
TIPS FOR EVANGELISM

There is no unique particular way to announce the good news (gospel) of the Kingdom of God, and the name of His Son Jesus Christ. However, there are some crucial parts of this message, various principles to keep in mind, and resources available that facilitate doing this. The better you are prepared to share the message, the more effective you will be in sharing it in different circumstances and to different kinds of people, such as your own network of family, friends, colleagues and neighbors, strangers out on the streets, a specific people group in the mission field, or in casual small-talk situations.

Explaining and teaching all the possibilities here would be an unending project, but the basic principles to take into account in the sharing of the gospel will be explained here instead, so that you will be able to develop your own way to do it.

A REASON TO BE HEARD

The unredeemed will not listen to you if they are not interested in what you have to say, or if they have better alternatives or more urgent things to do. This does not mean that you have to sell the gospel or sugarcoat it, but that you need to choose to work under circumstances that facilitate conversation.

Many of the times people reject what we have to say is because they have a prejudice that we were not able to unarm or get around. If we act wisely, we will be able to get to deeper and more personal opinions. This will allow us to share about the work of Jesus in a way that sounds familiar and appealing to the lost. Still this does not guarantee they will believe, but then we will know that if they reject our message it will not be because they did not understand it.

The master praised the dishonest servant manager for being so clever, because worldly people are more clever than enlightened people in dealing with their own. Luke 16:8

For example, if you are approaching strangers on the street you need to have a very short introduction that creates openness or interest. Try to have a description of who you are and what you want to do, so that the wall of mistrust and the defensive attitude can be lowered. You can prepare a list of standard questions about spirituality for example, if you will work in a mainly atheist area. If you will do street preaching (as standing on a high place and speaking out loud), it would be wise to start with something engaging if your audience is not open to spiritual or Christian topics. When talking to family members, it is better to be honest and tell them you would like to make an appointment to share something you have learned about faith and that you think will interest them, and that you need their feedback on.

A BOND OF TRUST

Make yourself as reachable as possible, as possible to be related to by the ones you are trying to reach.

Although I am free from everyone's expectations, I have made myself a servant to all of them to win more people. To the Jews I became like a Jew in order to win Jews. To those under the Law I became like a man under the Law, in order to win those under the Law (although I myself am not under the Law). To those who do not have the Law, I became like

a man who does not have the Law in order to win those who do not have the Law. However, I am not free from God's Law, but I'm subject to the Messiah's law. To the weak I became weak in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some of them. I do all this for the sake of the gospel in order to have a share in its blessings. 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

It is good to find common ground with the ones we are reaching out to. If someone, for example, is angry with God, or has become atheist due to religious disappointments, it would be good to ask them which kind of God they do not believe in. Then we can tell them we also do not believe in such a God. Someone said: "Never judge an atheist until you understand which kind of god he was taught he had to believe in."

DEMONSTRATION OF THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM

When the Lord sent the disciples on their first mission without Him, in Luke 10, the disciples were supposed to first find a person of honor, stay there, eat and drink, and then heal the sick before they would start preaching.

The preaching of the gospel was always accompanied by signs and wonders, and the church prayed always that the preaching would be supported by supernatural power.

Lord, pay attention to their threats now, and allow your servants to speak your word boldly as you stretch out your hand to heal and to perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." Acts 4:29-30

My message and my preaching were not accompanied by clever, wise words, but by a display of the Spirit's power, so that your faith would not be based on human wisdom but on God's power. -1 Corinthians 2:4-5

But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed. 1 Corinthians 14:24-25

Every disciple of Jesus should be able to demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit by healing the sick, casting out demons, giving words of wisdom or prophecies. On the other hand, we must remember that if someone is able to perform these signs, that will not mean that he is an approved worker. Every disciple of Jesus should be able to perform miracles, but not everyone who performs miracles is a disciple of Jesus.

ONE STEP CLOSER

The task of sharing the gospel is not always harvesting ripe crops. Many times, it is sowing the seed or watering the young plant, bringing the process closer to the moment of harvesting.

He was also saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seeds on the ground. He sleeps and gets up night and day while the seeds sprout and grow, although he doesn't know how. The ground produces grain by itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, he immediately starts cutting with his sickle because the harvest time has come." Mark 4:26-29

Who is Apollos, anyhow? Or who is Paul? They're merely servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord gave to each of us his task. I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept everything growing. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is significant, but God, who keeps everything growing, is the one who matters. The one who plants and the one who waters have the same goal, and each will receive a reward for his own action. For we are God's co-workers. You are God's farmland and God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

Therefore, we see clearly that in the New Testament days the process of growth of the seed of new life was respected, and they were not to rush it. We must learn to discern what is the next step a person needs to take in order to come to faith in Jesus, or to grow in it.

For example, if we come to a person that has no seed of the gospel in him, we need to aim at a first goal of believing there is a spiritual world. If the person is religious, we can start dealing with sin and the righteousness of God. If the person is broken, we need to bring love and mercy. If the person is self-righteous, we need to sharpen their conscience by bringing the concepts of law and punishment.

Dr. James Engel developed for this purpose a scale for evangelism that helps understand where people are at in their spiritual walk of faith in Jesus, and to discern what could be their next step closer to God.

<i>DISCIPLESHIP</i>	+4	Spiritual growth / sanctification
	+3	Discovering spiritual gifts
	+2	Integrating into a Christian church
	+1	Understanding of the consequences of faith
<i>0 – New birth, faithfulness to Jesus</i>		
<i>EVANGELISM</i>	-1	Deciding to follow Jesus
	-2	Personal concern
	-3	Positive attitude towards the gospel
	-4	Understanding of the simple gospel
	-5	Interest in the Christian faith
	-6	Rough understanding of the Christian faith
	-7	Considering the existence of a “higher power”
	-8	Denying all supernatural activity

A more detailed and expanded version of this same scale is found on the website of the very well-known apologetic Ravi Zacharias (<https://connect.rzim.org/>).

The Engel Scale

Modified with Permission of Dr. James Engel

PATIENT'S MICRO-DECISIONS OF FAITH			HEALTHCARE WORKER ROLE	
DISCIPLE	Choose to live by faith	+5	MULTIPLYING	Speaks to: The Whole Person Addresses: Social Barriers Overcomes: Isolation By: Participation in Body Goal: Growth Answers: Will I live for Christ? <i>Example: Jerusalem Church (Acts 2:41-47) & Samaritan Awakening (Acts 8:4-8)</i>
	Chooses to share faith with others	+4		
	Makes Christ-like choices	+3		
	Joins in community life	+2		
	Assimilates God's Word	+1		
BELIEVER	Trusts in Christ	0	HARVESTING	Speaks to: The Will Addresses: Volitional Barriers Overcomes: Indecision, Unwillingness to Change By: Prayer & Persuasion Goal: Trust Christ Answers: Will I trust Christ? <i>Example: Paul before Agrippa (Acts 26:1-23)</i>
	Turns from self-trust	-1		
	Sees Christ as the answer	-2		
	Recognizes own need	-3		
SEEKER	Considers the truth of the Gospel	-4	SOWING	Speaks to: The Mind Addresses: Intellectual Barriers Overcomes: Ignorance, Misconceptions & Error By: Presentation Goal: Understanding Answers: Who is Jesus? What does He want from me? <i>Example: Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8)</i>
	Understand the implications	-5		
	Aware of the Gospel	-6		
	Recognizes relevance of the Bible	-7		
SPECTATOR	Looks positively at the Bible	-8	CULTIVATING	Speaks to: The Emotions Addresses: Emotional Barriers Overcomes: Indifference, Fear & Antagonism By: Presence Goal: Attractions, Trust You Answers: What's in it for me? <i>Example: Nicodemus (John 3)</i>
	Recognizes differences in the messenger	-9		
	Aware of the messenger	-10		
	Going own way	-11		
	Avoids the truth	-12		
CYNIC				

Remember that it is God who brings fruit, not our tactics. Nonetheless, if we are not adequately prepared and trained, or if we are too lazy or distracted with other issues in life, we can be disturbing, hindering or neglecting the work of the Kingdom. Practically spoken, is the Lord who opens the hearts and brings conviction if the person is open for it. We cannot do that part. But we have been sent to bring that good news accordingly, and we need to be clear in the message we preach to the lost. That is our part.

FURTHER CONTACT

An apostolic worker in Germany described the openness of people in comparison to a traffic light, following this pattern:

-  Closed → let go
-  Open → keep contact
-  Ready → new birth

Many workers in the Kingdom of God expect only the 'green light' people, those ripe for the harvest. Nonetheless, most of people (at least here in Europe where this document is being written and developed) are on the 'amber light.' Those are the ones who are not closed, but are neither convicted and ready. They are open to consider that what you are saying might be true, they just do not fully understand it yet. The 'amber light' people need to be disciplined **to salvation**. You can meet with them and patiently bring them from -7 in the [Engel Scale](#) to -5, and gradually to the point of conversion and new birth.

Someone said once that this process can be compared to the disciples of Jesus. They were disciplined by Him for around two and a half years before they even realized He was the Messiah, and received the Holy Spirit after His departure.

In the case of the 'green light' people, remember that when someone gets baptized by believing in the Jesus as Messiah and Lord, it is just the beginning of the work. Then a baby has been born, but that baby still needs to be nurtured, fed, raised, equipped, trained, and educated in many areas of life. Leaving them to themselves could be fatal, unless you are snatched away by the Holy Spirit like Phillip in Acts 8. If we are not in a position to disciple them, at least we could do our best to stay in touch or connect them with another disciple that can train them in the culture of the Kingdom and the ways of the Lord.