

The Compass

A tool for disciplers

COMMUNICATE



THE FOUR LAWS

CONVERSATION ON THE JOURNEY

“God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.” That phrase has been read or heard by millions of people all over the world. It is conjectured that more people have been introduced to the Gospel by that simple statement than by any other in the history of the church. It is, of course, “Law One” of The Four Spiritual Laws, a tool that God has used to draw millions to Himself.

As this appointment is on sharing the Four Spiritual Laws it may be good to get the ball rolling with some opening questions, or a quiz: Ask your disciple to recite or write out from memory as much of the booklet as they can remember. You might ask them, “If they were to change one thing about the presentation what would it be? (Give a few of your own.) Law One was really contextualized to the audience it was written for. Why do you think Dr. Bright added it? (Most all presentations at that time began with the bad news that we were going to hell.)

Mileage varies these days on the effectiveness of The Four Laws. Some love it because it helps them communicate complex truths simply and clearly (or because they first understood the Gospel when someone shared it with them). Others reject it out of hand because it seems like a canned presentation. Wherever your disciple is coming from in experience and attitude, you can help them. Everyone will benefit from a proper understanding of how to use the Four Laws (and how not to use it).

Setting, setting, setting.

So will the exact same presentation of the Gospel work in any setting? Of course not. Don't be stupid. Not to be insulting, that's just really a ridiculous assumption. The Gospel never changes, but the notions that need to be emphasized, the starting point, the level of depth pursued, the objections responded to, the metaphors used to clarify, and on and on, can all vary. Among other things, they can be affected by the relationship between parties, length of the conversation, background of the non-Christian, knowledge of the Christian, maturity of either party, and so on. So does that mean that a standardized tool like the Four Laws has no value? No, of course not.

Even though you should expect variety in conversations about the Gospel, it is extremely helpful to have a crystal clear understanding of the essence of the Gospel and how to express it. With it, you can easily modify your conversation to be most helpful to the person you are sharing with. Without it, you are likely to find yourself rambling on and failing to communicate clearly.

Think of an architect. Let's say his name is, oh I don't know, Mike Brady. Mike here has gone to school to learn how to design houses. He knows all about

THIS WEEK'S EXCURSION

The Four Spiritual Laws is a revolutionary tool that changed the way evangelism is done all over the world. In this lesson you'll learn three effective methods for using the tool.

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MORE OF THE CONVERSATION

ideal room dimensions, code requirements, use of space, light, and structural stuff. I, on the other hand, don't know jack about architecture, so that was probably a pretty lame list. Anyway, the point is that Mike has been trained in the essence of home design. Because he has learned the proper form of a house he can apply that knowledge in a variety of construction settings.

But let's say Mike is more of a free spirit. He could have said, "Every house I design will be different. Some will be built on a sloping property; some will have a basement; some will have lots of bedrooms. Since each will be different, there's no point getting trained. I'll just make it up as I go along." With that perspective, his houses would be pretty lame. He'd be a lousy architect. Clearly there is a place for getting trained in the basics, so that you will have a core skill set from which to draw on in various contexts.

I would argue that when it comes to distilling out the essence of the Gospel, the Four Laws does about as good a job as you are likely to find. If you are looking for a core skill set to give someone who wants to be an effective evangelist, knowledge of The Four Laws is it.

Here are three different ways to use it. I'd recommend you train your disciple in each.

Read through the booklet with someone.

As the heading suggests, this is the option where you read through the booklet with someone. This is classic Crusade. When in a conversation with someone about spiritual things you can ask them if they'd be willing to give you their opinion on a four point outline of the Gospel. If they agree, fantastic. Bust it out and read it to them. On this CD there is a file entitled "Four Laws Script." It provides a full script of what you can say, read, and write when going through the Four Laws. Take a look; it's pretty solid. Just remember that if it sounds like you are reading a script, you're not doing it right. The purpose of that script is to help you identify and clarify key points of the Gospel and communicate them effectively.

Share it from memory.

Often times I will work with students who balk at the idea of going through a booklet with someone. They think that a booklet would be perceived as canned or inauthentic. You know why they think that? Because sometimes it would be. Sometimes, particularly in this culture, anything pre-printed reeks of establishment. People are more interested in authenticity and personal experience, than in an official presentation. Also, they might feel weird being read to when chances are they've been literate for years.

So what do you do - go back to an incoherent ramble? No! All you need to do is share the essence of the Gospel as expressed in The Four Laws without the booklet. In other words, memorize it. If you and your disciple would commit every word of the booklet to memory you would have a fantastic treasure stored up in your head. I mean every word. Memorize the laws, and the Scripture, and the clarifying statements. Skip the page numbers, but memorize pretty much everything else. It would be great if you could even draw out the diagrams on the back of a napkin. Then, as the situation calls for, you can draw on that clear summary and share your faith conversationally in a way that is comfortable and relevant, and still stays on track. Doing that well will require some practice. Begin with the discipline of memorization.

Hand it out.

The final option is the simplest. With an introductory comment, hand someone a copy of the booklet. Dr. Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade and author of The Four Laws often used this method when he traveled. After getting to know his seatmate on an airplane he would say, "The things this booklet talks about changed my life. If you are interested I'd love to talk to you about it. Would you like a copy to read yourself?" Then, if the individual chooses to read it, and wants to talk further, they do. If not, no problem.

NEXT STEPS

Here are three applications points for this lesson:

1. After they have seen you share the Four Laws in a couple of different settings, ask them to do it. It may be a major faith step for them, so be encouraging. The files, *Four Laws Script.pdf*, and *Four Laws Chart.pdf* can help you prepare them. Both are included on this CD.
2. Have your disciple memorize the Four Laws. Maybe it would be best to memorize one law a week for four weeks. (I'm a math genius.)
3. Finally, help them think through a couple of phrases they could use when handing the Four Laws to a friend, or someone they've just met. Challenge them to give out one copy to someone before your next discipleship appointment.

SIDE TRAILS

Four Laws Script.pdf

Four Laws Chart.pdf

Included on this CD.

EVEN MORE OF THE CONVERSATION

(I KNOW, IT'S A LONG ONE)

I recommend you talk about each of these methods with your disciple. Of course, better than merely explaining how they could do it, is also showing them how you do do it. Weekly (or at least every other week) you and your disciple should be out sharing your faith. Share with RAs, with your friends, with their friends, with folks on your hall, or in your target audience. Use the Four Laws, share from memory, share your testimony, and by all means let your disciple do the talking when she's ready. Also, keep in mind that you don't need to cover all three methods in one week. All year long you are working to help them learn to communicate their faith. Spread these ideas out as seems best to you.