the teen in our story, sometimes we do try, but become discouraged when our efforts to tell others about Christ seem to fall flat.
- F. This leads to the question: How can we ignite a passion for the unchurched in our own heart? How can we raise the temperature of our concern enough to break loose from our unwillingness even to try? Here are a few things that may help.

### II. To ignite a passion for the unchurched in us, here are three things we can all do...

#### A. We can move **CLOSER** to our Master.

##### 1. Illustration:

Imagine preparing the grill for your Fourth of July picnic. You arrange the charcoal, spray lighter fluid on the briquettes and ignite the fire. Noticing a couple of pieces of charcoal have separated from your carefully constructed pile, you see the need for attention. Off to the side, they neither heat, nor contribute to the cause of cooking your steaks. Off to the side, they are useless. To get them involved in the cooking process, they've got to be moved to the heat. Move them back to the center and their whole character changes. Near the heat, they take on the characteristics of the other briquettes. They get hot. And they become useful. They cook!

2. There's similarity between those charcoal briquettes and believers.
  - a. If we get too far away from our Lord Jesus and the fire of our **COMMITMENT** cools.
  - b. Losing that warmth, we contribute little toward the **MISSION** of winning those who don't yet know Jesus.
  - c. In our cooled-off condition, (the Lord calls it "luke-

## II. Lecture (cont.)

warmness,” Revelation 3:16), we just don’t **FOCUS** on the mission.

- d. Most often, our vision goes no further than our own **INTERESTS**. But, as we move closer to our Lord, and the situation changes. We come to life. The fire of His passion for the lost warms our heart.
- e. Instead of focusing on ourselves, we start feeling **COMPASSION** for those apart from Christ and begin to genuinely care about them. For us to possess a passion for those who don’t yet know Jesus, we must move closer to the Lord.

### B. We can understand the difference between “**FIRE-FIGHTERS**” and “**FIRELIGHTERS**.”

1. “**FIRE-FIGHTERS**” are those people who tend to extinguish the flames of our passion.
  - a. They are the critics, the **COMPLAINERS**.
  - b. They are the **NEGATIVE** people who can never see anything good.
  - c. They are the **FAULT-FINDERS** whose fingers are quickly pointed at the flaws of those around them.

#### 2. Illustration:

Hear about the father and son taking their donkey to the market? The man sat on the back of the animal while the boy walked. People along the way said, “What a terrible thing, a big strong fellow sitting on the donkey’s back while the youngster has to walk.” So the father, feeling a bit of guilt, dismounted and the son took his place. Soon onlookers remarked, “How terrible, this man walking and the little boy sitting.” At that, they both got on the donkey’s back—only to hear animal rights advocates complain, “How cruel, two people crushing one poor donkey.” Off they came. But other bystanders quickly commented, “How crazy! The donkey is carrying nothing and two people are walking.” Finally, trying to please the crowd, the exasperated father and son tried carrying the donkey! They never did make it to the market.



## II. Lecture (cont.)

3. The father and son found that “fire-fighters” are everywhere. These people can quickly suck the oxygen from our souls. Instead of building you up, they are adept at tearing you down. Hang around “fire-fighters” and you will soon find your frustration increasing and your own passion cooling.
4. On the other hand, “**FIRE-LIGHTERS**” fan the flames of godly passion in our heart.
  - a. They are the **ENCOURAGERS**, the helpers, the cooperative supporters whose actions and words of appreciation inspire us to move ahead.
  - b. Their **WILLINGNESS** to see the good in us lifts our spirits. Their “thank yous” brightens our day.
  - c. Spend time around “fire-lighters” and we discover we are better than we thought! Our **COMMITMENT** is warmed by their enthusiasm and encouragement.
5. John Maxwell writes, “I have yet to find a person who did not do better work and put forth greater effort under a spirit of approval than under a spirit of criticism. Encouragement is the oxygen of the soul.” (John C. Maxwell, Developing the Leader Within You, 107)
6. Illustration:

A woman traveling in the west and enjoying the beautiful mountain scenery rounded a curve and was surprised to see the road ahead seemed to end in the face of the mountain. The road narrowed to one lane and as she drove closer, she saw a sliver of an opening into a tunnel. The passage was so narrow it looked impossible to drive through without scraping the rock walls. Then, she saw a hand-lettered sign scrawled on the right of the tunnel entrance. The message had been left by someone who had passed that way before. It proclaimed simply, “Yes, you can.”

7. Everyone needs people who will tell us, “Yes, you can.” We need those who believe in us, who encourage, challenge and **INSPIRE** us to accomplish more than we would otherwise attempt. We need “fire-lighters.”

## II. Lecture (cont.)

8. To raise the temperature of our **PASSION** for the unchurched, find encouragers, people who will support and lift you. Find people who believe in you. Keep a file of encouraging letters and comments. (There will be days when you will need to read them.)
9. Illustration:

A bank examiner, once a tall gangly teenager in the church youth group, e-mailed his youth minister fifteen years later. He wrote,

“...I’ve been heavily involved with youth ministry for about the last ten years and just this year began serving in the leadership of Bible Study Fellowship. The more I’ve grown over the years, the more I’ve realized that serving in ministry really is a privilege. ... My thinking of you brought back a flood of memories from my ‘younger years,’ and particularly the impact you had on my life. I’m truly and eternally grateful you introduced me to Jesus Christ. Not that life has been perfect since then (it seldom is), but I can’t imagine living without the hope, joy and eternal security that comes from that relationship. Who knows what my life would look like right now if I had not met Jesus? Having worked with kids a fair amount over the years, I know full well what a pain they can be. When I think about that further, it makes me appreciate those (such as you) who fed into my life at that age. Thank you for your patience and faithfulness to plant and harvest seed in my life. My life will never be the same.

In Christ,  
John”

The youth minister rejoiced when he read the e-mail. Appreciation raises our spirits. Others’ success causes us to celebrate. To know ministry can be multiplied in the next generation keeps us plugging. Encouragement, even from the past, increases enthusiasm.

10. Hang around people who will say by their words and **ACTIONS**, “I believe in you.” “You are doing great!” “Keep up the good work!” “Yes, you can.” “I appreciate you.” When you find and draw around you these supporting people, be their encourager, as well. You will discover both they and you become better in the process.

## II. Lecture (cont.)

### C. We can learn about **PASSIONATE** people and let their examples inspire us.

#### 1. Illustrations:

“People with a purpose”—that’s the kind of people who can inspire us. After Bill Hybels led Willow Creek Church to a few thousand in attendance, he maintained a great undying passion to reach more unsaved families. Today over 15,000 worship weekly.

Lee Iacocca, with nerve and commitment, brought the failing, nearly-bankrupt Chrysler Corporation back to solvency. A man who found himself in an elevator with Chrysler’s CEO. Wanting to be pleasant, he asked, “You are Lee Iacocca, are you not?” He acknowledged that he was. “Mr. Iacocca,” said Williams, “I want to tell you how much I enjoy your television commercials advertising Chrysler.” To this compliment Iacocca retorted, “Sir, I couldn’t care less what you think of my commercials. I want to know, what kind of car do you drive?”

Billy Graham, with unwavering faith and life-long persistence, has made a huge difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands. God has mightily used this minister with integrity and passion.

#### 2. **FOCUS**. “People with a purpose.”

a. Passionate people possess a clear, single-minded vision that inspires and **PROPELS** them to accomplish more than expected.

b. Passion makes ordinary people **EXTRAORDINARY**.

#### 3. Some of the examples I’ve mentioned perhaps do not share our values. Some may not be committed to the same Lord to whom we are committed.

a. But, their drive, their enthusiasm, their perseverance, their vision and yes, their passion, can inspire us to take eagerly our disciple-making mission.

b. Their passion can stir our passion. “A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has unlimited enthusiasm,” said Charles Schwab (Draper’s Quotations for the Christian World, 3176)

## II. Lecture (cont.)

4. **PASSION** makes a difference. We can lift the level of our passion.
  - a. We can move closer to our Lord. When we do, the fire of His **LOVE** for humankind will fill us.
  - b. We can find people who **BELIEVE** in us. We can surround ourselves with “fire-lighters.”
  - c. And while we will never be able to silence all the “fire-fighters”—those who would extinguish our enthusiasm with their criticism and complaints, we can learn not to **ALLOW** their negativity to control our mind and heart.
  - d. We can use the **INSPIRATION** that comes from passionate people to encourage, guide and lift us.
  - e. There are things we can do to **IGNITE** a passion for the lost in our own heart.
  - f. Our passion will make a **DIFFERENCE**.

### III. Small Group Exercise

(20 minutes)

The small group exercise portion of the module provides an opportunity for the teams to discuss the information presented and how it applies to their church.

The questions are:

- Describe enthusiastic people. Who do you know who understands or enjoys unbelievers?
- What might they tell you if you asked them the source of their passion?
- Which of their behaviors and attitudes can you adapt?

Remain available during the exercise time to answer questions. Announce to the group when five minutes remain. Again announce to the group when two minutes remain.

### IV. Discussion

(5 minutes)

The discussion portion of the module provides an opportunity for people to share their thoughts about involving people in ministry and techniques used to recruit people.

If you're ahead of schedule, the discussion can go a few extra minutes. However, it's easy to lose track of time so watch the clock.

Open the floor for discussion. If the group is hesitant to discuss, start with one of the questions they discussed during the small group activity.

## V. Action Planning

(15 minutes)

This section gives the participants an opportunity to discuss their plans for using this information when they return to their church.

The homework assignment for this module includes answering and reflecting the following questions:

1. Who in your community or congregation possess the gift of evangelism?
2. Who prays for lost people?
3. Who are the bringers (those who invite unchurched people) in your congregation?
4. Would you profit from meeting (perhaps for an occasional coffee) with these two or more outreach-focused people?

Let's take about 15 minutes to discuss how you plan to use this information as a church. In your material you have an Action Planning/Reporting page with your homework assignment. You will probably need to continue this discussion when you return home.

Move among the groups to answer specific questions. Listen for discussions that are not focused on the assignment and guide them completing the questions. Let the groups know when there are five minutes remaining and ask them to begin to conclude their discussions.

## VI. Module Wrap-Up

(5 minutes)

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

- Ask participants to share their thoughts about the module.
- Answer any questions and provide encouragement.