

Necessary Elements in a Faithful Presentation of the Gospel

"How To Evangelize"

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The Bible provides many different occasions where people proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. In seeking to understand what the essential elements are in a biblically-faithful presentation of the gospel, here are some helpful headings to bear in mind.

1. Teach Them About God's Holiness.

God is holy (Lev 11.44). That means that God is set apart from sin and that no wicked thing can stand before His eyes (Hab 1.13). The character of God is so holy that anything that defiles His character is, thus, hated by God (Ps 5.5). God is so impeccably pure that anyone who would enter His presence must be consecrated (Ex 19.22). God is a faithful, righteous, and upright God (Deut 32.4).

2. Show Them Their Sin.

Because all of man's ways are before the eyes of God (Prov 5.21), man is desperately evil and corrupt (Rom 3.10-20). He is corrupt in his heart (Jer 17.9), his mind and heart (Jer 4.14; Isa 59.7), and of course in his actions of life (1 Kings 8.46; Ecc 7.20). Every person is completely depraved (Eph 2.1-3) and therefore headed for eternal death (Rom 6.23; Ezek 18.4). We are inherently sinful because we are humans and have descended from Adam's progeny (Rom 5.12).

3. Instruct Them About Christ & What He Has Done.

Though God is infinitely holy and man is desperately unholy, God has intervened to solve an impossible problem (Titus 3.4). God calls a sinner by grace (Eph 2.4-9), regenerates His soul (John 3.8; Ezek 36.26), grants eternal life (2 Tim 1.9) simply and solely because of the work of Christ on the cross (1 Pet 3.18). Christ eternally existed as God (John 1.1-3) but willingly emptied himself by taking on human flesh (Phil 2.5-8). He obeyed the Law of God (Rom 10.4) and drank the cup of God's ferocious wrath (Matt 26.39; John 19.30) so that sinners might have access to God (Heb 7.25) by shedding his blood (Lev 17.11; Heb 9.22), dying and rising from the dead (Rom 4.25; 1 Cor 15.4; Matt 28.5-6). This is only accomplished by a God-given faith to the sinner who entrusts Himself fully to Jesus Christ (Eph 2.8-9; Phil 1.29). Christ took the curse that sinners deserve (Gal 3.13) so that sinners who trust in Him might be made righteous (2 Cor 5.21). This is the great exchange via the work of Christ (1 Cor 15.3).

4. Tell Them What God Demands Of Them.

God commands all people to repent (Acts 17.30) and believe in Christ (Acts 2.38) in order to be saved (Matt 4.17; John 3.15). God commands that sinners would come to Christ to find life (Matt 11.28; John 5.40). God demands that they turn from their wicked ways (Ezek 33.11), repent (Jer 15.7), believe (Rom 10.9), and surrender to Christ (Luke 9.23). Jesus demands that all of His followers surrender everything (Luke 9.62) so as to gain everything (Mark 8.35). One who dies to self (1 Cor 15.31) leaves everything (Phil 3.8) so as to follow Christ as Savior and as Lord (John 15.7-9).

5. Advise Them To Count the Cost Thoroughly.

Every person is to consider the cost of following Christ (Luke 14.33). In fact, if one does not renounce all he has — even his own life — then he cannot be Christ's disciple (Luke 14.26). Christ does not ask for a portion of one's life; he demands Lordship over one's entire life (Jer 24.7). A person is not saved by mere intellectual assent; the demons have this (James 2.19) as does Satan (Matt 4.6). A person must be willing to leave everything including family, friends, and inheritances to follow Christ (Matt 8.21). But Christ is sweeter, greater, and the true dispenser of eternal joy (John 15.11). It means that a new allegiance must form since one cannot serve two masters (Matt 6.24). He must choose Christ, persevere with Him, and evidence that change by an ongoing pursuit of aggressive holiness (Matt 24.13; Gal 5.16-17; Heb 12.14).

6. Urge Them to Trust in Christ Now!

Paul preached and said that God “commanded all men to repent” (Acts 17.30). In fact, those who repent should perform deeds appropriate to repentance (Acts 26.20). Isaiah, speaking for Yahweh Himself, called Israel to “turn to God and be saved” (Isa 45.20). The author of Hebrews says that men ought not to continue to sin willfully after receiving a knowledge of the truth or there will be no forgiveness of sins offered to him (Heb 10.26-27). The psalmist called the people of Israel to worship God and not harden their hearts (Ps 95.8). In fact, the author of Hebrews quotes this and says: “today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb 3.15). Indeed, “now is the acceptable time” and “today is the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6.1). Paul appeals for men's souls. He even says that he begs people to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5.20). When Paul preached on his missionary journeys, he attempted to persuade people to believe in Jesus Christ (Acts 18.4). All day, as he preached, from morning till evening, he tried to persuade men concerning Jesus from the Word of God (Acts 28.23). This is well understood by the prophet Joel who pleaded with the wayward people of Israel to “now return to the Lord your God” (Joel 2.13). God even calls people to “return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds” (Zech 1.4). May we follow the pattern laid forth in the Scriptures and plead with sinners, urge sinners, passionately persuade sinners to trust in Christ now for salvation!

Summary of Verses for Evangelism:

God's Holiness (Habakkuk 1.13; Psalm 5.5; Romans 1.18)

Man's Sinfulness (Romans 3.23; 6.23; Ecclesiastes 7.20; Ephesians 2.1-3)

Christ's Work (2 Corinthians 5.21; Romans 5.8; 1 Corinthians 15.1-4; John 19.30)

God's Demands (Acts 17.30; Luke 9.23; Ezekiel 33.11; Ephesians 2:8-10)

Counting the Cost (Luke 14.26; Matthew 6.24; Hebrews 12.14)

Urgent Pleading (Isaiah 45.20; 2 Corinthians 6.1; 2 Corinthians 5.20; Hebrews 3.15)