

“Introduction to Evangelism”
3-4-01

I. What is evangelism?

A. Meaning of the word.

1. Greek word: *euvaggeli, zw*: (1) gener. *bring* or *announce good news* (LU 1.19); (2) predom. in the NT as making known God's message of salvation with authority and power *tell the good news, make known the Gospel, evangelize* (AC 5.42); pass. *have the Gospel preached* to one (MT 11.5).
 - a. It can mean to preach the Gospel.
 - (i) Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"
 - (ii) 1 Corinthians 15:1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand.
 - (iii) Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.
 - (iv) Galatians 1:8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.
 - (v) In this sense, it was used only of our Lord and those He sent.
 - b. It can mean to announce good news.
 - (i) Luke 1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news.
 - (ii) 1 Thessalonians 3:6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you.
 - (iii) In this sense, it can be used to bring good news of any kind.
2. There is another word used in the area of evangelism, and it is “witness.”
 - a. *ma,rtuj*: *a witness*; (1) as a witness to ascertainable facts; (a) legally (MT 26.65); (b) gener., as one who testifies to something (RO 1.9); (2) as one who declares facts directly known to himself; (a) fr. firsthand knowledge (AC 1.22); (b) fr. firsthand experience (HE 12.1); (3) as one who tells what he believes, even though it results in his being killed for it *witness, martyr* (AC 1.8; RV 17.6).
 - b. It is in this last sense that it interests us.
 - (i) Luke 24:44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to

- all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things.
- (ii) Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.
- (iii) Acts 5:29-32 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men. 30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. 31 "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."
- (iv) Acts 10:38 "*You know of* Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him. 39 "And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. 40 "God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, *that is*, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. 43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."
- (v) But it also has a reference to all the godly who have lived godly lives.
Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- c. But how can we be witnesses of these things, if we have never seen them?
- (i) We can because we have seen them.
- (ii) Review the Edwards material.

B. Is it our duty to evangelize?

1. We are called to be lights in the world.
- a. Matt. 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."
- b. Phil 2:14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the

midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

- c. To be a light means to be a beacon of truth.
2. We are to make the most of our opportunities among outsiders.
 - a. Col. 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; 4 in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, *as it were*, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.
 - b. 1 Peter 3:14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.
 - c. Matt. 10:32 "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 "But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.
 3. We are to tell of the things Christ has done for us.
 - a. Mark 5:19 And He did not let him, but He *said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and *how* He had mercy on you." 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone marveled.
 - b. Also the example of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4) and the blind man who was healed (John 9).
 - c. Rev. 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. 11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.
- D. What are some of the hindrances to evangelism?
1. Fear of rejection.
 2. Inability to share it clearly.
 3. A low level of personal sanctification and zeal.
- E. How can we overcome these things?
1. Using the means of grace, not the least of which is prayer. Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and *began* to speak the word of God with boldness.

2. Study to know the Gospel.
3. Practical experience through personal witness.