

ENCOURAGE

"So that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." - Eph. 6:3

EVANGELISM IS IMPORTANT

We are told by Jesus himself to not only take up the cross and follow him, but we are also commanded to teach the Gospel to all the world and make disciples. This doesn't mean we can sit and wait on people to come find the path that leads to Jesus. No, Jesus' first word in the Great Commission is "Go." We can't sit and wait, we must be active. We must believe that, as he says in the 20th verse of Matthew 28:19-20, that even if we are scared or nervous when it comes to talk to people about Jesus and his story, that He will be with us "to the very end of the age." So, let's get out there and talk about Jesus. Share his story. Bring people to Christ so they can know Him and have a relationship with him just like we do.

PRAY ABOUT EVANGELISM

Pray for God to give you compassion for the lost.

Pray for God to open doors.

Pray for God to give you wisdom of what to say.

Pray for God to give you the courage to speak.



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Sharing Jesus WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

The last two verses of Matthew gives us what is often referred to as the Great Commission: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

These words not only tell us to go and teach, but they also tell us to make disciples. Both of those can be daunting at times, especially when we are talking about evangelizing to family and friends.

However, here are four tips for evangelizing family and friends:

1. Be yourself. If we simply develop the courage to be ourselves, we'll make a lot more progress than keeping our faith to ourselves.

2. Strive to get to know the individual(s), but don't pry into personal issues. Develop a friendly, personal relationship with your friend.

3. Don't be defensive. If someone is really going on about what

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REMEMBER...

Prayer is crucial in evangelism: Only God can change the heart of someone who is in rebellion against Him. No matter how logical our arguments or how fervent our appeals, our words will accomplish nothing unless God's Spirit prepares the way.

If you live by the same values and priorities [Jesus] had, you will find evangelism happening naturally. It becomes a life-style and not a project.

We talk of the second coming, half the world has never heard of the first.

Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor.

Be an ambassador for Christ! "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO YOU?

The Gospels are read by more than a few, But the one that is most read and commented on is the gospel according to you.

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day
By the things you do and the words that you say
Men read what you write, whether faithless or true
Say, what is the gospel according to you?

Do men read His truth and His love in your life
Or has yours bee too full of malice and strife?
Does your life speak of evil, or does it ring true?
Say, what is the gospel according to you?

- Arthur McPhee

BE PREPARED TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

Spend a good time in devotional reading with the Lord. As you come to passages that show proclamation of the Gospel, pray for the Lord to move in your heart, family, neighborhood, workplace and the world through you.

1 Peter 3:15 says, "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"

PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES

- 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. Plan ahead! Who should you have over for dinner? Who should you take out to lunch?
- The Gospel is not just an idea that we should seek to communicate...instead we should view it as a reality that is to be proclaimed and portrayed. People should see how the hope, love, power of the Gospel is transforming our lives and giving us hope that is greater than this world (1 Peter 3:1-6).

SHARING JESUS (continued)

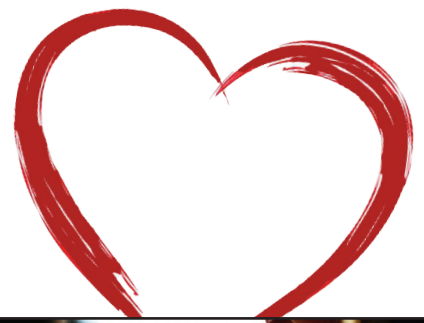
they dislike about the Church, they will probably expect us to get upset and respond emotionally. Keeping calm will disarm them. Sometimes allowing them to vent can be therapeutic; our kindness in hearing them out often softens their edge against the church.

4. Pray. It's not all on us; we should pray (before, during, and after) for all those with whom we'd love to share the gospel.

Keep these things in mind as you work to share the story of Jesus with your friends and family. Your job is to sow the seed, and let God water that seed and reap the harvest.

THE LOST WE

love the most!



What is more difficult than sharing the gospel for the first time with someone you love? Sharing the gospel for the tenth time with someone you love — even after they've already (repeatedly) responded with rejection or indifference.

At that point, we often feel stuck, as though we've played to a stalemate with our friend, child, neighbor, or spouse. We've prayed faithfully, spoken the gospel clearly, and loved patiently. But there's been no sign of movement or progress. What more can we do?

We don't plan on giving up. Too much is at stake. But we know that unwanted repetition of the same gospel words may repel rather than attract, harden rather than soften. So, what to do next? Tiptoe around in conversation? Settle for pleasantries? We're left feeling weary and discouraged. We might grow cynical and resign ourselves to what feels like the inevitable reality that the person we care about won't ever follow Jesus.

What do we say when we've already said it all? How can we persevere in pursuing the lost we love?

How to Get Unstuck

There are several helpful responses to those of us who struggle in this way. First, it may be that we're too focused on our own ability (or lack thereof) to win the person we love.

Jesus points us away from ourselves and to the sovereignty of God. We can trust that, in his time, God will draw his people to his Son (John 6:44). It may be that we're too absorbed with our present lack of success. The apostle Paul points us instead to the future: "Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up". (Gal.6:9)

Another cause of our despair and confusion may be Satan's lie that we're dealing with a static situation. Deep down, we're convinced nothing's



ever going to change. Our reason for feeling this way may be an unspoken belief that runs something like this: I have an unchanging gospel to share, and I've already shared it (multiple times!). I have nothing more to offer. I've done all I can. Nothing's going to change.

This Person Will Change

It's all too easy to believe that the loved one who has repeatedly brushed you off or beaten you down will always reject the gospel. But people change. There's a popular myth that every cell in our bodies is replaced every seven years, so that we're literally different people every 84 months. While untrue, it's a helpful metaphor for what really is the case. A 45-year-old you are (or will be) a different person from the 35-year-old you (who was different from the 25-year-old you). And this should make us hopeful.

Please don't lose heart. Don't believe the lie that nothing will ever change, that there's nothing more for you to say or do. Don't settle into the conviction that your spouse, child, neighbor, or friend will never come to know Jesus. Keep praying. Keep patiently speaking as you have opportunity. Keep loving with the love of Jesus. Keep sharing the twists and turns of your own life as you cling to Jesus and grow in him. Keep persevering in pursuing the lost you love.



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EVANGELISM IS NOT A JOB, IT'S A RESPONSIBILITY

Remember, evangelism is not a job for a few trained men, it is the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs to the company of Jesus.

The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed. At the end of the day, the biggest obstacle to evangelism is Christians who don't share the Gospel.

As we talk about sharing the Gospel in relationships that we are closest to us, we should remember that no matter who we are sharing with, the Gospel never changes. People are always sinners, Christ

is always the sinless Savior who died for rebels, rose from the dead and now calls them to repent and believe. There is no secret thing that you should say to your children, your parents, your best friend or your boss.

The simple definition of evangelism is those who know tell those who don't. So, go and tell!

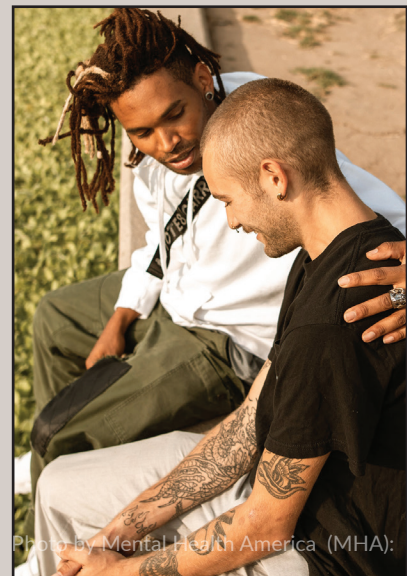


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