

EVANGELISM:

how the whole church speaks of Jesus

Wk 10—Intentional Evangelists (Pt. 2)

This week, we continue the six ways we develop a culture of evangelism. Already, we realize we have to (1) prepare our hearts, minds, and feet, and (2) understand a gospel-shaped way of life.

#3 Slay our assumptions

When we begin to assume the gospel, it can be deadly. We take for granted that visitors and neighbors are already Christians. “That bad assumption leads to the next: there is no need to share, teach, or preach the gospel” (91).

Morality is not the gospel. We may have a community of very nice people—but they are very nice *lost* people if they haven’t repented and believed in Jesus Christ. “There will always be people in our churches who look like believers, which is why it’s so important that we keep sharing the gospel. They tend to be the very ones who push back about how boring and repetitive it is to talk about the gospel” (92).

Question—In what ways do we betray that we assume everyone in our church gatherings is a Christian?

#4 See evangelism as a discipline

Donald Whitney writes, “Evangelism is also a discipline in that we must discipline ourselves to get into the context of evangelism, that is, we must not just wait for witnessing opportunities to happen...unless we discipline ourselves for evangelism, it is very easy to excuse ourselves from ever sharing the gospel with anyone” (95).

Both Jesus and Paul exhort us to disciplined evangelism:

- “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:16)
- Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so

that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” (Col. 4:5-6)

#5 Pray

We don’t know whom God is saving or whom he might save in the future. But we do know that he *is* saving and he *will* save. And he will save in response to our prayers: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people...This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Tim. 2:1-5)

“Make it a discipline to pray regularly for those who don’t know Christ to come to him. Pray in church services, in small groups, in gathering in homes, at special events, and as a part of your devotional time. I have a friend who says he tries to pray prayers like those the Puritans prayed, prayers ‘God would blush not to answer.’” (96)

Question—If all of your prayers were answered tomorrow, how many people would be saved? Who are you currently praying to be saved?

#6 Give leadership in evangelism

It’s important for the leaders of a church, particularly the pastors, to set an example in spending time with non-Christians and building relationships with others for the sake of the Gospel.

“Besides teaching and modeling, one of the most important thing leaders can do is just talk about evangelism...[my pastor] regularly has people share about evangelistic opportunities the people in his congregation have had over the previous week. When people realized it was going to happen weekly, they not only began coming to the meeting ready to share about the ways God had used them, they became more attuned to opportunities around them during the week.” (97-98)

Paul’s encouragement to Timothy applies to pastors and leaders—“As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” (2 Tim. 4:5)