

Evangelism Principles

Written by Josh Winslett

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Over the past couple of days some of my meditations have been drawn toward biblical evangelism. Below are some observations of proper principles concerning both biblical evangelism and how to interact with other Christians about the gospel.

- Preaching the gospel by necessity always has to involve preaching the Gospel. Simply doing good works does nothing in a secular culture unless we are also preaching the gospel. Actions without words is not preaching the gospel. There is zero teaching without the preached word. See Matthew 19-20.

- Answer the questions that are asked. Apologetics and polemics are important and have their place. Yet do not drown somebody in a flood of your personal dogmatics every time you share the gospel. Yes, we should certainly be discussing the distinctions between theological beliefs. I do not water down what I believe and neither should anyone else. I uncompromisingly believe in the sovereignty of God in salvation. But when somebody asks us a specific question we should answer the question that's asked. In other words, stay on topic. See Acts 8:34-35.

- Speaking of apologetics and polemics, be prepared to both defend and tear down. The gospel isn't just a warm and fuzzy. It's often a battle to be fought. See Acts 17:22-31, 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Timothy 2:3.

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- We should always inevitably bring our answer back to Christ. The gospel is his story. Also, sometimes we can get so focused on churchianity that we forget the gospel. Do I think everyone should be a Primitive Baptist? Of course!! Unequivocally, absolutely!!! Come to church with me sometime. Yet whether or not somebody ever comes to the church of my conviction, I hope that I can edify everyone I meet by the gospel and help them grow in grace regardless of where they attend. See 1 Corinthians 2:2.

- Our lives should be a testimony of the Gospel. In other words, our lives should both show that we're living according to what we believe and that we truly believe in our own product. People might argue with you. They can't argue with your testimony, "I once was blind, but now I see." See 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

- We should know when to preach and when not to preach. The Bible teaches us that we must judge every situation individually. Sometimes preaching to a person may be throwing our pearls to swine. Only those prepared by divine grace can receive the gospel. With that said, we often do not know if somebody has been touched by divine grace unless we are preaching the gospel. See Proverbs 26:4-6, Matthew 7:6, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Timothy 1:10.

- Preaching the gospel should always come naturally. You cannot force yourself to talk about a subject that you have not made the treasure of your heart. We must first sanctify God in our hearts before we can tell others about Christ. See 1 Peter 3:15.

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- You need to actually know the gospel yourself before you can tell it to someone else. It's hard to talk about something we haven't studied. See 2 Timothy 2:15.

- Be prepared for rejection and yet equally expect for God to work miracles. 2 Corinthians 2:14-16.

Finally, all of these principles are only applicable to you if you are personally preaching the gospel. Are you?