

EVANGELISM: KEY TO RECLAIMING THE NATIONS

The word evangelism refers to the practice of relaying information about a particular set of beliefs to others who do not hold those beliefs. In Christianity, evangelism is the act of witnessing or fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). The scriptures often describe "evangelism" as "spreading the Gospel". Therefore, simply put, Christian evangelism is when we share our faith with others. It is a verbal proclamation of the Christian gospel.

The overriding objective of this article is to urge believers to tell what they know about God from their encounters with Him. You are required as a believer to expose your religion and not to impose it. You were saved to save others. The essence is to proclaim liberty to those in captivity (Isaiah 61:1). As believers we are all bestowed with power and authority to proclaim the good news with signs and wonders (Luke 10:19; Mark 16:17). We are to go forth and bear fruits and disciple them to abide (John 15:16). Therefore, LET'S GO!

In the Bible, we read of men who saw God. They discovered God in ways that transformed them. What they saw compelled them to say something about Him. This reoccurring pattern is summarized in 1 John 1:1, "That ... which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." The encounters so inspired them that they felt compelled to tell other people. We are the benefactors of these rich encounters with God and demonstration of an act of obedience.

Captivity is inevitable wherever the messenger abandons the message (Isaiah 56:9-11). The captive will be set free whenever the message is delivered (2 Cor. 4:5; John 3:14-15; John 12:32). That is why we must go forth to the city and beyond to proclaim the Gospel. Again, the message is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the Gospel is preached by the power of the Holy Spirit, deliverance of all kinds will follow (Matt 4:23; Mark 1:13-14; Acts 14:3).

Approaches to Evangelism

There are several approaches to evangelism and not limited to the following:

- Open-air preaching (Matt. 5, 6, 7)
- Door to door evangelism (Luke 10:1-11)
- Trickle-down evangelism (Acts 8:27-39)
- Servant evangelism – Serving others with no strings attached (Jn. 13:14-17)
- Prophetic evangelism (John 4:5-15, 19-25)
- Evangelism through a sermon (Matt. 4:23; Acts 2:37-41)
- Lifestyle evangelism (Matthew 5:14-16)
- Friendship evangelism (1 Cor. 9:19-23)
- Creative evangelism styles - media evangelism; phone evangelism or "phone fishing"; tract evangelism and et cetera.
- Combined methods – a combination of two or more approaches.

Qualities of the Evangelist

There are some fundamental qualities that the fiery evangelist should take into cognizance. Soul-winning is his lifestyle. He/she is committed to personal and church/corporate evangelism outreaches. He must be fearless (2 Tim. 1:7). He/she must be totally consumed with a passion for souls (Luke 4:43). They are alert in the spirit and have a discerning spirit (Hebrews 5:14), knowing what to say and at when.

He/she must have compassion for the lost. Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated great compassion for the lost. He deals with sinners as if He is a fellow sinner (Rom. 3:23). He is living to destroy the works of the devil (Luke 4:18-19). As disciples we are to hate the sin but to demonstrate genuine love to the sinner. Jesus himself said it that He came for sinners to come unto repentance (Luke 2:17).

He/she must be a person of prayer. Prayer is his/her spiritual oxygen. We need to maintain the fire of God through continual fervent prayer (James 5:16). Fire cannot continue to burn without oxygen, therefore we must be fervent in prayers, praying without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17) and praying all manner of prayers. Prayer is as natural an expression of faith as breathing is of life. Prayer is a longing of the soul. It is a daily admission of one's weakness. Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and the key to setting the captives free.

He/she is absolutely holy and hates sin with his whole heart (Romans 12:1). Obedience is the key to holiness (Joshua 1:8). Holiness will lead to the manifestation of the power of God – the anointing which will produce miracles and thereby the lost and unbelieving will not be able to resist the salvation call. Sin is a fire killer. The evangelist considers time as very crucial. Therefore, he/she is not a time waster (Ps. 89: 47; Eccles. 9:12a; Ephesians 5:16). He/she should remain connected to the source of the power (Jn. 15:5). Therefore, a true evangelist strives not to forsake the gathering of brethren (Hebrews 10:25). He/she lives a faith filled life (Rom. 1:17).

In all, reclaiming the nations through evangelism requires focus. Evangelism ought to be a way of life of the fiery believer/disciple. Ignite your passion for the lost by an absolute commitment of your life. It is noteworthy that, the evangelist has been God-ordained to be on a collision course with the destiny of the multitudes. You must be a carrier of His power, full of His spirit. It is the responsibility of the fiery disciple of God to win souls. This is not a choice. It is a wise thing to do (Prov. 11:30). Remember, God will reward soul winners with crowns (1 Thess. 2:19). The complacent worker will be spewed out for negligence of duty (Rev. 3: 15-16; Luke. 12:47).

Prayer - Lord, make me an uncompromising soul-winner (Matt. 28:19-20).

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