



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

BASIC TACTICS OF EVANGELISM

NOTES

Introduction

In doing personal evangelism there are certain tactics or simple principles which can make the task much easier. Over a period of time, most people would probably figure these things out for themselves through experience. However, by becoming familiar with them here, you may save yourself some painful mistakes.

Use the Bible

Always have a small Bible or New Testament in your pocket or purse to refer to when opportunities for witnessing arise. The Bible is our authority, and most people will tend to be more attentive if they can see and read the Bible passages for themselves.

Have the person read the verses aloud to you as you present the Gospel. Make sure that you find the chapter and verse for the person, because most people are not familiar enough with the Bible to find their way around in it without embarrassment.

Sometimes we become intimidated when the person we are trying to witness to says he does not “believe in the Bible,” or doesn’t “think the Bible is really the Word of God.” Our natural response to these kinds of statements is to become defensive and even argumentative as we try to justify the fact that the Bible is true. We must remember that our witness is meant to share the Gospel—the “Good News.” If we become sidetracked arguing about the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, we may lose the chance to present Christ.

What should we do in such a situation? The answer is simply to use the Bible anyway. God’s Word is not an ordinary book. It has supernatural power and will be used by the Holy Spirit if we can just get the person to read it.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

(Isaiah 55:11)

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

(1 Peter 1:23)

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

(Hebrews 4:12)

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

(Ephesians 6:17)

Example

Imagine that you are fighting in a battle with a powerful and sharp sword as your weapon. You are able to overtake one of the enemy by surprise and find him unarmed. The enemy says to you, “You can’t scare me with that weapon. I don’t believe that is a sword at all. I don’t believe it is sharp. It simply can’t hurt me because I don’t believe it can.” How could you prove to such a soldier your weapon is real? Very simply—by using it on him. Whether he believes in it or not, the sword is still a sword and will produce results.

If a person does not believe in the inerrancy or authority of the Scripture, you can say something like this:

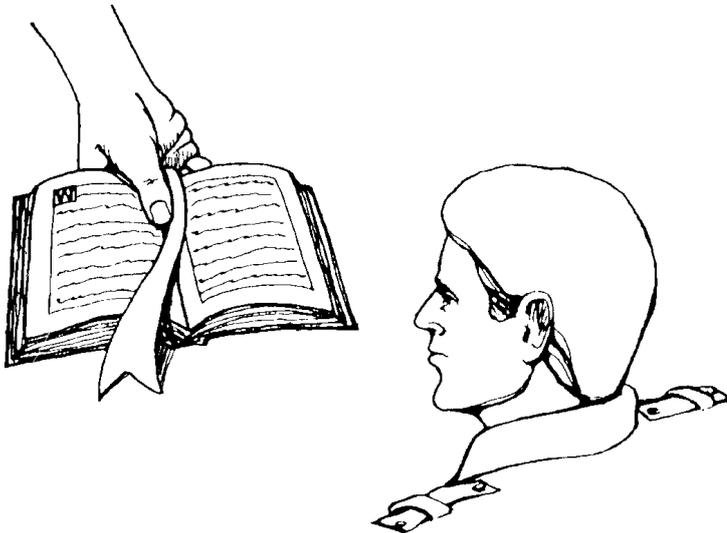
“Well, you certainly are not the only one who holds that opinion. However, whatever else it may or may not be, the Bible is the primary resource book of Christianity. If we wanted to study Islam and what a person must do to become a Muslim, we would examine the Koran because it is the oldest and primary resource book on Islam. But now, since we are examining Christianity and what a person must do to become a Christian, let’s look at the Bible as the basic book on Jesus and Christianity.”



If the person will agree to look at the Scriptures on this basis, it is enough. At least he is reading and looking at the Person of Christ for himself. *The Spirit of God* will then go to work with His Sword to produce the results God desires.

Control The Bible

Keep the Bible in *your* hand when the person is *not* reading from it. When he has finished reading the verse, hold out your hand to receive it, he will naturally give it back to you. If you do not control and hold the Bible yourself, the person's eyes may wander to some other verses on the page that have nothing to do with the Gospel you are trying to present. He may come up with questions on things that will sidetrack you from your message. You can avoid this by simply giving the Bible to him at the proper time—already having located the reference for him. Then, as already suggested, when he has finished reading, hold out your hand for him to return it to you.



Maintain a Controlled Dialogue

While you are presenting the Gospel, Satan is hard at work. He will do anything to keep the person from hearing the message that can change his life for eternity. Often Satan will bring irrelevant questions to the person's mind which will cause him to be sidetracked in his thinking. Sometimes the questions that come to the listener's mind are genuine and sincere, but are secondary to the Gospel message. If such questions come up, you can usually help the person back on track by controlling the dialogue with a statement like this:

“I would certainly like to answer that question, but I would like to do it in the context of what I am saying to you. So, if you could just hold your question until we have finished this, perhaps we can find a really clear answer to the question.”

After saying this, simply go back to where you were in your presentation. If the question was sincere, it will come back again. If it was irrelevant, the person will probably forget that he even asked it.

Maintain Good Eye Contact

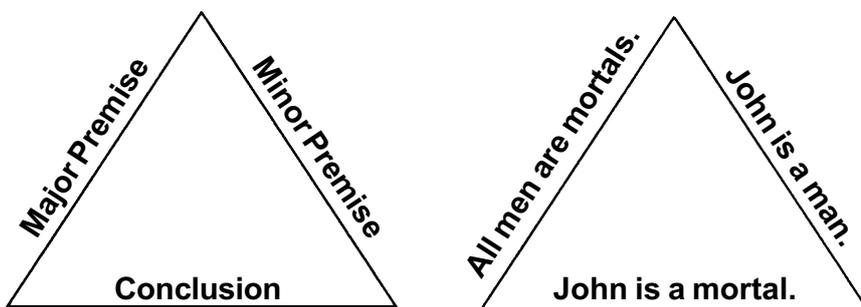
In normal dialogue between two persons, there is usually good, natural eye contact. Only when there is a strain of some kind in the relationship do people turn their eyes or look down. Good eye contact helps to create a natural dialogue with your listener. It also helps you to hold the attention of the listener. If the person senses that you are talking *at* him, rather than *to* him, he will tend to “tune you out” and turn on his “uh-huh” button. If you maintain good eye contact with your listener, you will also be able to read his facial expressions and determine how he is responding to what you are saying. If you see a puzzled look or sense an emotion of some kind, you will be better able to address your witness to the need or problem.

Use the Socratic Method of Dialogue

The Socratic Method of Dialogue will be discussed in more detail later in this course. It can be briefly defined, however, as a deductive reasoning process in which you lead people from truths which they already know and understand, to a new truth which they can discover for themselves.

The Socratic method is named after the Greek Philosopher, Socrates, whose form of reasoning has been called a syllogism. A syllogism has a major premise and a minor premise from which you then draw a conclusion. (A *premise* is a previous statement or assertion that serves as the basis for an argument.)

Example of a Syllogism



If a person discovers the conclusion for himself based upon the premises which he already accepts, he will be able to reconstruct his own reasoning process and know how he arrived at the conclusion. Naturally, such discovery of truth remains with the person for life. If you merely tell the person rather than allow him to discover it, it will not be long before he asks: “How in the world did you arrive at that?”

Make the Person Articulate Each Premise

Every time you come to one of the premises upon which the Gospel is built, (i.e. “all have sinned;” “the wages of sin is death;” “judgment is coming” etc.) make the person articulate the premise to you. This way the premise becomes his conclusion—not yours. If you can help him to establish the premises, it is very easy for the Spirit of God to help him see the truth. If, on the other hand, you establish the premises and do not allow the person to do it, you allow your listener to conclude: “Well, that’s *his* opinion.”

When the person establishes a premise, it is important for you to *write it down* so that he can remember what he has already discovered. This question/answer method helps the witness to extract the person’s thinking process and to record it on paper for him to see.

Draw the Bridge and Include His Answers

We must resist the urge to give our listeners the “right” answers as we witness. If you extract the basic premises from the person one at a time and write *his* answers down rather than yours, he will find it very difficult to reject his own answers and conclusions. Then, when you finish your presentation, you can give your drawing to the person to keep. It will have all the premises, conclusions, and verses to remind him of what he has discovered in your time together.

Stay on the Offensive

Many times when the listener raises some question which threatens the witness’ position, the witness becomes defensive and sacrifices his position of strength for one of weakness. We should realize that as Christians, with the Word of God as our authority, we are in a position of great strength. If the listener disagrees with our authority, it is up to him to prove it and defend his own position.

Example:

A young girl in the university had an agnostic geology teacher who would often ridicule her belief in the Bible. One day he made a statement to the effect that “Everyone knows that the Bible is full of contradictions.” Although she, as a much younger student, naturally tended to be intimidated by his remarks, she said to him:

“Well, sir, you must know of something I don’t because in all my study of the Bible, I have never found any contradictions. Here is my Bible. Could you just enlighten me by turning to some error or contradiction that you know of?”

With that the teacher backed down. He did not read or understand the Bible well enough to even begin to find a so-called contradiction. Politely, the girl had called his bluff and maintained her position of strength. She had not had to prove anything to him. She had left the burden of proof exactly where it belonged—on the person questioning the Word of God.

Leave the Door Open

Remember that evangelism is a process and not simply an act. In many cases, it will be a *very* long time before your listener finally receives Christ. It is the Holy Spirit's responsibility to bring a person under conviction in His own timing. Your job as a witness is to proclaim the Good News. You must be careful to keep the door open for further sharing of Christ's message. If you try to hurry up the Holy Spirit or help Him out by forcing the person into a decision, he will either become closed and resentful or make an emotional decision that will not be valid.

Tips to Truth

"The Concept of Truth"



—What all Arguments Boil Down To

Truth must be either **Relative** or **Absolute**. Whichever of these positions you subscribe to will determine your conclusions about God.

Truth is Relative

This belief says that truth resides within the individual and that only you must decide what is right/wrong or true/false. There is **no** external truth. No one else can determine truth for you. You must decide for yourself. Under this belief, one person may determine that lying is wrong while another person may decide that it is not. It all depends on the internal persuasion of the individual.

Only non-Christians can believe that truth is relative. These unbelievers can be in either of two categories:

Atheist

The word atheist means "without God." The atheist says **there is no God**. This is a very **absolute** statement for someone who does not believe in absolutes, is it not? The atheist is denying the very premise he is arguing from. He is a very confused person, and it is very difficult to reason with him. However, many people who call themselves "atheists" really are not. They are using the term wrongly and are really agnostics.

Agnostic

The word “agnostic” means “without knowledge.” Most non-Christians fit into this category. There are two kinds of agnostics:

True Agnostic

- **One who is simply without knowledge.** He does not have enough knowledge or information to come to a decision about God. He is not sure whether or not there is a God.

Militant Agnostic

- **One who is militantly agnostic.** This person says: “**I don’t know** if there is a God, **you don’t know; no one can know.**” This person is really an atheist in disguise because his statements are absolute and deny the premise from which he argues.

When you ask such a person to prove that there is no God, he must admit that he cannot. He has no basis for concluding that there is no God except by faith. This reasoning certainly is not scientific as he would have you to believe.

Truth is Absolute

This is the position that Christians hold. They believe that truth is external and not dependent upon the internal conclusions of people. This position precludes that:

- **God Is**
- **God Is Knowable**
- **God Has Communicated**

Just as the atheist and agnostic cannot prove there is **no** God, so the Christian cannot prove that there **is** a God. Both positions are positions of faith. The Christian position, however, requires less faith because of the great amount of evidence—both scientific and personal—pointing to the existence and knowability of God.

Is there a way that man can know for sure God exists? Yes, there is, but God wants to prove it to each person individually through faith. God will **never** be knowable solely by intellect or reason because He wants to be known on a personal and spiritual basis to each individual. This personal and spiritual basis yields knowledge.

Jesus said that *faith* and *obedience* must come before knowledge.

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,

or whether I speak of myself.

(John 7:16-17)

NOTES

If a person will *do* God's will—then and only then will he *know*.

Jesus said:

If any man will do his will, he shall know ...

(John 7:17)

Here you must "*abide* in the Word of God" and *become* a follower of Christ—a disciple—first. Then Jesus promises that *you will* know the truth.

The real question boils down to this:

- **How badly do you really want to know?**
- **Do you want to know God enough that you are willing to do what He asks you to do?**

This simple and yet profound argument about truth being absolute or relative can be graphed into a simple chart as drawn below.

Truth is Relative (Non-Christian)	Truth is Absolute (Christian)
Atheist: <i>There is no God</i> Agnostic: I don't know You don't know Nobody knows	God is God is knowable God has communicated
Can't Be Proven— Accept By Faith	Can't Be Proven— Accept By Faith

...When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he...

(John 8:28)

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

(John 8:32)