

**Core Seminar**

**Evangelism**

**Class 9: Being Intentional & Strategic in Evangelism**

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Welcome to the Evangelism C.S., Introduce yourself / co-teachers, Handout, Pray

Pray (ASK PEOPLE TO LOOK UP Passages)

**Introduction**

**Today** we’re talking about how to be **intentional** and **strategic** in evangelism. We see Christ being both intentional and strategic in his own ministry in the Gospel’s. Christ was intentional. He lived his life on purpose. 1 Timothy 1:15, “The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.” This was Christ’s main intention and he carried it out to the very end. Jesus grabbed every opportunity the Father gave him to share the Gospel.

Jesus was also strategic. In other words, he had a detailed plan for how to use his whole life to share the Gospel.

So how can we be like Jesus? How can we be both intentional & strategic in our Evangelism?

By doing 3 things:

1. By identifying & removing barriers to evangelism that lurk in our lives.

2. By turning commonplace conversations into eternal exchanges.

3. By living strategically for the sake of the Gospel.

* Strategy is big buzzword. People misuse all the time.
* So let me clarify by what I mean. All a strategy is really is a plan.
* So here we’re talking about ways to plan your life for evangelism.

**But before we do any of that, Let’s Pray.**

1. **Be Intentional in Evangelism: Identify barriers to evangelism and remove them from your life**

It’s a normal thing to go through busy seasons and slow seasons as evangelists. One reason for this could be that we are in a particular season of life that causes this to happen. Children, sickness, certain work, etc. But in every season of life, we’re given new opportunities for evangelism, but we also face new barriers as well. Maybe some barriers we’ve never faced before. Often we can’t even see these barriers because we don’t even know to look for them.

Here are three questions to probe and find out why you may not be sharing your faith in this season of life:

**Question 1: Are you motivated?**

 Are you motivated to share the Gospel? Do you even desire to do what Jesus has asked you to do?

Believe it or not when it comes to EV, the most important factor isn’t how much we know. And it isn’t whether we’re 1introverted or 2extroverted, or if we have many non-Christian friends or very few. Ultimately, the **most** important thing in Evangelism is having a right desire for Evangelism. Desire and motivation are so important because they determine not just **IF** we share the Gospel evangelism, but also **HOW** we do it. If I don’t desire to share the **Gospel**, I won’t do it, even if I have opportunities & even if I’m equipped. Jonah’s life illustrates this point perfectly. Jonah had everything he needed for Evangelism. God told him what to say & who to preach to. He even had God’s power and commission! But Jonah didn’t do it. He sailed away. And why? Because of his own motivations and desires.

Friends, we’re part of a church that equips us well to share the Gospel. And we live in Washington D.C., a city where the world comes to live and work. But simply having opportunities and being equipped isn’t enough. We’ve gotta be motivated. And even in being motivated, we’ve gotta have the right motivations

Why? Because, when we’re motivated to do something out of pride, it’s looks really different from when we do something out of a love for God and others.

**Question:** What are some sinful motives for evangelism that you’ve seen? (class)

So why should we share the Gospel? What are right reasons for Evangelism?

Here are 3 good reasons to evangelize:

First, OBEDIENCE. It’s a COMMAND! Consider what Jesus said in **Luke 6:46:**

 “Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?”

Friends, God **loves us** & he is patient **with us**, but He also **calls us** to deny ourselves & follow Him.

And Part of following God is sharing the Gospel. We see that **so** clearly in Matthew 28.

So, Right Motivation #1: We should evangelize out of obedience to God.

But Motivation #2, PEOPLE ARE LOST! We should also consider the state of the lost, & their need for Christ.

Penn Gillette is a famous magician & comedian, and also an atheist, and he says this about Christians who don’t share Christ:

*“If you believe that there’s a heaven & hell & people could be going to hell—or not getting eternal life or whatever—& you think that, well, it’s not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward. . . .*

 *How much do you have to hate somebody to not proselytize?*

*How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?” – Penn Jillette, Atheist Entertainer*

If anatheists can see the kindness of Christian Evangelism, how much more should we?

(PAUSE)

Finally, Right Motivation #3

 We should share the Gospel for God’s Glory!

John Piper says it this way:

*“All of history is moving toward one great goal, the white-hot worship of God & His Son among all the peoples of the earth. Missions is not that goal. It is the means.” - JP*

What’s he’s saying here is that we’re not commanded to do evangelism for evangelism’s sake. We’re commanded to do it to bring God glory. That’s his plan. That’s what he deserves.

***So friends, I’ll reiterate our first question. Are you motivated for Evangelism?***

***(Any Questions?)***

After motivation comes a second factor, which is our second question.

**Question 2: Are you equipped?** Are you Equipped for Evangelism?

By equipped I mean capable, are you capable of Evangelism? Is it possible for you to share the Gospel, to explain it to someone else? Part of this is literally knowing the content of the Gospel and being able to recite it. But once we’ve learned the basics, we’ve only just begun to be equipped. Evangelism is like a good board game. It takes a minute to learn, but a lifetime to master.

***Question for class:*** How did you learn to EV? Who were people, or what were tools that helped you?

* Bridge Diagram: Romans 6:23 the first way I learned to evangelize
* Ministry of Campus Outreach, John Muller discipled me and taught me how, first time on the beach.

**Finally, Question 3: Are you available?**

Are you physically available for evangelism? Are you ever around Non-Christians? We should make it a priority to be around non-believers. During one phase of my life I spent 2 years working in CrossFit gyms therefore that was my ministry/mission field, there was a year and a half where I was working for the Government and that was my ministry, now its my job.

So if you find yourself around nothing but believers, ask yourself why that is. How could you practically get around non-believers, to change that?

What questions do you have on that section?

1. **Be Intentional in Evangelism: Turn Commonplace Conversations into Eternal Exchanges**

If we’re motivated, equipped and available for evangelism. Then we should have opportunities to tell people about Christ. Evangelism is the natural outflow of a life that’s filled with the Spirit. That being said, one of the most unnatural parts of evangelism, for anyone I think (even me as this is literally my job description), is transitioning from talking about everyday life issues to discussing eternal issues.

So in this section, we’ll discuss how to bridge the everyday with the eternal in your relationships & in conversations. We’ll talk about how to move conversation closer to sharing the Gospel. A lot of what I’m gonna share here is simply practical wisdom. The Bible doesn’t have a chapter on how to bridge into the Gospel with non-Christians. So, think about these things, pray through them & pick a few to put into practice.

So, **4 Tips for Building Bridges in Everyday Conversations**

**Tip 1:** Pray for wisdom to know how **quickly** you should move toward sharing the Gospel.

When it comes to evangelism, every encounter is different. (which is why it can be difficult) There are some people you’ll see once, but then likely never again. In these cases, you’ll need to move quickly into a Gospel conversation. Examples would be people you meet on vacation, on a bus or airplane, in a line or a restaurant. Know that each of these *brief* encounters is from the Lord. If we truly believe in the sovereignty of God, there are no coincidences. So we should pray wisdom on how to be both winsome and bold in the encounters.

Any stories of this kind of opportunity? Personal tip: You may have to get awkward and be ok with that. Push through the awkwardness.

**Tip 2:** Sow Seeds with your words and deeds

There are other types of relationships where you’ll have more time to build a relationship with the person you hope to share with. This is called relational evangelism. For example friends, family members & co-workers. Don’t be fooled by the fact that you know these people better, sharing the Gospel is still urgent in these relationships. But at the same time, we should have a long-term witnessing strategy in mind.

We’ll talk more about these other kinds of relationships next week.

So, Ask the Lord to give you wisdom in how to sow seeds with your **words**. (Col. 4:5)

**Colossians 4:5-6** [read]. “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. **6**Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

There should be something different about the way Christians speak. So in many ways, you’ll even sow seeds of curiosity by what you **don’t** say. Over time, people close to you will be curious as to why you **don’t** do some things. Why you don’t curse or gossip or slander or grumble or complain. I found this especially true when I was in college. If and when someone asks you why…Pray for wisdom of how to answer them…and point them to Christ. And try to sow seeds. Try to show them that who you are (a Christian) ties into what you do.

For instance, you could mention something like… “after church on Sunday…” our family had a few people over to eat. Or maybe “a few friends from our Bible study…” and I went to go see a movie. These aren’t huge statements. But when you say these kinda things throughout the flow of your day, people register that you’re religious. And they start to watch. But even these things require a level of boldness.

Another way you can sow seeds is to ask how you can pray for them people. This can be something you actively do… like when you have a neighbor over for dinner …or if you see someone struggling/having a hard day…you can ask how you can pray. (SBP students example)

**Tip 3:** Be **observant** of other people’s lives.

I’m not sure about you, but one of my **favorite** things is to people watch.

I’m sure we could all tells stories of crazy things we’ve seen, but when I make this point, I’m thinking of something a little more useful.

I’m encouraging you to be on the alert when you’re in conversations with people. Be on the lookout for things that might provide a door into talking about the Gospel.

Listen to the things people say. Watch what they do. Look at what they wear.

Ask what people are reading. Now, I’m not talking about being creepy.

I’m talking about being observant.

I’m talking about looking for bridges into spiritual conversations.

For instance, 3 years ago this week, a student walked into my office.

She had a Christian fish on her tuition check. So I asked her about it.

That conversation turned into a lunch with me and my friend Kaitlyn Belloli.

That turned into our new friend visiting church and talking about the Gospel.

And the Lord used all of that resulted in my friend Audrey coming to Christ and being baptized here 6 months later.

And it all started with, “Hey, tell me about the fish on your check?”

“I noticed your cross, where did you get that? What does it mean to you?”

You can do the same things with t-shirts or tattoos.

People wear things or get tattoos because they mean something to them, so ask.

Be interested in other people.

*IF TIME: What are things you like to use to turn conversations to the Gospel (rw?)*

It’s not an exact science, but it’s good to look and listen for ways to connect with people and see how you can take a conversation from observations about their life to more eternal and weighty conversations.

Finally, **Tip 4:Prepare and Plan for Gospel Conversations**

* Prepare for conversations.

Think re what you’ll say, or how to get to the Gospel before you see someone.

* Evangelize in groups.

Its always easier to get to the Gospel with a Christian friend (JFK ill)

* Finally, plan to do EV, or to think about doing it.

Put time in your calendar this week.

Much EV is not done bc we don’t plan to do it.

**Any questions on those 4 Tips or anything we covered in that section?**

One Final Point, Roman Numeral 3 on your handouts…

1. **Be Intentional and Strategic with Your Life**

Don’t forget who you are.

Christ has commissioned you as His ambassador (2 Cor. 5:20).

This means you’re His representative wherever He’s placed you.

**As his ambassadors we should**

1. Be devoted to **Praying** about evangelism.
* We should pray for God to give us compassion for the lost.
* We should pray for God to open doors.
* We should pray for God to give us wisdom of what to say.
* We should pray for God to give us courage to speak.
1. Always be **Preparing** to share the Gospel.
* (\_\_\_\_\_, could you read **1 Peter 3:15?** [read]. **1 Peter 3:15** “in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”
* We should, no we must, spend good time in devotional reading with the Lord.

As we come to passages that show proclamation of the Gospel, pray for the Lord to move through you in your family, neighborhood, workplace and the world.

* We should buy copies of trustworthy tracts like 2 Ways to Live and carry copies with us to give to people you speak with about the Gospel or with a tip.
* We could purchase some $5 Bibles or $1 NTs to have a copy in your bag when you travel or at your desk. Consider making note of a few passages of Scripture that would be good for the person receiving it to read.
* We should read biographies of people who dedicated their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.[[1]](#footnote-1)
1. Always be **Pursuing** opportunities to share the Gospel with those near you.
* Be intentional to pray for and meet your neighbors and have them over for a meal.
* Make having non-Christians over for a meal a regular part of your life.
* Talk to strangers…Illustr: Walter
* Talk to the people you see everyday. Be a creature of habit…Illustr: Mark @ Hops…

(PRINT PC list)

1. Always be **Pursuing** opportunities to get the Gospel with those far away.
* Pray for Christian workers around the world. Illustr: map on our wall
* Give generously and sacrificially to your local church…supports missionaries
* Go on mission trips. (Ill: The thing that really sparked my evangelism was TK trip).

**Conclusion & Challenge**

* Pray
* Examine before the Lord the three questions we asked earlier
* Pursue an opportunity to share the Gospel…

I have 5 copies of the New Testament, they cost me 50 cents.

And, I seriously know this takes a lot of courage, but…

Would any of you be willing to try and pass 1 out, and let us know next week how it went?

1. *Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God*, Noel Piper; *Through Gates of Spendor*, Elizabeth Elliot; *Whitfield* by Arnold Dallimore; To Golden Shore (Adoniram Judson) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)