

Practising Spiritual Disciplines



EVANGELISM

Proclaiming • Witnessing • Testimony

Some things to keep in mind when you are sharing the gospel:

- 1. The power of your testimony:** There are many discussions, even arguments, which you can have with people as you share the gospel. Is the Bible accurate? Why is there evil in the world? Did Jesus really rise from the dead? However, your testimony is unique and generally hard to challenge. When you share with others how God has been working in your life, it presents a powerful picture to the person who is listening. After encountering your testimony, they can reflect on your witness to a powerful, active God.
When you share your testimony, keep it simple. Focus on some of your most vivid encounters with God. Share how God has changed your heart, direction and purpose. Describe your sinful nature before you personally knew God, and who you are now.
- 2. Speak and act only in love:** The Word of God is known as a double-edged sword and is extremely powerful (see Hebrews 4:12), so take special care when you “wield” it. People who have used the Word of God to witness out of duty or obligation have done more harm than good. To effectively proclaim the gospel message and reach others, it must be done in love and with respect (see Ephesians 4:15, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13). If you can’t love those to whom you are evangelizing, then don’t. Go to the Lord and figure out why your heart is cold and allow him to bring new life into it.
- 3. Evangelize with a partner:** While it is not necessary to evangelize in pairs, witnessing with another person offers a measure of support. Jesus sent out his disciples two by two (see Mark 6:7, Luke 10:1), an example to all believers who are sharing the gospel. For example, while one of you has the opportunity to share, the other can be silently praying. The witness of two testimonies may be more influential than one.
- 4. If you don’t actively witness, it will never become natural:** Ask yourself, “Do I have a deep concern for the lost?” You would think the answer to that is easy, but you might be surprised with yourself. It will be very hard to witness if you are not concerned for the people that don’t know Christ or have an understanding of their eternal consequences. Ask the Lord to show you how his heart aches for souls, and remember his compassion for you. Only then will witnessing become a natural expression of who you are.
- 5. Fear of rejection:** It is very difficult to know how people will respond to your witness. No one likes rejection, but we must look at evangelism in a different light. Think of it as planting the seeds of salvation in people (see John 4:37-38). You will probably not lead that person to Christ in your first witness, but your labour will not be in vain (see 1 Corinthians 15:58). Someone else might harvest the seeds that you planted. Someone has to plant the seed! You may need to look at rejection from a positive perspective. People will come up with all sorts of excuses against God, but that may be an example of an inner spiritual struggle. Always act in love!

My Action Plan

→ Write out your testimony and highlight areas of your life where you see the faithful work of God. This will help you collect your thoughts.

→ Seek potential Christian friends who may become evangelism partners. Contact them and develop a plan to evangelize.

→ Share your testimony. Use social media, private messages and in-person visits. Be creative and joyful! Follow the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Cut out and keep in your Bible or journal. Allow these verses to mould your idea of evangelism.

“For the Lord gave us this command when he said, ‘I have made you a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth’ ”
(Acts 13:47 *NLT*).

“For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile”
(Romans 1:16 *NLT*).

“But in your hearts revere 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” (1 Peter 3:15 *NIV*).

“ ‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people’ ” (Matthew 4:19 *NIV*).

“They triumphed over him [the devil] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11 *NIV*).

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8 *NIV*).

“He [Jesus] replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven’ ”
(Luke 10:18-20 *NIV*).

Also see Luke 10:1-24.