

Evangelism and a Christ-like Presentation

Luke 10:25-37 ESV

²⁵ And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

3 Aspects of Christ-like Evangelism → in regards to how we present the gospel

Spend Time

- SPEND TIME
- ASK QUESTIONS
- OPEN EYES

EVANGELISM IS TEACHING THE GOSPEL WITH THE AIM TO PERSUADE. THAT IS OUR WORK. IT IS GOD WHO WORKS SALVATION AND THE CONVERSION OF SINNERS HAPPENS ON HIS TIMING, NOT OURS. THEREFORE, WE NEED TO SHARE THE GOSPEL URGENTLY, YET PATIENTLY. WE MUST BE PREPARED TO SPEND OUR TIME TO EVANGELIZE.

Jesus is not a slave to immediate results

He is prepared to wait for visible results

A lawyer asks Jesus to share the gospel with him: “And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?””

Jesus does not answer the question ... as far as we know he never answers this question.

Jesus seems content to have an interaction with him

Jesus seems content to have an opportunity to engage with the lawyer

Important: Jesus knew it was a test, a trap

Consider this illustration from *EVANGELISM* by Mack Stiles

Dear Mack,

I've been praying for Candice for a while now—for opportunities to share the gospel. A little background: Candice was raised Catholic but does not go to any church currently. She lives a homosexual lifestyle in the context of a family with four kids. The kids are biologically her

partner's, but she is mostly their primary caregiver. Candice's mom has cancer, and lives over a thousand miles from her. I've known Candice for over twenty-five years and I've worked for her for the last two years. She knows I am serious about my faith and generally I would say she holds me in high regard. I've offered to pray for her, which she appreciates, and she's given financial support for me to go on short-term mission trips.

The other day, while she was telling me about visiting her mom, she broke down crying. I've never seen her cry. As I was sitting across from her, in my head I was trying to bring the gospel to bear on her situation and figure out a way to communicate something of eternal value that didn't sound like I lacked compassion. In the end, I didn't say anything of obvious eternal value. I merely tried to make her comfortable to cry in my presence and to affirm that I had empathy with her situation. I think I could have done better.

As I reflected on that situation later, I wished I had said something like: "This pain you are feeling is normal in a broken, sin-sick world. This world is broken and not like it will be when God reconciles all things to himself." I think I hesitated to say something like that because I didn't want her to assume, like most people do, that there is nothing required on their part to be included in God's reconciliation. Should I have said it anyway? Should I have said something else?

Dear Kim,

- many of us have had similar experiences
- some times our relationships take time
- we don't evangelize often enough, but neither should we share callously or unthinkingly

Kim

Well, first off, I think that allowing someone to feel comfortable to cry in your presence is worth quite a bit, but I know how you feel—it's that sense that we have something so precious to offer and of such consoling power that in the midst of heartache, if we could just break through all the defenses that are set up around people's hearts against Christ, they could know the one who will one day wipe away all tears. And to make matters worse, we know how close they are to the truth—"It's in my heart and I'm right next to you"—but they just can't see it.

But more to the point about Candice: maybe God is break-ing down the barriers against Christ in her heart through your witness. Of course, I'm not sure what the Holy Spirit has in the works, but it may just be that consoling her was the best thing to do at the time in a long string of good things she has seen in you.

The thing to do now, in my mind, is to have a follow-up conversation. Would it be possible for you to take Candice for a coffee and conversation? I'd say something like, "Candice, I want to have a spiritual conversation with you over coffee; would that offend you?" In my experience, when we reassure people that we know that faith can be offensive, they tend to be more open.

...

- we can be intentional + determined, also recognizing these things take time Mack

In regards to evangelism, particularly with those people in our lives, I think we need to have a patient urgency in regards to sharing the gospel.

- Patient because God is sovereign. *- we don't worry or panic*
- Urgent because we aren't. *- we don't know what will happen*
 - if we will ever see someone again*
 - we could die tomorrow*

⇒ GOSPEL ~ *if you don't know Christ we encourage you to trust Christ for salvation as patiently and as urgently as we can*

Dwain's testimony

1. Be prepared to spend time because you care.
2. Be prepared to spend time to cultivate relationships.
3. Be prepared to spend time to create opportunities to share the gospel.

Ask Questions

We are being intentional about opportunities to evangelize. Asking questions creates those opportunities.

Paul Weston has assembled figures of the number of questions Jesus asked during evangelistic conversations. The results: Mathew 94, Mark 59, Luke 82, and John 49

In *How to Argue Like Jesus: Learning Persuasion from History's Greatest Communicator*, authors Joe Carter and John Coleman suggest that "Throughout the New Testament, Jesus uses questions to force people to personalize answers, to come to obvious conclusions, and to take emotional and intellectual ownership of those conclusions."

- Personalize answers
 - Come to obvious conclusions
 - Take emotional and intellectual ownership of those conclusions
 - ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."
 - How many believe in the afterlife? How many believe in judgment?
1. Ask people questions because you care about them
 2. Ask people questions to promote dialogue and conversation
 3. Ask people questions to create opportunities to share the gospel

Open Eyes (Speak Truth)

WE CAN CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GOSPEL BY HELPING PEOPLE DISCOVER THE TRUTH.

In *How to Argue like Jesus: Learning Persuasion from History's Greatest Communicator*, The authors note how Jesus would communicate in such a way so as to help people discover the truth for themselves: "Rather than force a particular conclusion upon someone by the sheer weight of logic,

Jesus would allow his audience to “connect the dots” and discover the insight on their own. This is another example of Jesus’ profound understanding of human nature. People are often resistant to accepting “foreign” ideas but are less hesitant when the conclusion is deduced from their own thought processes. By leaving steps out, he allowed listeners to complete the argument themselves, internalizing it and amplifying its power.”

We need to see the benefit of not just proclaiming the truth but also helping people to discover the truth

There are at least 4 things Jesus opens the lawyers eyes to; two of them pertain to the truth about the world and the other two pertain to the truth about ourselves:

1. The truth of the world’s brokenness: “Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead.”
2. The truth of the barrenness of religion without love: “³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.”
3. The truth of our propensity to racism and prejudice: “³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion.”
4. The truth that our salvation comes with a price: “³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him.³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’”

Can you see how each of these discoveries by the lawyer would provide opportunities to share the gospel?

People who believe in God but aren't Christians: Shouldn't God get to determine how he is worshipped?

1. Open eyes to the truth because you care
2. Open eyes to the truth to provide opportunities to share the gospel
3. Open eyes to the truth that God might save