



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

NOTES

The Command to Evangelize

In Mark's Gospel Jesus says:

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:15

Jesus charges His disciples with the responsibility to see that every person hears the Good News of His saving love. This is a part of Jesus' plan for our lives. In John He goes on to tell us:

*Ye have not chosen me, but I have **chosen** you, and **ordained** you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...*

John 15:16 (KJV)

Every Layman Called and Ordained

We have been both **called** and **ordained** by Jesus to this task. Now evangelism may not be our primary spiritual gift, but every Christian is called and ordained to the task of evangelism. Many of us have convinced ourselves that we can't do evangelism, and we excuse ourselves from the task. Jesus not only gives the command to evangelize, but He also gives us the knowledge to be able to do it.

The Knowledge to Evangelize

Jesus said:

Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Matthew 4:19

In this passage Jesus promises to make us fishers of men. He is going to teach us how to do evangelism so that we can win people to Christ. The secret of learning to do evangelism is following Jesus and doing what He commands. If you are not a fisher of men, I don't know whom you are following, but I would wonder if it is Jesus. When you find the two words "**I will**" and Jesus is speaking, this constitutes a promise.

The Son of God says, "I will make you **Fishers of Men.**"

The Lord does not want us to be obnoxious, but He does want us to be ever at the task of reaching the lost. Everyone we know without Christ is to be a candidate for the Gospel. However, we are to use tact and wisdom in speaking with people. If they don't respond, we are not to force the issue. We must back off and continue to pray and wait for the Spirit of God to work in their lives.

Definition of Evangelism

Lorne Sanny, the Chairman of the Board of the Navigators, says:

Evangelism is taking a good look at Jesus Christ and then telling someone what you saw.

This is what John is saying in his first epistle.

*That which we have **seen** and **heard** we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

1 John 1:3

A witness is one who reports what has happened. This is what God expects us to do. David expresses this very well when he says:

*Let the redeemed of the Lord **say so**, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*

Psalms 107:2

Evangelism Is Helping a Person

- To recognize his need for Jesus Christ
- To understand **how to** receive Jesus into his life

Our job is to proclaim the Gospel in such a way that people understand their need for Him. In doing this we need to remember that the Gospel is Good News and not hell, fire and damnation. Our job is to proclaim the Word of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring conviction of sin. Some Christians try to trade jobs with the Holy Spirit. We are most effective when we proclaim the Word in such a way that the Holy Spirit is not hindered in His work. If we are faithful in this task, oftentimes our efforts will be rewarded with the privilege of assisting a person to receive Jesus Christ.

He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalms 126:6

In Ephesians 4:11, we are told that God has given us evangelists. These are specifically instructed to perfect the saints: to instruct, prepare and equip the saints to carry out the work of evangelism. Their job is not simply to do the work for us, but to train us in evangelism.

Not only has Jesus commanded us to evangelize and given us the knowledge, but He has also given us the power.

The Power to Evangelize

Jesus said:

*But **you shall** receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses** to Me in **Jerusalem**, and in **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to **the end of the earth**.*

Acts 1:8

When the Holy Spirit comes into the life of a believer at conversion, He gives him power to witness to others about Christ. We need this power since there is a natural reluctance to talk with others about Jesus. Also, God wants us to have a world-wide witness. He wants to use us to carry the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth. He not only intends for us to start in our Jerusalem (home town) but then to be used in our county, state and eventually to the ends of the earth. If we are to do all this, we will need the Holy Spirit's power. God's plan for us involves a life style of evangelism.

Life Style of Evangelism

Paul was a good example of someone whose life style was one of evangelism. In Colossians 1:28 Paul says:

*So **naturally** we proclaim Christ! We warn everyone we meet and we teach everyone we can, all that we know about Him, so that, if possible, we may bring **every man** up to his full maturity in Christ. **This** is what I am working at **all the time**, with all the **strength** that God gives me.*

Colossians 1:28,29 (JBP)

Both an Act and a Process

Oftentimes we think of evangelism as an act, as if it were something we do for a given time and then it is over, like giving out tracts for an hour, or doing church visitation one night a week! In Matthew 13:4-23 Jesus likens evangelism to a farmer sowing seed in his field.

Planting is a process for farming.

NOTES

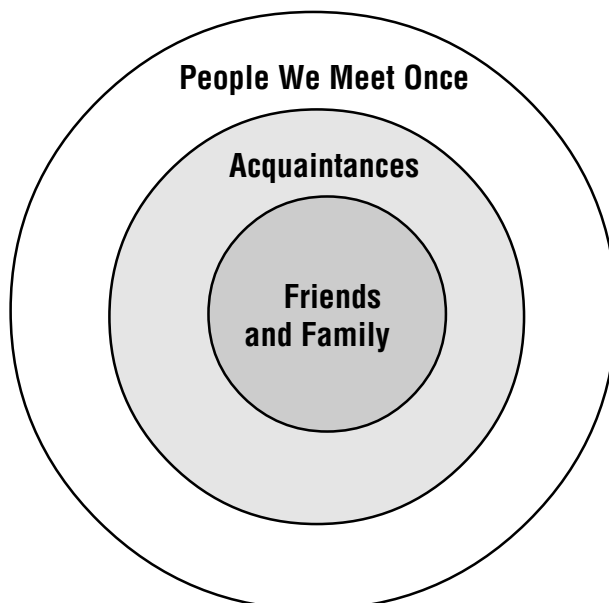
Farming	Evangelism
• Select the field	• Find a person
• Prepare the ground	• Pray for the person
• Sow the seed	• Present the Gospel
• Water and cultivate	• Friendship and help
• Harvest the seed	• Lead person to Christ
• Conserve the fruit	• Follow-up

A good witness understands this process and learns to assess the situation and do what is needed to further the process. If we think that every witnessing situation is a harvesting situation, we will probably not be very effective.

Relationships in Evangelism

In our lifetime we develop many types of relationships with people around us. Most of these relationships can be divided into three categories:

- People we meet once
- Regular acquaintances/friends
- Occasional acquaintances



God wants to use you in all of these relationships to win people to Christ. However, we are most responsible for people in the inner two categories. Listed here are some practical considerations for each of these relationships.

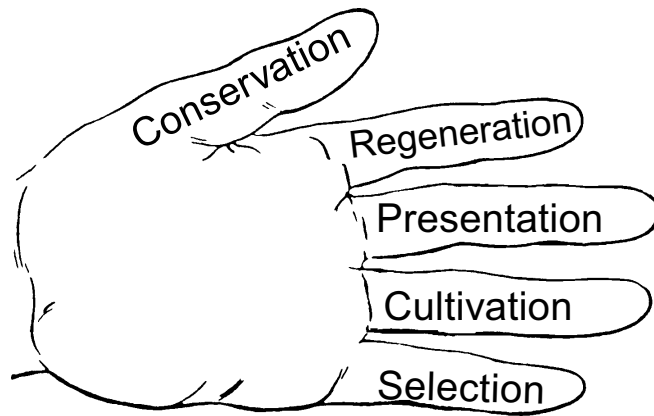
Types of Relationships	Actions
<p>People you meet only once in your life.</p> <p>(God often uses us to reap this kind of fruit if we are willing to be witnesses.)</p>	<p>We need to be constantly alert and prepared to present the Gospel briefly and concisely whenever we have an opening or opportunity.</p>
<p>Casual acquaintance you meet occasionally.</p> <p>(God has placed this person in your sphere of influence and wants to use you in the process of sharing the Gospel with him.)</p>	<p>Work at building the kind of relationship that allows conversation about spiritual issues. Ask God for wisdom as to where and how best to share the Gospel.</p>
<p>Colleagues and Friends you meet as a regular part of your daily sphere of influence. This includes family and relatives.</p> <p>(God will hold you most accountable for these.)</p>	<p>Be a living example of what you preach, as well as a dependable friend. Ask God for wisdom as to when and how to share the Gospel.</p>

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

Proverbs 24:11,12 (KJV)

Evangelism Hand

To have good effective New Testament evangelism taking place in our own personal lives and ministries, at least five elements are of absolute importance. Let me illustrate this for you in the use of a hand on the following page.



Selection

We need to have a list of people that we are talking to God about if we ever hope to talk to these people about God. This helps us realize that we are dependent on God to work in their lives if they are ever to trust in Christ for their salvation.

Cultivation

As we pray for people we must also begin to cultivate a relationship with them. People are not normally willing to discuss such intimate relationships about spiritual matters with someone they barely know unless they are in a crisis situation. We must reach out to develop warm personal relationships that allow us to discuss every issue of life.

Presentation

As we pray and cultivate relationships with lost people, situations will arise that will naturally open the door to share a personal experience such as a testimony and the Gospel. The Spirit of God will arrange these events so that we know that the time is right to walk through the door which God has opened and present the Gospel. You can use either the Bridge Presentation or John Study,

Regeneration

This takes place when people understand the **FACT** of sin, the **PENALTY** of sin, that Christ has **PAID** for those sins, and that they must **RECEIVE** Christ. These are the basic tenets of the Gospel. When a person is ready to receive God's love and grace and turn from their sinful way, regeneration takes place and sinners are born again into the family of God.

Conservation

Now that God has used us in this process of regeneration, He now wants to use us in helping this spiritual babe be established in a growing personal relationship to the Lord. If we don't teach them how to develop their relationship with God through the Word and Prayer they will end up practicing a religion and be lost, for any practical purpose, to the Kingdom of God. Their lives are nullified before they ever get started. The John Study and Convert Guide can aid you in this.