

# **TREK 101**

# **Christian**

# **Discipleship**

**SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

**By Donald S. Whitney**

## **LESSON 5 EVANGELISM**

**“Work hard to show the results of your salvation,  
obeying God with deep reverence and fear.”**

**Philippians 2:12b (NLT)**

**A Ministry of Rockpointe Church**

# Lesson 5

## EVANGELISM

### EVANGELISM

(This Lesson Adapted From Donald Whitney's *Spiritual Disciplines For The Christian Life*)

**Question:** Ask – What are people's greatest fears?

-What makes them true fears? Are these fears from experience or observing? Are they rational or mostly unfounded? What does it take to overcome one's fears? What is a stronger force than fear – i.e. protection of a child outweighs one's fear etc...

-Why do you think so many Christians avoid evangelism, or the sharing of their faith?

Donald Whitney states: "Only the sheer rapture of being lost in the worship of God is as exhilarating and intoxicating as telling someone about Jesus Christ. Yet nothing causes an eye-dropping, foot-shuffling anxiety more quickly among a group of Christians like myself than talking about our responsibility to evangelize. In fact, I'm sure I don't know a single Christian who would boldly say, 'I am as evangelistic as I should be.'"

### A. EVANGELISM FOR THE PURPOSE OF GODLINESS

"Evangelism is simply one beggar showing another beggar where to find bread."

1. Perhaps nothing strikes more fear into the heart than the prospect of having to share your faith with another stranger. Harder still, the prospect of having to share the gospel with a close family member.
2. Yet, God's will is that His children share honestly and lovingly with others all that He has done for them.
3. Truly, to do the work of evangelism requires a willing spirit, sometimes real guts, and capturing the opportunity before us. To do this well, it takes discipline. Evangelism is God's idea and it is a spiritual discipline since the act of Evangelism is allowing the Spirit of God to speak through you and your life (story) to others who need to hear about the good news of salvation and eternal life. The more we share our faith, the more we become like the Savior (who ultimately shared His whole life with us and for us on the Cross!)
4. Evangelism, therefore, will flow naturally out of the heart of one who is completely devoted to the presence of God. The more we seek Him, the more we cannot help but tell others about His grandeur, love, and sacrifice.

## B. WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

1. Evangelism is telling the story of God. Nothing more complicated than that.
2. God's story involves you and involves the one to whom you are telling. Effective evangelism is possible when you integrate your story into God's story. Your story includes how you met God and how your life has changed since you met God.
3. **AXIOM:** YOU CAN NEVER GIVE AWAY WHAT YOU DO NOT POSSESS.
4. Evangelism is powerful because it involves you giving away the greatest treasure that has been entrusted to you: The Gospel of God = the good news of Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection!
5. The most important aspect of evangelism is a willing heart!
6. Though there are many ways to share the good news of Christ, and no one is more important than the other, the Lord's will is that we share, and share faithfully with the lost all around us. We should get hung up on the Message of Christ, not necessarily the Method by which we share the good news of salvation.

## C. GOD COMMANDS THAT WE EVANGELIZE, AND DISCIPLE THOSE WE BRING TO CHRIST

- Evangelism and Discipleship are like two-sides of the same coin. You cannot really have true discipleship unless one has been truly converted to Christ. Further, God wants us to help new believers grow after they trust in Christ for salvation. It is our responsibility as Christians to both share our faith and to nurture (disciple) new believers. God commands that we be busy about kingdom business while we are on this earth. Kingdom business is spiritual business. Spiritual business is investing our lives spiritually into others and that begins with evangelism. God commands that we share our faith and willingly open ourselves up for rejection of (1) others and (2) this world which rejects spiritual things (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Luke 6:22-23; 1 Corinthians 2:14)

Even though there is sometimes a personal, emotional, and social risk in sharing the gospel, nonetheless God requires that we be willing to share the gospel with the world.

## Read Aloud each of these Scriptures:

*“Therefore AS YOU GO, 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 will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).*

*“But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:5)*

*Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21).*

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

*He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (Mark 16:15)*

*“You are witnesses of these things.” (Luke 24:48)*

*“And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.” (John 15:27)*

These are Jesus’ words and this is His command that we share our faith openly, willingly, and faithfully – since He has first loved us and since we are not to be ashamed of Him! Consider Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Timothy 1:8.

## D. Evangelism can be the most natural part of your Christian walk.

### READ ALOUD: 2 Corinthians 4:5,7

*“For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake... But we have this **treasure** in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.”*

- What is this TREASURE? -Do YOU possess it?
- What are you doing with Christ’s gift of this treasure? You are to be a steward of it, and give it away to those who need it most!

\*Since it is God, not man, who has given us this gift of LIFE within us, sealed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, IF we walk daily by the Spirit’s power then we will naturally be ready and able to share

intentionally with those around us in every possible circumstance (Galatians 5:16, 25).

1. God's command is that we share our faith. And when we do share, our message is to be seasoned with grace and truth (Colossians 4:6)
2. God promises us help and guidance when we attempt to share our faith. His Spirit, the Counselor and Comforter, is ever near **READY** to help us:
3. The Spirit of God will help you see the needs around you. Consider Acts 8:29; 16:9-10.
4. The Spirit of God will lead you to speak truth about Jesus. Consider Matthew 10:19-20; John 14:26; 15:26.
5. The Spirit of God will empower you to speak boldly Consider Acts 4:31; 2 Corinthians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:2.
6. The Spirit will also humble your heart and remind you to first seek God's help and power, that you may be an effective witness. Consider Ephesians 6:16; Acts 4:29.

Donald Whitney notes, "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? Some believe that they need a lot of specialized training to witness effectively. They are afraid to talk to someone about Christ until they feel confident that they have an adequate amount of Bible knowledge and could deal with any potential question or objection."

-However, the reality is that any Christian, no matter how new a believer or how unprepared they feel, **CAN** share effectively with another person because the work of evangelism is a work of the spirit. **READ LUKE 12:12** How does this verse apply to scary situations when one may not feel adequately prepared?

## **E. SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM**

1. We need to learn that sharing the gospel is successful evangelism.

We ought to have an obsession for souls and tearfully plead with God to see more people converted, but conversions are fruit that God alone can give. In this regard we are like the postal service. Success is measured by the careful and accurate delivery of the message, not by the response of the recipient. Whenever we share the gospel (which includes the summons to repent and believe), we have succeeded.

2. God's call to us is to willingly share with all whom He brings our way. It is the Lord's task alone to convert souls.

### **READ ALOUD: 1 Corinthians 3:5-7**

1. When we share our faith, knowing Scripture is very helpful. The Roman Road is a very easy plan to follow when walking someone through the gospel story (or reading to them these Scriptures) in order for them to understand their Lostness and their real need for a Savior. Here is a sample way one can share the gospel using the Roman Road of five simple Bible verses:

\*Did you know there is a God who created you and loves you. God has made you to experience a personal relationship with Him forever. That really is good news. However, you have a problem, just like every other person in this big world. Sin.

Sin (our broken actions by which we reject God and reject the good things He is and made for us to enjoy; by our sin we reject God's gracious offer of eternal life and a relationship with Him forever. That is bad news.

#### **Romans 3:23**

The Bible teaches that every person ever born has sinned against God. No one is exempt from sinning. We have all done it. The Bible says, "*For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*" Further, the Bible makes this really clear: We are all in the same boat without God - "*No one is righteous—not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one.*" **Romans 3:10**

#### **Romans 6:23**

Even worse, the Bible teaches that the penalty for sin, my sin and your sin is death. Our actions of rejecting God means that we have forfeited our relationship with Him and must face eternity apart from God and heaven. The Bible says the "*wages of our sin is death.*"

#### **Romans 5:8**

However, there is really awesome news. The Bible teaches that God still loved us so much, even though we have sinned against Him, He sent His perfect and holy Son –Jesus Christ- to this earth to pay the death penalty that each of us deserved. Jesus took my place in death. He died for me, so that God could forgive my sin and still have a relationship with Him. The Bible says, "*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" It's just like John 3:16, the most famous verse in the Bible which says, "*For God so love this world that He gave His one and only Son, Jesus, that whoever would believe (trust in) in*

*Christ Jesus would not die apart from God, but would spend eternity with God.”*

So, the Bible tells us that if we BELIEVE in Jesus, and TRUST in HIM to save (rescue) us from our sin, that He would really do just that... Save us and give us a real relationship with God for eternity. The Bible says,

**Romans 10:9-10**

*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.*

**Romans 10:13**

*... For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

Wow! You can be saved today, right now, simply by calling upon Him to save you. What would stop you from asking Jesus to become your Savior and Lord right now?

Are you willing to accept this gift of salvation right now? Will you give your life over to Jesus to save you? It is as easy as asking (praying to) Him this very moment.

The Bible says, after we pray to God for salvation, and have willingly turned from our sin and to the savior (that's called repentance), He will save us and give us assurance that we are His children forever.

**Romans 5:1** *“Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us”.* The Bible also says, *“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”* 1 John 5:13

**Romans 8:1** *“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.”*

\*You can use these verses in any combination which is most natural to you. But, it is hard to improve upon Scripture. Using God’s Word to share the gospel is perhaps the easiest and most direct way of evangelism.

2. When sharing your faith, using your own testimony is a great tool. It is very difficult for others to discount or reject your own testimony of what God has done for you.
  - Your testimony consists of briefly sharing:
    - A. Your life before Christ
    - B. How you became a believer
    - C. How your life has changed since you met Christ
3. When Sharing your faith, be a good listener, and ask intentional questions which will cause your listener to think, but not be on the defensive.
4. Pray. Pray. Pray. It is always best to have someone you trust praying for you while you are sharing. Prayer cover works. Consider James 5:16.

### **READ ALOUD: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17**

*“For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.”*

What is the power of this Scripture? What fragrance are we to those who will be saved? Why is that?

The heart for evangelism is a heart for the Spiritual Disciplines, a heart for Godliness.

Who can you name in your family, work, and in your world that needs to hear a clear presentation of the Gospel?

What will YOU do about it? Their eternity may rest in your decision, or indecision.

### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:**

Spend some time this week writing out your own conversion testimony. When you feel that you have it all down, try and summarize into a 30 second version and then share the quick version with your family. Once you feel that you have perfected the telling of your life before Christ, how you met Christ, and how your life has changed since you met Christ, then ask the Lord to show you this week who you can share it with as “practice” 😊

READ Colossians 4:4 as your prayer this week!