

Fundamentals of Relationship Evangelism

Text : **John 4: 27-38 ; Colossians 4: 2-6**

INTRODUCTION :

S#1.

S#2.

A. In our last lesson we observed three fundamental aspects of evangelism.

S#3.

1. Ingredients required for evangelism to occur
2. Some important concerns about those ingredients
3. Some strategies for putting the ingredients into action

B. We observed three ingredients that are necessary.

S#4.

1. A Message
2. A Messenger
3. A Mission Field (recipient for the message)

* **Acts 16: 16** ff ... *Girl with demon had right method and contact with lost, but her life made her an unacceptable witness.*

C. We observed some concerns about these three ingredients.

1. Concerns about the message :

S#5.

- a. It must be communicated accurately and clearly.
- b. It must be verbalized.

* *A good example is essential, but it is NOT evangelism.*

The message must be verbalized.

Rom. 10: 17 – So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

2. Concern about the messenger :

S#6.

- a. The messenger must be credible.

I Pet. 3: 15 – Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make ...

- b. There are two aspects to credibility

- 1) Personal : Speaks the message from heart to heart
- 2) Congregation : Loving, Unified, Non-judgmental (*disagree with love*)

3. Concern about the mission field :

S#7.

- a. Contact ... don't become isolated ... "holy huddle" ... monastic attitude
- b. Be IN the world, but not OF the world. (*insolate, not isolate*)

D. We observed some strategies for the implementation of these ingredients.

1. The strategy for the message : S#8.
 - a. A good example lends credibility, but the message must be verbalized.
 - b. There is no best way to present the message just make it clear and understandable.
 - c. The desire to communicate the gospel is the natural fruit of commitment.
2. The strategy for the messenger : S#9.
 - a. He must continually build redemptive relationships. (*Prospects for salvation*)
 - b. Find ways to mention Christ or the church in ever conversation.
 - c. Introduce outsiders to the church. (*Habitually bring visitors*)
3. The strategy for the mission field : S#10.
 - a. Flood the field with messengers. (*Not just one fisherman in the boat*)
 - b. Have regular special events to which outsiders can be invited.
 - c. Get the word out in many positive, inviting ways.

These considerations provide the foundation upon which Christians build their concept of evangelism.

S#11.

With this lesson we want to build upon the foundation to understand that evangelism is a process rather than event centered.

We all do it differently, but evangelism should be as natural and as instinctive as breathing.

** Ducks swim in it and eagles soar above it, but both get food from the water.*

This is to say that evangelism should take place in the normal course of the Christian's life. This is the lesson of our text :

S#12.

I. Evangelism is a process.

- A. **John 4: 37-38** For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps. S#13.
³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.

B. Evangelism is not a point action event.

S#14.

1. Past Church culture orients us to event evangelism, e.g., gospel meetings.
2. Not necessarily one person (preachers) interacting with an individual or group.
3. Day by day every Christian must contribute to the process.

C. The conversion can take a great deal of time.**... 14 ...**

1. It requires a continual proclamation of the gospel.
2. People must have their doubts and questions addressed.
3. We must draw them to Christ lovingly and encourage them along the way.
4. They must be brought to services and introduced to the church.
5. In text, the Apostles were brought in on the end of the process.
(**I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored**)

D. Think back to your own conversion.**... 14 ...**

1. Did you come to Christ the very first time you heard the gospel ?
2. The vast majority of Christians came to Christ only after having heard many times.
 - a. What's true of us is true of others.
 - b. Surrendering to Christ requires a change in one's core values. (**new world view**)

E. We are not aware of what God is doing in the lives of other people.**... 14 ...**

1. We don't know where they are in the transition.
 - a. Events in their life may be causing them to question their value system.
 - b. Other people may be seeking to influence them to turn to Christ.
2. We don't know if we are planting, cultivating or harvesting, **we must be ready.**

F. Our church culture often prevents us from being truly evangelistic.**... 14 ...**

1. We are used to event-based evangelism.
 - a. We bring people to gospel meetings to hear someone else preach.
 - b. We arrange a formal bible study setting.
2. If our friend doesn't respond we're disappointed and begin looking for someone else
 - a. We erroneously think we had one shot and it's gone.
 - b. As long as God lives He is in control and
 - c. As long as a person lives the conversion process can continue.
3. No one series of interactions finalizes one's choice.

G. Clarification : Though evangelism is a process salvation is not.**S#15.**

1. We are not saying one's salvation progresses 10%, 20%, 40%, etc.
2. Salvation is always 100% ... one is either saved or lost ... never partial.
3. Salvation is spiritually dead people being resurrected to new life. (**Rom. 6: 3-7**)

II. Evangelism is a life-related process.**S#16.**

- A. John 4: 34-35** Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.
- B. The context is that of a lunch break. They are traveling and stop for lunch.** **S#17.**
1. Jesus is waiting for His disciples to bring their food to the rest stop.
 2. Jesus starts a mundane conversation with the woman and turns it to spiritual things.
 3. The disciples return with food ... still thinking about physical food.
 - a. They are still thinking about physical food.
 - b. They had no way of knowing what had transpired at the well. (*We don’t know ..*)
- C. Jesus tells them, Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’?**
1. Translation : *We don’t have to go somewhere to evangelize, God opened this door.*
 2. Jesus is teaching His disciples (**us**) the kind of mindset we should have ... **i.e.,** always seeking an opportunity to turn every conversation to Him.
 3. God’s harvest is not seasonal like grain, but may occur at any time.
 - a. We should not wait for fixed events. (**VBS, gospel meetings, singing, etc.**)
 - b. Christians must live with our minds focused on looking for opportunities.
- * This is the definition of an evangelistic church.**

III. Evangelism is a life-related process that God can and does influence.**S#18.**

- A. Col. 4: 2-3** Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; ³ praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;
- B. What is the Apostle Paul instructing us to do ? PRAY** **S#19.**
1. What does this instruction presuppose ?
 - a. That God will hear and answers their prayer.
 - b. An answer requires that God affects events in people’s lives.
 2. What is the Apostle telling them to pray for ?
 - a. Pray that opportunities will arise for the gospel to be presented to lost people.

- b. In order to accomplish this God will have to providentially cause events to happen in people's lives and cause them to be influenced in various ways. **S#20.**
- 3. The Apostle is saying that people praying can influence events in a distant place.
 - a. How does God accomplish this ?
 - b. He does not send an angel or miraculously change people's lives.
- * **Acts 10** ... *The angel could have told Cornelius how to be saved, but did not.*
- C. By his power, God providentially orchestrates events in the lives of people.

IV. Evangelism is a life-related process that God can and does influence in which we must be alert and active. **S#21.**

- A. **Col. 4: 5-6** Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. ⁶ Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. **S#22.**
 - 1. Who are the outsiders ?
 - a. Those who have not been added to the body of Christ. (cf. **I Cor. 5, I Thes. 4**)
 - b. The church has a distinctive identity as a body of believers.
 - 2. The Christians lives among people of the world with awareness they are outsiders.
 - 3. We live among the outsiders opportunistically, **i.e.**, we view each interaction as an opportunity for the gospel.
 - a. Not confrontational or judgmental ... **Let your speech always be with grace.**
 - b. Wisdom is the ability to recognize an opportunity and the ability to capitalize on it.
- B. This addresses a mindset that God wants for us to have. **S#23.**
 - 1. In all our interactions with outsiders, the gospel remains in the back of our minds.
 - a. It's like a tiger in a cage looking for a way to escape.
 - b. We are like soldiers on the battle field, always aware of their surroundings.
 - 2. At the well Jesus demonstrates the Christian's world view, and Paul reinforces it.
 - a. We must watch for whatever opportunity God gives you.
 - b. Waiting in line at the post office gives us only minutes, but we can sow a seed.
 - c. Jesus did not share everything with the woman at the well, but it bore fruit.
- C. We tend to have a lot more opportunities than we recognize. (*Thought process*)
 - 1. We need to have contact with the lost before we can teach them.

- a. Contact necessitates proximity. (*Venture out of the monastery.*)
- b. We should be making opportunities to have positive contact with outsiders.
- 2. We need to make places like the well. ... **Points of contact.** (*Events*)
 - a. Contact alone will not save anyone, the gospel must be verbalized.
 - b. There must be positive contact but **ONLY** the gospel saves people.

S#24.

D. The key is to take mundane contacts and use them as a channel for the gospel.

- 1. **John 4** ... Jesus uses the need for water as a way to open a discussion of salvation.
- 2. **Mark 5** ... Jesus uses diseases to open a door for the gospel. S#25.
- 3. **Eccl. 7: 1-2** ... **Better to go to the house of mourning, than** ... Death forces thought
- 4. **Luke 13: 4** ... Jesus used a local tragedy to teach a lesson about repentance.
(*Who can know when a calamity will befall, earth quake, plane crash, etc.*)
- 5. **John 7** ... Jesus used religious tradition as a springboard for teaching truth.
- 6. **Acts 17** ... The Apostle used false religious to launch the teaching of truth.
- 7. When great blessings are received we point men to God and His spiritual blessings.
- 8. **Acts 16** ... Failure and heartache can open a door ... Philipians jailor about to kill

CONCLUSION :

A. We are talking about a mindset, a Christian world view is evangelistic.

S#26.

- 1. When we seek first the kingdom of God, it stays on our mind.
- 2. Christians have to learn to think differently than “**outsiders.**”
 - a. When children are born, they must learn all of life’s skills. (*soldiers*)
 - b. When a new employee starts a job, he learns skills, vocabulary, attitude.

B. Christian, there is no “Plan B.” God has entrusted the gospel to you.

S#27.

- 1. Every person on the planet is either a missionary or a mission field.
- 2. Which one are you ? S#28.
- a. If you are a Christian we urge you to be about your Father’s business.
- b. If you are not a Christian, we urge you to become one right now.

S#29.

INVITATION :

During invitation song S#30.

Lesson Text :**John 4: 27-38**

27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You speak with her?” **28** So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, **29** “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I *have* done; this is not the Christ, is it?” **30** They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” **32** But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” **33** So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him *anything* to eat, did he?” **34** Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. **35** Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. **36** Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. **37** For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ **38** I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

Colossians 4: 2-6

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving; **3** praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; **4** that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. **6** Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.