

# “Theology of Evangelism”

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## Scripture

### Philemon 1:4-6

“I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.”

### Last Week

Salvation 101 -> how are we saved? -> rescued from the domain of darkness by the Father!

### This Week

What is Evangelism all about? And -> What are we required to do?

How will we know if we're successful?

### Paul's Prayer for Philemon

Father's Day -> Paul viewed himself as Philemon's spiritual father

“I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers”

Paul always wrote of his prayers for his spiritual children

Last week, we looked at Paul's beautiful prayer for the Colossians

Today, we read his prayer for Philemon

Philemon was the host of the church in Colossae

The church met in his house

He was obviously a pretty wealthy individual with many servants and business activities

Why did Paul pray for Philemon?

### Philemon 1:5

“because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints”

Philemon was a true believer

Philemon had an active faith

There were works associated with Philemon's faith

### James 2:17

“Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”

James is saying that if you say you believe, the working for the Lord would come from that faith

If you say that you're a believer, and there is no change in your life -> James says your faith is dead!

James would question whether you're in Jesus's Kingdom

With Philemon, there was no doubt -> His love for the Lord was evident

He proved his faith in Jesus through his ministry to "all the saints"

There was no partiality with Philemon

He didn't just serve his favorites – He served all the saints because of his love for Jesus

What a beautiful example of faith!

We should all be like that!

What did Paul pray for Philemon?

### Philemon 1:6

"I pray that **the sharing of your faith may become effective** through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake"

Paul wants Philemon to share his faith

The Greek word for "sharing" is koinónia -> a holistic, mutual sharing of life in community with others

Perhaps Philemon was a "behind the scenes" type of guy

Perhaps he wasn't much of a talker

He loved the Lord deeply, He cared for others, but he might not have spoken about the reason for his actions

"**may become effective**" -> Greek word for "effective" is energés -> where we get our word "energy"

Paul prays that Philemon's sharing of his faith is Active, Energetic and Powerful

The writer of Hebrews uses the word to describe how the Bible works in believers:

### Hebrews 4:12

"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

How will Philemon's sharing of his faith become powerful?

"through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you" -> this is not just head knowledge - epignósis

It is an intensive knowledge -> It's not just knowing a bunch of facts to pass a test

It is experiential knowledge that Paul is writing about

This is Natasha sharing how she dealt with health challenges last year

This is Jim sharing about how he felt on a helicopter to Kearney

Sharing your experiences while walking in faith with Jesus is important

“every good thing which is in you”

### 1 Corinthians 3:16

“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

A believer houses the Holy Spirit

We have divinity within us; he that is shaping us into the image of Jesus through sanctification

Philemon was filled the Holy Spirit

Paul knew that the Holy Spirit would empower Philemon to speak about Jesus

When I mention evangelism, I know some of you start to squirm in your seat

- “I’m not that good of a speaker”
- “I don’t know enough of the Bible”
- “What happens if they ask me a question where I don’t know the answer?”

Jesus had answer for the disciples who were feeling the same way as you do:

### Luke 12:11-12

“When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for **the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.**”

He will give you exactly what you need to say!

Lastly, Paul wrote, “**for Christ's sake**” – We speak of our experiences for Jesus

I have often said, “You always talk about people you love!”

Do you love Jesus?

If so, you should be talking about Him!

We speak for His glory

We share our life experiences so that He may be glorified in our life

So, let’s talk about the theology of evangelism

### The Theology of Evangelism

What do I mean by that?

What does God say about Evangelism?

Evangelism simply means sharing the good news of Jesus

What is the good news?

You can have a personal, intimate relationship with the God who created you

You can be rescued from the domain of darkness we talked about last week

You can be forgiven of your sins and have a right relationship with God through Jesus

We are all born in sin -> we are all born into the domain of darkness

We discussed this last week

But the Lord has a planned rescue for many:

### Matthew 9:35-38

“Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

36 Seeing the people, **He felt compassion for them**, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, **‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.**

“Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”

Jesus was sharing the good news!

Why?

“**He felt compassion for them**, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd”

The reason we evangelize is because we should have compassion for others

We’re not collecting pelts for our success; we’re not putting notches in our Bible of those who came to Christ

We should be motivated by our compassion for the lost

Jesus operated with that mindset and so should we

### The Call to Evangelism

We’ve often heard the Great Commission as the major call to evangelism

### Matthew 28:18-20

“Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

How many of you believe our job is make people accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior?

”R. C. Sproul explained that he had much difficulty in his early Christian experience with the Great Commission. He believed he was not particularly good at evangelism and regarded himself close to a **failure**. Eventually he learned that “we should take notice of what Jesus did not say in the Great Commission. He did not say, ‘Go therefore and make converts of as many people as possible.’”

Do any of you feel like a failure in evangelism?

Do you feel like you should be doing more than you are?

You’re in good company!

Sproul had to learn that his job was not to make people convert to following Christ

What did Jesus say then?

Go make disciples!

Baptizing them and teaching them about Jesus -> Baptize and Teach

It is impossible for you to make someone convert to Christ

Simply put, it is not your job to do that!

Well, whose job is it to convert people to Christ?

In other words, what are the roles in evangelism?

### The Roles in Evangelism

Jesus told the disciples that He was going away at the end of **John 13**

But then He told them:

#### John 16:7-11

**"I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away;** for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. "And **He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;** concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."

What will the Holy Spirit do?

Convict the world that they need to have Jesus in their life -> to convert people

Concerning sin -> The Spirit will point out someone's sin

Concerning righteousness -> The Spirit will inform someone of how to have a right relationship with God

Concerning judgment -> The Spirit will let people that the domain of darkness is a dead-end route

We do not need to do any of that!

What will He do for us?

#### John 14:26

**"The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."**

The Spirit will not only give us the right words, but He will bring us remembrance of what is in the Bible

He is our teacher and our guide to the words of Jesus

#### John 16:13

**"When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth;** for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."

The Spirit will not only give us remembrance but will be our guide into the future

He worked with John:

### 1 John 2:17

“The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

He worked with Peter:

### 2 Peter 3:10

“The day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which **the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat**, and the earth and its works will be burned up.”

Go figure, Peter was told by the Spirit that there would be global warming!

Scientists just started to figure this out during this century -> Peter was guided into that truth in the 1<sup>st</sup> century

So, what is our role?

In short, open our mouths and speak about Jesus!

It is also a team effort, not a solo one:

### 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

“I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, **but God who causes the growth.**”

Paul may have started a conversation with someone, Apollos came behind and said something else to them

But God was the One who was causing growth -> the Spirit convicting, converting, and teaching them.

Jesus taught that evangelism was a team sport (at Sychar after the woman at the well departed):

### John 4:35-38

“Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. "Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; **so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.** "For in this case the saying is true, One sows and another reaps. **I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.**”

There are times when someone is ready to come into the kingdom and we are just there for the reaping

### Successful Evangelism

Fear ---> Forgetting Everything And Running

### Joshua 1:5-7

“Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. **Be strong and courageous**, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only **be strong and very courageous**; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.”

## 2 Timothy 1:7

“God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”

What if someone does not willing receive the gospel message?

## Matthew 10:14

“If anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, **shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town**. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.”

If someone isn't listening to you, simply move on -> know that you have planted and someone else may water

**Geoffrey's Big Lesson: Don't be SELF-conscious, be GOD-conscious!**

## Summary of the Theology of Evangelism

- 1) We are successful when we share the gospel.
- 2) We are told to be bold and courageous.
- 3) We are empowered by the Holy Spirit for the right words at the right time.
- 4) The Holy Spirit's job is to convict the unbeliever, not ours. We simply cannot do it.
- 5) Our perceived “failures” could be OR really are just positive “sowing”.

## The Commitment to Evangelism

### 1 Peter 3:15

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and **be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.**”

**Do you hope to go to Heaven when you die?**

### 2 Timothy 4:5

“As for you, **be calm and cool and steady**, accept and suffer unflinchingly every hardship, **do the work of an evangelist**, fully perform all the duties of your ministry.”

May we fulfill our ministry and simply speak about the Lord we love and follow

## Prayer

## Benediction