

Text: Various

Title: The Mindset and Methods of Evangelism (Part 3 of Evangelism Series)

Truth: A Biblical mindset and convictions will drive the believer to biblical methods in evangelism.

Date/Location: October 23, 2022 at FBC

Introduction

It is common to hear people say that we live in a world that is far worse than it was thirty, forty, or fifty years ago. While it may be true that the world waxes worse and worse, it is not the time to tie the knot and hang on tight until Christ returns. As the world continues its deep descent into darkness and chaos, do we neglect to pray like this, “God, keep our hearts from growing cold to the lawless and barbaric souls dying around us”? Do you spend too much time shouting at the dark than you do shining the light (2 Pt 1:19; 2 Cor 4:6)?

While the world affirms wrong as right, we must preach what IS right with absolute conviction. As we have been learning, this requires a clear understanding of the Gospel. This also requires us to have Biblical convictions and a biblical mindset, which leads to faithful, Gospel witness. Without these biblical convictions to inform our methods of evangelism, it will certainly result in unbiblical approaches to evangelism.

In the time we have this morning, we will consider (1) the mindset and biblical convictions necessary for faithful, gospel witness and we will explore (2) the methods necessary for faithful gospel, witness.

I. The Mindset/Convictions Necessary for Faithful, Gospel Witness

- A. The Word of God commands supreme authority and power (Deut 8:3; Ps 19:7-11; 33:6; Matt 4:4)
 - i. God’s Word is truth (Jn 17:17)

A firm commitment to God’s Word as the truth is paramount in evangelism. The unbeliever will try to alter reality to his or her own view to suit their passions. Truth, however, is not relative; it does not come from within. Affirming any other source than God’s Word as the truth will greatly hinder evangelism.

ii. The Word of God creates life (Gen 1; Ezek 37; Rom 1:16-17; 2 Cor 4:6; Js 1:18)

B. Apart from Christ, people are dead in trespasses and sins (1 Cor 2:14; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-19; 2 Tim 2:24-26)

i. The problem is spiritual death, not sickness.

People are not generally okay or generally good people. The unbelieving person cannot pull themselves out of the sinful mire they are in. Paul calls them futile (lit. empty) in their minds, “having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Eph 4:18).

This is what is called total depravity. This doctrine teaches from the Bible that every part of man—his mind, will, emotions and flesh—have been corrupted by sin. In other words, sin affects all areas of our being including who we are and what we do. It penetrates to the very core of our being so that everything is tainted by sin and “...all our righteous acts are like filthy rags” before a holy God (Isaiah 64:6).

The spiritually dead person is being held captive by Satan, doing the devils bidding, and apart from hearing the Gospel and the Spirit of God giving them new birth, they will die in their sins (2 Tim 2:24-26; Rom 6:23).

ii. The solution is new birth by the Spirit, not therapy

In sharing the Gospel, we must convey with biblical accuracy the solution to man’s problem (i.e., sin). A right response to the Gospel promises the forgiveness of sins, new birth, eternal life, and justification. In sharing the Gospel, we must be careful not to relay that salvation is the answer to all their problems; it addresses one particular problem, and that is their sin.

In other words, we must not preach a message that promises to satisfy the felt needs of the individual. Salvation does not guarantee that their marital problems will dissipate, or that their anxiety and depression will disappear. True enough, God’s Word does provide wisdom and counsel in these areas, but the

message we preach ought to be centered upon Christ's atoning work for their sin.

The reality is that the Christian life is not easy and may present more difficulties in their marriage than they experienced before their salvation (Lk 14:26; Micah 7:6).

C. All people bear the image of God (Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-2; 9:6)

All people possess inherent value and worth and should be treated as such.

There is absolutely no one who does not deserve to hear the Gospel and respond to its call. As image bearers of God, we must uphold the value and worth of all people, even the vilest of men, and make every effort to reach them.

II. The Methods Necessary for Faithful, Gospel Witness

A. Leverage the power of the Word (Acts 17:1-4; 18:27-28; 19:8-10)

"Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths *reasoned with them from the Scriptures*, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead" (Acts 17:2-3) (emphasis added)

"he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, *showing from the Scriptures* that Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 18:28) (emphasis added)

"reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God... reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus...And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:8-10) (emphasis added)

B. Build relationships (Lk 5:27-32; 19:1-10)

Begin by sharing the Gospel with those you already have relationships with. This can potentially be some of the most fruitful witnessing opportunities that you, since you already have an established relationship.

Following the example of Matthew and Zacchaeus, develop intentional opportunities to share the Gospel. Invite your friends, co-workers, or family over for a dinner and take a few minutes afterwards to present the Gospel. Ask your neighbor if they would

like to study the Bible with you. Take a co-worker out for coffee and strike up a conversation about the Bible. Start a small group study with your friends. There are endless means by which you can build redemptive relationships. Ask Pastor Matt or myself and we can give you more ideas or even come with you to meet with your friend, family member, or co-worker.

- C. Offer persuasive answers to every argument and lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God (Acts 26:25; 2 Cor 1:5)
- i. Truth is objective, and God is its source. God has revealed himself (general revelation) and has spoken (special revelation).
 - ii. God created the earth in six, literal 24-hour days.
 - iii. The Bible is God-breathed (inspired) and has not been corrupted. The Bible has been accurately preserved in the in the copies that we have today.
 - iv. Man was created by God in the image of God. Mankind is not the product of the evolutionary process.
 - v. God destroyed the earth in a worldwide flood (the fossil record provides extensive evidence of this).
 - vi. According to God's design, only two genders exist, and gender matches biological sex.
 - vii. Marriage is sacred, lifelong relationship instituted by God between one man and one woman.
 - viii. God made the sexes complimentary. God tasked the man with the responsibility of protecting and providing and the woman with the responsibility of helping.
 - ix. Sex is sacred and reserved by God for marriage.
- D. Pray (2 Thess 3:1)

A highlight of the Church's dependence upon prayer occurs as the "official" beginning of missions takes place in Acts 13:3. "And when they had fasted and prayed . . . they sent them away."

Without the enablement of God our efforts and missions are worthless.

Conclusion

We must determine to have a biblical mindset and biblical convictions in our evangelism. When we do, it will inevitably lead us to the outworking of biblical methods in our Gospel witness.

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