

# What is Evangelism?



# **What Is Evangelism?**

Evangelism Course

**Church of the Nazarene**

Mesoamerica Region

**Bernie Slingerland**

General Coordinator for the Evangelism Course



## What Is Evangelism?

A book in the School of Leadership series.

Evangelism Course

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Material produced by EDUCATION AND CLERGY DEVELOPMENT of the Church of the Nazarene, Mesoamerica Region. [www.edunaz.org](http://www.edunaz.org)

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Publisher and Distributor: Asociación Región Mesoamérica

Av. 12 de Octubre, Plaza Victoria, Locales 5 y 6

Pueblo Nuevo Hato Pintado, Ciudad de Panamá.

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All Biblical quotations are from the New International Version-2011, unless otherwise noted.

Design of cover image: Juan Manuel Fernandez Design ([www.betterworldagency.com](http://www.betterworldagency.com))

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Digital printing

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# Introduction

The School of Leadership book series is designed to provide a tool for the church to train and educate its members so they can actively participate in Christian service according to the gifts and calling (vocation) they have received from their Lord.

Each book provides study materials for a course of the School of Leadership program that is offered by the Nazarene Higher Education Institutions of the Mesoamerica Region of the Church of the Nazarene. Most of the key leaders from our schools (presidents, directors, academic vice presidents and directors of decentralized academic studies) actively participated in the program design.

The School of Leadership has five core courses common to all ministries and six specialized courses for each individual ministry. After completing the series, the respective theological Institution gives the student a certificate (or diploma) in Specialized Ministry.

The general objective of the School of Leadership is “to work with the local church in equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, giving them solid, theological, Biblical knowledge and developing them through the exercise of their gifts for service in their local congregation and in society.” The specific objectives of this program are threefold:

- Develop the ministerial gifts of the local congregation.
- Multiply service ministries in the church and community.
- Raise awareness of the vocation of professional ministry in its diverse forms.

The objective of the book series entitled Evangelism is to train those who are gifted in evangelism and desire to participate in the Great Commission, but who do not yet have professional ministerial education. Missionaries, pastors and lay people throughout the Mesoamerica Region have written the lessons of these six books and the desire of the authors is that each student would receive an enriched vision of the Great Commission and the training to win others for Christ. We desire that God would be glorified through the courses and that each student would grow in their preparation and service as an effective worker in his kingdom.

A special thanks to Dr. Ruben E. Fernandez, Education and Clergy Development Coordinator, Dr. Monica Mastronardi Fernandez for her dedication as General Editor of the project, Rev. Simone Mulieri Twibell for her assistance, and the team of writers and designers who collaborated to publish these books. An additional thanks to the teachers who will share these materials. They will make a difference in the lives of thousands of people throughout the Mesoamerica Region.

Finally, I give thanks to the Mesoamerica Regional Literature team for the publication and distribution of these materials, and to Dr. L. Carlos Saenz, Mesoamerica Regional Director, for his continued support in this task, which is the result of his conviction of the important need for the church to be comprehensively trained.

I pray for God’s blessing for all the disciples whose lives and Christian service will be enriched by these books.

**Dr. Bernie Slingerland**  
**Coordinator of Evangelism Mesoamerica Region**

# What Is the School of Leadership?

The **School of Leadership** is an educational program for lay ministry in different specialties to engage in the mission of the local church. This program is administered by the Theological Institutions of the Church of the Nazarene in the Mesoamerica Region and taught both at these institutions and in the local churches enrolled in the program.

## Who Can Benefit from the School of Leadership?

It is for all the members of the Church of the Nazarene who have participated in Levels Saving Grace and Sanctifying Grace - Growth in Holiness of the discipleship program A Journey of Grace, and who, with all their heart, wish to discover their gifts and serve God in His work.

## The Plan - A Journey of Grace

In the Church of the Nazarene, we believe that making disciples in the image of Christ in the nations is the foundation of the missionary work of the church and the responsibility of its leadership (Ephesians 4:7-16). For this, at all levels of the church, the implementation of progressive discipleship is promoted as “A Journey of Grace” (John 14: 6), a lifestyle of discipleship. The School of Leadership is part of the “Sanctifying Grace - Ministry Development” section, and is designed for those who have gone through the “Prevenient Grace” and “Saving Grace” sections of the discipleship path.



The work of discipleship is continuous and dynamic; therefore, the disciple never stops growing in the likeness of his Lord. This growth, when healthy, occurs in all dimensions: the individual dimension (spiritual growth), the corporate dimension (joining the congregation), the holiness in life dimension (progressive transformation of our being and doing according to the model of Jesus Christ) and the service dimension (investing our lives in ministry).

**Dr. Monica Mastronardi de Fernandez**  
Managing Editor, The School of Leadership Book Series



# How Do I Use This Book?

This book contains eight lessons of the School of Leadership program, along with activities and final evaluation of the course.

## How are the contents of this book organized?

Each of the eight lessons of this book contains the following:

- ▶ **Objectives:** These are the learning objectives the student is expected to understand at the end of the lesson.
- ▶ **Main Ideas:** A summary of the key teachings of the lesson.
- ▶ **Development of Lesson:** This is the largest section because it is the development of the contents of the lesson. The lessons have been written so that the book can be the teacher, and for that reason the contents have been written in a dynamic form and in simple language with contemporary ideas.
- ▶ **Notes and Comments:** The information in the margins is intended to clarify terms and provide notes that complement or extend the content of the lesson.
- ▶ **Questions:** Sometimes questions are included in the margin that the teacher can use to introduce or reinforce a lesson topic.
- ▶ **What did we learn?:** The box at the end of the lesson development section provides a brief summary of the lesson.
- ▶ **Activities:** This is a page at the end of each lesson that contains learning activities, for individuals or groups, on the subject studied. The estimated time for implementation in class is 20 minutes.
- ▶ **Final evaluation of the course:** This is the last page of the book and once completed the student must remove it from the book and hand it in to a course instructor. The final evaluation should take about 15 minutes.

## How long is each course?

The courses are designed for 12 hours of class over 8 ninety-minute sessions. Each institution and each church or local theological study center will coordinate days and times of the classes. Within this hour and a half the teacher or the teachers should include time for the activities contained in the book.

## What is the role of the student?

The student is responsible for the following:

1. Enroll on time for the course.
2. Buy the book and study each lesson before class time.
3. Arrive for class on time.
4. Participate in class activities.
5. Participate in practical ministry in the local church outside of class.
6. Complete and submit the final evaluation to the teacher.



## What is the role of the teacher of the course?

The professors and teachers for the School of Leadership courses are pastors and laity committed to the mission and ministry of the church and preferably have experience in the ministry they teach. The Director and/or the School of Leadership at the local church (or theological institution) invites their participation and their functions are the following:

1. Be well prepared by studying the book's content and scheduling the use of class time. When studying the lesson, you should have on hand the Bible and a dictionary. Although the lessons are written using simple language, it is recommended that you "translate" what you consider difficult in order to help the students understand. In other words, use terms that they can better understand.
2. Ensure that the students are studying the material in the book and achieving the learning objectives.
3. Plan and accompany students in the activities of ministerial practice. The local pastor and the director of the respective ministry must schedule these activities. These activities should not take away from class time.
4. Take daily attendance and grades in the class report form. The final average will be the result demonstrated by the student in the following activities:
  - a. Class work
  - b. Participation in ministerial practice outside of class
  - c. Final evaluation
5. At the end of the course, collect the evaluation sheets and hand them in with the form "Class Report" to the local School of Leadership director. Do this after totaling the averages and verifying that all data is complete on the form.
6. Professors and teachers should not add tasks or reading assignments apart from the contents of the book. They should be creative in the design of the learning activities and in planning ministry activities outside the classroom according to the reality of their local church and its context.

## How do I teach a class?

We recommend using a 90-minute class session as follows:

- **5 minutes:** Review the topic of the previous lesson and pray together.
- **30 minutes:** Review and discuss the lesson. We recommend using an outline, chalkboard, cardboard or other available materials, using dynamic learning activities and visual media such as graphics, drawings, objects, pictures, questions, assigning students to submit parts of the lesson, and so on. We do not recommend lecturing or having the teacher reread the lesson content.
- **5 minutes:** Break either in the middle of class or when it is convenient.
- **20 minutes:** Work on activities in the book. This can be done at the beginning,

middle or end of the review, or you can complete the activities as you proceed in accordance with the issues as it relates to them.

- **20 minutes:** Discussion about the students' ministry practice that they currently do and that they will do. At the beginning of the course you will need to present the schedule to the students so that they can make arrangements to attend the ministry practice. In the classes when the students discuss their ministry practice, the conversation should be focused on what they learned, including their successes and their errors, as well as the difficulties they encountered.
- **10 minutes:** Prayer for the issues arising from the practice (challenges, people, problems, goals, gratitude for the results, among others).

### **How do I implement the final course evaluation?**

Allocate 15 minutes of time during the last class meeting for the course evaluation. If necessary, students may consult their books and Bibles. Final evaluations are designed to be an activity to reinforce what was learned in class and not a repetition of the contents of the book. The purpose of this assessment is to measure the understanding and evaluation of the student concerning the class topics, their spiritual growth, their progress in the commitment to the mission of the church and their progress in ministerial experience.

# Ministerial Practice Activities

The following are suggested activities for ministerial practice outside of class. The list below includes several ideas to help teachers, pastors, directors of local School of Leadership groups and local ministry directors. From the list you can choose the practice most suited to the contextual situation and the local church ministry, or others can replace these according to the needs and possibilities of your context.

We recommend having at least three ministerial activities per course. You can put the whole class to work on a project or assign group tasks according to interests, gifts and abilities. It is advisable to involve students in a variety of new ministry experiences.

## Suggested Practical Ministry Activities for the Course

### What Is Evangelism?

1. Take a survey of the congregation to evaluate how aware they are of their responsibility to share the gospel with others and how they are carrying it out.
2. Make signs with images and phrases about the responsibility we have to evangelize others and put them in visible places around the church (bathrooms, hallways, etc.).
3. Prepare a program for a special service centered on the following premise: “The gospel changes lives.” Include music, testimonies and videos of people whose lives have been transformed thanks to someone who shared the gospel with them.
4. Make a visit to the local jail, hospital, nursing home, or recovery center where it may be possible to share the gospel with others. Make contacts to start a discipleship class with those who accept Jesus as their Savior.
5. Organize a breakfast and invite one or more evangelists who have won souls through personal evangelism so the congregation can learn from their experiences and have the opportunity to ask questions.
6. Walk around your neighborhood to find out who may be interested in being a part of a Bible study.
7. Form a home Bible study group studying one of the Gospels by inviting neighbors, coworkers, classmates, or newcomers from church for the purpose of evangelizing.
8. Design a creative plan to collect Bibles, New Testaments, evangelistic flyers, discipleship lessons, books for educational formation, and other materials that may be useful to begin or strengthen the evangelism ministry of your local church.

A large, close-up photograph of a human hand held palm up, with a small pile of light-colored seeds or grains resting in the center. The background is dark and textured.

## *Lesson 1*

# **WHAT IS EVANGELISM?**



## Objectives

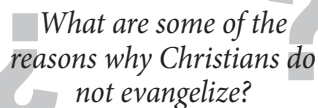
- To describe the meaning of the word evangelism.
- To become aware of the steps that precede evangelism.
- To participate in the redemptive plan that God has for humanity.

## Main Ideas

- Evangelism was born in the heart of God.
- Christ brought the good news of salvation; therefore, it is our duty and privilege to share it with others.
- An evangelist must be prepared to present the gospel in order to glorify God and have a good harvest.

## Introduction

Sometimes, the most difficult thing that we face when we take on a new project is getting started. Many of us spend hours, days, months and even years before we finally take the first step to realize the work that we have ahead of us. Just as an athlete who wants to run long distances does not simply talk about the desire to run, but instead decides to practice and train in order to be ready for the race, we must do the same. After having practiced and trained, when athletes hear the signal to go, they will run the race to their full potential.

 What are some of the reasons why Christians do not evangelize?

In the same way, now is the moment to start practicing and training in evangelism. To get started, it is important to remember that evangelism began in the heart of God. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). When we recognize the sacrifice that God made by sending his Son for us and accept the challenge to live in accordance with his will, we notice that sharing the gospel with others is more than an obligation or a duty. Instead, this task turns into a privilege and honor because we show the world that there is a better way, that there is a life that is worth living, and that Christ is the reason we have hope today in this very dark and empty world.

The objective of **Evangelism Explosion** is to teach the believer how to share his or her faith effectively in order to develop into a teacher of teachers of “winning souls.” This way, the entire congregation becomes involved in the process of evangelization, bringing an explosive growth of evangelism to the local church.

## A Mission to Fulfill

**Evangelism is God’s plan to redeem humanity.** 

There is nothing so valuable and exciting in the spiritual life as proclaiming the gospel to others and sharing the message of salvation with those that do not know Christ. A Christian should proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost, who will either reject or accept the message after hearing it. If someone accepts the message of the gospel, the believer becomes a new creation. However, no one will hear the gospel unless someone shares it.

It is true; no one will come to know Jesus if the gospel is not shared with them! Romans 10:14-15 says, *“How, then, can they call on the one they have*

*not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"*

It wasn't long ago that that I met a young housewife. At church, she heard that she should share her faith, which led her to decide that she must do something about it. She never went to school, but she started sharing the gospel in whatever way she could, yet she didn't see any results. Then she heard about a training called *Evangelism Explosion*, so she started studying the presentation until she had it memorized. She practiced in front of a mirror and with her friends. Soon, she was ready to go out and evangelize. Of course, she was nervous, but after sharing the gospel again and again her confidence grew; as a result, people started to accept Christ. A little while later, she started teaching workshops and training the people in her church, her district, and then all over the world. This story shows us that God always gives us opportunities to participate in evangelism and we, as children of God, should make every effort possible to learn, fulfill, and participate in this magnificent task called evangelism!

But what is evangelism exactly? Etymologically, the word evangelism derives from the Greek word, "*euangelion*," which means "good tidings" or "good news." Therefore, evangelism is the action of proclaiming the good news of salvation. As we read in Romans, no one will hear the gospel unless it is proclaimed. Just as someone spoke the Word of God to us about eternal life and the gift of salvation, God counts on those who have been transformed by his grace to share this truth so that those who continue to live in a lost world can come to know Christ personally.

Now let's ask ourselves, why should we share the gospel with others? What does God want from me? How am I to be a messenger of the gospel?

## Biblical Foundation

***What are some of the reasons we should evangelize?***



Sharing the gospel with other people is part of the DNA of every Christian. The more we do it, the more we grow and mature. There are six basic reasons that reveal the biblical foundation behind evangelism, and all should be taken into account to be able to evangelize with the appropriate motivations.

**1. Humanity is lost.** Without Christ, people live surrounded by darkness. Jesus himself said, "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life*" (John 8:12b). We also were lost, without peace or hope, but one day Christ rescued us with his love and gave us a new life. People are not capable of saving themselves, which is why they need a Savior. For this reason "*the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost*" (Luke 19:10).

*"We are debtors to every man to give him the gospel in the same measure in which we have received it" (P.F. Bresee).*

**2. The love of God compels us.** Our love for people is limited, but the love of God is infinite. This is why when we receive Christ he gives us the capacity to love with a love that is more pure and altruistic. Paul tells us that *“Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again”* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Just as newlyweds can’t stop talking about their significant other to everyone around, so the love of Christ drives us to talk with others about his love.

**3. It is a privilege and honor.** Talking about Christ with others is more than a task; it is an honor. Just as it is an honor to represent our country in the Olympics, in the World Cup, or in secular events, God has entrusted us to be his ambassadors. An ambassador represents his or her country while residing in another nation. In the same manner, God has made us “ambassadors of Christ” and has made us representatives of his heavenly kingdom. Paul reminds us *“that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors”* (2 Corinthians 5:19-20a).

**4. Our spiritual life grows.** Just as our muscles are strengthened when we exercise, so our spiritual life becomes healthier when we develop the muscles of our tongue and speak the Word of God to others. The Bible tells us that *“a man reaps what he sows”* (Galatians 6:7b) and *“whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously”* (2 Corinthians 9:6). Therefore, it is essential that we harvest with abundance so that the Word of God may bear fruit in its time and in its measure.

**5. Christ’s command must be fulfilled.** Before he returned to heaven, Jesus approached his disciples and commanded them: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”* (Matthew 28:18-20a). The reason we should go and preach is because power and authority resides in Jesus whose name we preach, and knowing this we have the certainty that his will be done.

**6. God does not want anyone to perish.** His word says that *“God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). Many wonder why, if God wants all to be saved, he doesn’t make it so that everyone repents? But this action would be contrary to the voluntary condition that God has given us, known as “free will.” God has given us the opportunity to choose the path we will take, but that does not mean that God does not desire for all to be saved. His own word affirms that God *“is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9b).

Type	Apocryphal Writings
Gospels	Gospel of the Hebrews, Gospel of Thomas, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs and Apocrypha of James.
Acts	Acts of Paul and Thecla, Acts of Peter, Acts of Thomas and Acts of John.
Apocalypse	Apocalypse of Peter.
Epistles	The Epistles of the Laodiceans, etc.
Others	Ascension of Isaiah.

## Steps Prior to Evangelizing

*We will now learn the preparation required for an evangelist.*



If we accept God's calling and participate in the plan that God has for saving humanity, we must ask now, what are the steps we should take in our personal preparation?

**1. Be filled with the power of God.** Evangelism is an expression of the work of the Holy Spirit and not the work of people. The early Church prayed in unity until the Holy Spirit had filled them with power to be able to speak with boldness. Many Christians try to share the gospel, but they lack the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why many of the presentations of the gospel do not have positive results and are not effective. Before presenting the gospel to others, we must be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**2. Pray for the lost.** In John 17, Jesus prayed for his disciples who were with him at the time and for those in the future. Prayer is fundamental because it not only prepares the heart of the person who will hear the Word of God, but it also prepares our own heart and keeps us in tune with the heart of God. Being tuned into God means that we have a relationship of dependence and trust in him, and we cultivate this good relationship through prayer and intercession.

**3. Get to know the audience.** We might not know the people we are going to talk with, but the majority of the failures in evangelism come from lack of knowledge. This gives us an idea of how important it is to study our audience so that we can come to know their cultural differences and interests. As a result, these conversations help us lead into a more serious conversation. For example, in sharing the gospel, it is better not to jump into discussions about world religions right away without finding out which religions have impacted the person's life. If we start making negative

**Bill Bright (1921-2003)** founded *Campus Crusade for Christ* with the goal of reaching out to college students in California. Today, this ministry is in 191 nations, with 26,000 full-time employees and more than 255,000 trained volunteers. He is the author of "The Four Spiritual Laws," a special evangelism tool that has been printed in 200 languages and distributed to more than 2.5 million people.



“I am not here to simply enjoy a good life. I am here as a son and servant of God; to invest my time, talent and treasure in seeking and saving the lost. This is the reason why Jesus Christ came 2000 years ago and it is what He commissioned His followers to do, generation after generation, until He comes again”  
(Bill Bright).

**EvangeCube:**  
An evangelistic tool with seven images that presents the message of salvation creatively. After a simple training, it can be used by children, youth, and adults to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

comments about the religion that this person has accepted, this could change the tone of the conversation. What is most important is that we study our audience and learn about them so that we can visit with them. The more information we have about the person, the better, since it will help us open the channels of communication.

**4. Know the message.** Take time to study the history of Christianity and memorize some Bible verses so as to more easily share the message of the gospel. It is important to understand the message of the gospel to be able to share it with clarity and personal conviction. In lesson 6, we will learn more about this step.

**5. Find the best tool.** Some might find *The Four Spiritual Laws*, developed by Dr. Bill Bright, to be a good tool. Others might use the five points from *Evangelism Explosion*. Of course, there are many other presentations of personal evangelism, and we will study those in another lesson. These tools serve as visual resources since not all of us have the same experience in presenting the gospel or have the same learning style. That is why it is good to be familiar with several of the tools and choose the one that will be best in the particular situation.

**6. Have a follow up plan.** Suppose the mother of a newborn baby were to leave her baby in the street to take care of himself; that baby is very unlikely to survive. This is exactly what happens when there is not a plan to disciple a new convert. They need constant care in order to grow to spiritual maturity. In lesson 8 of this book, we will learn more about this important step.



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The proclamation of the gospel is an invitation, a responsibility and a privilege that God has extended to all his children. Participating in his redemption plan requires that we be well prepared to carry out the mission of an evangelist with excellence, anticipating great results for the Kingdom of God.

# Activities

Time



## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. How did you come to know Jesus as your personal Savior? Share with your classmates.

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2. Answer the following questions and then share in groups of three or four: Have you ever had the experience of sharing the gospel with another person? How do you evaluate yourself as an evangelist? If you have not yet shared the gospel, what is it that is holding you back?

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3. Write a letter or a text message to a friend explaining the reasons why you desire to be involved in the ministry of evangelism.

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4. Evaluate yourself regarding your preparation as an evangelist. Which of the six steps in personal preparation do you need to strengthen in your own life? On a piece of paper write a plan to strengthen those weak points during the eight weeks of this course.

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5. Write the names of five people that you know personally who do not know God. Commit to pray for them every day for these eight weeks. During that time, pray that the Holy Spirit would prepare their hearts and that the seed of the gospel would be planted.

I commit to pray for the following five people for eight weeks:

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A black and white photograph of a hand held palm up, holding a small pile of seeds. The hand is positioned over a dark, textured surface that looks like soil. The background is a parchment-like texture with faint Arabic script. A black banner at the top right contains the text 'Lesson 2'.

## Lesson 2

# BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EVANGELISM

## Objectives

- To know the plan of salvation that God has for humanity.
- To understand that the gospel is a full and complete salvation.
- To identify with the first evangelists.

## Main Ideas

- The Bible reveals God's plan for the salvation of the world.
- Jesus took advantage of every opportunity to present the gospel.
- The first evangelists followed Jesus' example by proclaiming the good news to all creation.

## Introduction

What did God Show the world by sending his Son, according to 1 John 4:9?

When sin first entered the human experience, God had to design a plan of salvation so that sin could be forgiven and the human race could have a clear conscience and a healthy relationship with the Creator. The pages of the Holy Scriptures tell us about this plan.

What are the consequences of humanity's sin according to Romans 8:20-23?

In his original plan, God had created man so that he could be with him. God wanted to be in direct contact with humanity, and he desired the Holy Spirit of God to be united with our own. But after the intrusion of sin, God came up with new strategies in order to have a restored relationship with his people. The creation of the Israelites as a people group, the laws, commandments, and prophecies all became part of those methods of salvation. However, it was not until after God sent his only Son that he revealed how far he was willing to go to save humanity from their sins and restore relationship with them.

## Salvation in the Old Testament

***In this section we will look at the foundation of salvation in the Old Testament.***



God loves his creation and desires that all people come to know the truth. In the Old Testament, there are many examples of how God wanted to save his people from eternal destruction. He called Israel to be his chosen people and to show the world the way to salvation.

Abraham was not only called to be the father of a great nation, but he was also to become an instrument of blessing for the whole world. Later, God called Moses to guide the people of Israel out of their 400 years of slavery in Egypt. Right before the exodus occurred, the people of Israel were instructed to take a lamb and sacrifice it at night. Its blood was to be placed on the top and both sides of the doorframe so that when the angel of the Lord passed over and killed the firstborns of the Egyptians, those whose houses were covered by the blood of the lamb would not be touched and their children would live.

The story of the Old Testament reveals that the way to salvation is realized through the fulfillment of the ordinances and commandments of God. One of the rituals instituted for the remission of sins was through the sacrifice of animals, completely innocent of sin, and this can be clearly seen in the ritual of the Day of Atonement, as described in Leviticus 16.

The tradition was that only once a year the high priest could enter behind the curtain of the sanctuary known as the Holy of Holies and make atonement for the sins of the people. The high priest had to bring one bull and two goats for the offerings. The bull was sacrificed first as a sin offering to atone for the high priest and his family. Then, one of the goats was sacrificed while the other was sent out into the desert with the sins of the people figuratively placed on its head. The first goat signified a propitiation for the sins of the people, and it was slaughtered to pay for the sins of the entire nation (Leviticus 16:5). For the second goat, the scapegoat, the high priest placed his hands over its head as he verbally confessed all of the iniquities and transgressions of the people. Thus, the goat carried everyone's sins and was sent out of camp to never return.

From the times of the Old Testament, we see that God, in his infinite mercy, promised to send a lamb that would be sacrificed once and for all to take the place of the innocent animals. The Messiah was sacrificed to forgive humanity's sins, and at the same time, carry all the sins of the people while suffering alone, outside of the city of Jerusalem. His blood, like the blood of the lamb during the exodus, would cover the people from death and would offer life for all eternity.

## Salvation in the New Testament

*Now we will look at what God has done in order to reach humanity.*



God put an end to the sacrificial system established in the Old Testament by sending the promised Messiah, whose sacrifice was offered once and for all. Jesus became the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29) and carried our sins on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). By his own blood it is now possible that all sin be forgiven and that the hearts of his children be sanctified. God, in his eternal love and mercy, established a sacrificial system in the Old Testament that would simply foreshadow what would come at a later time.

Jesus' ministry does not end in his death, but in his resurrection. Jesus promised that he would send the counselor, the Holy Spirit, and he left all his followers with the responsibility and privilege to share the good news of salvation (Acts 1:8). The message of forgiveness of sins and salvation should be proclaimed throughout the world with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The power that the followers of Jesus needed to be able to tell the story of the good news came on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). It was then that those

### **Propitiation:**

*it means expiation: a means by which sin is covered, forgiven and eliminated. Christ as propitiation is the means by which God shows his mercy toward a repented sinner, who by placing faith in Christ as the only and sufficient savior, receives forgiveness for all sins.*

### **Messiah:**

*from the Latin "messias" and Hebrew "messiah," meaning "the anointed one." Isaiah was the first one to use this word to point to the future lamb that God would send, a baby who would become king and would bring a kingdom of righteousness, justice, and peace, and whose name would be Emmanuel, which means "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14).*

*"And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood" (Hebrews 13:12).*

who were praying together received the Holy Spirit and were prepared to speak with courage about the message of salvation, which was made possible through Jesus' death and resurrection.

The first century church was committed to spreading the gospel message to the known world. The primitive church went through difficult moments, tribulations, attacks, imprisonment and even death-- all for the sake of the gospel. For these brave men and women, the preaching of the gospel went beyond just fulfilling an obligation. It was so important for them that they even gave up their lives for it. After all, salvation was not a gift to be kept to oneself. Salvation was a gift to be shared with others in the same way that they had received it: by the grace of God and through faith.

## An Exemplary Life

***Here we will learn the evangelistic model of the Teacher.***



*In Christ, we can see the message of the gospel incarnate, modeling for us an exemplary life that we can follow. In the same way, our life should be a living example that influences the lives of those who surround us.*

Jesus lived a life of purity, obedience, faith and loyalty to the Father. His quality of life allowed people to admire him, and those who encountered him were amazed by his wisdom. Jesus knew that salvation was not only a personal matter, but it also had social ramifications. It is for that reason that when he was at the synagogue he proclaimed the prophet Isaiah's own words about the Messiah: "*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor*" (Luke 4:18-19). Despite the fact that Jesus came to seek and save all of humanity, he knew that his purpose was also to break the oppressive systems and bring justice for the poor, the marginalized, and the needy. Jesus didn't leave a massive plan of salvation, but rather an individual plan, which had to do with each person and his or her needs.

The transforming power of the gospel that Jesus presented was found in the content and character of his message. He gave bread to many people so that they could understand that he is the bread of life. He healed deaf people so that they could hear about the justice of God. He raised the dead so that they would know that he was the resurrection and the life. He healed the sick so that there would be healing for their souls. He gave sight to the blind so that they could learn about spiritual blindness. He forgave prostitutes and ate with sinners so that they would know that he came to rescue even the most despicable person. In that way, the actions, message, and lifestyle that Jesus led were "the gospel."

# The First Evangelists

*In this section we will study the life examples of the first evangelists.*



The first century evangelists did something that had never been done before. They did not have another example other than Christ and even though religions and sects were abundant during that time, there was not another religion that sought to share its message with such longing, enthusiasm and energy as the followers of Christianity. The more Christians were persecuted, the more the followers of Jesus multiplied. The message of the gospel impacted the world from then on in such a way that thousands of people converted through the testimonies of the faithful followers of Christ. Next we will recall the stories of some of them.

## Mary Magdalene

It can be said that Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist to share the good news of the resurrection with the rest of the disciples. John 20:18 tells us that, *“Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: ‘I have seen the Lord!’ And she told them that he had said these things to her.”* In a culture where the testimony of a woman was not treated in the same way as that of a man, it is incredible to see that from the beginning Jesus called women as well as men to share the story of the gospel with others. Mary Magdalene did not keep to herself what she had seen and heard, even though she ran the risk that no one would believe her words.

## Peter

The first evangelist that appears in the Book of Acts is Peter. After having received the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter stood in front of a great crowd and declared the gospel with courage and power. People were amazed and could not believe that this was the same Peter they had known before. Peter started preaching to his Jewish brothers showing through the Old Testament scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah. Those who heard him, instead of stoning him, were moved and asked Peter and the other apostles what must they do in order to be saved. Peter explained that they needed to repent of their sins and be baptized in order to be saved through Jesus Christ (Acts 2:40).

## Philip

One of the seven men chosen to serve in the food distribution, Philip became a great evangelist. After the death of Stephen (also one of the seven) and the persecution that broke out in Jerusalem, Philip became more active in the evangelistic ministry, healing the sick, expelling demons, and sharing the good news with others. His message went beyond Jerusalem and Judea, penetrating the hills of Samaria where the people did not get along with the Jews. Remembering Christ’s Great Commission, *“and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8b), Philip was the first to dare to cross cultural and ethnic barriers to

*“To get a man soundly saved it is not enough to put on him a pair of new breeches, to give him regular work, or even to give him a University education. These things are all outside a man, and if the inside remains unchanged you have wasted your labor. You must in some way or other graft upon the man’s nature a new nature, which has in it the element of the Divine”*  
(William Booth).



proclaim the gospel of peace. Thus, besides being the first evangelist, Philip was also the first missionary.

### Paul

What do people in your community and in your church need to see in you in order to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior?

The experiences of Paul, a man without equal, are narrated in the Book of Acts. After chapter 9, we find the narration of his conversion and his ministry throughout the Middle East and Europe. His ministry included healing the sick, teaching about Jesus, preaching in synagogues, planting new congregations, and writing letters to the churches during his travels or time of imprisonment. Paul was an evangelist full of wisdom, biblical knowledge, passion and courage. Neither prisons nor shipwrecks could stop his fervor for the gospel. Paul evangelized the Jews in their synagogues, the philosophers in Greece, Gentile men and women, prisoners, and even important politicians! His passion for preaching Christ was found in the personal and powerful encounter that he had with Jesus on the way to Damascus (Acts 9). For these reasons, Paul was an evangelist with such a vision and passion that he marked the primitive church like none other.

The evangelists of the first century have a lot to teach the followers of Christ in the 21st century. Perhaps we should embrace the same passion and urgency that these witnesses carried with them wherever they went as they preached the gospel. Truthfully, if there is a lesson they leave behind, it is the fact that one cannot share the gospel without having first a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and being empowered by the Holy Spirit.



Certainly, much has changed in twenty centuries, but the message of salvation and need of forgiveness continues to be the same. The challenges and environments always change with the years, but “Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8) and his message continues to make the difference in the lives of those who repent from their sins and accept the gift of salvation.



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The proclamation of the gospel is an invitation, a responsibility and a privilege that God has extended to all his children. Participating in his redemption plan requires that we be well prepared to carry out the mission of an evangelist with excellence, anticipating great results for the Kingdom of God.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Match the verse in the middle column with the letter of the Bible reference in the last column. Place the letter in the first column.

	<i>“He himself bore our sins, in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”</i>	A) Acts 1:8
	<i>“And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.”</i>	B) John 3:16
	<i>“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”</i>	C) Hebrews 13:12
	<i>“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.”</i>	D) John 1:29
	<i>“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”</i>	E) I Peter 2:24

2. Read Leviticus 16 and explain to a friend in your own words the purpose of the scapegoat system in the Old Testament.

3. Read Paul’s three missionary experiences in Acts 17 and answer these questions:

- A) How did the Jews in Thessalonica react?
- B) How did the people of Berea respond to the message of salvation?
- C) Who did Paul talk to in Athens?
- D) What cultural elements were used in presenting the gospel to the Athenian citizens? (v.22-28)
- E) How did they respond?

4. Read the following narratives of the life of Peter, Philip, and Paul, and in groups of 3 or 4 act them out:

- A) Conversion of Saul – Acts 8:4-25
- B) Peter and Cornelius – Acts 10:25-48
- C) Peter in jail at Philippi – Acts 16:16-40



A black and white photograph of a hand held palm up, with a small pile of seeds or grains resting in the center. The background is a blurred image of a library with rows of books on shelves. A dark, semi-transparent banner is positioned at the top right of the image.

*Lesson 3*

**A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF EVANGELISM**

## Objectives

- To be familiar with the main evangelists in the history of the church.
- To value the trajectory of evangelism through the Modern Era.
- To commit yourself to Christ's plan and vision of evangelism.

## Main Ideas

- History teaches us certain truths about evangelism that have been uncovered over time by different people who were guided by God.
- The disciples of Jesus went from being “sinners” to being “fishers of souls.”

What is the relationship between the history of salvation of which the Bible speaks and your own salvation history?

## Introduction

The history of salvation began with the intrusion of sin into the perfect creation of God. Everything originated with the desires that flowed from the heart of God to reach a people whose relationship with him was fragmented because of the separation that sin brought about. God, in his grace, love, mercy, and justice, could not have a relationship with humanity unless he somehow restored the relationship with the human race.

The sacred Scriptures share the history of salvation from the beginning of the world to the promise of the second coming of Christ. The Scriptures can be summed up in a single well-known German word in theological circles: *Heilsgeschichte* meaning “history of salvation.”

Nevertheless, the history of evangelism began with the coming of Christ, because he is the “gospel,” the good news of evangelism. Thus, we can say that the history of evangelism itself began in the New Testament, and it is from there that we will begin our study.

## Early Phases of Evangelism

**In this section we will follow the trajectory of evangelism in the New Testament.**



In the New Testament we find the gospels, where we learn about Jesus' life and his purposes. His life can be summarized in four fundamental parts: birth, ministry, death and resurrection. The four gospels narrate these facets that focus on different themes. Luke, for example, decided to narrate the teachings and parables of Christ, while John focused on the purpose and divinity of Christ. Matthew describes many of the miracles while Mark gives us a more general and concise glance of the life of Christ. However, in all four gospels we find narratives of the passion and resurrection of Christ, which highlight the importance of these historical events. After this point, it is easy to see that the faith of the believers in the primitive church was based on the death and resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:14).

It is not until the Book of Acts that we find the recording of the beginning of the church which includes the evangelistic labor of the primitive church. The prophetic word of Christ that was given to the disciples before he ascended, was fulfilled in the same Book of Acts: *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). When the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, they received power and were witnesses in Jerusalem. Peter preached his first evangelistic sermon with courage before the multitude (Acts 2) and three thousand people were added to the community of faith. Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, spoke before the assembly of teachers of the law and gave his life for the sake of the Kingdom of God (Acts 7).

It is clear that after that moment, not everything was smooth for the people of God. A great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem and everyone was dispersed to the regions of Judea and Samaria. It is here that we see that the word of Christ was being fulfilled: *“But you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria...”*

It is Philip who takes the word of God to Samaria and announces the good news of the Messiah (Acts 8:5). We also know that other people shared the gospel with the Greeks: *“Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus”* (Acts 11:19-20).

When Paul is converted, he starts to share the gospel *“to the ends of the earth...”* for the “ends of the earth” in those days was Rome, the center of the empire that dominated the Jews during the first centuries. After all his missionary journeys and evangelistic discussions, Paul makes it to Rome, where he spends two years preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord without any obstacle (Acts 28:31). It is in this manner that the book of Acts narrates the evangelistic activities and the fulfillment, initially and partially, of the prophetic words of Christ in regards to the expansion of the testimony *“to the ends of the earth.”*

*Philip provides us with a beautiful example of approaching someone through an evangelistic conversation that ended in a personal encounter with Jesus and acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior.*

## A Journey Through History

***Fascinating events have occurred in the past two thousand years of evangelism.***



Author Lewis Drummond divides the history of evangelism by eras: the Apostolic Era, the Patriarchal Era, the Middle Age, the Reformation, the Puritan Era/the Awakening, and the “Great” Era (2003:14). Based on those six basic periods, we will study the main events, the most outstanding personalities, as well as three essential truths that each era teaches us about evangelism.

**Christian apologetics**  
*is the field of theology that specializes in using rational arguments to defend Christianity (Wikipedia).*

**Apostolic Era:** As we saw in the first section, this era begins with the evangelism of the first apostles. Perhaps the person that stands out the most in the book of Acts is the apostle Paul, whose calling to preach the gospel urged the mission of spreading the gospel to go beyond Jerusalem and its surroundings. This era communicates three essential aspects about evangelism:

1. God calls all people to share in the ministry of evangelism.
2. All who participate in this calling should be equipped through the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses of the gospel and to speak boldly.
3. God desires that the gospel be shared cross-culturally.

**Patriarchal Era:** During the times of the church fathers, the spreading of the gospel happens by the dynamic work of God. God uses servants who are willing to participate in the mission. The importance of this era lies in the theological legacy that the fathers of the church left behind through their doctrinal treaties and apologetics in those first centuries. Without a doubt, one of the most recognized figures of this era is Saint Augustine. His theology shows us that God is revealed as sovereign over everything and that God has everything under control. Saint Augustine exalts the gospel of Jesus Christ and all the Christian efforts that bring people to a personal encounter with God, but without diminishing the importance of the Holy Spirit in these efforts. In this way, the contribution of this evangelistic period is highlighted in the following truths:

1. The expansion of the Kingdom of God is the work of God, who does everything to reach the lost.
2. An attitude of faith and courage should control the minds of believers in order to present the gospel effectively.
3. All human efforts that are not accompanied by the guidance of the Holy Spirit are insufficient to convince the sinner.

**Medieval Era:** In the years that followed the era of the fathers of the church, the church went through a time known as the “Middle Age,” “Catholic Era” or “Medieval Phase.” Despite the somber names and the difficulties that evangelism faced during this time that lasted more than a thousand years, one sincere man shined because of the way he evangelized the poor. Saint Francis of Assisi won multitudes for Christ with his simplicity. It is said that many times he preached to the birds when there was no one else around. On the other hand, he maintained the belief that preaching should be done through lifestyle and if necessary one should use words. Francis of Assisi affirmed that the gospel should be holistic, in other words, it should be centered on the necessities of humans in their totality: spiritual, emotional, cultural, physical, and financial. The contribution of this era is very important for an appropriate understanding of evangelism:

**Augustine of Hippo**  
*(354-430), the greatest Christian thinker in the first millennium. He dedicated the great majority of his life to writing philosophical and theological books, among which we find Confessions and City of God.*

1. The ministry of the Christian and of the church should be carried out holistically and not only through proclamation.
2. Satisfying the basic needs of people should be a priority for believers since we have been called to love God and our neighbor as we love ourselves.
3. When we have eyes to see the needs of others, they will have ears to hear the message we have to share.

**Reformation Era:** A new phase of evangelism began during the 16th century with the arrival of a powerful movement, the Protestant Reformation. Once again the gospel could be made known in its simplicity and purity and the message was no longer based on tradition or on the requirements of the church leaders, but instead on the rediscovery of the basic biblical truths. Martin Luther realized that Paul was right in saying that “a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law” (Romans 3:28). For this reason, the contribution of this era was extremely important for the history of evangelism:

1. The proclamation of the gospel should be based on the gospel and not on tradition.
2. The sacred Scriptures are the holy Word of God, trustworthy and authoritative, and they therefore form the basis to any significant evangelical ministry.
3. The fountain for power and knowledge of any evangelist comes from the Word of God since “faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” (Romans 10:17).

**Puritan/Awakening Era:** When the Reformation Era gave way to another phase of history, one of the most important eras in the history of the church began through the pietistic movement. This movement stressed personal experience more than formalism. It emphasized both the study of the Bible as much as an experience with the Holy Spirit, which created a rapid expansion of missionary activity. One of the most prominent evangelists of this era who won multitudes and started a new awakening in England was John Wesley, who not only started Methodism (from whose tradition the Church of the Nazarene emerged) but also left behind hundreds of sermons and books that influenced the masses. The most prominent points of this era are these:

1. The personal experience should form part of any evangelistic initiative.
2. The overflow of the Holy Spirit and the infusion of new life in the church are always fundamental for evangelism.
3. Without a life of holiness, it is impossible to please God; therefore, without holiness it is impossible to testify of his power to a world that lives in perpetual darkness.

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*Martin Luther was a theologian, Augustinian Catholic monk and German religious reformer whose teachings and insights gave birth to the Protestant Reformation. He inaugurated the theological and cultural doctrine which led to Lutheranism and influenced the rest of the protestant traditions.*

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*“You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. It is not your business to preach so many times; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord” (John Wesley).*

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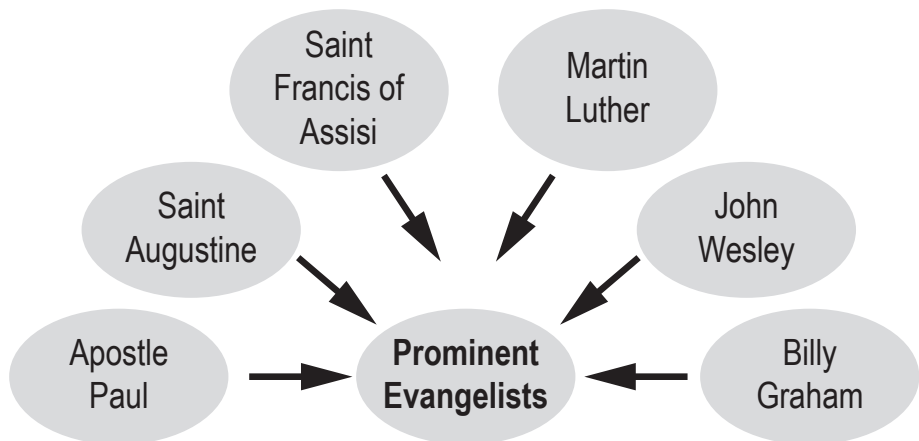


*“My one purpose in life is to help people find a personal relationship with God, which, I believe, comes through knowing Christ”  
(Billy Graham).*

**Modern Era/The “Great” Era:** Evangelism in the 19th and 20th century took a new step in spreading the word of God to areas where the gospel had never been before, reaching the multitudes for Christ. The most prominent figure of the era is, without a doubt, Billy Graham, who with his campaigns, summits, and evangelistic crusades not only won millions of souls, but also influenced politicians and others of influence in the secular circles. From this era we can understand these points:

1. God uses people who are prepared and desire to serve him in the way he wants.
2. To bring others to the feet of Christ, one needs sincerity, integrity and passion.
3. The Word of God penetrates the farthest places and the most lost hearts.

### PROMINENT EVANGELISTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY



*Why do you think Jesus preferred one-on-one evangelism instead of mass evangelism?*

### Capturing the Vision of Christ

***The vision of Christ was always focused on people.***



Living in a post-modern world, we know the truths of evangelism may be slightly different from the ones discovered in other eras. However, we can always learn from history because the past helps us make clearer paths for the future. We can learn much from the historical eras about personal evangelism; however, our own strategy should be based on the Lord’s strategy, which was both personal and relational.

Jesus showed a special concern for the individual and not for numbers. When Jesus approached the multitudes, he spoke in parables, but when he drew near to people he spoke directly to their hearts. In this way, we can

see that evangelism starts with one person at a time and spreads one person at a time. For example, when the Lord came to Peter to call him, he talked in a way that made the heart of Peter humble in his presence. It was in the recognition of his own sin that Peter was saved. When he said to Jesus, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man” (Luke 5:8), he realized that his job was not as important as his redemption. He went from “**sinner**” to “**fisher of men**” because he came to grips with his sinful state and accepted the forgiveness of Christ.

The vision of Jesus is always to save people in their present or original condition. He desires that all of us leave the life of sin to become “fishers” of men and women, and that we be transformed into people that capture Christ’s vision. Through history we see that when men and women are transformed by the grace of God, a new deep desire comes to them that enables them to share that change with others.

God wants to reach all sinners, because for him there are no distinctions or barriers. Thus, we, as “fishers of souls” should recognize the needs of people and the condition of their hearts so as to reach them for Christ, meeting their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. In this way, we can add our names to the list of the great evangelists in history that realized that to be fishers of souls was the most valuable and important task into which we can invest our lives.

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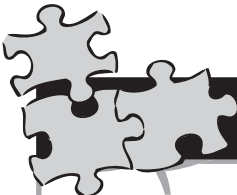
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## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

God is always concerned for the human being in a holistic and personal way. The greatest evangelists were inspired by God through the truths of the Word that had been forgotten through time. Today, Jesus wants to impart his vision to us to make us “fishers of souls.”

# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Form groups of three or four and create on large sheets of paper a chronological timeline of the events and the prominent historical characters who were involved in the history of the church through evangelism.

2. Make a list of the biblical truths that are highlighted in each era of history. Which of these needs to be rediscovered in the Post-Modern Era?

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3. Mention something positive that you learned from each of the six great evangelists studied in this lesson that will be of benefit to your own ministry as an evangelist.

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4. What constitutes Christ's vision? Explain.

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A black and white photograph of a hand held palm up, holding a small pile of seeds. The hand is positioned over a dark, textured surface that appears to be soil. A bright, glowing light effect emanates from the bottom center of the image, creating a lens flare and illuminating the scene. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

**Lesson 4**

**GOD'S ROLE IN EVANGELISM**

## Objectives

- To value the active role of God in evangelization.
- To recognize that it is God who initiates all activity and evangelistic effort.
- To explain the difference between general revelation and special revelation.
- To commit to participating in God's redemptive plan.

## Main Ideas

- The church, as the body of Christ, has been called to collaborate with God in the plan to save humanity, but it is God who begins the work.
- The Holy Spirit convicts the sinner so that he or she can experience a true encounter with Jesus Christ and recognize him as Lord and Savior.

## Introduction

*"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them..."*  
(John 6:44a)

The gospel is a simple message and everyone who has good common sense can understand it. God did not send us a message that only a certain group of intellectuals would understand, nor did he send a doctrine that people had to struggle their way through to grasp. The gospel does not come to us as something ordinary with little value or importance, nor does it come to us as a message for one particular person. The gospel comes to the entire human race by the strength of a command, with divine authority, from the mouth of God himself, directly through his Word to us through the faithful exposition of his servants.

*God is the originator of all evangelistic effort because it is he who prepares the heart, sends the preacher, and convicts the sinner.*

It is only God who is capable of granting salvation to the human being. We know in our hearts that God works in us through his Spirit so we can understand more clearly who he is and who Jesus Christ, his son, is. For that reason, before the gospel is proclaimed, God is already working in the hearts of those who hear the word. God is the originator of every evangelistic effort because he is the One who prepares hearts, sends preachers and convicts sinners.

## The Designer of the Gospel

***Here we will study how God has revealed himself and continues to reveal himself to humanity.***



*There are many ways in which we can spread the message of the gospel, and one of them is evangelistic preaching.*

In the Old Testament, God promised to send a messenger from heaven into this world who would carry a message that would precede Him. This promise was written in Malachi 3:1, "I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me." In the New Testament, we find the fulfillment of the promise through the coming of Jesus Christ. Aside from this act and the evangelistic sermons that Jesus and his followers preached, we should ask ourselves some key questions that help us understand the role that God plays in evangelism:

1. Who originated the gospel message?

2. Who did God send and where did he send them?

3. Where was the first gospel message preached?

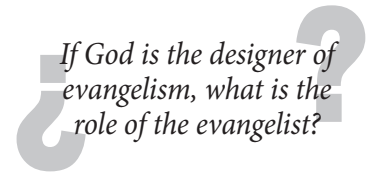
The Book of Acts answers all these questions in two verses: *“You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached”* (Acts 10:36-37). Here we find an indication that the gospel originated with God because it was “the message God sent.” God sent the prophets and Jesus sent his disciples first to the people of Israel, even though months after Jesus’ death that same gospel was shared with gentiles of all nations. Geographically, we can find its beginnings according to the words of the apostle Paul in verse 37: *“You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee.”*

Galilee, then, is the place where the gospel was preached for the first time. It was not in Jerusalem! Instead, it was Galilee! The gospel did not originate in Peter or even the Apostle Paul. It was sent by God! It is clear that God is the designer, the originator, and the initiator of every evangelistic work, even though many think that it is the preachers or followers who make it happen.

Before anyone preaches the word, before anyone is sent, and definitely before anyone is converted, God reveals himself in his ways and in his time. Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us that *“God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.”* How does God reveal himself today? In many ways and especially through his Son. God offers two types of revelation so that humanity can come to know and believe in him: general revelation and special revelation.

**General Revelation:** This is the way that God has revealed himself through his creation so that everyone can have evidence of his existence. Romans 1:19-20 says, *“since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”* This verse affirms that all can come to believe in the existence of God through the natural world; however, it is necessary to have special revelation to be able to know God through Christ.

**Special Revelation:** This comes through the Word of God, whether written or shared, or by witness. It also comes through dreams, visions, or any other phenomenon that God chooses to use to reveal himself to an individual. In Galatians 1:11-12, Paul affirms this type of specific revelation: *“I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ”* (Galatians 1:11-12).



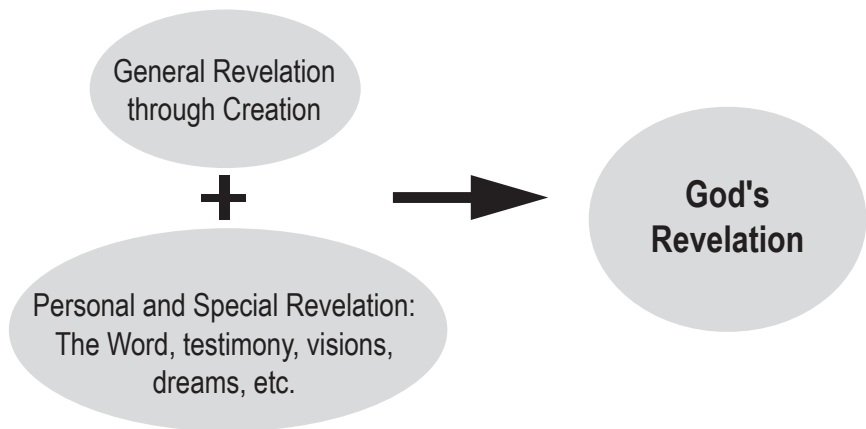
*If God is the designer of evangelism, what is the role of the evangelist?*

It wasn't too long ago that in several Christian magazines and online publications there was news that Muslims were receiving Christ through dreams. Without having had the opportunity to have someone preach the gospel to them or have a missionary visit their community, these people were coming to the feet of Christ through the special revelation that Jesus Christ offered to them. For example, some years ago Ali was travelling to Mecca to accomplish his regular yearly pilgrimage. One night, before arriving, he dreamed about Jesus, who came to him and touched his forehead and heart and said, "You belong to me." After this experience, when Ali "heard" that voice, instead of finishing the pilgrimage, he decided to follow Christ (LeClaire 2012).

The will of God is that all would be saved: *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise...not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9).

It is in this way that God decides to use different methods so that the following may happen:

*"You have no wish for others to be saved? Then you're not saved yourself, be sure of that!"*  
(Charles H. Spurgeon).



## The Evangelistic Work of the Holy Spirit

*In this section we will see how God accomplishes his evangelistic work.*



Although God is the designer and originator of evangelism, he decided to use men and women who are willing to collaborate with this work through the equipping that the Holy Spirit offers. Romans 10:14-15 reminds us of this point: *"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"* Thus, the presence of the Holy Spirit acts like a motor that pushes us forward to go and preach so that people will hear and believe.

The presence of the Holy Spirit was evident in the lives of the first Christians: *"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit"* and that also

confirms Acts 4:31: “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” In Acts 1:8 Jesus says, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...” This promise was not only for the apostles, nor was it only for pastors or leaders. This promise was and continues to be for everyone in the church that wants to preach the gospel, for everyone that wants to be a witness of Jesus Christ, and for everyone who recognizes the need to reach the whole world for Christ. The quality and truthfulness of our Christianity is found in lives full of the power of the Holy Spirit.

When I was an associate pastor at a local church, I met an elderly man who despite his 92 years of age and inability to read and write, spoke about Jesus to everyone who came to buy from him in the local market. One day, a personal emergency led me to take him from Sunday School to the closest hospital because he was very ill. When we got there and he was seen, to my surprise he began to share the gospel with the doctors and nurses that were helping him. When he was admitted and taken to a room full of men, he continued to evangelize as much as he could, saying that it was the Lord who had given him the chance to show his gratefulness by sharing Jesus with others. He died just after turning 96 years old and although he never went to a seminary, was not a pastor or a reverend, he spoke in such a way about what God had done in his life that many men, women, teens and children came to know the gospel of Jesus because of him.

The Holy Spirit works in us so that we can become partners with God in evangelism. The famous preacher Charles H. Spurgeon said on one occasion: “Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you’re not saved yourself, be sure of that!”

## Living in the Power of the Gospel

***The gospel unleashes the power of the Spirit so that the world may believe.***



The gospel is not something to be taken lightly. When the gospel says: “Believe and you shall live,” it is not the voice of a man speaking to another man. It is the very voice of God. We do not dare to imagine that God sent this gospel to the world so that it could be used as a ball to be kicked away like Felix the Roman governor did when he said to Paul: “That’s enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you” (Acts 24:25b). Nor do we believe that God sent the gospel so that human beings could treat it as a toy, so they could say things like King Agrippa said to Paul: “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?” (Acts 26:28).

The gospel is about truth. It is not a presentation of a personal point of view, or an idea or common teaching. It is the presentation of a unique, authentic, and true message, based on the Bible and confirmed by the

What should an evangelist do to be on the same “team” with the Holy Spirit?

**Discipleship** is an important part of the presentation of the gospel. The sermon is not enough. Without a process of discipleship, evangelism is incomplete.

“For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16).

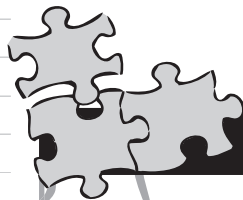


Holy Spirit. In the book of Acts we see the advancement of the gospel in an extraordinary way: everywhere the gospel was announced it was touched by the presence of God. All the sick to whom the gospel was preached were healed by the power of God. Those were times when preaching and hearing the gospel turned an ordinary event into an extraordinary one. People were converted, the sick were healed, the demons were cast out, and the church made a tremendous impact wherever the gospel was preached.

How is it that preaching about the crucified Jesus transformed so dramatically the lives of those who heard the message? Without a doubt, Jesus had risen! And the power of the Father that raised Jesus Christ is the same power that covered, blessed, confirmed and gave life to the proclamation of the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Hearing the gospel is having an encounter with the Christ of the gospel: the Christ who lives and whose good news is full of the life and the power of God.

The Church, which proclaims and imparts the faith, imitates God's way of living, and this is possible through the offering of the Son. The church reveals to the world what true love is by imitating the love that exists between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. At the heart of the message of the gospel is Jesus Christ, in whom we live and testify.

It is God who touches hearts, enlightens minds, and encourages the will. It is God who prepares the hearts using our individual actions, which are reflected in the community of faith. However, the work of the believer is not to produce results, instead our task is to preach the message faithfully and clearly and to leave the results in the hands of the Holy Spirit, because God is the One who makes the way and brings growth to any human effort spurred by his will.



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The gospel has been designed and initiated by God. It is he who works in the hearts of men and women so that they may come to believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior, through general and special revelation. All his children have been called to participate in this divine enterprise.

# Activities

Time



## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Explain in your own words or through a drawing the difference between general and special revelation.

General Revelation: \_\_\_\_\_

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Special Revelation: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. In what ways has God revealed himself to you? How did you come to know the existence of God? What did God use to help you be aware of the need to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Share your experience with the class.

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3. Write a personal reflection about the story of Ali. Have you ever had a similar experience like that in your life?

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4. Read 1 Corinthians 9:16 and answer: Why does Paul feel “obligated” to preach the gospel? In what way do you feel obligated to fulfill this task?

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A black and white photograph of a hand held palm up, with a small pile of seeds or grains resting in the center. The background is a wooden surface.

*Lesson 5*

A black and white photograph showing the lower legs and feet of two people walking on a paved surface. The person on the left is wearing dark shoes, and the person on the right is wearing sandals. Long shadows are cast on the ground.

**OUR ROLE IN EVANGELISM**

## Objectives

- To understand our responsibility in evangelism.
- To identify the qualities of an evangelist according to the Bible.
- To learn some practical considerations for evangelizing.

## Main Ideas

- God has given every believer the responsibility of communicating the message of the gospel.
- Evangelism must become a lifestyle in which the good news of God is communicated each day to others.
- There are practical and universal aspects that every evangelist needs to know and practice.

Is it possible to be an authentic disciple of Christ without being personally involved in sharing the good news of salvation with others?

As we have seen in the previous lessons, God is the author of salvation and it is he who initiated reconciliation with humans. In the Garden of Eden, God began his saving work towards humanity, which was completed at Calvary on the cross of Jesus our Lord. He showed his love and intention to restore the broken relationship between humans and himself, to save them from death, and to put them on the road towards eternal life.

The message of the good news has been given by God to Christ's disciples of all times so that they, in turn, would share it with the world. The message of the gospel is life, but so that this life may be incarnate in people, disciples of Jesus must do their part. God already did his part: Jesus died for sinners, brought salvation, and the Holy Spirit is daily carrying out his role of convicting sinners, leading them to justice and judgment. Therefore it is the believer, the disciple who has received Christ into his or her heart, that needs to communicate the gospel. The action of evangelism is intrinsically linked to communicating the divine message of salvation in every way possible.

## Introduction

## The Missionary Character of Christianity

*"It is possible for the most obscure person in a church, with a heart right toward God, to exercise as much power for the evangelization of the world, as it is for those who stand in the most prominent positions"*  
(John R. Mott).

***The mission of evangelism is universal and includes every believer.*** 

Since the beginning, Christianity has had the purpose of being inclusive in order to reach every human being. God's intention has always been to reach all peoples in order that they may know his love and draw near to him. Christ exhibited this truth when he said, "... go and make disciples of all nations...and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:19a, 20a). In order to fulfill this great mission, God did not commission his angels, but instead he sent the church, the regenerated man and woman.

Evangelism must become a lifestyle and each day God's good news should be communicated to the world. The salvation of many people

depends on whether the message of God reaches them in time, and that is our job. It is imperative that we carry out the command of the Lord. This responsibility must be taught to the new disciples from the very beginning of their Christian walk.

Sometimes, evangelism has been carried out in churches by a certain group of members in the church. Some congregations have evangelism ministries, evangelists in the streets, and evangelists behind a pulpit. All these people carry out a valuable mission towards non-Christian society. However, the task of evangelism must not be given to the hands of a few, selected individuals. Every believer has been given gifts from the Holy Spirit to proclaim and share the gospel. Although some people may have the gift of evangelism, this does not imply that the rest of the congregation will have a passive role.

So we should ask ourselves these questions: What is my daily responsibility when it comes to evangelism? What spiritual qualities do I need to cultivate in my life to be a good evangelist?

## Spiritual Practices of an Evangelist

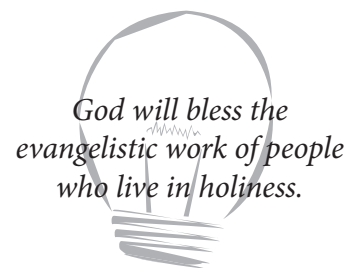
### What distinguishes a good evangelist?



So, we know that God works in people to lead them to a point of genuine repentance and that the gospel must be transmitted globally. God has given every believer a responsibility within this great work of salvation. His Word has at least five practical aspects that constitute the spiritual basis for becoming excellent evangelists.

**1. Prayer.** This aspect is essential for God to work in favor of what we do for him. First of all, we must pray so that God moves believers to evangelize: *“Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’”* (Matthew 9:37-38). Secondly, we need to pray that God would open doors for us to evangelize: *“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”* (Colossians 4:3). Thirdly, we pray that God will put his words on our lips. Ephesians 6:18-19 reminds us, *“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.”* Finally, we should pray that the Word of God would flow everywhere and reach its objective: *“As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you”* (2 Thess. 3:1).

**2. Communion with the Holy Spirit.** This aspect was vital in the expansion of the primitive church. It is not anything vain or prideful, but rather it implies a life of daily communion with Christ. He speaks to our



“God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called”  
(Unknown, but some attribute this quote to A. W. Tozer).

lives about what we should be doing each moment. We need him so that he can guide us with words, actions and directions. Acts 16:6 says: “Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.” Acts 19:11-12 says: “God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.” It is only through communion with the Holy Spirit that we can have the power and strength to share the message of salvation.

**3. Testimony.** Someone once said, “If your life is not a message, your message has no life.” One of the most effective ways of evangelizing is done without using words. People need to observe that we do what we say. This behavior is essential for the fruits we will harvest in evangelism. God will bless the evangelistic work of people who live in holiness, and anything contrary would discredit the message of the cross. Paul is considered one of the greatest men of God in sharing the gospel to the Gentiles, and his testimony was a part of his success. 2 Corinthians 1:12 says: “Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God’s grace.”

**4. Commitment.** Our commitment level must be high when we understand all we have received from God, and how he is the one who has commissioned us to work for him. For that reason, we should dedicate our time, sacrifice and finances to preaching the gospel. Many in the early church had this level of commitment to the gospel, based on the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. The cost of the gospel was death for many, Stephen being the first martyr (Acts 6:8-15). The cost was also imprisonment for many. “They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail” (Acts 5:18). Commitment to the gospel should surpass our physical and spiritual strength in order to effectively fulfill our responsibility before God. Those who were before us paid a high price, and now in the present age God demands the same type of commitment from us.

**5. Communication.** Communicating the gospel should not be limited to verbal expression, even though this method is the most widely used. For this reason, we should teach people to communicate the message in many ways, so that they may be prepared for any situation. The great truth we know will not make a difference in people’s lives if we do not share it or if we share it incorrectly. The apostles communicated the gospel daily without caring about where they were, as Acts 5:42 says: “Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.” Paul is emphatic about the communication of the gospel and expresses the following: “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” (Romans 10:14). Paul also shows the satisfaction of those that each day share words of hope with others: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10:15b).

## THE 5 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES OF AN EVANGELIST



*“The only Christian discipline we can carry out better here on earth than in heaven is to share our faith in Christ with others”  
(David Shibley).*

## What Must Be Done to Evangelize?

*Consider the following points when sharing the gospel with others.*



There are countless methods and opinions about how to evangelize. In order to define the most correct or biblical method one must consider what God has done in history, since it is necessary to keep in mind the culture, tradition, the individual, and the action of the Holy Spirit. We must use the most appropriate methods in each specific context. For God, the method is not more important than the message, which, in essence, is the same message no matter where you go in the world. Nevertheless, there are certain universal and basic considerations that must be taken into account in evangelism:

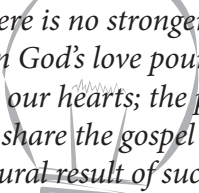
### ***1. Show the change that God has made in your life:***

People can question the existence of God, they can deny the truth of the Bible, believe only in scientific arguments, form speculations or even form their own personal criteria, but what no person can do is question what God has done in your life since your experiences with God are unique. Speaking about and showing the change that God has made in us after we know him is preaching the gospel in a way that is indispensable.

The change that Paul experienced after encountering Jesus added credibility to his words and achieved incredible evangelistic fruits. There is something marvelous about evangelism that is simple: we don't need a university degree to be able to preach the gospel, for God uses each believer. So simply remember that he is with you and speak about what God has done in your life. It is undeniable to the eyes of society when an alcoholic, a prostitute, a delinquent, a scientist, or simply a sinner receives Christ and their love for the world is changed for that which the naked eye cannot see.

*Why does our life testimony have such a great impact on people?*





*There is no stronger force than God's love poured out into our hearts; the passion to share the gospel is the natural result of such love.*

There is no greater way of evangelizing than this. When people see these changes in people, many recognize their sinful condition and open their hearts to the love of God.

### **2. Do it with passion:**

Passion is essential in evangelism because it mobilizes us. When this passion is in our hearts, we do not care about the circumstances, and even obstacles are ignored because the focus is on bringing the good news to people.

God sees the heart and rewards correct motives. Some evangelize with the wrong motives: to show that they have a bigger church, to raise numerical growth, to highlight personal ministries or even to fill a quota. These are not biblically sound motives. The right motivation comes from the love of God and the love for neighbor. There is no stronger force than the love of God flooding hearts, which naturally gives one the passion to share the gospel.

### **3. Base your speech on the Word of God**

Our words lack meaning when we don't reinforce them with what God has said in his Word. When we share the gospel, it will not be our arguments that will convince the sinner to repent, but the very "words" of God. For example, when we help people understand that we all are sinners, that everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's glory, it is not just because we say so, but because God has affirmed this and we need his forgiveness. Many people say, "I am not a sinner because I haven't hurt anybody" and at that moment we should quote the Word of God instead of trying to convince the person with our own arguments.

We are living in a generation that questions whether sin exists, and people question what is sinful and what is not. Society as a whole is left without any examples to follow, and everything is relegated to popular opinion or individual belief. How do we define if this or that is sinful or not? We can only identify it based on what the Word of God reveals. It is God who teaches us how we should live, and it is he who confirms if our opinions or beliefs are biblically coherent.

Thus, when the message of the gospel is appropriately presented with the Word of God, the person will have the opportunity to accept or reject God directly. In this way, the believer takes the place of an ambassador, sharing what God has done in his or her life, and demonstrating to others the wonderful plan that the Father has revealed in the Word for all people.



## **WHAT DID WE LEARN?**

Evangelism is the responsibility of every believer. There are practical, biblically based aspects that help us to fulfill the command to preach the gospel responsibly. Our testimony of life, our passion, and the Word of God are among the most effective tools for evangelism across cultures.

# Activities

Time



## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *What impacting experiences have you had while preaching the gospel? Describe at least two of these experiences.*

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2. *In groups of 2 or 3, answer the following question: What Bible verses would you use to speak to others about the need to repent? Consider the principle, "Always speak about the Word of God."*

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3. *Write on the first line of the table the five spiritual practices of a great evangelist as studied in this lesson. Then write on each column some examples of how you can carry out these aspects currently in your life.*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

4. *What is our role in evangelism? What is God's role? How do these roles work together in coordination?*

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A black and white composite image. The top half shows a close-up of a hand held palm up, with a small pile of seeds in the center. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly soil. The bottom half shows a woman from the chest up, looking upwards with a contemplative expression. The background behind her is a dark, cracked, and textured surface, resembling parched earth or a dry lake bed. A dark, rounded rectangular banner is positioned in the upper right corner, containing the text 'Lesson 6'.

*Lesson 6*

# THE URGENCY OF EVANGELISM

## Objectives

- To recognize the cultural tendencies that affect the practice of evangelism.
- To identify the reasons why the gospel is not preached.
- To become aware of the opportunities we all have to evangelize others.

## Main Ideas

- The philosophical and cultural tendencies of our context can influence the way we evangelize.
- There are five common excuses we often give for not evangelizing.
  - As lay people, we have a special opportunity to evangelize in our daily activities.

## Introduction

When evangelism workshops are offered at the church, what else should accompany the information?

It is pointless to teach someone to search for gold if there is no plan to take them to dig somewhere in the mountain. People need to have an opportunity to practice what they have learned or they will get so frustrated that they won't do anything with the new knowledge. On the other hand, if people are trained appropriately and given the opportunity to practice, they will be ready to do it themselves.

Going back to the example of the gold search, besides teaching people how to dig, one must train them so that they are able to identify the difference between false gold and true gold, as well as know how to use the proper excavation tools. Even more important, we have to take them to the mountain! When they start hitting the rock, and they start picking through the rubble for gold, what is the result? They get "gold fever."

Unfortunately, many people are taught the strategies for gold searching, but few are taken to the mountain. They are shown the tools and they hear about the magnificent results of finding the gold, but they are hardly ever taken to the mountain to dig. The same thing happens with evangelism. We talk about strategies, tools and even the results we should be having, but we never practice. Therefore, we simply give away the job to the pastor or evangelism leader in the local church.

Memorizing verses is a good practice for your Christian development and the best thing is that they can be used to evangelize others. You can begin by memorizing two or three verses a week; write them on a piece of paper and put them on a mirror, in the kitchen, on your cell phone, in your wallet or in your Bible.

## Evangelism in the 21st Century

**Let us examine how culture affects the practice of evangelism.** 

The world is being governed by pluralist and post-modern thought. It is pluralist in the sense that it accepts the belief in many gods and many religions, emphasizing the individual value of freedom and personal choice. In a post-modern environment, it becomes normal to believe in whatever one chooses to believe, and everyone must accept this individual preference. In the Mesoamerica Region, these two ways of thinking are present in many ways, and they confront our Christian theology and biblical principles in these ways:

- The authority of the Bible
- Jesus as the only way to heaven
- Sin as a spiritual barrier
- The credibility of the stories of the Bible
- Sexual orientation
- The existences of heaven and hell

This leads people to believe that evangelism is not necessary, since the way people live revolves around personal preference. This is the conclusion that many have reached, and for that reason, people do not see the need to share their religious perspective because other people could be offended or get their feelings hurt.

## Why Don't We Evangelize?

*Next, we will examine five excuses frequently used to not evangelize.*



When you have an opportunity to share the gospel with non-believers, whether they be strangers, acquaintances, or family members, do you find yourself in situations where you do not know what to say or you prefer not to say anything so that no one gets offended?

*“Evangelize or fossilize”  
(Canon David Watson).*

Generally, we are able to make excuses in our minds or we began to rationalize the situation. Instead of confronting sin with love and the truth of the gospel, we prefer to escape and keep our silence. Many of the excuses are entertained in our minds because we are not adequately prepared or we do not have the knowledge to confront them. In the next few paragraphs we will examine five of those excuses. We encourage you as a student and believer to examine your own life and see if perhaps you can identify with some of them.

**1. “Evangelism is for pastors and professional leaders.”** Many think that only a pastor, evangelist, missionary, and/or professional leader should preach the gospel. These people say, “After all, that’s why they get paid, right?” This way of thinking becomes a mere pretext since we know through the Bible that evangelism is a command to all believers. When Jesus said, *“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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”* (Matthew 28:19-20a), He was talking to his disciples and not to pastors or evangelists. The disciples of Jesus were common people who had been called from secular professions to participate in the extension of the kingdom of God on earth. In the same way, Jesus counts on all who want to follow him and be his disciples to continue to rescue the lost souls here on earth.

*What excuses have you heard in the church to avoid being involved in evangelism?*

**2. “I don’t know the gospel very well.”** Maybe you are a new believer or you have never had the opportunity to study the Bible in depth to be able to have the answers to the questions that can come up when presenting the gospel. However, all new believers can begin to share the gospel through their testimony. How has God changed you and given you new life?

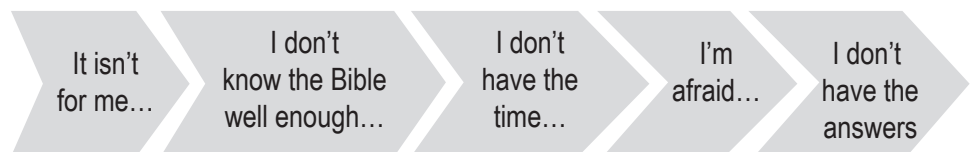
It is important that every believer know the Word of God well, but if someone does not, then they can begin by memorizing one or two key verses to present the message of salvation to others. Biblical knowledge and the practice of evangelism must go hand-in-hand. We should not forget that the Holy Spirit will be with us when we share the gospel with others. He can give us the words and courage we need to share his love with others.

**3. “I’m too busy.”** One of the excuses that Satan puts in our minds is to believe that we are too busy to have the time to speak to others about Christ. But that is not true. We all can talk about Christ to people at work, when we are shopping or when we are at family reunions or visits. Ephesians 6:15 states that we must have our *“feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.”* Proclaiming the gospel should be accompanied by a willingness on our part. That is why it is important to be alert at every moment because our enemy the devil does not want us to share the good news with the lost. Furthermore, the Bible tells us *“Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour”*(1 Peter 5:8). Therefore, we should know how to discern the opportunities that are presented to us to be able to talk about Christ whenever possible.

**4. “I’m afraid of rejection.”** No one likes to be rejected or resisted. However, we need to remember the words of our Lord when he warned us: *“Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me”* (Luke 10:16). When we understand that our job is not to convert anyone, but rather to present the gospel, for only God can convict the sinner, the burden is taken off our shoulders. Our task is to preach the gospel and if we are rejected, then they are not rejecting us, but instead they are rejecting Jesus and God. From then on the only thing we can do is pray for them that God would touch them and somehow give them another opportunity.

**5. “What if I don’t have the right answers?”** The truth is that not even pastors and professional evangelists have all the right answers! The important thing is to start a dialogue with people to whom we want to present the gospel and when that difficult question arises we can honestly answer, “I don’t have the answer, but I will find out.” Later we can talk with a pastor about these questions and get back with the person. This will allow you not only to gain experience and knowledge, but it will also provide an opportunity for continual investment in the relationship with this person and to continue the conversation about the plan of salvation.

In the following graph, we can see a summary of the excuses described previously concerning the reasons we are reluctant to share the gospel:



*It is also important that every Christian grow in the knowledge of the Word of God. One can begin by learning a few key verses that can be used to speak with others about the plan of salvation.*

# A Window of Opportunity

Now we will study about the opportunities lay people have for evangelism.



The job of winning souls is really sustained by the evangelism of lay people. The truth is that many people resist professional preachers or certain evangelists that pressure people into making abrupt decisions without even having a relationship with the person. However, if a Christian who works as a mechanic talks to a colleague at the workshop or if a student talks to another student about Christ, people tend to be more receptive and are able to converse more easily.

Lay people have a unique opportunity to speak with others because they work in different environments; consequently, they have a network of relationships with non-believers, something that pastors or evangelists often do not have. Young people will gladly listen to another youth who is passionate about Christ, and colleagues at work will gladly listen to those who work with them if they see that there is something different in their lifestyle. It is so important that all Christians know and live by what they claim to be true. That is why it is important to be trained and ready to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented daily to share the gospel.

Out of the more than seven billion people who live in the world, only 33.84% of that population is Christian (Sersun Corda). This means that if we leave evangelizing to the professional preachers and paid evangelists, many people around us will die without Christ. However, if we all do our part and become personal evangelists, more people will accept Christ because we can plant seeds where preachers and evangelists cannot!

I met an 11-year-old girl named Margarita who lives in the hills of Maguila in northern Guatemala. She spoke Spanish and Q'eqchi', a Mayan dialect. As soon as she was converted, she didn't waste any time. She had the yearning to share the gospel with her neighbors and friends. Using the Evangecube, Margarita, in her own dialect, shared the gospel with her sisters and friends. The opportunity that Margarita had was more valuable than mine. She could communicate in the language of her people and she lived with them. I, on the other hand, would not be there to follow up or to engage in conversations about God and how to live a Christian live. But Margarita had those advantages and did not want to waste the window of opportunity that was before her.

Like Margarita, do we have the desire and fervor to talk to our friends, colleagues, and family members about Christ? If you entertain excuses and pretexts in your mind, pray and ask God to change your heart so that he may give you the desire and the courage that you need to share the gospel with those whom you encounter.

*The Kekchí people group is located in the North of Alta Verapaz state and South of Petén in Guatemala. The language Kechí is still spoken in Guatemala, and it is one of the most spoken in the Mayan tradition.*

*“When we became Christians, God had more in mind for us than just getting us saved. His desire is for us to influence others - the whole earth - for Him. He didn't say we were the salt of our church or the salt of our Sunday School class. We are the salt of the earth - nobody salts their salt!”  
(Melody Green).*



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

We must set aside the cultural tendencies that surround us and refuse to make excuses so that we can embrace the special opportunities before us to present the gospel to non-believers that we encounter on a daily basis.



# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *What excuses and pretexts have you used to keep yourself from sharing Christ with your friends, family and colleagues? How can you respond now to those excuses?*

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2. *Write a message to God committing yourself to begin your role as an evangelist to your network of friends.*

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3. *In groups of 2 or 3 ask questions from the post modern or pluralist point of view and argue against the following theological fundamentals:*

- *The authority of the Bible*
- *Jesus as the only way to heaven*
- *Sin as a spiritual barrier*
- *The credibility of the stories of the Bible*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *The existence of heaven and hell*

*Example: Why should I believe in a book that has been written over 2000 years ago by several people? How do I know that the Bible is true? What about other spiritual books like the Koran (Muslim sacred scriptures) or the Book of Mormon? How do I know these books are not the true ones?*

A black and white photograph of a hand held palm up, with a small pile of seeds resting in the center. The hand is positioned over a dark, textured surface, likely soil. A bright, glowing light effect emanates from the bottom of the hand, creating a lens flare and illuminating the scene. In the upper right corner, there is a black rounded rectangle containing the text "Lesson 7".

*Lesson 7*

# **PREPARATION FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM**



## Objectives

- To make a commitment to be prepared to evangelize.
- To evaluate each preparation area in my own life.
- To memorize three key verses in order to faithfully present the gospel.

## Main Ideas

- The lack of personal preparation of Christians is the main reason why evangelistic initiatives fail.
- The best results in evangelism come when the evangelist is well prepared.

## Introduction

Have you ever felt the desire to speak about Christ but you did not do it? Why do you think this happens?

In most Christian circles, personal evangelism is recognized as a matter of utmost importance. In fact, a recent survey conducted by LifeWay Research found that 80 percent of regular churchgoers believe that they have a personal responsibility to share their belief in Christ with non-Christians (Wilke).

Also encouraging was the finding that 75 percent of those polled claimed that they felt comfortable talking about their Christian faith. On a much more discouraging note, however, 61 percent stated that they had not actually shared their faith with anyone over the last six months. They knew evangelism was important and felt capable of doing it should the opportunity arise, but less than two out of five of those surveyed had taken the initiative to follow through on this all-important Christian responsibility (Wilke). Such distressing statistics require explanation. If we as Christians know the eternal impact of sharing our faith, why are we not more active in doing so?

## Why Do We Fail?

**Here we will see what hinders us from sharing our faith.**



Without a doubt, Scripture is clear regarding the responsibility and privilege of sharing the gospel. Though perhaps less well-known than Jesus' emphasis upon discipleship in Matthew's Great Commission, Jesus' final words in the Gospel of Mark carry a distinct evangelistic flavor: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15).

How many members of your church have received training for personal evangelism?

In much the same way, the Apostle Paul, in one of his final admonitions to his own disciple Timothy, states clearly, "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5). And, in case we need any further encouragement, Jesus paints a clear picture of the consequences of bypassing opportunities to share our faith: "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory..." (Luke 9:26).

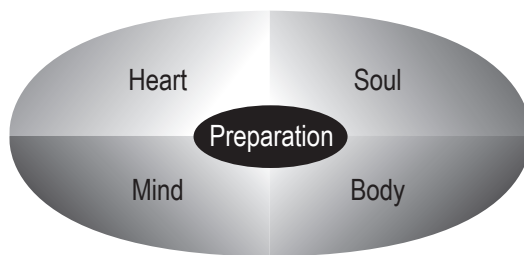
The general famine of personal evangelism that we are experiencing in

the Church today is not for lack of clear scriptural direction. Neither, in most cases, is our failure to evangelize a direct result of some hidden shame about our faith. Most Christians are generally very grateful for their salvation and recognize the monumental impact Christ's sacrifice has made on their eternal trajectory. Rather, the great statistical discrepancy between those who *believe* sharing their faith is important and those who actually do so is best traced back to one primary issue: a lack of **preparation for evangelism**.

The Apostle Peter understood this problem clearly. He personally experienced the repercussions of being unprepared. Before Jesus' arrest, Peter was one of those 75 percent who claimed to feel comfortable sharing his faith: *"Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you"* (Mark 14:31). And yet, only a few hours later, Peter would wither under the relentless interrogation of a little servant girl. Perhaps it is with his personal failure in mind that Peter offers these simple words of advice: *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason of the hope you have"* (I Peter 3:15). Always be prepared. Similarly, Paul also encouraged Timothy to always be ready: *"Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season"* (2 Timothy 4:2).

Being prepared is the remedy for not failing in our great responsibility to fulfill this function. But how do we do it? The answer is found in the most important command: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength"* (Mark 12:30). The way we fulfill this commandment is by preparing our heart, our soul, our mind and our body to be able to love the Lord well, and as a result, love all of creation.

A Holistic Preparation of the Evangelist



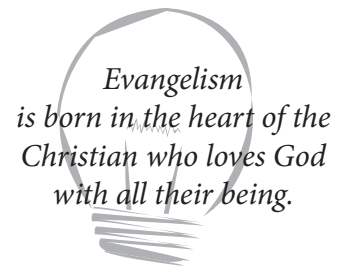
## Preparation of Heart

*In this section we will see how we can prepare our hearts.*



The first step to preparing ourselves for evangelism is asking God to give us his heart for the lost, the broken and the suffering. Jesus exhibited this essential spirit of compassion in his earthly ministry: *"When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd"* (Matthew 9:36).

*"Not praying is the sin of pride because it's thinking we can accomplish something without God"*  
(Joy Dawson).

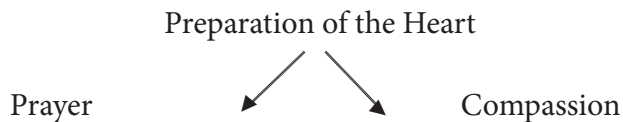


It is important to note that having been filled with such great compassion, the first thing Jesus instructed his disciples to do was to pray: *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”* (Matthew 9:37-38). Before calling them to share the gospel, heal diseases, or drive out evil spirits, Jesus tells them to pray that God would send out workers at the proper time and in the proper place so that a great harvest of souls may be reaped.

When we attempt to engage in the work of evangelism without first praying to the Lord of the harvest, we will almost certainly find our effectiveness greatly inhibited. The reason for this is quite simple: it is God who saves souls, not man. When we rely on our own words, ingenuity, and human wisdom to accomplish only what God can do, even our greatest efforts bear little fruit. But when we prepare our hearts through the ministry of prayer, the Lord of the harvest will fill us with a spirit of compassion by which we may become effective witnesses for him.

I remember when I wanted to talk to a friend about Jesus and I had predetermined in my mind what I was going to say, but just when I was about to talk to him about salvation I felt the Holy Spirit tell me that it wasn't the right moment. A little later, when my friend realized that I was interested in hearing about his situation, he then opened up his heart for me to speak to him. We should always be in tune with the Spirit so that he can guide us in every conversation. Listen patiently, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation.

A heart that is truly prepared for evangelism is more concerned with the individual than the decision. The evangelist's work does not end with the "sinner's prayer." In fact, it has only just begun as the evangelist actively connects the new believer with the means of grace necessary for growth in discipleship. Evangelism without systematic follow-up rarely bears lasting fruit.



*Only a person with a pure heart can guide others into a lifestyle of holiness. Only the person who has developed a personal relationship with Jesus can introduce him to others.*

## Preparation of Soul

***In this section we will see how to prepare our souls.***



First and foremost, the one who is commissioned to share the gospel must ensure that he or she is engaged in a committed, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Some may suggest that such a simple preparatory step should go without saying. Stories abound, however, of pastors and laypeople alike who have spent a good portion of their lives evangelizing others without ever truly placing their faith in Christ.

John Wesley was one of them. When he was young, he traveled by boat with some Moravian brothers who were headed to North America as missionaries. One of those pastors asked him, “Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are His child? Do you know Jesus?” Wesley did not know how to respond, and simply said, “I know He is the savior of the world...” John was going to lands far away as an evangelist without having in his soul the certainty that Jesus was his personal savior (Christianitytoday.com, *John Wesley’s Big Impact*).

Scripture is unmistakably clear: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation cannot be earned. No amount of evangelistic fervor can serve as a substitute for faith in Christ. We are saved by grace through faith.

The source of our power in evangelism is the Holy Spirit. Thus, the presence of anything in our lives that grieves the Spirit of God will greatly hinder our ability to be used by him “as evangelists.” The evangelist who has unconfessed sin in his or her life runs the risk of doing that which our Lord so strongly condemned in the religious leaders of his day. Jesus says that calling others to a life of holiness while living in active sin is the height of hypocrisy (Matthew 23). Thus, before sharing the gospel, a good practice of spiritual preparation is to pray the prayer of the psalmist: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24). When we sincerely pray in this manner, the Spirit will reveal any hidden sin that may be hindering his work in us. And as we confess our sin, God is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us (I John 1:9) so that we may be pure and holy, fully effective in the ministry.



## Preparation of Mind

***In this section we will see how to prepare our minds.***



With a soul set in proper relationship with God and a heart equipped with compassion for the lost, the evangelist must now prepare his or her mind for the task at hand.

Perhaps the greatest source of our lack of courage in sharing the gospel message comes from a lack of mental preparation. We have a passion for the lost. We want to reach the unsaved. But we’re just not sure where to begin. It is perhaps for this reason that Paul so strongly admonishes his disciple Timothy: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved,

*A good way to begin to practice the presentation of the gospel is with a brother or sister of the church, a leader of the church or with your pastor.*

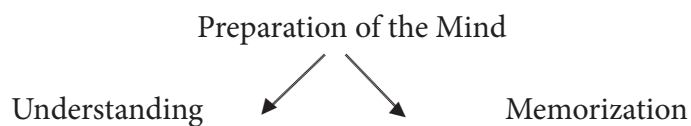
a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

How, then can we properly prepare our minds for the task of evangelism? The majority of Christians (and even many non-Christians) know the basics of evangelism, but a student of evangelism should know why this message is good news for those who do not believe. One way to understand the gospel is to have a thorough knowledge of the plan of salvation in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. This aids the evangelist in explaining man’s sinful condition, the history of God’s work of salvation through time, and the hope of future glory.

It is also important for a Christian to commit to memorizing several key Bible verses that will aid in the Gospel presentation. Differing contexts may call for different verses, but several key passages to memorize may include these:

- John 1:12
- John 3:16
- John 14:6
- Acts 4:12
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 10:9
- Romans 10:13
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Hebrews 9:27
- 1 John 1:9

It is good to be prepared ahead of time to use these verses, and an ideal way to practice is to ask a friend or a pastor to listen to your presentation using these verses while dialoguing with them.



**Sabbath:** Since Old Testament days, Jews have regarded Saturday as the day to worship God and rest from all work. From the times of the Early Church, Christians have kept this day as Sunday because it is the day Jesus rose from the dead. Due to the rhythms of life in modern society, many Christians work on Sundays, including those who have ministerial responsibilities. That is why it is important that each family and that each Christian separate a day of the week to rest and dedicate time to study the Word and have fellowship with the Lord.

## Preparation of the Body

*In this section we will see how to be prepared physically.*



Though this final preparatory step is often overlooked, it is in fact quite beneficial to fruitful evangelism. Certainly, the Spirit can use any individual in any given situation to bear his message. However, we are much more likely to be mentally, emotionally, and spiritually prepared for the task of evangelism when we have properly cared for our body as well.

Scripture is clear: we have a God-given responsibility to care for our body. Paul writes, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit... You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).





# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *In which of the four areas of personal preparation are you failing? Which one comes easiest to you?*

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2. *What can you do to make changes in these areas? Write a plan for the next month, beginning tomorrow.*

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3. *Look up the verses mentioned in the lesson and prepare for a face-to-face evangelistic discussion using at least five of them.*

4. *In the previous list of verses, commit to memorizing at least five of them this week. Choose ones that you have not yet memorized.*

A large, close-up photograph of a human hand held palm up, with a small pile of seeds resting in the center. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly soil or wood. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the skin and the individual seeds.

## *Lesson 8*

A black and white photograph of a man and a woman sitting on the ground in front of a rustic wooden fence. The man is on the right, wearing a patterned shirt, and the woman is on the left, wearing a light-colored shirt. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The fence is made of vertical wooden posts, and the background is a bright, overexposed area.

# **EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP**

## Objectives

- To recognize the importance of discipleship in the life of the believer.
- To know the characteristics of a disciple of Christ.
- To follow the discipleship model that Jesus gave us.

## Main Ideas

- Discipleship is the method through which the believer solidifies his or her faith, and it is just as important as evangelism.
- The model that Jesus gave us is to make disciples in his likeness, and that is why we should spend time with the Master and be discipled by other believers.

## Introduction

George Whitefield and John Wesley were well-known evangelists in the 1700's. Although both reached many people with the gospel message, the lasting fruits of their respective ministries were very different. An article from Christianity Today states, "Largely forgotten today, George Whitefield was probably the most famous religious figure of the eighteenth century. Newspapers called him the 'marvel of the age.' Whitefield was a preacher capable of commanding thousands on two continents through the sheer power of his oratory. In his lifetime, he preached at least 18,000 times to perhaps 10 million hearers." However, despite Whitefield's ability to connect and to powerfully share the gospel with many people, Whitefield never developed an intentional plan to care for the new believers that came to know Christ through his preaching.

John Wesley, on the other hand, recognized the importance of caring for new believers as well as the importance of evangelism, and he left a different legacy. Wesley knew that preaching to the masses alone was insufficient, so he added class meetings – a small group system, which shaped the character of the participant and changed the behavior of those who joined. Wesley's focus on discipleship impacted many people's lives to the point where we see the results of his vision today. Wesley's determination to make disciples continues to impact the world more than 200 years after his death. Through John Wesley's commitment to disciple new believers, the Methodist church, the Church of the Nazarene, the Wesleyan Church and many other denominations were born that continue to evangelize, to disciple and to send out missionaries around the world.

What was the difference between Whitefield and Wesley regarding the fruit of their ministry?

## The Biblical Basis: The Great Commission

***In the following section we will look at the biblical foundations of discipleship.***



*"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, 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).*

Many know this passage as The Great Commission. Jesus commanded us to go and make disciples of all nations. This plan is for every believer; there is no Plan B.

For the three years of Christ’s public ministry, Jesus’ primary focus was to invest in the lives of his twelve disciples. Jesus traveled with them, ate with them, and spent almost every day with them. Following the example of Christ, the disciples and early church leaders invested their lives in others as they discipled.

Paul, the first and greatest missionary of the church, dedicated his life to following Jesus and discipling others. The Apostle Paul not only founded many churches, but painstakingly discipled the new leaders. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, *“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ”* (1 Cor. 11:1). Paul committed his life to follow Jesus and to disciple others. Paul reminded Timothy, *“You know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings...”(2 Timothy 3:10-11).* Paul had intentionally prepared this young leader so that he could prepare and disciple others.

The New Testament teaches that a believer is always an active disciple of Jesus Christ. Dallas Willard observes, *“The word ‘disciple’ occurs 269 times in the New Testament. ‘Christian’ is found only three times and was first introduced to refer precisely to the disciples...The New Testament is a book about disciples, by disciples and for disciples of Jesus Christ”* (Willard, 258). To the New Testament writers, Christian and disciple were synonymous terms.

Jesus confronted the crowds many times in the gospels with the necessity of discipleship. Jesus said, *“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it”* (Mark 8:34-35). Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, *“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ”* (Bonhoeffer 1937:64).

Although the early church faced many challenges, history shows how God blessed the early church’s obedience and commitment to intentional discipleship in their first 200-250 years. Alan Hirsch notes, *“They were an illegal religion throughout this period...They didn’t have church buildings as we know them...They didn’t even have the Scriptures as we know them...They didn’t have an institution or the professional form of leadership normally associated with it”* (Hirsch, 2009:29). Yet it is believed the early church grew from perhaps as few as 25,000 Christians in 100 AD to up to 20,000,000 Christians in 310 AD (Hirsch, 2009:28). In analyzing this radical growth, Hirsch identifies six key components of the early church. Of these components, he recognizes the early church’s commitment to disciple making as one of the most important.

*“Christianity without  
discipleship is always  
Christianity without  
Christ”  
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer).*

# Discipleship Defined and Modeled

*“But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus lived”  
(1 John 2:5-6).*

***Jesus left us with a practical model to follow.***



While some may define discipleship as education, this is only a partial answer. Hal Perkins gives us the true context of discipleship. “Long ago a ‘maestro’ or ‘master’ would look for a student in whom to reproduce his expertise. To be selected, this student must demonstrate great potential. This master would then invite this student into an apprenticeship for a significant length of time. Through the influence of this relationship, the apprentice—or disciple—could watch, learn, be coached, and eventually duplicate the skills of the master” (Perkins, 13). The intention of the master was that the student would absorb his same passions, dreams and vision. The master, in turn, was always attentive to what his disciple would learn because he wanted to ensure that he would be able to replicate the same skills and knowledge.

Likewise, Christ left us a perfect model for discipleship. One can identify many ways that Jesus helped his disciples to absorb the passions, dreams and secrets that he had. We can learn from Jesus and follow his model through these practical ways:

**1. Look for practical opportunities to teach disciples.** In Luke 14:15-24, the gospel writer records that Jesus noticed how guests were picking the places of honor at the table and then shared a parable that taught the principle of humility.

**2. Be available and transparent.** Christ was a great teacher because he modeled the life that he desired for his disciples. One clear example of this is how Christ’s life of prayer impacted the disciples. “*One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples’*” (Luke 11:1).

**3. Always point Christ’s followers to God the Father.** Jesus prayed to the Father: “*I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word*” (John 17:6).

**4. Involve disciples in the mission.** Jesus was not afraid to delegate his authority: “*When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick... So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere*” (Luke 9:1,2,6).

**5. Ask for reports on the disciples’ activities.** Jesus listened to his disciples and also held them accountable. “*When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done*” (Lucas 9:10a).

**6. Correct followers of Christ when necessary.** One of Jesus’ strongest

recorded rebukes came to one of his closest disciples: “Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns” (Matthew 16:23).

**7. Remind the disciples of their purpose in this world.** Jesus said, “Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave” (Matthew 20:26-27).

### JESUS’ DISCIPLESHIP MODEL

- ✓ Find Opportunities
- ✓ Be Accessible and Transparent
- ✓ Direct the Followers
- ✓ Involve the Disciples
- ✓ Ask for Reports
- ✓ Correct the Followers
- ✓ Remind them of their Purpose

Discipleship happens as we pray and study the Bible together. Discipleship also happens as believers share a meal, watch how a mentor interacts with others, or shares his or her faith in the market. The question is not, should I have a disciple? We all know that as disciples of Christ we ought to be “making disciples.” The question becomes: how are we discipling?

## What Is a Disciple?

### **Characteristics of a true follower of Christ.**



The motto of Trevecca Nazarene University is a good motto for every disciple: *Esse quam videri* — “To be rather than to seem.” A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who is growing “*in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 3:18b). A disciple is someone who maintains a personal relationship with the Lord. Donald Wellman has identified several characteristics of a disciple who can be identified with Jesus and his mission (Wellman, 1996:14). Here are five of them:

- A person that is completely **committed** to Jesus Christ. This means that every activity and every part of his or her life is surrendered to the Lordship of Christ (Luke 14:26-27, 33).
- A person who diligently **saturates his or her life** with the Word of God through the consistent study of the Bible (John 8:31).
- A person who develops a **devotional life** through the consistent

Are the characteristics of an authentic disciple present in the lives of the members of your congregation?

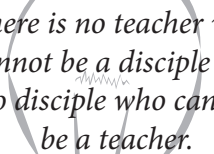
“People talk about prayer, read books about prayer, and attend workshops about prayer, but do not pray!”

practice of looking for daily quiet time and a growing prayer life (Psalm 5:3; Mark 1:35).

- A person whose **loyalty and love**, demonstrated by a **servant's heart**, characterize a regular involvement in the fellowship of the local church (1 John 1:3; Hebrews 10:24-25).

- A person who shows the desire to **make Christ known to others** by sharing regularly a personal testimony and the gospel with increasing skill (John 15:8).

## A Disciple Disciples



*There is no teacher who cannot be a disciple and no disciple who cannot be a teacher.*

*In this section we will see that a disciple is one who disciples others.*

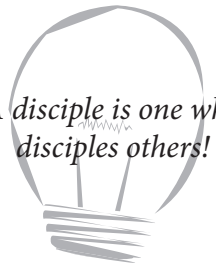


If one is to follow Christ's example and his mandate to make disciples, we must conclude that a disciple is also someone who is a discipler. Next we highlight the three facets of discipleship that each follower should keep in mind:

**1. Discipleship should be integrated in the life of each believer, and it is a process that we realize together.** The word "discipline" may sound like a very harsh word. As a young Christian, I was at first dismayed when I realized that "disciple" and "discipline" come from the same root word. However, the older I get, the more I realize the importance of discipline, whether in exercise, diet or how I use my time. Discipline, properly applied, brings many benefits. Likewise, as I grow in the faith, I delight in the blessings that spiritual disciplines bring to my life.

**2. Discipleship should begin with the relationship between the disciple and God.** A disciple makes time with God a priority. As in any other relationship, our relationship with God grows only when we spend time with him. As incredible as it sounds, the God of the universe desires to meet with us everyday (1 Thess. 5:17). Many good discipleship materials exist; however, every Christian must be careful that materials and workshops never become a substitute for Bible study and/or prayer time. A good friend once told me, "*People talk about praying, they read books about prayer and attend workshops on prayer. They just don't pray!*"

**3. Discipleship takes place in community** (Hebrews 10:24-25). Every believer needs someone close to him or her to regularly give encouragement, to offer counsel, and to lovingly check on his or her relationship with the Lord and with others. I am thankful for those who have invited me into their lives for weekly times of prayer and accountability. One of God's greatest gifts is someone that will hold us accountable; someone who helps us fix our eyes on Jesus. This is a person of confidence that weekly asks what God is doing in our lives, what God is saying to us in prayer and Bible study, and how we are reflecting



*A disciple is one who disciples others!*





# Activities

Time



20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. What was the model that Jesus left us for discipling others? Evaluate yourself using the list of seven characteristics that this lesson suggests.

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2. What are the five characteristics of a disciple? Which ones do you think you possess and which ones do you need to work on in your life?

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3. Of the three characteristics of a good disciple, which is the easiest to practice and which is the most challenging?

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4. Answer the two key questions: "Who are you discipling?" and "Who is discipling you?" If you cannot answer either or both of these questions, spend some time in prayer asking God to show you who to disciple or who might disciple you.

5. In groups of three or four persons answer this question: If you had to lead someone in discipleship for three months, what topics and themes would you consider teaching each week?

Week	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

# Final evaluation

Time



## COURSE: What Is Evangelism?

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church or Study Center: \_\_\_\_\_  
District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of this evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

1. *In your own words, explain how this course has helped you to be aware of your responsibility to share the gospel with others.*

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2. *Explain why one-on-one evangelism and discipleship are more effective for the expansion of God's kingdom.*

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3. *List some areas of your life that you have committed yourself to perfecting in order to become a better evangelist.*

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4. *What have you learned from completing the practical ministry component of this course?*

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5. *In your opinion, how could this course be improved?*

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