

Live Out Loud

Courageous and Contagious

Choose an Approach that Fits You

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“There are some needs only you can see. There are some hands only you can hold. There are some people only you can reach.” - Tim Keller

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

1 Corinthians 3: 5-6 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

A church with high orthodox teaching will be a church that attracts a certain crowd. They are God-loving people who see the big God they serve. They know that life is not a complete mystery and that God is actively orchestrating things in their lives for His glory and our good.

And this big God view also lends itself to a belief that only God brings people into right relationship with Himself. Before you know it we show up to church, we get our weekly feeding, and we hold high accurate teaching, but then quickly forget what it is like to wake up this morning with a God-sized hole in our lives. Consequently, and without malice, we rarely open our mouths to share the gospel message.

We've spent the last two weeks learning about how to be prepared to share your faith:

Potency (time with God) + **Proximity** (to unbelievers) + **Speaking** (witness) = **Maximum Impact**

This sounds good to many of us, yet we're left with questions and, at times, even have guilt-ridden anxiety as we wonder how to do this.

God has placed us here, not by happenstance, but among the 7 billion humans on the earth right now. Your arrival, timing, location, and circumstance were planned. Your genetic make up is unique among all of creation and you will walk in places and talk with people and do things that no one else will do just as you would do it. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are not an accident. You have purpose.

With that in mind, we can still wonder how to share the Gospel with those around us.

What does God's word say about the right approach?

The right approach is really about two biblical themes or principles: the Personality Principle and the People Principle.

God's word clearly shows us at least six different personalities on display in how the Gospel can be shared.

The Personality Principle:

1. You will *start* to make an impact when you choose to be the Gospel witness God designed *you* to be.

Some of you have been you have been fooled into believing that either God will save them or you are not responsible, or you are not able. You simply don't see yourself as an ambassador of the Gospel.

There is not a one-size fits all. Throughout Scripture we see different approaches.

God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are taught to us in the same Bible; sometimes, indeed in the same text.

J.I. Packer, Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God

Example: Luke 22:22 "For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined (to his death), but woe to the man by whom he is betrayed!" cf. Acts 3:23

- **Peter – the direct approach – Matt 16:15.** He was the “ready, aim, shoot” personality. See the target-hit the target.
- **Paul - the intellectual approach – In Acts 17,** we see Paul laying out an apologetic to the skeptical philosopher. Do you like to work with ideas and evidence? Do you like to dialogue and discuss? Guys like Ravi Zacharias and Lee Strobel are examples of witnesses that do just this. You can know, reason and logic hold up under scrutiny.
- **The Blind Man – the testimonial approach – John 9.**

Don't feel that you need to have all the answers to all the arguments that people will pose.

God (He is) > **Man** (he is flawed) > **Christ** (He is God and died for our sin) > **Response** (Faith in Christ)

> **Jesus** – who He is – very God man (**John 8:24** – this claim is either true or false, Jesus couldn't be good and claim this if it were not true.)

> **Mission** – to pay the penalty for sin and death, and give you new life now and in eternity.

> **Response** – two ways to live – faith in Him being the substitute for and Savior from sin or figure life out on your own where you live primarily for self and hope there is no God. (**Gal 2:20**)

- **Samaritan Woman - The Invitational Approach – John 4**

God specializes in picking the most unlikely people to bring into relationship with him and do His divine work.

The People Principle:

2. You will make an eternal impact when you live obediently; trusting ‘God to be God’ as He sends ‘you to be you’ to share that Jesus is God’s answer to man’s ultimate need.

In **Acts 8**, we read about Saul persecuting Christians and causing them to scatter. Despite all this, the disciples continue to witness. God is not hindered by vile hatred. People became believers in the face of opposition.

Then in **Acts 9**, meet Ananias. He’s a new believer, minding his own business and God tells him that just down the road there is a guy named Saul and that He’s sending him to help Saul see.

There is a pattern in Scripture. It’s a pattern of God’s people moving toward the hurting, even the hostile and trusting God more than whatever response is awaiting.

When Ananias arrived, Saul was ready. Why? Because God is God before Ananias even knows Saul is ready.

Other Approaches in light of your personality and call to witness:

- **Matthew – The Interpersonal Approach** - bringing as many as he knew to hear Jesus (Luke 5)
- **Tabitha - The Service Approach** –always doing things to help others that need help and doing it to sow seeds that Christ is the difference in your life (Acts 9:36ff)

Great Resources to read about Living Out Loud:

Becoming a Contagious Christian; Bill Hybels & Mark Mittelberg (great for understanding how to do it and approaching with your personality – ch.9)

What Is the Gospel; Greg Gilbert (get a clear understanding of what the Gospel is and what it’s not)

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God; J.I. Packer (helps explain both God’s sovereignty to save and man’s responsibility to choose, which are equally taught in Scripture and as we witness there is a need to embrace both)