

Open with prayer

Before we begin, I would like to give you all a bit of a warning. I jerk. No, I am not a jerk, but I do jerk. I have a medical condition for which they have yet to find a cure and from time to time I jerk and twitch. I tell you this for a couple of reasons.

- 1) I really do not want you to be distracted wondering if I am OK if you see me jerk and twitch.
- 2) I want you to know that if God can use me (and he can) then he can also use you. It is truly a miracle that I am alive and able to function on my own based on what happened to me in a hospital back in 1996, but God had other plans and if he can use me, he can use anyone.

As many of you know, we started a ministry here last year called "A.C.T. for the Gospel". Among other things, we do workshops designed to help Christians feel empowered to share the good news of Jesus with a lost and dying world. I started out with enough material to cover a 3 semester hour college course. From there, I took it down to a 12 hour 2 day workshop. From there, I decided to make it a 6 hour workshop and have a ministry opportunity after the workshop. Now I am going to try to cram as much of that into the two and a half hours we have this morning, so let's get started.

If you are taking notes, I want you to write these three things down now:

LOVE

SOUND DOCTRINE

HOLY SPIRIT

We will cover a lot of cool things, but these three things are the three things that I want you to remember if you remember nothing else. We will come back to them from time to time.

If you want an outline, we will cover the What, Who, Why, When, Where, and How of evangelism. Some of those we may skim over rather quickly and we may even tackle a couple at a time due to the shortness of time. Make sure I cover the ONLY two times you should share the gospel, though. Can someone be responsible for making sure when we get to the WHEN that I do not forget to cover the ONLY TWO TIMES you should ever share the gospel? GREAT!

This morning, we are going to be looking at evangelism. Interestingly enough, the word evangelism does not appear in the English Bible. The concept certainly does, much like the word trinity does not appear in the Bible, but the concept certainly does.

The word Evangelist does appear in the Bible two or three times depending on your translation. The Greek word in all its forms appears a few more times, but let's start by defining our terms.

Normally, in my 6 hour workshop, I spend some time on how I came up with this definition, but because we only have a short time, I will get right to the point.

Evangelism is sharing, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the truth of salvation, from the power of sin and eternal punishment for our sins, through faith in Jesus Christ, to people that are lost in sin, and leaving the results up to God.

(Repeat definition twice)

If you are taking notes, the outline is pretty simple. We just covered WHAT: In order to save some time I am going to combine WHO and WHY:

WHO is every Christian and the reason is our WHY:

1st, because we love God and want what he wants.

Matthew 22:34-37 ³⁴ ***But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.*** ³⁵ ***Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying,*** ³⁶ ***“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”***

³⁷ ***Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”***^[a]

II Peter 3:9 ⁹ ***The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us,***^[a] ***not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.***

The reason we are still here is so that more people can come to salvation.

Romans 11:25-32 ²⁵ ***For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*** ²⁶ ***And so all Israel will be saved,***^[a] ***as it is written:***

***“ The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;***

***²⁷ For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.”***^[b]

²⁸ ***Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the***

election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.³⁰ For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,³¹ even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.³² For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Paul is saying back in verse 25 that Israel has experienced hardening in part until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, or in other words, many Jews will reject Jesus as the Messiah until the appointed number (unknown to us) of Gentiles (non-Jews) have accepted Jesus as their savior.

According to II Peter 3:9, God does not want any of us to reject Him, but wants us all to come to know Him.

Our love for GOD is our first big WHY.

Love for our neighbor is our second big WHY

Matthew 22:36-40³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”^[a]³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’^[b]⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Do we believe Jesus when he said ***“I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me.” John 14:6***

Do we believe Peter in Acts when he said ***“Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” Acts 4:12***

If we believe these statements and others like them to be true, then we are compelled out of LOVE to tell our neighbors or friends about Jesus Christ.

Love your Enemy is the third big WHY:

Matthew 5:43, 44

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor^[a] and hate your enemy.’⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do

good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,^[a]

Jot down Luke 6:27-36

So if the WHY is so obvious, the big question is why not. Why is it that so few Christians tell others about Jesus?

I think if we were to survey this, or any other church in America, we would find that most Christians admittedly do not share their faith as much as they should or could. If we were to ask why that is for each individual person, we might get quite a few answers but I would submit that they would all fall into one of two categories.

- 1) Lack of concern or love
- 2) Fear

If your problem is the first one, you need to examine yourself, according to Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:5, and see if you really are a true Christian. If you are, then confess you sin and let's move on.

⁵ Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

If you read through 1st John, you will see that one of the major evidences or tests to see if you are in the faith is love.

If your issue is FEAR, like it is for most of us, then I think we have something we can work with.

(Video 8 reasons)

Key principles to successful evangelism or HOW:

- 1) Pray a lot
- 2) Know what happened in your own life
- 3) Do not be afraid to say "I do not know the answer to that question."
- 4) Practice like a doctor practices medicine.
- 5) Pay a lot.

There are lots of good techniques of explaining the gospel. My recommendation is to learn one or two that you get very comfortable with, and make that your default setting.

Let me just throw out a few quickly. When you hear one you have seen before, raise your hand.

- 1) Wordless Book/color bracelet
- 2) The Bridge

- 3) Evangecube
- 4) Way of the Master
- 5) Evangelism Explosion
- 6) 4 spiritual laws
- 7) Keys to peace with God
- 8) Do vs. Done
- 9) F.A.I.T.H. acrostic.

Many years ago, Billy Graham was being interviewed on a radio program and was asked this question.

“What is the hardest thing about getting somebody saved?”

His answer was “Getting them lost.”

Galatians 3:21-25 ²¹ *Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.* ²² *But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.* ²³ *But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.* ²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

Other translations say that the law was my schoolmaster in verse 24. Each of these methods, to one degree or another, deals with sin. If someone is prideful, you may have to spend some time dealing with God’s law to show that they are without hope on their own. If you are dealing with someone who is already broken and recognizes their condition, you can get to grace much quicker.

Law to the Proud

If you are going to use the law to help a person see that they do not live up to God’s standard, it might be a good idea to familiarize yourself with at least the 10 commandments.

Demonstrate the 10 commandments with hand motions.

Grace to the humble

It is not until we are justified by faith that we are no longer under the law.

Alright, we have covered WHAT, WHO, WHY, HOW, let’s look at WHEN.

There was something I was supposed to remember to tell you. That is right. There are only two times that we are told to tell others the gospel.

- 1) When it is convenient
- 2) When it is not convenient

2 Timothy 4:2² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.

Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. (when it is convenient and when it is not convenient)

Romans 10:14,15¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

***“ How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,^[a]
Who bring glad tidings of good things!”^[b]***

This is a cool passage for me because it means that even my feet are beautiful in the sight of God even though my left foot looks pretty messed up.

Paul uses the same word in Romans as he does in Timothy that is translated preach in both of these cases. It is not referring, necessarily, to your pastor preaching a sermon on a Sunday morning. This has much more the idea of a town crier going through the streets declaring the good news.

So if WHO and WHY are closely related, we can also say that WHEN and WHERE are closely related.

Let's talk a bit about WHERE:

EVERYWHERE:

Do I need to say anything else? What about at the grocery store? Sure

How about at family gatherings? Sometimes that is a little less convenient, but yes.

What about here at church? I am not talking about the pastor from the pulpit. His primary job is to equip you to do your job. How many of you believe that every person that comes to this church regularly, that if they were to die right now, they would go to heaven?

I am not asking you to judge anyone in particular. Let's just look at the words of Jesus:

Matthew 13:24-30 ²⁴ *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"*

Matthew 13: 47-50 ⁴⁷ *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, ⁴⁸ which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, ⁵⁰ and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

Matthew 7:21-23 ²¹ *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*

It is clear that there are a lot of people that think they have what it takes to get to heaven, but are deceived. Mostly, they have deceived themselves.

There may be some here this morning that have heard a lot of good bible teaching in the past, but it just has never taken root. They may even be someone here who is wondering what this whole gospel thing is all about. Well, here it is:

God made man in his own image. He created man to have fellowship with God. Unfortunately, Man chose to sin. That means that we violated, in our conscience, what we know to be right and have done what is wrong. We have lied, we have stolen, had impure thoughts, hateful thoughts, been disrespectful to our parents, and so on. As a result, we deserve death or eternal condemnation. The Bible says that every liar has his place in the Lake of Fire.

As I mentioned earlier, though, God does not want that for us. He wants a relationship with us. He wants it so much that he sent His son, Jesus to earth and he lived as a man, only He did not sin. The Bible says “He who knew no sin became sin for us”. That is why Jesus died on a cross as was prophesied hundreds of years earlier. But it did not end there. Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by hundreds of eye witnesses that would not recant even when being tortured to death.

Jesus paid the price for your sins and mine. In order for his payment to be reckoned to your account, the Bible says in ***Romans chapter 10:9,10⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.***

The Greek word that is translated Confess in verse 9 literally means to declare with the conviction of a covenant.

Paul writes in ***2 Corinthians 13:5⁵ Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?— unless indeed you are disqualified.***

1 John Chapter 5 verse 13 John tells us that he wrote this letter so that we can know we have eternal life. In the letter, though, he gives about 15 or so different tests to help us know if we are truly in Christ Jesus.

My challenge to each of us is to read through 1 John, it is a short letter, and examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. Do not depend on the fact that you once said a prayer. Christianity is not witchcraft. There are no magic spells or incantations. It is your heart before God. He knows our heart and as His sheep, we know His voice. If we are not following His voice, we need to consider the fact that we may not be in Christ Jesus. If that is you, I urge you today, Father’s day, to make God your heavenly father.

Let’s Pray.