



Evangelism Week 1

GRC ACE Hour (11 Oct 2015)
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Introduction

- Why two “non-experts” are giving this talk
- Resources:
 - “The Unbelievable Gospel” - Jonathan Dodson
 - “Get Real: Sharing Your Everyday Faith Every Day” - John Leonard
 - The Bible!

Outline (5 weeks)

Week 1: Setting the stage/ Evangelism Defeaters

Week 2: Re-Evangelization (Getting our own theology right)

Week 3: Interacting with culture/ Tolerance

Week 4: Putting it into Practice/ Breaking through the Casual

Week 5: Evangelism in Different Contexts/ Q & A

Basics

- What is Evangelism?
- Evangelism = εὐ (good) ἀγγελλω (send message/ news)
- David Bosch quote:

“Evangelism is: the core, heart, or center of mission: it consists in the proclamation of salvation in Christ to nonbelievers, in announcing forgiveness of sins, in calling people to repentance and faith in Christ, in inviting them to become living members of Christ’s earthly community and to begin a life in the power of the Spirit.”

What is Evangelism?

*“Evangelism is the core, heart, or **center** of mission: it consists in the **proclamation** of salvation in Christ to nonbelievers, in announcing forgiveness of sins, in **calling people to repentance** and faith in Christ, in inviting them to become living members of **Christ’s earthly community** and to begin a life in the **power of the Spirit.**”*

- 1) **Gospel** centered
- 2) **Proclamation** oriented
- 3) Calls for a **response**
- 4) Includes the **church**
- 5) Points to the **Spirit**

Why Evangelize?

What does Scripture Say

Jesus calls us to:

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

The Stark Reality of the Lost:

36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them. (John 3:36)

Sharing Your Faith Will Grow You in Christ:

And I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. (Philemon 6)

Are we being hypocrites?: What an Atheist said

“If you believe that there’s a heaven and a hell, and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life, and you think that it’s not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward....how much do you have to hate somebody to NOT proselytize? How much do you have to HATE somebody to believe everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?”

- Penn Jillette (from Penn & Teller)

Basics

We will look at our:

- Motives (Heart & Mind) → Thwarted by Defeaters
- Message (the Gospel) → Re-evangelizing to ourselves
- Methods (our communication) → Gospel Metaphors

Defeaters

Impersonal Witness

Preachy Witness

Uninformed Witness

Intolerant Witness (week 3)

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Defeaters:

Impersonal Witness

- The decline of relationships
- Small talk → build trust/relationship → deeper truth
- Avoid pushiness/ “salesman” perception
- Jesus taught us to love people first
 - Engage, ask questions
 - Luke 18:18-25 (Rich man and the Kingdom of God)

Defeaters: Impersonal Witness

How did Jesus Witness?

(Luke 18:18-25)

18 A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

19 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. **20** You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’”

21 “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

23 When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. **24** Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! **25** Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Defeaters:

Impersonal Witness

- **Ask Questions:** not just about giving answers
- **Focus on the heart,** not just on the mind
- Steer conversation, with love and wisdom, toward **deeply held beliefs and desires**
- Value and **affirm the insights** of skeptics and seekers
- **Tell stories** from - and to - the heart

Defeaters:

Impersonal Witness

- Relationship between Faith and Work
- Excellent work = Strong witness
- BUT faith comes from hearing (Rom 10:14)
- Right words come from exploring/ searching hearts

“By contemporary standards, Jesus blows his evangelistic opportunities. Instead of trying to obtain the right confession, Jesus focused his words on the heart.” (The Unbelievable Gospel)

Defeaters

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Intolerant Witness (week 3)

Defeaters: Preachy Witness

- Who wants to be seen as a “preachy” Christian?
- Perceived as **self-righteousness**
- Things we put between us and others:
 - Morality
 - Politics
 - Spirituality
 - Theology

Defeaters: Preachy Witness

Proselytizing vs. Evangelizing

- **Proselytizing** is **recruiting** someone to believe what you believe and trying to make them part of your “group”
 - Act like we have power/responsibility to talk them into the Kingdom of God
 - Convince them our beliefs or community are better than theirs
- **Evangelizing** is **announcing** forgiveness and hope in Jesus
 - We share and keep the focus on Jesus and what He did
 - We testify how/why we could not live without Him

Defeaters: Preachy Witness

Changing Motives

- We must **know the gospel** ourselves
- We must **break down misconceptions**/stereotypes of Christianity
- We must **offer alternative understanding** of faith
- Actions speak some, but **words speak louder** (when it comes to the gospel)

Defeaters

Impersonal Witness

Preachy Witness

Uninformed Witness

Intolerant Witness (week 3)

Defeaters:

Uninformed Witness

- “I don’t know enough” “I’m not qualified” “What if they ask a question I don’t know the answer to?”
- We are called to engage our faith with our minds:
 - Mark 12:30
 - Acts 17:17, 2 / Acts 18:4, 19
 - 1 Peter 3:14-15
- Thinking faith is not canned apologetic defenses
 - Deeply consider how Gospel interacts with different cultures/contexts

Defeaters: Uninformed Witness

Paul's Model

Acts 22 (Speaking to Jews)

Credentials

Shares stories/ testimony

Engages with Jewish theology

Acts 17:22-31 (Speaking to Greeks)

Engages with Greek philosophy/
poetry

Found 'touch points' with Greek
culture (eg. "unknown god")

"A thinking faith requires a willingness to learn and to adapt to circumstances so that we can communicate the gospel fluently in ideas, idioms, and words our hearers can understand" (The Unbelievable Gospel, p.88)

Defeaters: Uninformed Witness

Dealing with Intimidation/ Insecurity

- Apologetics is NOT being defensive/ having prepped arguments
- Develop **intellectual security**
 - Many smart people that came (and answered) before us
 - Deepen our own understanding of gospel in life
- Develop **deep security**
 - Spending heartfelt times in worship and prayer
 - Nurturing confidence in God that drives out man-made fears
 - Is the approval of others > resting in the approval of the Father?

Defeaters:

Summary

- Need to go beyond impersonal small talk
- Need to share the gospel/check improper motives
- Need to inform ourselves with apologetics and preach the gospel to ourselves

NEXT WEEK: Re-evangelization