

## Close Proximity

Our formula for Maximum Impact was:

$$HP + CP + CC = MI$$

High Potency plus *Close Proximity* plus Clear Communication equals Maximum Impact.

If we are going to impact the lost in Brownsburg, we must be in Close Proximity to them. But let's face it; nobody is really seeing our light shine simply because they see us walking down the Wal-Mart aisle. Close Proximity is more than a matter of distance. It is about relationships.

I know it's amazing, but have the accusations of the Pharisees against Jesus ever sunk in. In **Luke 5:30** they asked, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (ESV). In **Luke 15:2**, they grumbled, "This man receives sinners and eats with them" (ESV). In **Luke 7:34**, Jesus said that He had been accused of being "a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (ESV).

Why was Jesus a friend with these people? He was seeking to save the lost. Just as a doctor can only do his job by spending time with the sick, a Savior can only do His job by spending time with the lost. Considering how lost we were, aren't we glad somebody spent time with us while we were sinners?

Where can we begin? Why not take a cue from Jesus. What was the big deal the Pharisees kept harping on? Jesus ate with sinners. Start there.

How about inviting your non-Christian neighbors over for a cookout? At work, don't divide up into the Christian table and the non-Christian table. Mix and mingle, developing relationships with non-Christians. Let them see how you really live. Only then will your light shine for them. Do what Levi (Matthew) did in **Luke 5:29**. Have a get together and invite both your Christian and non-Christian friends. What a great opportunity to develop relationships across the board.

Take stock of the areas in which you already come in contact with non-Christians. What about PTA, little league, Rotary, etc. Don't just come and go, afraid to get too close to the sinners. Strike up conversations. Get to know about their kids, their families, their desires and goals. Let them see the genuine compassion and love you have for them.

Of course, we must remember bad company corrupts good morals (**I Corinthians 15:33**). We must not let our desire to be around the lost lead us into sin. But we can never lead the lost to Jesus unless we start developing relationships with them.

No doubt, if we do this, some will accuse us of being friends with the wrong people. But, as Jesus said in **Luke 7:35**, "wisdom is justified by all her children" (ESV).

### Edwin L. Crozier

PS: Don't forget. If you want to be part of the Practical Evangelism class, let Edwin know.