

Evangelizing to People Who Have Heard it All Before

5 ways to share your faith without shoving it down people's throats.

Stephen Mattson – Relevant Magazine October 13, 2014

Within a society where people know the gist of what Christianity teaches but words such as “converts,” “evangelism” and “proselytize” are increasingly associated with religious zealots, abusive cults and violent terrorism, it’s becoming more difficult to communicate faith-based ideas without being offensive or perceived as a close-minded bigot.

Historically, evangelism has sometimes been used as a weapon to hurt, shame, guilt and induce fear. Its longtime associations with obnoxious street preachers, sleazy televangelists and corrupt organizations make it even less appealing to the public—and to Christians themselves.

Being on the receiving end of bad evangelism means suffering through preachy presentations that are contrived and superficial. Instead of hearing something honest and truthful, it’s often just a sales pitch with quick answers and no room for questioning, doubt, skepticism or critical thinking. Theology is presented as black and white, doctrines are non-negotiable, and entire populations are predestined to either a blissful eternity in heaven or a torturous afterlife in hell.

As a Christian, I’ve never once enjoyed being evangelized to, whether it was regarding Christianity or any other belief. Why? Because the context is usually extremely uncomfortable and the premise is built upon the preconception that you’re wrong. Instead of a conversation about faith, evangelism can feel more like an aggressive prosecutor grilling you for a crime you didn’t commit.

Can we pray for you? Do you believe in Jesus? How do you know you’re saved? What church do you go attend? What version of the Bible do you read?

Obviously, comfort shouldn’t be the deciding factor for whether we evangelize, and Jesus instructed us to carry out the Great Commission regardless of whether it’s easy or difficult, but our entire concept of evangelism needs to change. Here are five principles Christians should apply when evangelizing:

1. Make It About God.

Evangelism isn't about promoting yourself, a pastor, a church or a denomination. It's not even about heaven or hell. Instead, it's ultimately about a relationship with Jesus— about revealing God.

2. Be Motivated Out of Love.

Too often, evangelism is driven by hate, distrust, guilt, shame, bitterness and fear. It shouldn't be about stats, fulfilling a quota, self-righteously patting yourself on the back or reinforcing your own beliefs. If evangelism isn't motivated by love, just stop doing it.

3. Be Honest.

We mistakenly assume our faith testimony should be rehearsed, without error and perfectly tidy—but this isn't the messy reality of life. Honestly, we don't have all the answers, and our faith isn't about knowing everything—instead it's about knowing God. Above all else, be real.

4. Be Graceful

The Gospel isn't about proving others wrong. It's about sharing the love of Christ. Evangelism should be full of patience, empathy, dialogue and mutual appreciation—full of grace and understanding. Learn, listen, and never approach someone with an attitude of moral superiority—always be humble.

5. Be Respectful.

Evangelism isn't hijacking a family while they're walking to a baseball game or yelling at a bus full of helpless passengers. Sometimes we need to learn to tone it down and prayerfully wait for the right opportunity to come along.

We mistakenly assume evangelism should consist of high-pressure tactics, confrontation and in-your-face strategies. More often than not, it's the complete opposite.

In many cases, we're more comfortable talking with people we don't know than those who are closest to us because we don't want to cause pain or discomfort to those we love—so we randomly approach strangers, where the stakes—and consequences of our actions—are lower. Using street evangelism-style practices aren't always bad—but be respectful.

Overall, evangelism is increasingly seen as counter-cultural and distasteful—it's a social faux pas. Secular society is—understandably—tired of hypocritical Christians trying to change

people, especially when it's done out of selfish ambition, to promote agendas and without love.

So what should modern evangelism look like? For Christians, the answer is Jesus. It's dedicating our lives to helping those in need, feeding the poor, taking care of the sick, representing the oppressed, fighting injustice and sacrificially serving the world around us, wholeheartedly loving others without expecting anything in return. We should emulate the life of Jesus to the best of our ability. God help us.

Top 10 Bible Verses for Evangelism

by Kathy | Feb 3, 2014 | Evangelism, Salvation, Scripture Memory, Witnessing | 34 comments



Top 10 Verses for Evangelism

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Are you ready to share Jesus at a moment's notice? Sharing the Good News of Jesus with others can be scary for many of us. But, half the battle is simply being prepared. One of the best ways to prepare is by memorizing Bible verses for evangelism.

Here's some wise advice from the Apostle Peter:

But 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. *1 Peter 3:15a*

How can we prepare to share the Gospel?

- First, we need to be ready to tell our own story – Be prepared to share your “story” (less daunting word than “testimony”) in 2 or 3 minutes. What was your life like before Jesus? How did Jesus break through to your heart and save you? Importantly, what is God doing in your life right now?
- Second, memorize Scripture verses about salvation – Our personal experience is vital, but we need to be prepared to back it up with the authority of God’s Word. Jesus is not the only way because we say so. *God* says so and we should be armed with that truth. It’s also important to know verses by heart so we are ready any time and any where to share the Good News of Jesus.

My Top 10 List

There are some many verses we can use to share the Gospel message. But here are my favorite 10, in no particular order. And yes, I do know these “by heart!” Check them out and you’ll see why they made my top 10:

1. **Romans 3:23** – Every person has sinned and is therefore separated from God.
2. **Romans 6:23** – We have earned an eternal death penalty because of our sin.
3. **John 3:16-18** – We were under condemnation, but because God loves us so much, He sent Jesus to provide a way of salvation.
4. **Romans 5:8** – God showed His love for us by sending Jesus to die for us.
5. **2 Corinthians 5:21** – Sinless Jesus, took our sin, so we could have His righteousness.
6. **1 Peter 3:18** – Jesus, who was completely righteous, died for us, the unrighteous, so He could bring us to God.
7. **Ephesians 2:8-10** – We cannot do anything to earn our salvation. God saves us by His grace through faith in Christ.
8. **Romans 10:9-10** – We are saved through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus.
9. **John 14:6** – Jesus is the way to God the Father.
10. **Acts 4:12** – Jesus is the only name that can save us.