

Produced to Reproduce / Part 1, Evangelism

*“The gospel is ten words: Christ died
for our sins and rose from the dead.”*

—R Larry Moyer

In a business I used to work for, we used to use the acronym OJT. It stood for “On the Job Training.” The Disciples learned this way. By listening, looking, and emulating Jesus, they learned the way of the Master. Later, when Jesus told them to go and “make disciples,” they knew they were to repeat the process that He used with them. And that was the top priority Jesus gave to the Disciples from the Great Commission: disciple people.

The Disciples were not the “best and the brightest” either. They were the guys, if we had to predict, who were the least likely to change the world. But through the power of God and His instruction—they did. Even though they were average, Jesus placed them in the most crucial apprenticeship ever conceived of.

The Greatest Mission

We are now a part of that apprenticeship, and the responsibility of evangelizing the lost and discipling the saved has passed to us. From generation to generation, from faith to faith, we now have the responsibility to disciple the next generation.

The most important thing we could ever do, concerning another person, is to share the Gospel of Jesus with them. Everything else is an extreme distant second. For in the the end, what else matters if a person has no relationship with the Lord? Salvation is every person's greatest need. It is every coworker's greatest need. It is every fellow student's greatest need. It is every homeless person's greatest need. Most assuredly, if you and I are not making Christ known as we go through life, we are neglecting our highest priority for our lives. The next generation is born as the last was, one birth at a time. Those births start with the hearing of the Good News.

All Too Common

“When was the last time you had a conversation about God?” That was a question the Barna Group asked for a survey. Their conclusion came back:

“For most people, the unfortunate and surprising answer to that question is ‘not very often.’ Spiritual conversations are exceedingly rare for most Americans, and even for Christians, who are at best reluctant to have them.”⁵²

I once heard a powerful comment on Christians' silence regarding the Gospel from Nabeel Qureshi. Qureshi grew up in America and came to faith in Jesus as an adult out of Islam. He said he was surrounded by people who called themselves “Christian,” but they never shared the Gospel with him. He later

⁵² “Sharing Faith Is Increasingly Optional to Christians”, The Barna Group, accessed Dec. 4, 2019, <https://www.barna.com/research/sharing-faith-increasingly-optional-christians/>.

concluded, “either they didn’t believe the gospel was true, or, if they did believe it, they didn’t care if I went to hell.”⁵³ We must speak up!

Paul, through rhetorical questioning, put it to the Roman church plainly: “How are they to call on one they have not believed in? And how are they to believe in one they have not heard of? And how are they to hear without someone preaching to them?” (Romans 10:14) We are God’s ambassadors. We are supposed to represent Him here. We must open our mouths with the words of life we have inside of us.

How many times did you share the Gospel last year? How many times will you share the Gospel next year if you had to guess? Many Christians are stringing years together without ever sharing their faith in words. There is apprehension for many, so we need to pray for strength and courage to share our faith.

Where is the Darkness?

Some Christians only have spiritual conversations when they are around like minded Christians. They are light among light. I believe there are many reasons for this. I have listed several reasons here:

Holy Huddles. It’s tempting to play life safe by only associating with Christian friends, family, and communities. However, to make disciples, we must enter into darkness. Lost people do not attend Bible teaching and believing churches. We must go to them. The walled-off, monastery life is attractive because it protects us from lost, godless people. While we need to protect children from people who would influence them in ungodliness, we need to be more intentional in sharing our faith in the dark world. Sharing our faith may be uncomfortable at first (it is spiritual), but as we share our faith more often it can become quite natural.

“No Time.” What keeps us in holy huddles oftentimes are church programs. Churches fill their calendars up with programs and more programs—especially

⁵³ Nabeel Qureshi, “American Gospel” Documentary, accessed Dec. 4, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YEIQia3WFA>, (20 seconds from the beginning).

medium size to mega churches. There is always something for the faithful to do at their respective place of worship. But when the church has a fireworks display in their parking lot on July 4th, who is witnessing about the One who brings true freedom at the fire station's firework display on 10th Street? When we only go to men's Bible study to study the King, who is talking about the King-of-Kings at the social club or deer camp? We have to get around lost people to witness about Jesus.

“Monday Morning Atheists.”⁵⁴ We compartmentalize our lives. We may often live Monday through Friday without ever speaking Jesus to our peers, bosses, teachers, or anybody. This is the case for many Christians year after year. We need to embrace the thesis verses of Romans with Paul:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, ‘The righteous by faith will live.’” (Romans 1:16–17).

Simplify the Process

We tend to think about sharing our faith like it is a monumental challenge, or that it takes a pastor “to do it right,” or if those don't work, we might come up with another of a hundred other misconceptions (excuses really). Bottom line: we are called to be Jesus' witnesses.

There are many books on “lifestyle evangelism”⁵⁵ that include explanations on how to turn everyday interactions and conversations into sharing the Cross of Christ with others. But we tend to think the process is much harder than it is. All witnesses do is testify about something. When we are witnessing about Jesus, we are giving testimony of *what God has done for us*. Here is a simple plan to have a conversation about Jesus with someone else:

⁵⁴ From the title of Doug Spada's book, *Monday Morning Atheist*.

⁵⁵ I recommend Joe Aldrich's, *Lifestyle Evangelism : Learning to Open Your Life to Those Around You*.

- May I share something with you?
- (Before) I want to tell you what my life was like before I trusted in Jesus to save me.
- (During) I came to know Jesus through ...
- (Jesus) Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave to save sinners who trust in Him alone.
- (After) My life after I trusted Jesus has been ...

Make sure it is an honest account of these things. Most Christians have not had an easy life after coming to know Jesus as their Savior. But we all have the spiritual blessing of a relationship with Him, things like joy and peace and contentment through our trials.

People who share their faith do it not “because of what they know, but because of the Person they know, how well they know Him, and how much they long to see others know Him.”⁵⁶

Scripture Passage

Roman 10:1-17

Questions

- 1) Have you recently told someone outside your family and friends about Jesus’ death and resurrection? In other words, did you share the Good News with someone in the last 3 months?
- 2) Is there a friend or family member that you can share the Gospel with today?
- 3) What is a plan you could implement to hold yourself accountable to sharing your faith with others?

⁵⁶ Dawson Trotman, Sermon “Born to Reproduce”, 1955, accessed Dec. 4, 2019, <https://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/AA094.pdf>, 5.

THE WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

4) Being honest with yourself here, are you a committed witness of Jesus?

Aim Point

1) Do you know a person who would mentor you or at least hold you accountable in regard to evangelism? Who?

2) What group of people could you get around to help motivate you to share your faith and disciple others?

Resources

There is a short video on the Gospel titled, “What is the Gospel? (The Gospel in Two Minutes)”. Here is a link to the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apBjEhATypE>

This could serve as a guide for the sharing of one’s faith or one could share the video directly with someone and ask if they could call them afterwards.

Evantell sells an easy to understand handout to aid people in sharing the Gospel with others. Their website is <https://www.evantell.org/>.