



## Evangelism – Sunday School

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### **Section 3**

#### **Preparation for Evangelism**

Soon after trusting in Christ, many Christians begin to naturally share the gospel with their friends. The blessing of forgiveness of their sins and the change they have experienced in their lives has so affected them that they cannot refrain from telling others about Jesus. I know this was the case for me. Evangelism is a part of our lives often before we even know what it is. And this is good and to be expected. Just as prayer should be an activity new Christians naturally begin to engage in, so too with evangelism. Just like the Samaritan woman at the well, many new Christians do evangelism without having ever been taught anything about it.

While this is a good sign of new life, yet as with any other type of Christian duty, preparation is essential to greater effectiveness. In what follows we are going to look at several primary elements of preparation for evangelism: (1) Attitudes necessary for evangelism; (2) Content of evangelism, (3) Strategies for evangelism, (4) Principles for conducting evangelism, (5) Common mistakes made during evangelism, and (6) Prayer.

Today, we will have time only to look at Part 1.

#### **Part 1: Attitudes Necessary for Evangelism**

Some things are just utterly unthinkable. A few years ago, a mother in New York city pushed her 7-month old child out of the subway train and onto the platform, and then got back on the train and left, never coming back for her child. Her plan was simply to abandon her child. Yes, I understand the doctrine of total depravity, and yet there are some things that I still find difficult to understand how anyone could do.

In Philippians 1:15 we read of another thing that, at least for me, is very hard to imagine. There were some people who were preaching Christ from sinful motives. Paul writes: “Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.” Paul was at this time??? in prison. He was suffering for the sake of the gospel. And yet, there were some who were free who were so consumed with jealousy over Paul’s ministry that they are not praying for his release or for the salvation of sinners in the prison where Paul was held, but they were preaching the gospel so as to **trouble** Paul. Verse 17 says their motives included rivalry, that is, they were hoping to surpass him in popularity. It also says they were hoping to “afflict” Paul, assumedly thinking their labors would cause Paul emotional distress. Obviously, they had some serious problems in the area of attitudes when doing evangelism.

One of the most important things we must attend to if we would wish to see our efforts in evangelism fulfill God's designed purpose is to make sure our hearts are prepared. We must do a diagnostic exam upon ourselves and see if we really have the correct heart-condition for sharing the gospel with the lost. In order to do that, we must first know what heart attitudes are essential to conducting evangelism. I will touch on just a few key attitudes here, breaking them up into two categories: Attitudes towards God, and Attitudes towards humans.

## **I. Attitudes towards God**

We must first make sure our hearts are rightly disposed towards God. How so? Look with me at the following 6 matters.

### **A. Concern for the glory of God**

This was covered above when we talked about the definition of evangelism. The only thing I will do here is repeat that this should be our primary heart motivation. Our hearts should beat with a strong desire that God be glorified through our sharing the gospel with others. Whenever we engage in evangelism, we should first and foremost have in mind that we are speaking of the wonders of God and His works, and hence are lifting up His name before others.

### **B. Love for God**

The first and greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. This command includes the sense of loving God constantly or at all times. There is never a time when we may fall slack in this, including when we conduct evangelism. Hence, when we evangelize the lost, one essential motivation must be a love for God. And love for God is shown in obeying His will (John 14:15). That is to say, we should tell others the gospel because of our love for God, love for God demonstrated in a commitment to God and His will. We want His purposes to be accomplished in the world and hence dedicate ourselves to using the whole of our being to engage in the means He has decreed for saving sinners, evangelism.

### **C. Awe towards God because of the love of God for us**

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:14 that He was compelled by the love of Christ to share the gospel with the lost. "For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." The thought that Christ intentionally died on the cross in his place and suffered the punishment he deserved so that he might be forgiven and reconciled with God so overwhelmed Paul that he could not constrain himself from living for Christ, which in context included preaching the gospel to others. In like manner, when we more and more grasp ...

- the horror of our sin and its consequences,
- the holiness and justice of God,
- the infinite value of the person and work of Christ, the glory of His love in His death and the power of His victory in the resurrection, and
- the beauty of the gift of eternal life,

... our affections will be stirred for our God and we will talk about His gospel with others more naturally and willingly.

## D. Fear of the coming judgment

In 2 Corinthians 5:11 we read, “Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.” A major motivation that compelled Paul to urge the lost to believe was his fear of God. And what was the foundation of this fear? In verse 10 Paul writes, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.” That is to say, it was a knowledge of the coming judgment that provoked Paul to evangelize, to strive to persuade the lost “about the seriousness of their plight without God and the abundance of God’s mercy in Christ.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, it was a fear of standing before God in the coming judgment that, in part, generated this passion to persuade. As Paul said elsewhere, “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16) Brethren, do we have a holy sense of fear about the coming judgment that compels us to evangelize the lost?

## E. Dependence upon God

There is the tendency in most of us to think that if we ...

- say something just the right way or
- show just enough patience and kindness or
- provide sufficient apologetical evidence,

... then the person we are sharing with will believe. Well, while God does use our words and deeds as a testimony, and we should be responsible to seek to grow in our skills of evangelism, ultimately salvation is of Him. Thus we read of Lydia’s case in Acts 16:14, “One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.” While God uses the means of our sharing the gospel to draw people to Christ (“what was said by Paul”), it is the Holy Spirit alone who can actually make our efforts effectual and open the heart of the dead sinner to understand and believe the gospel (“the Lord opened her heart”). Thus we must learn to depend upon God when conducting evangelism.

Spurgeon wrote:

As for you and for me, what can we do in saving a soul from death? Of ourselves nothing, any more than that pen which lies upon the table could write the Pilgrim’s Progress; yet let a Bunyan grasp the pen, and the matchless work is written. So you and I can do nothing to convert souls till God’s eternal Spirit takes us in hand, but then He can do wonders by us, and get to Himself glory by us, while it shall be joy enough to us to know that Jesus is honored, and the Spirit magnified.<sup>2</sup>

So again, brethren, when we share the gospel with the lost, we should seek to be clear and persuasive. We should do our best to answer all questions and overcome all arguments. But do not forget that without God’s grace, without the work of the Spirit upon the person who hears, our efforts, even our best efforts, are futile. Therefore, we must learn to walk in dependence upon God for all evangelism work.

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<sup>1</sup> Garland David E., *The New American Commentary*, Vol. 29, 2 Corinthians, B&H Publishing, 269-270.

<sup>2</sup> Steve J. Miller, *C.H. Spurgeon on Spiritual Leadership*, 168.

## F. Faith that God will save

We must not fall into skepticism, thinking that just because the days are so bleak and so many are disinterested in the gospel that God's Spirit cannot use the Word like a hammer to break their hard hearts and cause them to fall on their faces and call out to God for mercy. The Spirit of God is as mighty today as ever, and the gospel is still the means He uses to save. So, go out in faith and believe that what you are preaching is powerful and able to change a sinner into one who loves and serves God. There is every reason to be confident as we carry out the work of evangelism.

Let me ask: Do you really believe that God can save sinners? Do you believe that through your efforts He can do it? Or have you allowed a false humility or even unbelief to persuade you that God would never use your efforts to save sinners? Brethren, remember: God has promised to use the preaching of the gospel to save His elect. But He expects us to trust Him to use our efforts as He pleases. And knowing that He is pleased to save sinners, why would we doubt He can and will use our efforts? Calvin wrote, "we are too apt to conclude that our attempts at reclaiming the ungodly are vain and ineffectual, and forget that God is able to crown them with success."<sup>3</sup> Let us, then, in faith share the gospel with the lost, believing that God will use His gospel to save sinners.

In sum, we have seen that there are 6 attitudes towards God that we should make sure we have as we prepare to engage in evangelism

- Concern for the glory of God
- Love for God
- Awe towards??? the love of God for us
- Fear of the coming judgment
- Dependence upon God
- Faith that God will save

Each of these 6 attitudes towards God is crucial to our conducting evangelism in a way that honors God and fulfills His holy purposes.



1. Take several minutes to write down your thoughts about the following question.

- Of these 6 attitudes, which do you believe is most absent or weakest in your heart? Please explain.
  
- Take some time to pray about this right now.

What I would like you to do now is break up into groups and discuss your answers to this question.

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<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 5:302.

Then I would like you to pray for each other, remembering to pray with compassion and not judgment.

## II. Attitudes towards humans

We must secondly make sure our hearts are rightly disposed towards humans. In this section we will look at 7 contrasts.

### A. Compassion and not indifference

Correct understanding of the condition of the lost should stir our hearts to have compassion for them. Sadly, I have talked with no few Christians, including many Reformed Christians, who seem to have very little compassion towards the lost. They yawn when someone speaks of the plight of the perishing, as if it is of little consequence to them. Or, they give affirmation to the fact that the lost are perishing but do little to promote or assist in the work of evangelism.

Spurgeon spoke some strong words to those who profess to be Christians but do little to reach the lost with the gospel:

Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that. The saving of souls, if a man has once gained love to perishing sinners and his blessed Master, will be an all-absorbing passion to him. It will so carry him away, that he will almost forget himself in the saving of others. He will be like the brave fireman, who cares not for the scorch or the heat, so that he may rescue the poor creature on whom true humanity has set its heart. Oh, my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.<sup>4</sup>

Of similar heart, one pastor from Colorado wrote, “I could not just read my Bible, pray nice prayers and pastor a pleasant little church. My conscience burned with desire to rescue people from impending eternal disaster.” He and his church concluded that their primary outreach was going to be to make it hard for the people of their city to go to hell without at least having heard the gospel once.

In order to better understand what our response to the plight of the perishing should involve, let us look at the example of Jesus. In Matthew 9:35-38 we learn the following. READ???

- Jesus **saw** the plight of the perishing. Jesus was able to correctly assess and understand the situation of the crowd because He opened His eyes and observed them. If we are going to be able to correctly assess and understand the condition of the lost around us, we must open our eyes and actually look at them. We must look at and think about their predicament.
- Jesus **was moved for** the perishing in their plight. What Jesus saw did not affect just His understanding. It provoked Him to have compassion for them. He was not calloused or indifferent about their spiritual predicament, but actually cared for them. I hope we are not so heartless as to be numb towards the plight of the lost around us when we see them.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://spurgeon.org/sermons/0349.htm>

- Jesus **took action** on behalf of the perishing. His compassion for the lost was not a mere feeling, but the feeling gave birth to action, as we read that He issues a call to pray for laborers for the harvest and then, in the passage that follows, Himself prepares and sends out men. As we see in the example of Christ, true compassion will express itself in action! Jesus never had actionless compassion and neither should we.

I would like to take a moment here to exhort all of us to pay attention to the people around us. We all easily get distracted by our smartphones or some other gadget. If we would wish to imitate Jesus, we must turn off the distractions and start looking at the people who are around us and see if there is any way in which we can reach out to them with the love of Christ.

Also beware of the deadening effect of living in comfort. Many of God’s people have had their hearts so swallowed up by a love of the world and the comforts of the world that they have forgotten what is the real issue at stake. They no longer really are concerned about those who are perishing but instead spend most of their time thinking about, planning for, and even worrying about their own comfort and pleasure. Again take the words of Spurgeon to heart: “God save us from living in comfort while sinners are sinking into hell!” “在罪人陷入地狱的同时，愿神救我们脱离自己高兴自己生活在舒适之中！”

Walker wrote,

Consider what the Scriptures have to say about hell. Consider that the pictures and representations of hell are symbols and shadows of the reality, and symbols and shadows are necessarily less real, less gripping, less intense than the reality that they represent. If hell is a place where the fire is not quenched and the worm always gnaws (Mark 9:43-48); a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt 13:42, 50; Luke 13:28); of extreme and outer darkness (Matt 25:30); of fire (Matt 5:22; 18:9) and torment (Luke 16:28; Rev 14:11) and condemnation (Matt 23:33; John 5:29); if hell is the least part of what it is presented to be in God’s holy Word, through those Spirit-inspired Scriptures, then *how* in the name and for the sake of our own humanity, let alone our Christian duty, could we ever remain silent about the truth that saves from hell?<sup>5</sup>

In sum, as the eternal One, Jesus looked at those around Him from an eternal perspective, and this understanding affected how He felt for them and compelled Him to do something for them. How about us? Do we look at our neighbors or acquaintances according to their occupations or their treatment of us, or do we look at them as “sheep without a shepherd”? And how does the way we look at them affect the way we feel for them? And does this feeling press us to take some kind of action so as to share the gospel with them? If we wish to engage in evangelism rightly, we need to begin to view and feel for the lost as Jesus does.

## **B. Peaceable and not combative**

Peaceableness should characterize our evangelism. We are not out to crush our opponent, but to persuade them to repent of their sins and believe in Christ. Thus, when sharing the gospel with the lost, we should be tender with their questions, patient with their misunderstandings, and bear up under their insults. We should be calm and not easily agitated, serene and not easily flustered.

Many non-Christians act and speak out of ignorance, not malice. So their questions and tendency

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<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Walker, *The Brokenhearted Evangelist*, 34-35.

to look upon us as “out of touch with reality” should not be handled with frustration or anger. And even when they speak out of malice, remember the words of Paul to Timothy, “And the Lord’s servant **must not be quarrelsome** but kind to **everyone**, able to teach, **patiently enduring evil**, correcting his opponents **with gentleness**. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.” (2 Tim 2:24-25)

Let us look at three key characteristics mentioned in this passage.

First, do not be quarrelsome. The term “quarrelsome” means to fight without weapons. It is to engage in a heated dispute. Paul is telling us that during a time of speaking to the lost about the gospel, we are neither to pick a fight nor to engage when the other is trying to pick a fight. In the context of James 4:2, quarreling is viewed as the wisdom of the world. If we wish to employ the wisdom from above, we are to remain calm and seek to promote a climate of peace. Of course, we should stand for the truth without compromise. But we can do that without quarreling.

Second, be patient. The term “patient” means that one is able to bear mistreatment, whether physical or verbal, without resentment or retaliation. When wronged in some way, we are not to become angry or take measures to get back at the person who has hurt us. Instead, we are to endure the mocking or insults and seek to continue to share the gospel with the person. Of course, there may come a time when we have to leave. We may even need to rebuke the person speaking to us for something evil he is doing. But we should not be rash in doing so, much less do so in order to vent our frustrations or hurt the person who has attacked us.

Third, be gentle. This term means we are not impressed with ourselves and hence do not respond as if we think ourselves important and deserving of a better response. Thus, when we share the gospel with the lost, if they oppose what we are saying, we do not worry about what they think or say about us. We do not fret over our having lost face. Instead, we are focused on them repenting and gaining “a knowledge of the truth.” Our aim is their blessing, not ourselves looking good or defeating them in debate.

Think back to how you have responded to unbelievers when they have disagreed with you as you have shared the gospel. Have you been peaceable in your dealings with them?

### **C. Respectful and not abusive**

We read in Acts 17:22ff that when Paul spoke before those who had gathered at the Areopagus, he was respectful of the people he was addressing. He did not heap abuse upon them in spite of the fact that, as we read in verse 16, he was deeply grieved over their idolatry. Instead, he spoke to them courteously and civilly, acknowledging them as humans who were no different than he, except that he had received the grace of God and been saved.

When Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman in John 4, He did so as if she were a rational, thoughtful person. Knowing that she was created in the image of God, and had intellectual abilities with which to think and talk about matters related to theology, Jesus discussed the proper place of worship, the true nature of worship, and matters related to salvation. Despite her ethnicity, her gender, and even her sinfulness, Jesus showed her respect by the way in which He communicated with her.

In 1 Peter 3:15-16 Peter writes: “but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet

do it with gentleness and **respect**, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.” The term “respect” here carries the idea of esteem, to the point of looking up to them or thinking highly of them. Hence, even while they are sinners and unconverted, Peter wants his readers still to show unbelievers respect.

We too should remember that the person we share the gospel with is one who is made in the image of God. We should thus make sure our **words** and **actions** are never disrespectful but that we are genuinely courteous and polite towards them in the whole of our interaction with them.

#### **D. Humble and not self-righteous**

There is no sphere of life where you will not find pride. It appears in everything we do – even in evangelism. Just think of Luke 7:34, where Jesus addressed those who criticized His ministry to sinners: “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’” The Pharisees censored Jesus for associating with sinners, and were themselves not willing to associate with them for they viewed themselves as superior to such people. In other words, pride affected their “evangelism.” In the same way, pride causes some Christians today to avoid evangelizing certain kinds of people or from engaging in evangelism altogether. They think, “Oh, he is gay,” or, “Oh, she is Japanese.”

Barrs wrote:

When I was in seminary during the late sixties, one of my fellow students was invited to preach a series of revival meetings at a nearby church. One evening he had stopped to get a meal at a local fast-food place before the service. He met some young people who were arrayed in the typical hippie style of the time: long hair, beards, colorful clothes, and no shoes. After a good conversation together, they asked him where he was going, and why he was “dressed up” in a suit, white shirt, and tie on a weekday evening. He told them about the service he was going to preach at, and they asked if they could come. He was delighted and so they walked together over to the church. The pastor was waiting at the door to welcome people. When he saw the “hippies” he told them politely that they would have to go home and put shoes on their feet—they could not come to the revival service ‘looking like that.’ Of course they did not return.<sup>6</sup>

Such prideful attitudes have lost all connection with the heart of the gospel, that being, that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and all are equally in need of a Savior. There is no one who is more worthy of salvation in God’s eyes than anyone else, and hence no basis for anyone to feel pride in relation to others.

How did Jesus come? He is the Son of God! He could have come with legions of angels, looked down on our puny selves and our total depravity and slain us in full justice. Instead He came as a servant to seek and save us. Should we who are infinitely less than He have any measure of pride or boasting in our hearts about ourselves when seeking to evangelize the lost?

Remember, even when doing good works like evangelism, if we are proud, God is opposed to us (James 4:6). This means that He does not applaud us just because we are evangelizing the lost. He demands we do so with a right view of ourselves, a keen understanding of our own fallenness and

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<sup>6</sup> Barrs, Jerram (2009-05-06). Learning Evangelism from Jesus (p. 143). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

our unworthiness of any of the goodness He has shown us through Christ. Otherwise He will not smile on our efforts. Brethren, make sure to get rid of all pride from your evangelism!

Consider this story from 19<sup>th</sup> century preacher William Taylor.

I have somewhere read of a hardened criminal who was condemned to die and waiting for execution. Christian people were deeply interested in him and wished for his salvation. Pastors of different churches visited him and talked with him and prayed with him. But all they did and said seemed only to harden him the more, for they never got near him. They were afraid of him. They never touched him. At length, they bethought themselves of a member of the community, known of all men for his holiness and tenderness and wisdom in the winning of souls, and they got him to visit him. When he entered the condemned cell, he sat down beside the prisoner, by whom also he was well known, and told him the simple story of the cross, and when he had finished, he laid his hand upon the criminal's shoulder and said to him with a look of inexpressible emotion: "Now wasn't it a great sacrifice for the Son of God to lay down his life for guilty sinners like me and you?" In a moment the fountains of the great deep were broken up. The heart of the man was touched. The big tears ran down his cheeks, and the bursting sobs seemed to convulse his frame. From that time he was a different man, and listened with interest to all that was said to him, while ever and anon he would exclaim, "To think of such a good and holy man, as I know him to be, putting himself on a level with me, and saying, 'Sinners like me and you.'"<sup>7</sup>

Non-Christians hate self-righteousness, and they have a right to do so! For sure, we must not soft-peddle the law and the guilt of sin when preaching the gospel, but we must also make sure not to look down on people just because they dress in a manner we do not think acceptable for church or because they have committed some heinous crime that we have not! And yet, how easy for us to think in such ways. We see someone walk into the church with tattoos, or a couple who are not married but who are known to be sleeping together, or someone who is a known alcoholic, and we quickly look down on them and think ourselves to be so much better.

Walker wrote,

If we come puffed up and pompous with what we are beyond being sinners saved by grace, then we might as well zip our mouths shut on the spot.... You cannot go to another wretched, sinning creature clad in the imagined pomposity of high calling, dignified profession, public position, accumulated wealth, church office, or anything else, and then unload pretentious drivel from a position of illusory moral or social superiority. You must come as a sinner to sinners and speak to them of the pardon that you have obtained, and that is a humbling posture.<sup>8</sup>

When conducting evangelism, beware of presenting yourself as self-righteous, someone who is here to let them know how bad they are in comparison to you!

## **E. Impartial and not biased**

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<sup>7</sup> William M. Taylor, "The Cleansing of the Leper," in *The Miracles of Our Savior* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1890), 119-120.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Walker, *The Brokenhearted Evangelist*, 25.

In John 4:27 we see Jesus' disciples are astonished to find Him talking with a Samaritan woman. Their response is not surprising in view of the fact that Jews did not drink or eat from containers or utensils used by Samaritans. This manner of treating Samaritans was due to such teaching as the following from Rabbi Eliezer: "He who eats the bread of the Samaritans is like one who eats the flesh of swine"<sup>9</sup> Yet Jesus broke this social custom by asking the Samaritan woman for a drink of water from her vessel. In verse 9 we read that she was amazed because of the extraordinary nature of Jesus' request: "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" The reason for her amazement was couched in her response, for it seems to indicate that no Jew had ever addressed her as a social equal. In spite of real distinctions between them, Jesus did not allow Jewish partiality to affect His evangelistic efforts. He still reached out to this woman with the gospel.

God's people often have strong biases that influence the way they look at and treat people. The sad result is that many evangelistic opportunities are overlooked or steered away from. Christians only attempt to share the gospel with those who are like them, that is, of the same economic or educational level, or from the same nationality, etc. **Some are even shockingly brazen enough to argue that such a method is legitimate. In American history, for example, some whites asserted that blacks are inferior and sub-human and hence they did not try to reach them with the gospel. But this is not just a black/white problem. Many reach out only to those they feel comfortable with but do not reach out to those they fear or feel awkward with, much less those they believe have in some way done them or their group an injustice. And then there are those today who will not reach out to young people with tattoos and earrings in their noses, or who are gay or are feminists.**

In 2 Corinthians 5:16 Paul wrote: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh..." Paul is saying this in the context of imploring the Corinthians to make sure they are reconciled with God through Christ. His point is that he no longer thinks of them as Gentiles, but instead as lost sinners who need God's mercy in Christ, otherwise, they will perish. Is this the way in which we view the lost? Or do we tend to view them "according to the flesh," that is, according to their ethnicity, their education background, their income, or some other manner commonly used to categorize humans?



3. Who are the "Samaritans" in your area?

What could you and your church do to reach out to them?

What changes in attitude and practice might have to be made?

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<sup>9</sup> Barrs, Jerram (2009-05-06). Learning Evangelism from Jesus (p. 41). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

Please pause the video and answer the questions in the box. When you finish, turn back on the video and listen to the next section.

What are your answers to these questions? PLEASE KEEP YOUR ANSWERS BRIEF.

#### **F. Sincere and not phony**

Sincerity has to do with an absence of pretense, instead having our feelings genuinely engaged in the situation. When conducting evangelism, it means that we are honestly concerned for the person's well-being and show it by the way we interact with them.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 2:17, "For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ." He and his coworkers exercised sincerity when they preached Christ. They were genuine in their concern for those to whom they ministered, and they were straightforward in the way they conducted themselves.

Some non-Christians complain that Christians are not sincere when they share their faith. They say we appear aloof and do not look as if we really care for them. It seems as if we would rather be doing something else and have little genuine desire to be with the person with whom we are communicating. Such lack of sincerity is normally easily discerned. We look like we are only interested in completing an assignment. But we do not have sincere interest in the person with whom we are sharing. Such a heart is a far cry from the manner in which Paul conducted his ministry.

Think back to how you have conducted evangelism. Have you always had a genuine concern for the person you are sharing with, or are there times when you are aloof and somewhat disinterested?

#### **G. Bold and not fearful**

Boldness does not equal being pushy, loud, or "in your face." Instead, boldness means that we

- are firmly convinced that what we believe is true,
- are deeply desirous of speaking what we believe so others can hear, and then
- are straightforward and shameless when sharing with them, believing that is the best way for them to understand.

Courage involves taking the risk of losing a friendship, suffering rejection or mocking, all so that we can tell them the gospel with the hope they will believe and be saved. It is not intimidated by what others might think or how they might respond. It does not seek to create controversy, nor does it aim to avoid controversy.

It is the fear of man that causes many of us to hide in our homes rather than get out and share the gospel. We do not want to face rejection or ridicule. We do not want to lose a friend. Brethren,

self-concern must go. We must not so worry about our face that we would prefer to let sinners perish just so we can keep our face.

Sometimes the issue is not evangelism in general but parts of the gospel that we are uncomfortable about sharing. There are parts of the gospel story that make people unhappy to hear. For example, when we tell people they are a sinner before God and will one day stand in judgment for everything they have done, most will normally not respond positively (unless the Holy Spirit is presently working in the person's heart). I have had people angrily shout at me that they have never sinned even once in their lives, or yell at me to get out of their yard when I have told them that Jesus is the only Savior. And yet, in spite of such responses, we must tell them these unpopular parts of the gospel, for without the parts that are unpleasant to the fallen human heart, a person will not know why he needs to believe in Jesus or who is the Jesus we are telling them they need to believe in. So, boldness is essential to sharing the gospel with others.

It should be obvious that if this list of 7 attitudes towards humans is truly crucial to our evangelism, then we should be daily praying that God would more and more work these graces into us. Otherwise, we will tend to carry out our evangelism without much compassion or gentleness or sincerity or humility or courage or respect, or perhaps will be lacking several or all of these, but whatever, we will dull the effect of our evangelism, and will greatly dishonor our God.

Please take several minutes to think about and write down your thoughts about the following question.



4. Take several minutes to think about the following question and then write down your answer.

- Of these 7 attitudes, which do you believe is most absent or weakest in your heart? Please explain.
- Take some time to pray about this right now.



4. What is one key point you learned in the lesson today that is related to evangelism? Please take 2-3 minutes to write your answer below.

What is your answer to this question? (If not a lot of time, break into two groups so everyone can have an opportunity to answer.) PLEASE KEEP YOUR ANSWERS BRIEF.

Please remember to look for the supplemental mp3 to hear the rest of this lesson, as well as for the weekly follow-up where I will remind you of any HW that is coming up.

- Do be working on your Personal Conversion Story. In about two weeks you are going to speak it in class to the rest of the class. One note here: I want it to be under 5 minutes in length.
  - We will discuss the book by Greg Gilbert next week, so if you have not finished it yet, please do this week.
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