



Evangelism – Sunday School

Part 4: Important principles for conducting effective evangelism

I. Have contact with the lost

It should be obvious that we are going to have to have contact with the lost in order to evangelize the lost.

Usually, the longer a person is in the church, the more likely his proportion of friends will shift from mostly non-Christians to mostly Christians.

Should we really befriend non-Christians?



1. Take a few minutes to think up and write down some settings in which we can engage with the lost for evangelistic purposes.

Hence, we need to get out of our church-fortress and into our neighborhoods among the lost.

II. Be separate from the world

While we must have contact with the lost in order to evangelize them, we must also remember our calling to be separate from the world.

Leviticus 18:2-4 - “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the LORD your God.”

2 Corinthians 6:14-16



2. Take a few minutes to think up and write down some settings we should **not** enter into in order to engage with the lost for evangelistic purposes.

Be mindful of these things and do not allow your integrity to be compromised or smudged by wrongly engaging in practices that are offensive to God and contrary to His Word just because you think it will assist your evangelistic efforts.

Remember there will be some “_____ areas” here, that is, things that some may feel free to do that others do not, but either way these things are not sin in and of themselves.

III. Contextualize our person and our message

We must understand our audience and _____ world, and adjust the way we conduct evangelism so as to try to best connect with where they are at.

A. Our person

We should be willing to adopt the ways and practices of our target audience insofar as it assists the communication of the gospel while not in any way violating the principle of separation from the world.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 - “¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

Aside from sin, Paul was willing to adopt any practice or set aside any practice in order to bridge the gap between himself and those who was seeking to reach.



3. Take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

Are you willing to adopt the non-sinful cultural characteristics of those you seek to evangelize in order to win more of them to Christ?

What would that involve in your life? Please give some specific examples.

Can you think of some examples of mistakes you or your church have made in this area? Please explain. What could have been done different?

B. Our message

The gospel is the power of God for the saving of those who believe (Rom 1:16-17), and thus we must never change the _____ of the gospel in order to try to better attract a person to “believe,” lest we make our message impotent and leave our hearers unable to understand what they must believe in order to be saved.

But presenting the gospel content accurately is not the only thing we must consider about our message when conducting evangelism. We must also give careful consideration to how we can best connect the message to our hearers or “_____” it.

1. We should consider the cultural/historical background of the person we are speaking with and their exposure to the message of the Bible.



4. What cultural/historical background would you recommend American Christians pay attention to when addressing American non-Christians with the gospel? Take some time to write down what suggestions you would have for someone who is trying to share the gospel to each of the following types of people. **I want you to write down cultural/historical background by which to connect the gospel to their understanding of life, not write down the gospel itself.**

- A middle-aged business person indifferent about religion

- A Catholic lay person

- A Marxist college student

2. We should consider relevant current cultural contact points and events that help us connect the gospel with the world in which the person lives.

A story from a church planter working in a hard-to-reach area of the world.

I went to a tea party the week Obama won the election (in 2012), and I knew the topic would come up. I did some homework about Mormonism and Islam. There is a whole Wikipedia entry devoted to comparisons between the two sects. Sure enough, at the tea party one friend brought up Romney and Mormonism. I explained the basics – that Joseph Smith said he got a special message from an angel from God even though no one else saw the angel, that he said the [New Testament] had been changed and only the Book of Mormon was correct, that many people followed him, that Christians fought against him, and that he had strange ideas like polygamy. I got to share the message twice, each time only one woman listened – both were lawyer’s wives. They each said, ‘That’s just like Islam,’ very early on in my explanation. I explained that Joseph Smith did no miracles to prove that his message was really from God. I asked, ‘If I told you I had seen an angel and got a book from God, would you believe me?’ They said no. I asked, ‘If I turned this water into wine, would you believe me?’ ‘Maybe.’ ‘What if I healed Ibrahim Tatlises (partially paralyzed pop singer from Turkey)?’ ‘Maybe.’ ‘What if I raised Baris Mancho (popular Turkish singer who died in 1999) from the dead? Would you believe me?’ ‘Yes!’ So I said, ‘Jesus did all these things. He brought a message from God. He turned water into wine. He healed the sick. He raised the dead. This is why I believe Jesus.’ Alas, there was no outward sign of an inward change. I have been praying every day for Beth and Jazzy.¹

5. What would you recommend as **current** cultural contact points and events that American Christians can utilize when sharing the gospel with American non-Christians? Again, take some time to write down what suggestions you would have for someone who is trying to preach the gospel to each of the following types of people. **I want you to write down current cultural contact points and events by which to connect the gospel to their understanding of life, not write down the gospel itself.**

- A middle-aged business person indifferent about religion

¹ “Praying for Evangelists and to Be a Better One Myself;”

- A Catholic lay person
- A Marxist college student



6. Take some time to answer each question below.

- What has been the most helpful point of this section for you?
- Why?