

Living Evangelistically

1. Introduction

What is evangelism?:

I. *Euangelion*.

A. Mark 1:1: *“The beginning of the gospel (euangeliou) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”*

1. *Eu-* is the Greek prefix for “good.”
2. *Angelos* is Greek for “angel” or “messenger.”
3. “Evangelize” is a transliteration of the Greek and means to bring people/announce the good message/good news.

B. The good news is multifaceted.

1. The gospel of Jesus. (Mark 1:1)
2. The gospel of the kingdom. (Matthew 4:23)
3. The gospel of God. (Mark 1:14; 1 Timothy 1:11)
4. The gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24)
5. The gospel of salvation. (Eph. 1:13)
6. The gospel of peace. (Eph. 6:15)

Question: What different kinds of good news can we find in John 1:1-18? What about Acts 14:14-18 and Matthew 10:34-39?

Living evangelistically:

I. There are inescapable aspects of Christianity. (ex.: the Lord's Supper; baptism; worship.)

- A. Christians have given their lives to God.
- B. We no longer have our own kingdoms but we live in God's kingdom.

Question: Why must Christians surrender their lives to God?

- C. Evangelizing is inescapable.

Question: If evangelizing is inescapable, then why do we spend so much time trying to escape it?

II. Living evangelistically.

A. Neither relying on events to evangelize nor our goodness and kindness to evangelize.

1. Many churches today are realizing that they don't know how to evangelize.
2. This isn't putting on events and inviting people, and it's not hoping our kindness alone will bring others to Christ.
3. These are both two extremes ***which are useful*** but is not our focus.

B. Actively looking for opportunities to speak to people about God and Jesus.

1. This is ***not*** about manipulating conversations to make a sales pitch.
2. This is about loving the lost, taking an interest in their lives, and sharing your interests with others.

Question: Is evangelizing a form of love? If so, in what kinds of ways are we to evangelize?

- a. God can come up easily in regular conversation.
 - b. Many people have never been offered a chance to look at the real Jesus.
3. Find people of similar interests. (Ex.: Paul going to synagogues.)

Question: What is your synagogue?

C. People need to know we're Christians.

1. We need to tell others.

a. If our friends don't know we're Christians, then we're not being honest with our friends about ourselves.

b. The fear of coming across as ignorant or unintelligent can't stop us.

2. We need to have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)

a. Having love for one another demonstrates a community in which others want to be involved. (Ex.: Mormonism and the family unit.)

b. Many people are looking for an excuse not to believe in Jesus. When we don't love each other, we give them that excuse.

Why do we evangelize?:

A. Because we're Christians.

1. Christianity is not being baptized and waiting to die to go to heaven.

2. We're living our lives in God's kingdom right now, and we're to do the work God has for us to do.

B. Because Jesus is working right now. (John 14:1-3)

1. If Jesus is working right now, then we should be working, too.

2. We're not to sit back and wait to receive the fruits of the labor of Jesus.

C. Out of love for the souls of others.

1. Keeping Jesus to ourselves is the worst thing we can do to our neighbors.

Question: Has Jesus changed your life for the better? Why do you think we are quick to share worldly hobbies and goods that have changed us for the better and slow to share the gospel?

2. The goal is to bring the lost to Christ, not simply to increase the number of those in our local church. If our goal is to increase our numbers, then we'll use people as a means to an end, rather than share the gospel out of love.

3. It's possible to evangelize successfully and not to increase our numbers.

a. People might accept the gospel and become members of another church.

b. People might reject the gospel even if we bring it to them lovingly.

Many prophets were successful in their ministries yet were rejected during their lifetimes.

c. Our job is to bring the gospel, not to convert people. God converts people. We don't have that kind of power.

1. Trying to force someone to be converted is like trying to open a

locked bank vault using only the strength of your bare hands.

2. We shouldn't become discouraged if someone rejects the gospel.

3. We also can't take credit for someone accepting the gospel.

D. For the future of the church in Wallingford.

1. Evangelizing keeps our church alive for the sake of the souls who are lost both in the present and in the future.

2. We evangelize now to teach future members of our church how to evangelize.

Things to consider when beginning to evangelize:

1. Be honest with yourself and with others.

Do you enjoy evangelizing? If yes, why? If no, why not? If you don't enjoy it, then when you're speaking to others about the gospel, do they know how difficult it is for you to speak about the gospel? Being honest with others shows our weaknesses, but Christ's power is made perfect in our weaknesses. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

2. Evangelize out of love.

Think of a specific person in your life with whom you'd like to share the gospel. What is the best way to go about sharing it with them out of love and their best interest and not by manipulation or using a sales pitch?

3. Be genuinely interested in the lives of others and make friends with strangers.

Find out the interests of others. People are often interested in the things of God without knowing it. And let people into your life in order to show how positively the gospel has changed you.

4. Live evangelistically.

Don't rely on events or your goodness alone to spread the gospel. Talk to people about God, invite them to Bible studies and worship services, make yourself available so that when others are seeking God they have an option through you, and actively look for ways to bring glory to God in your daily life.