

Evangelism ... For the Purpose of Godliness

from *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald S. Whitney

Disciplined faith is faith that is likely to survive and lead to faith in others.

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Warm-Up

- What images does the word evangelism bring to mind?
- Why does God command us to evangelize?
- Why do you think many Christians are afraid to evangelize? What are your fears about evangelism?

Main Idea: Godliness requires that we discipline ourselves in the practice of evangelism. The reason many of us don't witness for Christ in ways that would be effective and relatively fear-free is simply because we don't discipline ourselves to do it.

Evangelism Is Expected

Small Group discussion, 6 questions on "Evangelism is Expected"

- What is evangelism?
- Why is evangelism expected?
Matthew 28:19-20

John 20:21

See also Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-47
- According to Acts 1:8, in whose power are we to witness?
- What do the following verses reveal about evangelism?
 - Luke 24:27
 - John 20:21
- Why do you think God commands all His people to evangelize and not just those who find it easy to present themselves and their beliefs to other people?
- What does 1 Peter 2:9 say about God's people?

Evangelism Is Empowered

- If it is so obvious to almost all Christians that we are to evangelize, how come almost all Christians seem to disobey that command so often?
- What is success in evangelism?

Small Group discussion, 2 questions on "the blind man" and "fear of evangelism"

- In John 9 about the blind man Jesus healed. What is striking about his words to the Pharisees (v30-34)?

- Have you ever been afraid to share Christ? If so when? Why were you afraid?

The Power of evangelism is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not empower all Christians to evangelize in the same way; rather all believers have been given power to be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Living a life openly devoted to Christ also manifests a power that augments Evangelism.

- 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

The most powerful ongoing Christian witness has always been the speaking of God's Word by one who is living God's Word.

Evangelism Is a Discipline

Isn't the main reason we don't witness the simple lack of disciplining ourselves to do it?

How often do you have the kinds of meaningful conversation with others where spiritual issues can be raised?

What are some ways to encourage meaningful gospel conversations?

Often it is the message of the Cross lived and demonstrated that God uses to open a heart to the gospel, but it is the message of the Cross proclaimed through which the power of God saves those who believe its content.

More Application:

- Because evangelism is expected, will you obey the Lord and witness?
- Because evangelism is empowered, will you believe God can use your words in the salvation of others?
- Because evangelism is a Discipline, will you plan for it?

Personal further application:

- Consider ways you might begin to make evangelism a Spiritual Discipline.
- What steps can you take this week to build deeper relationships with unbelievers?

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

Colossians 4:5-6

I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it
1 Corinthians 9:23