

Evangelism – Part 1

Preparing for Evangelism

“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” (Mk. 16:15). The last words of Jesus to His apostles in the book of Matthew told them to go and share the Gospel with others. Earlier He prayed for His disciples, not that God would take them out of the world, but that they would be kept in the world. This is because Jesus has a purpose with our life, and ultimately that purpose is to glorify Himself through us. One aspect of this goal includes remaining on this earth to witness to those who do not know Him. We declare Jesus to the world not simply by words, but also by our life-styles and in power. As we begin to understand the dynamics of evangelism and lift up the name of the Lord to those around us, Jesus is glorified.

I. Foundation for Evangelism Our goal is not to just pump ourselves up to go out and witness once or twice a week, but to have a life-style of sharing. As we are abiding in Jesus and maintaining a servant’s heart, a life-style of sharing the Gospel will come forth.

A. Some Definitions.

1. Ministry. The Greek is *diakonia*.
 - a. Strong’s – attendance (as a servant), aid, service, to run errands, a waiter (at a table or in other menial duties).
 - b. Vine’s – of the service of believers.
2. Witness. The Greek is *martus*.
 - a. Strong’s – by analogy, a martyr, record, witness.
 - b. Vine’s – of those who witness for Christ by their deaths.
3. Testify. The Greek is *martureo*.
 - a. Strong’s – to be a witness, charge, give evidence, bear record, have good report.
 - b. Vine’s – frequently rendered to bear witness, to testify.
4. Testimony. The Greek is *marturia*.
 - a. Strong’s – Evidence given (judicially or general) record, report, testimony, witness.
 - b. Vine’s – witness, evidence.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Define the meaning behind the words ministry, witness, testify, and testimony.

B. Abiding in Jesus. (Jn. 15:1-16)

1. Jesus is the vine; we are the branches. (vs. 1, 5).
 - a. Those branches that do not abide and do not bring forth fruit are cut out and burned. (vs. 6).
 - b. The branches that do bear fruit are pruned that they might bring forth more fruit. (vs. 2).
2. It is through abiding in Jesus that we bring forth fruit. (vs. 7-8).
3. We abide in Jesus through keeping His commands. (vs. 10; I Jn. 3:6).
4. We have been ordained to go and bring forth fruit. (vs. 16).

C. A Servant's Heart. Before we can faithfully minister to the lost, we must sacrifice our own preferences for others just as a servant would. (Matt. 20:25-28).

1. Those in the world become great by exerting their authority over others. (vs. 25).
2. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve. (vs. 28).
3. The Christians who want to be great are to be the servants and slaves. (vs. 26-27).
4. We become other's servants for Jesus' sake. (II Cor. 4:5).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Explain why abiding in Jesus and having a servant's heart are the foundations for evangelism.

II. Essential Elements Involved in Evangelism. God has given His children the authority to go and preach the Gospel. We are exhorted to pray that people would receive the message, but it is the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that actually reveals and convicts others of their need for the Savior.

A. Authority in Evangelism. Our authority stems from it being the Lord who has commanded us to share. "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life, " (Ac. 5:20).

1. Jesus introduced the Great Commission by first declaring He has all authority. (Matt. 28:18).

2. The people recognized Jesus as one who spoke with authority. (Matt. 7:29; Mk. 1:27).
 3. He has given this authority to us that Satan might not hinder the work. (Lu. 10:19).
- B. The Word of God in Evangelism. It is God’s Word that can cut through people’s masks of self-deception and expose to them their real need. “For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged 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,” (Heb. 4:12).
1. The Word is likened to a sword. (Eph. 6:17).
 2. It is able to break through the rock of people’s cold hearts. (Jer. 23:29).
 3. The early church understood the importance of speaking the Word while witnessing. (Ac. 4:29).
 4. When believers turned away from sin and the world, the power in the Word was able to go forth strongly. (Ac. 19:18-20).
- C. Prayer in Evangelism. “Then saith He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest,” (Matt. 9:37-38).
1. Paul realized it took prayer to open the door for the message of the Gospel. (Col. 4:3).
 2. After Peter and John had boldly shared the Gospel, they went back to their own people to pray. (Ac. 4:23-24).
 3. To intercede means to stand and plead on behalf of another. We should intercede for other’s salvation before God. (Ex. 32:32; I Sam. 7:5).
 4. If we do not intercede for those around us, God’s judgment will surely come. (Ps. 106:23; Eze. 22:30-31).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why are the Word of God and prayer essential elements in evangelism?

- D. The Holy Spirit in Evangelism. It is a work of the Spirit that takes the Word of God to an unbeliever, offering salvation. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing,” (Jn. 6:63).
1. The Spirit of God holds and applies the Sword, the Word of God. (Eph. 6:17).
 2. Conviction is the result of the Holy Spirit’s actions. (Jn. 16:8).
 3. Then it is the Holy Spirit that births one into salvation. (Jn. 3:5-8; Gal. 4:29).
 4. It is the work of the Spirit that strengthens the new believer toward maturity. (Eph. 3:16; II Cor. 3:17-18).
 5. The Spirit desires to use us in reaching the lost. (Ac. 16:5-10, 8:29).

IMPORTANT POINTS

What role does the Holy Spirit play in evangelism?

III. Ways to Witness. We have opportunities each day to not only verbalize the Gospel, but also to live the Gospel before others and walk in the power of the Spirit. “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?” (Rom. 10:14).

- A. By Our Words. “And they spoke unto him the Word of the Lord...” (Ac. 16:32).
1. Jesus has given us the words of eternal life. (Jn. 6:63, 68, 17:8).
 2. God brings His Word to light through our words. (Titus 1:3).
 3. No unwholesome talk should come out of our mouths that would not build up believers and unbelievers around us. (Eph. 4:29).
- B. By Our Actions. By being a servant to other’s needs, our life in Him can clearly be seen. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven,” (Matt. 5:16).
1. In order to shine as stars before the world, our behavior must be blameless and pure. (Ph. 2:15-16).
 2. Sometimes actions can speak louder than words. (Matt. 8:4).

3. Christian wives were encouraged that they may win over an unbelieving husband by the way they lived their lives. (I Pet. 3:1-2).

IMPORTANT POINTS

How can witnessing be through one's actions?

- C. By Power. "My speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit's power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God," (I Cor. 2:4-5).
 1. After Jesus had fasted, He entered Galilee in the power of the Spirit. (Lu. 4:14).
 2. The disciples were told that they would receive power when they received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (Ac. 1:8).
 3. The disciples did indeed witness with great power. (Ac. 4:33, 6:8).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe a present-day application of the progression in witnessing in Acts. 1:8.

IV. Who We Should Witness to. There is a natural progression that Jesus has ordained that we should follow in seeking who to witness with. "And ye shall be My witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth," (Ac. 1:8). Jerusalem and Judea can be regarded as our family and friends, and Samaria, located outside of Jerusalem, can be taken as our bosses, co-workers,

neighborhoods and acquaintances. The uttermost parts of the earth are the men of all nations.

- A. Family. The apostle Andrew “first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, ‘we have found the Messiah’,” (Jn. 1:41).
1. In the Old Testament, the sacrificial lamb was on behalf of each household, and not just for an individual. (Ex. 12:3).
 2. Rahab’s faith not only saved herself, but also her family. (Josh. 6:23)
 3. We have the promise in the New Testament for the salvation of our whole families. (Act. 16:31).
 4. Today, we must put priority in meeting our families’ spiritual needs. (1 Tim. 5:8).
- B. Friends. “Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, ‘Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee,’” (Mk. 5:19).
1. Cornelius invited not only his family but also his close friends together to hear the Word of the Lord from Peter. (Ac. 10:24, 33).
 2. Often it is embarrassment or shame that will keep us from telling our friends about our faith. (II Tim. 1:8; Jn. 7:13).
 3. Fear of being excluded will hinder our confession. (Jn. 12:42).
 4. Because of the Lord’s comfort, there is no reason to fear man. (Isa. 51:12-13; Lu. 6:22-23).
- C. Employers. Those who work for another are to labor in such a way that others are attracted to the teaching of Jesus. “Exhort the servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our savior in all things,” (Titus 2:9-10).
1. Nehemiah prayed and then shared with the king about building God’s chosen city. (Neh. 1:11-2:8).
 2. The Lord will reward all the good that one does for his boss. (Eph. 6:5-8).
- D. Acquaintances. We should always be ready to share the Gospel with those whom we pass by and consider that God may have ordained such a meeting for the Gospel’s sake. “Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you for a reason of the hope that is in you,” (1 Pet. 3:15).
1. Jesus, though being weary from His recent journey, shared the Gospel with a woman who was passing by. (Jn. 4:6-14).
 2. On the way to a place of prayer, Paul stopped to talk to some women in order to witness. (Ac. 16:13-14).
 3. Paul called out to his jailer and shared the good news with him. (Ac. 16:27-32).
- E. The Nations. The Lord spoke to Paul, “For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard,” (Ac. 22:15).

1. Because of the revelation of God seen at the cross and at the empty tomb, He desires that we make known to the nations what He has done. (Isa. 12:4; 1Chr. 16:8).
2. Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all the nations. (Lu. 24:47).
3. God is calling to all Gentile nations to receive His Word. (Ac. 15:7; Eph. 3:6; Ac. 28:28).
4. The Gospel will in fact go into all the nations before the end will come. (Matt. 24:14; Mk. 13:10).

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe God's call on Christians to reach the nations.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List the major points of Peter's witness to Cornelius.

V. Two Levels of Ministry There are two classes of people we share with: those who already are in a relationship with Jesus and those that are not. Our desire is to witness to all men, regardless of their particular area of need. "Having therefore obtained the help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great..." (Ac. 26:22).

- A. To the Sinner. The scriptural pattern in Acts was not to go around showing people the way of salvation, but to preach Jesus as Lord and as the risen savior. (Ac. 10:34-43).
 1. Peter first pointed to the character of God. (vs. 34-35).
 2. He then focused on Jesus.
 - a. He is Lord of all. (vs. 36)
 - b. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit. (vs. 38).
 - c. He died on the cross. (vs. 39).
 - d. God the Father raised him up from the dead. (vs. 40).

- e. This Jesus is now the judge of all men. (vs. 42).
- 3. Peter referred to the scriptures to show that there is forgiveness of sins in Jesus. (vs. 43).

B. To the Saved. We will want to encourage other Christians by bringing them into a deeper relationship with God by finding their needs and then helping to meet them. (Ac. 19:1-10).

- 1. He met about 12 disciples when he arrived in Ephesus. (vs. 1, 7).
- 2. He found out their area of need.
 - a. They had not received the baptism in the Holy Ghost. (vs. 2).
 - b. They had not been baptized in Jesus' name. (vs. 3).
- 3. Paul then ministered to them in these areas of need. (vs. 5-6).
- 4. He continued to teach the disciples there for two years. (vs. 9-10).

VI. Point of Decision. The life of Jesus within satisfies our desires as we understand His provision, draw close through the Word, prayer and worship, and function as a member of the Body of Christ. God's ministry to us, in turn, causes us to minister to others. "All thy works shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk to Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom," (Ps. 145:10-12).

PERSONAL APPLICATION - PREPARATION FOR EVANGELISM

1. What essential elements of evangelism do I need to be more sensitive to?

2. In what specific ways can I be a witness to others?

3. To what groups of people have I witnessed to in the past, and to what groups does the Lord want me to witness to in the future (i.e., family, friends, employers)?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to be a witness of the Lord's truth to both the saved and the lost because...
