

Demystifying Evangelism: How to Share Your Faith without Fear

INTRODUCTION

1. Most people experience great thoughts of fear and anxiety at the possibility of engaging in public evangelism. The reasons for this trepidation are numerous and multifaceted, but they must be overcome in order that the great commission may be realized.
2. By reading books, attending seminars, listening to teachings, instructing others, and even by ignoring the agonizing feelings of shame we stuff down in our hearts we deceive ourselves into believing that we are actually doing the work of an evangelist. All the while, we rarely, if ever, are intentionally persuading and giving invitation to unbelievers to respond to the gospel.
3. God's way of using broken, weak, human vessels to proclaim the reality of His Kingdom is by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling on the inside and giving us strength to be bold witnesses.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Realize you are in good company if you feel any amount of anxiety at the thought of being a witness for Jesus. The disciples all abandoned Jesus when he was arrested and sentenced to be crucified. But, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit would give weak men and women power from heaven to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Why Evangelize?

1. Jesus is worthy to receive the reward of his suffering!

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, **10** And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Psalms 2:8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

2. We are commanded in scripture to go (intentional activity) and proclaim (put in words) the message of the gospel of Jesus.

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. **17** And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; **18** they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

3. God desires for people to be saved and come into relationship with him.

1 Timothy 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all...

4. People, that God loves, are dying and going to hell every day!

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

What is Evangelism?

The word “evangelism” is not found in the scriptures, but the word “evangelist” is. If you look at the root greek word for evangelist it literally translates out to “good” - “I bring a message”, or you can say “I bring a good message.”

“Sharing the message of Jesus death and resurrection with Non-Christians and calling them to repent and believe.” -Mack Stiles

“Sharing the story of Jesus, in love, with someone you love.” Jack Deere

"Success in evangelism," according to Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade, "is taking the initiative to share Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God."

I. What Evangelism Is Not:

- A. Evangelism is not defined by any one method. The message never changes, but there are a variety of methods, some more effective in a particular culture than another.
- B. Evangelism doesn't always involve public outreach. Most evangelism will happen with our family, friends, co-worker, and people in the circles we already run in.
- C. Evangelism is not about you trying to get someone saved. You cannot, no matter how hard you try, get someone saved. You don't have the power to save anyone. Only God saves through Jesus, by the power of His Spirit.
- D. Evangelism is not saying whatever you think someone would like to hear in order to get them to pray a “sinner's prayer”.
- E. Evangelism is not arguing with someone about creationism vs. evolution, young earth vs. old earth, republican vs. democrat vs. libertarian, or any other thing that does not communicate the good message that Jesus died for sinners to be reconciled to God by the power of grace through a response of faith in Christ.
- F. Evangelism is not providing humanitarian aid while neglecting proclamation of and invitation to respond to the gospel

How Should We Evangelize?

1. Lot's of prayer
 - a) The theme of scripture shows that God dispatches angels, releases grace, opens hearts only if we pray.
2. Intentionally (actions and word)
 - a) Our natural human default is to float through life and take the easiest road. We must aggressively fight against this tendency if we desire to see people saved.
3. Confidently
 - a) Embarrassment, Timidity, and Apologies win no one to anything ever! These approaches certainly will not be effective in such important matters as engaging people in spiritual and eternal decisions.
4. Lovingly
 - a) Treat others the way you would like to be treated. This doesn't always mean being “nice”, but it always means showing honor and respect.
5. Wisely

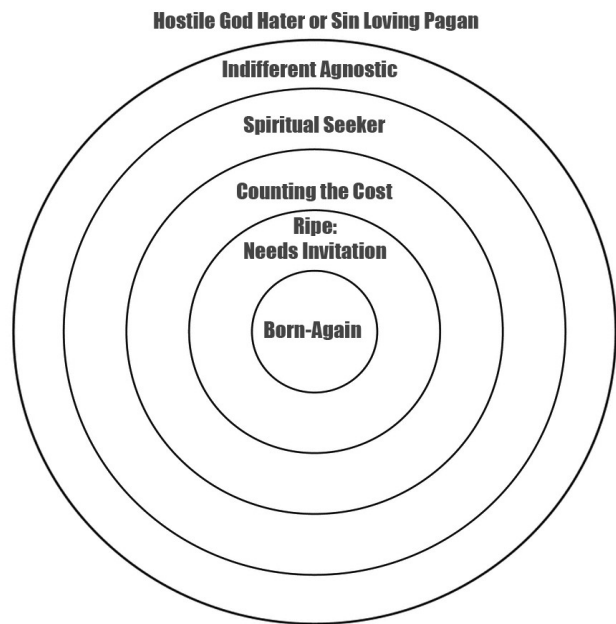
- a) The way that you share Christ with a stranger in the checkout line is going to be very different than the way you share Christ with a close family member or friend.
- b) You can't use the same tool on every person and expect it to do the job. Realize you have one solution, but a lot of tools in your bag to reach that solution.

Rick Warren says, “If the only tool you think you have is a hammer then you will treat everyone like a nail.”

- c) As you are evangelizing ask the Holy Spirit how ripe the person is that you are speaking with and what your response should be.

6. With Opportunity and Invitation

- a) You can tell your story of Jesus all day long, but unless you invite the hearer to respond to how God is possibly stirring their hearts they may never respond in a specific action of faith.



Spiritual Questioner Evangelism Tips

1. Smile, be friendly, confident, and have fun.
2. Memorize the questioner that you want to engage people with, but have a copy on hand to show.
3. Before conducting the questioner practice sharing your testimony of experiencing forgiveness for your sins, God's life in you, and knowing Jesus in a personal way. (your story of Jesus)
4. Before conducting the questioner refresh yourself on how to give a clear, brief, and simple gospel presentation. Campus Crusade's "4 Spiritual Laws" are very helpful in learning how to give a clear gospel presentation.
5. Take a deep breath and let God relieve you of any false pressure you feel to "get people saved". You make yourself available, engage people with Jesus, call them to repent and believe and leave the results up to God. He either stirs a persons heart, or not.
6. When approaching people to ask them to take the questioner be upfront by telling them that you are a Christian, from a local church, a Bible student... and that you are doing research on what people in your city think about spiritual things. Ask them if they would be willing to answer a few questions and share some of their thoughts about spiritual matters.
7. If they decline, smile and say "Bless you! Have a great day!"
8. If they are willing to participate in the questioner ask them if it would be alright if you anonymously audio record their response as a way to collect the results. Have your partner record their response on your personal smartphone, or recording device while simultaneously praying silently for God to open their heart to the gospel.
9. As you ask the interviewee the questions listening closely and do not try to formulate a response to their answers. Just respond with a brief personable comment such as, "wow, that's great" or "thank you" or "very interesting" and move on to the next question.
10. Your goal is to lovingly, and thoughtfully confront the interviewee with the person of Jesus and give them opportunity to decide how they will respond to who He is.
11. Try to answer any objections simply and briefly, but be very careful to not get side tracked from focusing on their response to Jesus. If they have serious philosophical, intellectual, or political hangups with religion just offer to refer them to a resource that may help them work out those difficulties. If they seem to only want to argue about peripheral non-Jesus related topics just politely tell them that you are very thankful for them sharing their thoughts and taking the time to participate in the questioner, but you want to make sure to not get too sidetracked from the questioner topic. (Very different from having genuine heartfelt questions. Listen carefully to hear the deeper question behind their objection. ex. Did a Christian hurt them? Family member that's gay? Shame?) Real heartfelt objections can be inroads for the gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit if the person is trying to prove a point, or sincerely needs some clarity on an issue.
12. Ultimately, you want an opportunity to share how you came to know the forgiveness, life, peace and salvation that is found only in Jesus. (share very briefly. DO NOT TAKE LONGER THAN 2 MINTUES!)
13. If they are willing to listen to your testimony, at the end, ask them what they are thinking about as you shared your story with them. Ask them if they would be willing to put their full trust in Jesus to give them the new life that He has for them.
14. If they respond positively ask them for their contact information (preferably their email address) so that you could check in with them in a couple of days to see how they are doing.
15. Thank them for their time and bless them as they go.