



Me, an evangelist?

The way in which 'missions' is often described can leave us thinking that, if we are not called by God to go to another nation to preach the gospel, we are not expected to evangelise. Whilst it may be true that we are not all *called* by God to be evangelists; we are all expected to be His *witnesses*. These words of Jesus should cause each one of us to take heed and tremble!

Matthew 10:32-33 – *Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

Where does that leave us? Remember: God will use you to minister to others where He has placed you, using the gifts He has given you. If you have a love for children, ask God how you can help them to place their trust in Jesus. If you have a love for street people, ask God how you can share Jesus with them, and how you can encourage them to step into a relationship with Him. If you are involved in business, ask God how and with whom you can share the gospel in ways that will cause them to think about their salvation. If you are working in the medical field, you have amazing opportunities to share about Jesus! If you are a housewife, you have access to schools and parents, etc.

Thus, we could say that every Christian can witness. In fact, we have a duty to do so! In practise, witnessing is what every Christian does with their life choices - their 'Christian walk'. If your life choices do not exemplify Christ's standards, your Christian walk will have no integrity, and you will be a poor witness for Christ. When any Believer witnesses, sharing their testimony may eventually lead to someone's conversion, but it could take several conversations and demonstrations of God's love to overcome the person's objections and misconceptions before they are ready to surrender their lives to Christ. Witnessing is an on-going process.

In summary one could say that:

>> **Witnessing** is telling others what *Jesus has done for me*.

>> **Evangelising** is telling others what *Jesus can do for them* (as I present the gospel to them).

Why do I see so few salvations?

Research has shown that not every person who hears the gospel for the first time will accept Christ and surrender their lives to Him. It often takes a number of interactions for someone to come to the point where they are ready to give their life to Christ. This is influenced by their experiences, disappointments, questions and so on. You or I may not be the final instrument used in the

sequence of encounters a person needs before they surrender their life to Christ. Understanding this changed everything for me!

1 Corinthians 3:5-6 – *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*

I pray the Lord would break the misconception many Believers have that they have failed if they do not lead someone to Jesus every day! The truth is, we *all* have the opportunity to share Jesus *every* day, and we trust the Holy Spirit to work in *each* life we minister to *every* time we step out in obedience to share about Christ. Our focus should be on looking for opportunities to speak about Jesus every day. If we do so faithfully, we will bring many people a step closer to making their final decision to surrender their lives to Christ.

False beliefs when it comes to evangelism

Not everyone will respond favourably to your efforts of sharing Christ with them. What do you do if they walk away? You can pray for them. Ask God to lead them to others who will repeat the same message. They will eventually come to a point where they realise 'something bigger is going on'. Then, they will be ready to consider the message of salvation.

People have ideas about evangelism that are typical of the western world, but not true biblically. If you asked a roomful of Christians what evangelism is, you will most likely get many different answers and points of view. However, there are some viewpoints that are simply not true, and it is important to look at these, so you will be able to answer such questions should they arise in your evangelising.

1. People do not want to talk about God

This is not entirely true. Most people are resistant to hearing you lecture them or preach to them or to hearing of all they are doing wrong; but those who are really searching for hope and meaning in life, will be surprisingly open! You will find that most people are actually open to spiritual things, if they feel safe with the person talking to them. Those who are not Christians want many of the same things Christians want: To be listened to and treated with respect, for example. They have questions about life and death, and if you talk to them without condemnation in your voice, they will interact with you. Put yourself in their shoes; look for common ground and start there!

2. To be kind and compassionate towards everyone is enough

There is a popular saying, commonly attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: *"Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words."* There is actually no historical record that St. Francis said this, and more importantly, it's not a complete view of what the Bible teaches. In the Bible we read, *"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ"* (Romans 10:17, NIV). People can only respond to an invitation they have received! The gospel message is an invitation from God to return to the relationship with Him that every

person was designed to enjoy. God asks us to be a part of bringing that invitation to the world. People will not know God wants to forgive them for everything they have done, and that He offers them eternal life, unless someone tells them! This means words as well as actions. If the disciples did not share the gospel with the then-known world, it would not have made its way to you and me! Someone had to share the gospel with someone else, who in turn shared it with another person, in order for *you* to believe! This is true for all of us.

3. You have to 'sell' the gospel to people

If you believe people don't really want to speak about God, it can make you feel that sharing the gospel must be a 'sales pitch'. The best way to avoid this is just to be honest and simple in your conversation! Share your own struggles and tell of how God helps you; don't come over as being 'better' than someone else.

4. God loves those who evangelise more

God loves us unconditionally (1 Corinthians 13). He does not love you more or less, if you do or do not evangelise. It does, however, gladden His heart when we obey His commandments (Mark 16:15), and there are rewards for those who are faithful to do so (1 Corinthians 3:13).

5. Evangelism is trying to win an argument

Shouting or yelling at someone to prove a point is not, and should never be, the objective for sharing Christ! Telling someone they are wrong and are going to end up in hell, will not move them. If this is your stance, then sharing Christ is merely an accomplishment for you, and your success depends on your own efforts. Such an approach does not reflect the heart of God, and it can do a lot of damage. The Holy Spirit must always be *central* in speaking of and sharing Christ with others.

Be equipped

The above article is an extract from a free PDF Book: *The Gospel of the Kingdom – Is it still relevant today?* To download this free book and gospel tracts, and access other free resources to equip you to share your faith, testimony and the gospel with others please visit:

<https://www.jwipn.com/pray-and-go>. You will be surprised how easy it is once you take the first few steps to Pray and GO!