

Witnessing

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I. Introduction.

A. A reason why a message on witnessing has a negative reaction: speakers usually major on the minors.

B. Evangelism usually works out as follows: 5% casual, 10% structured, and 85% is disarming.

II. Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 3:6-9, Luke 8:11, 13:7-9, John 4:35, Jeremiah 26:17, Exodus 14:4, James 1:18.

III. Conclusions:

A. The seed we sow is the Word of God.

B. The soil is the heart.

C. There are at least four kinds of hearts: hardened, honest, preoccupied and shallow.

D. Man has six responsibilities: sow, plant, water, cultivate, fertilize and harvest. Some may overlap.

E. God plows and prepares the soil of men's hearts and causes the Word to become life.

IV. God's part - preparing the soil.

A. Evangelism is considered drudgery because we overestimate what we are supposed to do in contrast to what God is supposed to do.

B. Many say that God is not doing his job because there is war, social injustice and human suffering.

1. God must be evaluated according to His own objectives.

2. God's primary objective in this age is to take a people for His name out of the Gentiles. (Acts 15:14, 28:28)

3. It is not through grace that people learn righteousness (Isaiah 26:10). God teaches obedience through war, social injustice and human suffering - people learn righteousness through these elements.

4. God is in the business of plowing and preparing human hearts.

C. God has been at work plowing and preparing long before we come along.

D. Our job is to sow the seed, cultivate, fertilize and harvest.

V. Three kinds of evangelism.

A. Cold turkey evangelism.

1. This can be having a discussion with someone on an airline.
 - a. The speaker uses John 3:16 and asks someone questions about God's love and to whom God gives his Son based upon the verse.
 - b. Once the listener discovers that the person who receives God's grace is the one who believes, the believer asks if that person includes the listener.
 - c. He then explains that two gifts accompany the gift of the Son - the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. (Ephesians 1:6, 1 John 5:10)
 - d. He finally gives them a prayer to pray if they would receive Christ.
2. Our job is to sow, plant, fertilize, cultivate and reap.
3. This consists of only 5% of our evangelism though.

B. Structured evangelism.

1. This includes church evangelism, missions work, etc.
2. This should probably include 10% of your evangelism.
3. Disarming evangelism is preferred.

C. Disarming evangelism (friendship).

1. This should occupy most of our effort - 85%.
 2. It comes from Matthew 5:41. One goes the extra mile to do something for someone that they are not obligated or expected to do.
 - a. One serves people and they want to know why he is different. (1 Peter 3:15)
 - b. It gives the person credibility and it opens the door for the gospel. (Acts 10:38)
 - c. The messenger is the message. Most have been converted because someone went out of their way to show love, compassion and interest.
 - d. It is ideal to let the nonbeliever raise the question about your actions rather than for you to share Him outright.
 - e. Doing good is easy, natural and it is what is expected of us.
3. To evangelize is to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and it needs to be verbalized, but it needs to have the results observed as well.

4. The overflow of compassion shows. (Psalm 126:6)
5. The most effective thing in bringing someone to Christ is prayer.

Application questions.

1. What is God's part in evangelism? What is your own?

2. How can one distinguish between the three types of evangelism? Why are all important?

3. Who comes to mind when you think of serving for an opportunity to share the gospel? Be intentional: write down at least two things you plan to do for that person in the next two weeks.
