

## **People Group/Interfaith Evangelism (PG/IE) Interfaith Evangelism Specialist Program (IES)**

Interfaith Evangelism (IE) is critical to an overall evangelism strategy for three significant reasons. One reason is that in this highly diverse culture we need to educate Christian people about the beliefs and practices of other faiths. It is incumbent for believers to have some understanding of them to minimize misconceptions and to enhance personal relationships.

We also need to educate Christians because many religions seek to proselytize Christians to their beliefs. Thus, we must prepare our people to defend their faith (1 Peter 3:15) and not be deceived by false teachers proclaiming false doctrines (2 Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6f; 2 Peter 2:1; 2 John 7-8).

The most important reason for IE is that we are commanded in the Bible to carry the message of salvation to all peoples (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Our conviction is that salvation is found in no other name but Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5-6). Thus, we seek to equip our people for evangelizing those in all faiths in ways that are loving and sensitive, yet uncompromising (Ephesians 4:15).

One way the PG/IE team will respond to these needs is through the Interfaith Evangelism Specialist (IE Specialist) program. The program's objective will be to enlist leaders across North America who can help educate and equip Southern Baptists in the area of IE.

The IE Specialist training events are for laypersons, pastors, Bible teachers, and others who are interested in IE ministry or simply desire an in-depth study of a specific IE subject for their own edification. IE Specialist training events, led by PG/IE staff or approved trainers, on specific IE subjects, will be conducted in cooperation with our state partners. Those desiring to lead short seminars in their churches, local associations, or state conventions on IE subjects will be required to attend the training events plus complete additional requirements for NAMB IE Specialist certification.

Requirements for certification include the following:

1. Attend an IE Specialist training event (12-16 hours) on a specific IE subject conducted by the NAMB PG/IE team staff or approved teacher (these are usually done in partnership with Baptist state conventions, associations, or local churches-- some future training events may be conducted online).
2. Take and pass a basic written informational test on the IE subject as administered by the IE Specialist trainer (will be conducted in most cases by email).
3. Read books, published articles, online articles, and other relevant materials as assigned by the IE Specialist training leader and submit synopses of contents to IE Specialist trainer.
4. Submit a 2-3 page outline on the IE subject for conducting an IE Awareness event (1-2 hours in length) to the IE Specialist trainer for approval.
5. Make personal contact with an active member of the IE subject organization (preferred would be an official representative such as a minister or other leadership position). Discuss his or her faith's beliefs and practices and how they compare and contrast with evangelical Christianity, Attempt to share the biblical Gospel when appropriate. Submit a one page report of the encounter to the IE Specialist trainer. (If personal contact with an appropriate representative is not possible, the trainer may suggest an alternative encounter.)
6. Upon completion and approval of all the above requirements, conduct an IE Awareness conference (1-2 hours) in an appropriate venue as approved by the trainer. If possible have trainer be present for evaluation. If not possible, the candidate may submit a video tape, audio tape, or online stream as agreed to by the trainer for evaluation.
7. Upon completion of all above requirements, the IE Specialist will inform the candidate's Baptist state IE Coordinator who will publicly present the candidate's signed certificate at a time and place they deem appropriate.

Some people were previously trained in IE subjects. Refresher courses on various topics will be conducted for those wishing to renew their involvement in IE and be part of the IE Specialist strategy.