

How to do evangelism?

- **Why we don't evangelize?**

- Barriers to Evangelism

- Unwillingness to Change Schedule

“Does an opportunity to share the gospel interrupt your schedule, or might your schedule ‘in the way’ of the Kingdom’s schedule?” Perhaps what we often may consider to be an “interruption” is a “Kingdom appointment” to engage in “successful evangelism” (*stepping out in the power of the Spirit with the intention to share the gospel and leaving the results to God.*)

Example: John 4:6-8 -- Jesus Witnessing to the Woman at the Well

- Fear of Potential Social/Career Consequences for Me:

Am I more concerned about how I am perceived by man, or by the eternal destiny of those I meet?

- Fear of not being sure how to relate to a person after I share the gospel:

How will I relate to them if they reject the gospel? What do I do if they place their faith in Christ for salvation?

- Fear that you will not know what to say:

Am I bound by the lie that I need to have all the answers to potentially tough or personal questions?

- Fear that my character is not in line with the gospel:

Am I believing and preaching a gospel that Christians are perfect, or that God saves imperfect sinners?

- False confidence in the viewing of my character to display the gospel:

Do I believe Romans 10:14?

(“...how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?”)

- Doubt that God will use my sharing the gospel for positive things:

Do I doubt the Holy Spirit’s work inside me to give me the strength to love them well in word and deed? Do I doubt the Holy Spirit’s ability to use my imperfect sharing of the gospel to draw the non-believer to place their faith in Christ?

- Fear that it will be unpleasant for me and/or a “messy” conversation:

Am I willing to suffer discomfort for the sake of the gospel?

Which of the above barriers (or one not listed above) do you find yourself most susceptible to?

- Because we are not deliberate or intentional.

- Critical spirit to evangelistic efforts.

“I like my way of doing it better than your way of not doing it!” - D.L. Moody

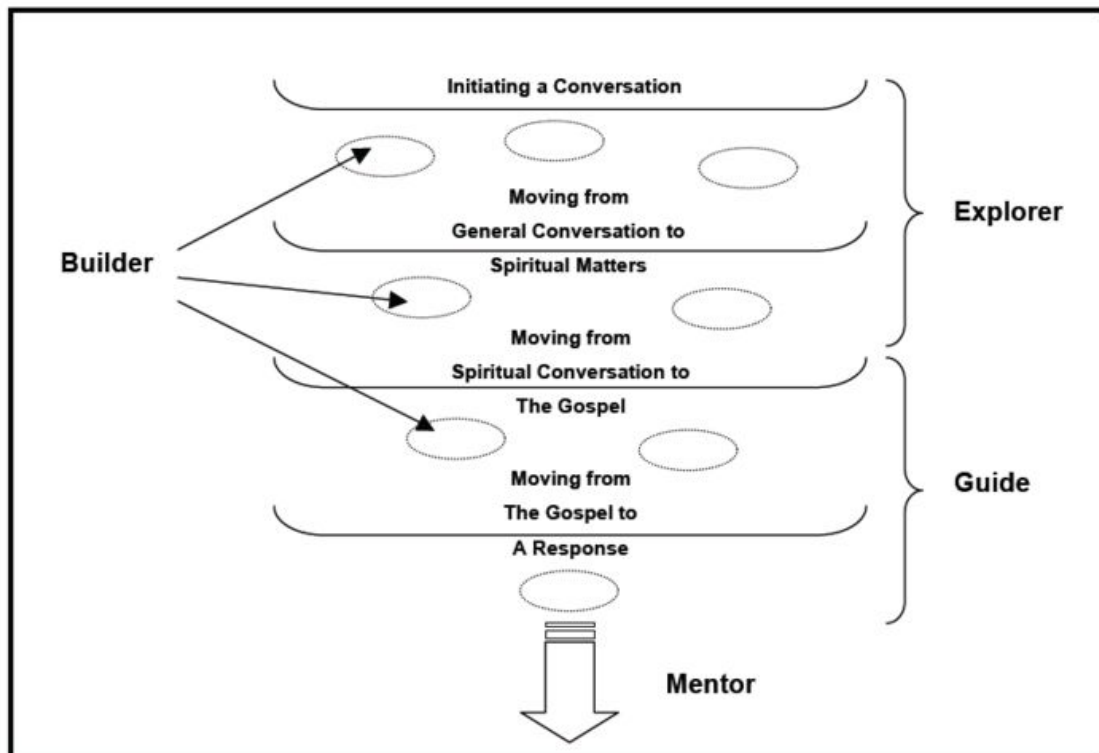
- **Where can we do evangelism?** -- “Where we live, work, play?”

What does that look like for us?

- **Postures in evangelism:** CoJourners

<https://www.cru.org/content/dam/cru/legacy/2012/03/CoJourners-TC.pdf>

- The Four Roles
 - These are not a formula; rather, they are dependent on your relationship with the person and their spiritual journey.
 - The order of how these roles embodied is not rigid; rather, one often “bounces around” between Explorer, Builder, and Guide.
- These roles are categories that may help give you some “tracks to run on” as you engage in successful evangelism (stepping out, intention to share the gospel, depending on God’s power, leaving the results to God).

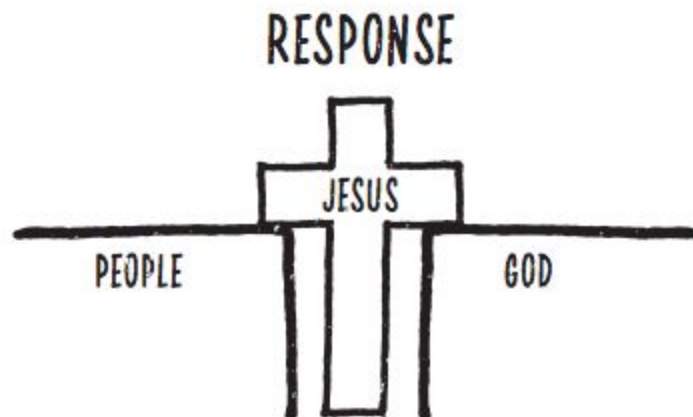


<http://www.theselways.com/blog/2015/4/7/cojourners-participating-in-others-spiritual-journeys-part-1>

- *The Explorer*: Discovering Spiritual Journeys

- Engage in significant conversations to discover and understand the spiritual journeys of others. Being an explorer involves active listening and asking questions.
 - Ask Questions such as:
 - How are you doing? (Many appreciate and notice when someone asks them this and seems to truly care.)
 - Exploring the Past: What was your religious background as a child? What have you tried in your spiritual journey since?
 - Exploring the Present: How has your search left you feeling? Where are you now in your spiritual journey?
 - Exploring the Future: What do you desire most spiritually? Do you think you are moving toward God, away from God, or staying about the same?
 - Do not assume you know where someone is at spiritually; seek to discover it.
 - Be sensitive to whatever level of conversational openness with one's life is allowed.
 - Seek to care for the whole person; each person is not a task but an image bearer of God.
- *The Guide*: Showing the way to Jesus.
- Show the way to faith in Christ. Being a guide involves sharing your life story and articulating the gospel in conversationally appropriate ways.
 - Invite to Christian community: Do not underestimate the power of a nonbeliever being exposed to genuine Christian community. Many "belong before they believe."
 - Share (parts) of your story:
 - Being a Guide (showing the way to Jesus) may involve telling how you found the way. Example: Samaritan woman in John 4: "He told me everything I ever did."
 - Ask for permission to share parts of your story.
 - Others are usually more open to hearing parts of your story after you have showed genuine interest in theirs. This rapport can be built in a matter of years or a matter of seconds.
 - Share the gospel clearly
 - Consider the four basic points of the gospel:
God → Man → Christ → Response
 - Consider the pros and cons of using a tract or guide
 - "Knowing God Personally Booklet"
 - Consider the three phrases of Romans 6:23 to conversationally communicate the gospel's essence:
 - 1. "For the wages of sin is death"
 - 2. "but the gift of God is eternal life"
 - 3. "in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- Consider questions you can ask while sharing the gospel to gauge the extent to which they grasp it, such as:
 - “How would you define sin?”
 - “Why did Jesus have to die?”
 - “How would you summarize Ephesians 2:8-9 in your own words?”
- Napkin Diagram¹



- Consider analogies:
 - Swimming Across the Ocean
 - Courtroom
- The Builder: Providing Bridges Over Spiritual Obstacles
 - Build bridges over and beyond the issues and obstacles that hinder others in their journey to Christ. Being a bridge building involves prayer and gentle persuasion.
 - Types of obstacles:
 - Intellectual
 - Example: “How can a good God allow evil?”
 - May involve apologetics.
 - Be aware of intellectually-framed questions that may either be designed to...
 - ...be a “smokescreen” for an emotional barrier. (example: someone asking how a good God could possibly allow evil is often a “smokescreen” for

¹ http://pulsemovement.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MOVEMENT_Training_2018.pdf

them asking you to reconcile evil of which they have been or are currently victims.

- ...place the burden of the proof of Christianity on you rather than on personally considering the claims of the gospel themselves.

- Emotional

- Many may find the claims of the gospel believable but cannot overcome bad experiences/baggage from the past.
- Examples
 - “I had religion crammed down my throat as a child.” (Perhaps they had a legalistic upbringing.)
 - “My friend is a Christian and is judgmental.” (“I’m unwilling to change my beliefs and lifestyle.”)
 - “Life has been hard since my mom died.” (“A good God couldn’t allow suffering like this.”)
- Rather than flee from uncomfortable discussions, consider asking thoughtful questions to “explore” emotional obstacles to the gospel. Consider: “Did you grow up in the church? What was that like for you?”
- Be ready to quickly and genuinely empathize with their emotional obstacles. Examples:
 - “I can’t imagine how difficult that must be for you.”
 - “I’m so sorry that you experienced that in the church.”

- Spiritual

- 2 Corinthians 4:4 -- “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
- Must be dealt with using spiritual means: prayer.
 - Timothy Keller’s “*Reason for God*” is a great resource as the “Builder.”
 - “It is an appealing tone with which we share God’s word in a safe and loving manner, often using personal experiences, insightful questions, and meaningful stories to help a person think differently about the issues they are stuck on.”²
- The Mentor: Encourage others to follow Christ. Being a mentor involves helping others make relational connections to other believers and imparting foundational concepts for Christian living.

² <https://www.cru.org/content/dam/cru/legacy/2012/03/CoJourners-TC.pdf>

- **How to evangelize?**

- Earn an opportunity to speak.
 - Listen.
 - Develop relationships.
 - Live a life consistent with your message.
- Understand your audience.
 - Get to know your audience.
 - Ask questions.
 - Listen, listen, listen.
 - Considering their background.
 - Communicate accordingly.
- Be deliberate, intentional, bold, urgent, and explicit in presenting the Gospel and looking for opportunities to do so.

“We must not only close our eyes in prayer for opportunities, but we must then open our eyes to see them.” - Mark Dever.

- Use Scripture.
 - God’s word, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, provokes faith (Isa 55:10-11; Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).
 - It shows that this message is not based in our imagination but is God’s truth.
- Evangelize with integrity to the message.
 - Do not add to the message.
 - Do not obscure the message.
 - Do not eliminate vital aspects of the message (e.g., offensive things -- 1 Cor 1:18-24; 2 Cor 2:15-16; Gal 5:11).

“A Gospel that in no way offends the sinner has not been understood.” - Mark Dever.

“If you alter or obscure the Biblical portrait of God in order to attract converts, you don’t get converts to God, you get converts to an illusion. This is not evangelism, but deception.” - John Piper.

“If you believe what you like in the Gospel, and reject what you don’t like, it is not the Gospel you believe, but yourself.” - Augustine

- Do not add unnecessary offense to the Gospel.

“We certainly don’t want the sharing of the gospel to bring us or the gospel into disrepute for any reason other than a disagreement with the message itself.... We simply don’t want to give people other reasons to oppose our evangel [Gospel]. We don’t want our evangelism to stand in the way of the evangel - the good news.” - Mark Dever.

- Evangelize with wisdom and tact (e.g., gentleness).
 - 1 Pet 3:15.
 - 2 Tim 2:24-25.

- Pray (Jonah 2:9; John 16:44; 1 Cor 3:5-7).
 - ...for opportunities.
 - ...for conversion.

- How to share a testimony of the gospel redeeming your life
 - The Opening. Identify a theme you can use to frame your story. What did your life revolve around (e.g. relationships, your reputation, money) that God used to help bring you to Him? Briefly illustrate how that influenced your life.
 - Your Life Before Christ. Paint a picture of what your life was like before you came to Christ. Don’t dwell too much on, or brag about, past sin struggles. Share only the details that relate to your theme — just enough to show your need for Christ.
 - How You Came to Christ. Give the details about why and how you became a Christian. Communicate in such a way that the person you are talking with, and anyone who overhears you, can understand how they can become a Christian, too. Even if your listeners are not ready for that, God could use your story and explanation of the gospel to draw them to Himself in the future.
 - Your Life After Coming to Christ. Share some of the changes that Christ has made in your life as they relate to your theme. Emphasize the changes in your character, attitude or perspective, not just mere changes in behavior. Be realistic. We still struggle as Christians. Life is far from perfect, but what’s different about your life now?
 - The Closing. End with a statement that summarizes your story and connects everything back to your theme. If you want, close with a Bible verse that relates to your experience.³
 - Helpful Hints
 - Pray before you write out and share your story.
 - Write the way you speak.
 - Don’t be overly negative or positive. Be honest.

- Don't criticize or name any church, denomination, organization, etc.
- Think about your listener(s). Avoid overly-religious terms.
- Keep it short. Aim to tell your story in three to five minutes...or 90 seconds.
- Other topics:
 - When and how to enter / initiate spiritual conversations
 - Don't be a jerk; don't be obnoxious
 - Appropriate evangelism at work
 - The role of hospitality
 - How to think about apologetics and evangelism with the skeptic
- **What should we do after evangelism?**
 - See Matthew 28:18-20 -
 - See Acts 2:41-42 -
 - Summary:
 - Baptism.
 - Incorporation into the church body.
 - Discipleship.

Resources for further learning:

- *What is the Gospel?* by Greg Gilbert.
- *Counterfeit Gospels: Rediscovering the Good News in a World of False Hope* by Trevin Wax.
- *Stop Asking Jesus into Your Heart* by J.D. Greear.
- *Marks of the Messenger: Knowing, Living and Speaking the Gospel* by Mack Stiles.
- *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* by Mark Dever.
- *Tell the Truth* by Will Metzger.
- *Reason for God* by Timothy Keller
- *CoJourners* by Cru: <https://www.cru.org/content/dam/cru/legacy/2012/03/CoJourners-TC.pdf>
- Cru Gospel Tract: <https://crustore.org/downloads/would.pdf>