

Live Out Loud

Courageous and Contagious

Finding an Approach That Fits You Best

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / 14-Feb-2016

Over the course of the last several weeks, we've spoken LOTS about evangelism, witnessing, living intentionally, looking to "live out loud" to reach people. In a very real way, people's souls hang in the balance.

What about you? Are you kicking yourself because of missed opportunities in days gone by? Do you find yourself feeling guilty or ashamed at the end of the day if you didn't get to "live out loud" in a specific, measurable, verifiable way?

A. We need to remember that GUILT and SHAME are miserable motivators to pleasing God in any area of our lives...and that includes evangelism!

If your motivation to "live out loud" among those God crosses your path is shame & guilt because you haven't already done so, you're not going to reflect the grace, mercy, help and hope of Christ you're wanting others to see.

Rom. 7:15,17-20,24

¹⁵For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate... ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Paul certainly knew what it was like to be frustrated with himself...but he doesn't stay there, staring at himself in a mirror of guilt and shame. **Guilt and shame make for lame motivators.** Paul moves on to Romans 8, a new mirror reminding him of the truth of God's Word and who He is in Christ.

Rom. 8:1,3-4,31-35

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... ³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

B. We need to remember there's no "one size fits all" when it comes to sharing the Gospel. Find an approach that best fits you!

God uses all different types of people reach all different types of people. Different personalities, different backgrounds, different methods, all used for the glory of God and the building of His Kingdom.

"God built diversity into the fabric of His body of believers. And until we realize that, we'll find ourselves needlessly imitating each other's outreach efforts, wastefully duplicating some approaches while harmfully squelching others."

Hybels, Bill, and Mark Mittelberg. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1994. 125. Print.

6 BIBLICAL APPROACHES TO SHARING THE GOSPEL¹

1. The DIRECT Approach

Peter didn't mince words, and God used him in situations where that was needed and helpful.

Matt. 16:15,16

¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Acts 2:22-24

²² "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know — ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

2. The INTELLECTUAL Approach

Paul was not an intellectual lightweight, and neither were the people of Athens. God providentially uses Paul in Rome & Greece to explain truths about God's nature, our sin and Christ's solution.

Acts 17:17,18

¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him.

3. The TESTIMONIAL Approach

When the man born blind was healed by Jesus, he didn't know much about Jesus except what he just experienced moments before. God even uses him to testify as to what the Lord had done in his life!

John 19:25

²⁵ He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

4. The INTERPERSONAL Approach

Matthew uses the interpersonal relationships he had with other tax collectors. He invites them to a feast, and gives them the opportunity to mingle with Jesus.

Luke 5:29

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.

5. The INVITATIONAL Approach

The Samaritan essentially uses three very simple words; "Come and see." Her simple invitation resulted in many being added to the kingdom of God.

John 4:28-29,39,41-42

²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did..." ³⁹ Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did..." ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

6. The SERVICE Approach

Tabitha (Dorcas) is said to have been "full of good works and acts of charity," (Acts 9:36). Her love for Christ was evident in her selflessness, putting people in touch with the message of the Gospel that perhaps could never have been reached by other forms of evangelism.

What about you? Consider your life, personality, experiences, age, spheres of influence, background, all that God has providentially brought into your life that makes you uniquely you. Which of these approaches best fits you? Where are there opportunities in your life that you can take advantage of with one of the biblically tried and true approaches we've looked at?

¹ Adapted from Hybels, Bill, and Mark Mittelberg. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1994. Print.