

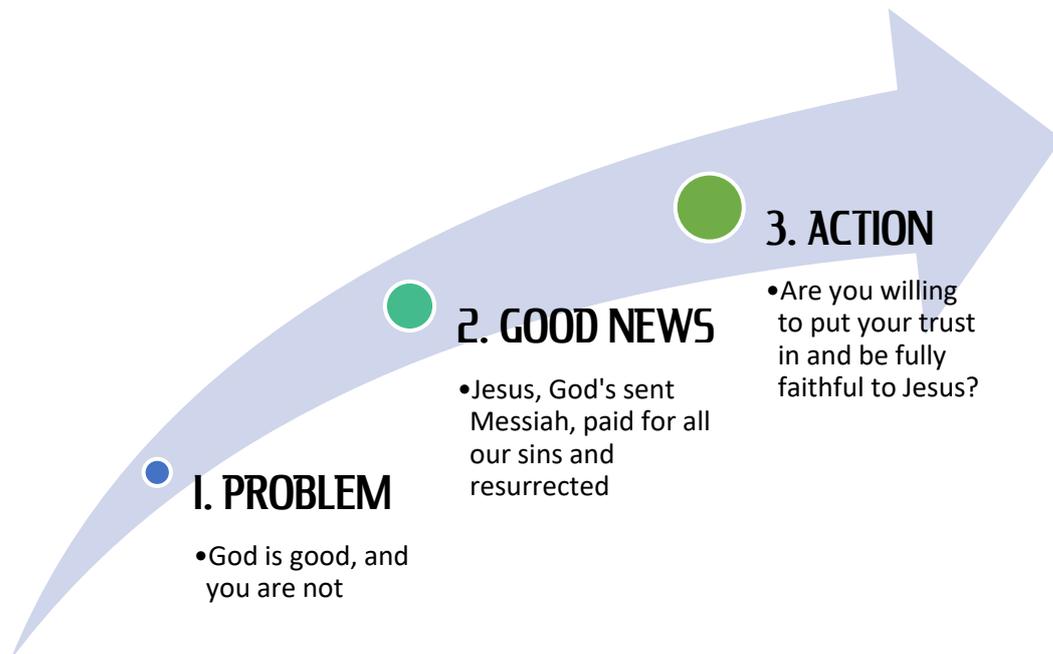
THE EVANGELISM ROUTE

This is the practical predicament of our days when proclaiming this message: how is good news for a 21st century westerner that a carpenter from a small village in the Middle East died on a cross for His religious teachings almost 2000 years ago? How does that help anyone today? We need to be able to explain this clearly, consistently, and briefly to everyone who is ready to hear it.

Ray Comfort, a great street evangelist from New Zealand, explained it this way. If you were a passenger on economy class in a crowded airplane, and the flight attendant gave you a big backpack that you were obliged to wear, you most likely would be quite upset. You would not be able to eat due to the lack of space, to sleep, or to even watch videos on the personal screen in front of you. Your journey would be badly disturbed, especially when seeing nobody else has been commanded to wear such a thing. You would find it very annoying and would surely complain, and if possible, take it off.

But what if the attendant would whisper to your ears the following message: "Sir, the pilot just told us that we have no fuel to reach our destination. We are going to crash, and there was only one parachute available. Your seat was the winner of the raffle, and you are allowed to jump and make a chance to survive." How would this explanation change your perspective on the backpack you had to wear? Surely, you would start asking a lot of questions about how to use it, where to pull and when, and you would be more than thankful for it. The backpack was inconvenient for comfortability, but vital for survival. Luckily you would understand that survival and life are much more important than comfort.

So, understanding this simple illustration, and seeing the enormous amount of biblical evidence on how Jesus, the apostles and the disciples preached, like in John 4 or in Acts 2 as some of the most known examples, I have come up with this simple diagram to illustrate the best procedure.



PROBLEM

The first thing a sinner needs to know is that they have a very serious problem, like the plane that will crash in our previous illustration. Feels good, but not for too long. When we read in the book of Acts how the disciples preached the gospel, they always started pointing at the sin of their hearers. There are different ways to do this, but my point here is that this is the first part of the message our hearers need to understand.

This, of course, needs to be brought wisely as to not lose our hearers' interest unnecessarily. And, important to clarify here, if our hearers are already broken by their sin and are aware of it, we do not need to put the finger deep in the wound. Remember, what is important is what they have to understand more than what we have to say. If they already are aware of their guilt, move on to the next part.

GOOD NEWS

When a person realizes that the plane will crash, they will be ready to receive the good news. It is like going to the dentist: it is expensive, painful and unpleasant, but nonetheless we pay and go through it because we know we need it. The good news is costly, there is a price to pay. It demands everything from us, but if people understand that through the life of Jesus the way out of the problem is at hand, and of course if they are prompted by the work of the Holy Spirit, they will ask us like the Jews did in Acts 2:37 "Brothers, what should we do?"

ACTION

Only if a sinner understands he has a problem with the Creator, that he deserves punishment and damnation because his ways are wicked; and if he believes that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah sent by God to fully pay the price for our sins and transgressions, only then comes obedience: repentance, faith(fulness), baptism in water in the name of Jesus, the fulfillment of the promise of receiving the Holy Spirit, understanding that he will need to be disciplined by older brothers or sisters to learn how to represent and obey his new King, Jesus.