

Discipling: Class 9. Encouraging a Passion for Evangelism

(Extended outline for the teacher.)

Basic idea:

God commands us in Scripture to share the faith and spread the Gospel to the nations. As disciplemakers trying to help our friends to become obedient disciples of Jesus, we should encourage our friends to think about and participate in evangelism.

Outline:

I. Evangelism

- a. Why should we encourage our friends to share their faith?
 - We're commanded to go and make disciples of all the nations
 - "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ" Romans 10:17
 - "Always be prepared to give the reason for the hope you profess, but do this with gentleness and respect." 1 Peter 3:16
 - We share our faith to our unsaved world because that's what God commands us to do. It makes no sense to hoard the gospel to ourselves. If our disciples are to become obedient followers of Christ, they should be sharing their faith to others.
 - Evangelism is a source of deep and satisfying joy (
 - Evangelism brings greater glory to the God we love (
- b. Jesus as a model for evangelism: Identifying with the world.
 - i. Jesus became like us to reach us. He was in the world but not conforming to it. He spent time with tax collectors and prostitutes but did not sin.
 - ii. What does this mean for us? How do we learn from this?
 - We also need to identify with those who live in this world. But, we don't participate in sin.
 - We need to identify with the world by understanding the emotions and struggles that people have. At the same time, we need to be radically different from the world, showing that we have a love for them that comes only from God.
 - iii. How do we encourage this to our discipling friends?
 - Sit down with your friend and think through ways that they may have meaningful interactions with non-Christians.
 - Think through some questions that your friend might be able to ask non-Christian friends to "identify" with them better.
- c. Jesus as a model for evangelism: Serving others.
 - i. Jesus served the people around him. Part of his ministry on earth was healing people and meeting their physical and emotional

needs. Most significantly, he served us by bearing our sins on the cross.

ii. What does this mean for us? How do we learn from this?

- We can serve others' needs to show Christ's love.
- Often, non-Christians are surprised when they see love unexpectedly extended to them through basic service!

iii. How do we encourage this to our discipling friends?

- Take your friend with you on a service project. (e.g. yardwork for a neighbor)
- Cook a meal with your friend, and take it to some neighbors that would be encouraged by it (e.g. couples with new-born children).
- Helping others is a rewarding thing, and we need to recognize that it's God allowing us to do it. Help your friend to understand that.
- Help your friend understand how such serving could lead to evangelism opportunities!

d. Jesus as a model for evangelism: Modeling a relationship with God

i. In his teaching, Jesus revealed his relationship with God. He spoke of his obedience to the Father and the Scriptures. He also allowed his disciples to hear him pray.

ii. What does this mean for us? How do we learn from this?

- We can demonstrate our relationship with God by speaking of what God has done for us. This can be as extensive as sharing your testimony, or simply explaining what God has done for you in a particular circumstance.
- We can tell others that we will pray for them.
- We should tell others of our love for Jesus and our thankfulness for what he's done.

iii. How do we encourage this to our discipling friends?

- Get your friend to be comfortable with "God-talk".
- First of all, ask them those questions so they get used to talking about God to a Christian. Then, perhaps do some role-playing.
- Go do something together with a non-Christian and your disciple friend. Model this sort of "God-talk". If you're not comfortable with this, you might set up a gathering with some older Christians – a dinner gathering could be a great tool for this.

e. Jesus as a model for evangelism: Speaking the truth

i. He spoke the truth, even if it was hard for some people to accept it. Jesus backed everything that he did with sound teaching of the

truth about God and man's state before Him.

- ii. What does this mean for us? How do we learn from this?
 - Your actions and words may be God-centered, but it's pretty likely that those won't lead people to Christ. Your actions should lead people to ask faith-related questions, and then we need to help them give answers.
 - We need to be prepared with the truth. Our answers need to be clear and biblical, so we should know the basic truths about the Gospel message.
 - If we live out a Christian life, but answer questions that don't point them to God, then we're not being very effective.
 - Don't gloss over "difficult" truths. Let them hear the whole gospel, and not just parts that are convenient for them.
 - We should communicate the URGENCY (Luke 12:20, John 3:18, 36), COSTLINESS (Luke 9:62, Luke 14:26-27), and WORTHWHILENESS (John 10:10) of the gospel!
- iii. How do we encourage this to our discipling friends?
 - Run through the gospel with them! Have them present the gospel to you.
 - You might use the "2 Ways to Live" method. Whatever tools you use, be sure that they go over the essential truths of the gospel. Ryan has a great handout. You might ask him for a copy of the Session 5: "The Gospel Recovered" handout!
- f. Other general ways to encourage evangelism:
 - i. Identify evangelism opportunities
 - ii. Follow up on evangelism relationships.
 - iii. Periodically go over the gospel, do role-playing.
 - iv. Go through a book on evangelism together.
 - v. Set up evangelism opportunities together.
- g. Setting expectations for our friends about evangelism.
 - Remind your friend that you're just planting seeds. Sometimes you see people come to Christ, but sometimes that happens years after your first conversation! Remind your friend that it's ultimately God who must work to change the hearts of non-Christians.
 - Remind your friends to be diligent with follow-up on evangelism opportunities. Your friend should know that evangelism isn't always packaged into a single meeting. It can be in friendships that last several years!
 - Remind your friend to be diligent in prayer for the friends that they share their faith with!
 - "Success" in evangelism isn't measured by how people receive it!
- h. Reminding your friend about the source of strength for evangelism.
 - The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of sinners! (Romans 1:16)

- The power of Godliness comes from God. (2 Corinthians 2:14-17)
- The Holy Spirit gives us the power to be witnesses over all the earth!