

Every Believer an Evangelist

By Bill Scheidler

Introduction

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word “evangelist?”

Stereotypes of an “evangelist”

We think of a fiery preacher who holds public crusades, preaches before crowds, casts out demons and heals the sick, all the while wearing bright clothes, white shoes and unusual hair styles. It is an advantage if they can sing, dance and play the guitar, piano, banjo or the accordion. It is a further advantage if their family can sing a moving rendition of “Just as I am.”

We think of names like Benny Hinn, Billy Graham, Reinhart Bonnke or Oral Roberts... people who hold vast crusades, have a TV ministry and travel in all parts of the world.

We think of the personality type of a bold, brash, hyper-active, impulsive, insensitive, unpredictable, obnoxious, outgoing, aggressive, salesman-like extrovert who is pushy, fearless and relentless.

Certainly there are people who are called to a very public ministry as an evangelist, but it is important for us to know that every believer is called to be an evangelist.

One of the hindrances to us evangelizing is to say “that is not my gift or ministry. I can’t see myself in that role.”

What is an Evangelist?

Dictionary definition of “evangelist”:

1. Any of the four writers of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.
2. One who practices evangelism, especially a Protestant preacher or missionary.
3. A revivalist or a preacher who holds large public services in various cities, now often televised.

If this is our definition then none of us qualify as evangelists.

Biblical definition of “evangelist”:

An evangelist is a messenger of good news. To evangelize is to announce good news.

Luke gave a summary of this ministry of an evangelist in relation to Christ.

Luke 4:18-19

The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.

Every believer is called to be a messenger of the good news to lost people or those who are separated from God.

Who is an Evangelist?

Being an evangelist is the call of every believer because the purpose of every believer is to win the lost.

Every believer is called...

- To be a light

Matthew 5:14-16

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

- To be the salt of the earth

Matthew 5:13

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

- To be a witness

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

A witness is someone who has seen and heard something.

- To be a minister of reconciliation

II Corinthians 5:18-19

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

To be a reconciler is to bring people back into close relationship or to make them compatible once again.

- To be an ambassador of Christ

II Corinthians 5:20

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

An ambassador is an authorized representative who officially represents and has the power to use the name of another.

- To be a vehicle of God's supernatural power

Mark 16:15-18

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

- To be a sower and a waterer of seed

I Corinthians 3:5-8

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

- To be a fisher of men

Mark 1:16-18

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Fishing is not a defensive but an offensive sport.

- a. You must go fishing (it includes going to where the fish are) (John 21:3).
- b. You must use the appropriate net (Life Track, Life g\Groups, GC, Forge, Marketplace, Glorious, Courageous, etc.) (Mt. 4:18).
- c. You must land the fish in the boat (no catch and release here).

How can I be an evangelist?

When it comes to being evangelistic we often focus on what we **can't** do. Instead we should be focusing on what we **can** do.

What can I do?

1. **I can** pray...

I Timothy 2:1-4

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- For a heart of love and compassion for the lost (II Cor. 5:14)
- For lost specific lost people
- For doors of opportunity to open

Colossians 4:3-4, NIV

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

- For eyes to see the opportunities (ripe harvest) in front of me

John 4:35

Do you not say, "There are still four months and then comes the harvest"? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

- For boldness to speak when the opportunity comes

Acts 4:29-31

"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

- For wisdom in my witness

Colossians 4:5-6, NLT

Live wisely among those who are not Christians, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and effective so that you will have the right answer for everyone.

- For creativity in my witness

I Corinthians 9:22b

I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Any and all means "facebook, my space, twitter, etc."

- For sensitivity to the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14)

2. **I can** live the Christian life openly.
3. **I can** love people and meet needs.
4. **I can** be led and directed by the Holy Spirit.
5. **I can** learn how to share the Gospel in a nutshell.
6. **I can** be ready to give an answer for my faith.

I Peter 3:15, NIV

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

7. **I can** invite people to church (Andrew principle).

John 1:40-42

One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

How would you like to have been the one to have brought Peter to Jesus?

Where am I an evangelist?

- At work
- At school
- At the mall
- At the hospital
- At the gym
- At restaurants

In other words, "Wherever you go." As you can see, you do not have to make a special trip to preach the gospel. While you go...remember who you are.

When am I an evangelist?

Every believer is an evangelist from the moment that they get saved. You do not have to wait...

Until you go through special training.
 Until you have your life completely in order.
 Until you thoroughly know the Bible.
 Until you feel you are ready.

At every level you can bear witness of what you have seen and heard.

You are an evangelist "NOW!"

Closing:

Action

Have people stand and commission them as evangelists.

If you feel like your need a special commissioning...let us officially do that now.

Supplemental Material as time permits

What does it mean to be a witness?

- A. To be a witness is to be ready to give testimony of what you have seen and heard (Acts 4:18-20; I John 1:1-4).

So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts 4:18-20

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life--the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us--that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. I John 1:1-4

- B. To be a witness is to live a life that attests to your confession (I Th. 1:5-7). This is a life that is able to say, "Follow me as I follow the Lord" (I Cor. 11:1; I Tim. 4:12).

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. I Thessalonians 1:5-7

Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. I Corinthians 11:1

- C. To be a witness is to let our light shine though the good works that we do (Mt. 5:16; Acts 10:36-39).

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ--He is Lord of all--37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. Acts 10:36-39

- D. To be a witness is to share the gospel message when the door of opportunity is open (Luke 21:13; Acts 4:33; 13:31-32; Eph. 6:19-20; Col. 4:2-4).

And [pray] for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. Ephesians 6:19-20

Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

Colossians 4:2-4