

A Conversation Between An Evangelist And A Professing Christian About “Wordless Evangelism”



Evangelist: The Bible proclaims to the sinner “repent or perish”. It also says that all who die lost will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Yet so many preachers and “evangelists” nowadays only talk about the “love” of God.

Professor: Hey man, that’s because all that talk of judgment and wrath is way too harsh! Most people can’t handle a message like that. You need to preach about the love of God otherwise you will turn people off!

Evangelist: But the Bible says I am to warn the lost to flee the wrath to come. And if we preach about God’s love, we should preach about His love of righteousness as well as his hatred of sin.

Professor: Haven’t you ever heard the expression “Preach the Gospel and when necessary use words”?

Evangelist: Saying “Preach the Gospel and when necessary use words” is like saying “Tell me what the antidote is for the poison I just drank and if necessary speak clearly”. Preaching the gospel means we are to clearly and boldly tell hell deserving sinners that God is angry with the wicked every day, telling them to repent of their sins, and pointing them to Christ and the cross.

Professor: Man, you can’t just go around telling people that. You need to earn “the right” to preach that kind of stuff. You earn the right by how you act and by what you do.



Evangelist: Isn't that just a teaching of the modern church? Where in scripture does it say we have to earn the right to speak biblical truth in order to be an ambassador for Christ? Scripture says we are to obey God and when God says go into all the world and preach the Gospel, we are not to look for excuses why we cannot do so.

Professor: I don't know about that, but my church taught me that you need to give of yourself in service and show who you are by your speech, humility, and actions. Once the lost see who you are and who you represent by your actions and your life, then they will be willing to listen to what you have to say. Otherwise you will simply anger them and negate any opportunity you may have had in reaching them.

Evangelist: Sounds like you need to dust off your Bible. Where does the Bible say I need to wait until sinners are willing to listen to me to rebuke them concerning sin or to warn them about the judgment of God? Should a cop wait until someone is willing to go to jail before arresting them? Should a parent wait until a child is willing to be corrected before initiating any discipline?

Professor: I don't know but you will just be wasting your time and even casting pearls before swine. You don't want to do that do you?

Evangelist: Preaching the gospel serves many purposes. It may serve to convict a sinner or to harden them as God sees fit. It can serve to convict a person who may be listening on the sidelines. It should also serve to strengthen the faith of the preacher as well as bring to mind any hypocrisy in the life of the one preaching. From what I know of the Bible, we are to both

preach the gospel AND live Christ-like. We ***can*** do that simultaneously, even by how we respond to mockers and abusers who wish to silence our preaching by intimidation of various kinds. I have seen “angry” hearers settle down and be convicted in the course of minutes or hours after they notice that their curses are not responded to with the same.

Professor: Haven't you ever heard about friendship evangelism and how important it is to become someone's friend first before talking to them about Christ?

Evangelist: A doctor does not wait until he develops a friendship with a patient to tell them they are dying of cancer... so much more so with a soul headed for hell. Is such a situation not all the more urgent? Who knows when a soul will slip into eternity?.... Are we to say: “Oh, too bad the guy died. I was going to warn him about hell and tell him about my blessed Redeemer but I hadn't earned the right to talk to him about those kinds of things yet, so we just talked about the weather, sports, hobbies, cars and everything else the lost sinner wanted to talk about.”? I believe Ezekiel 33:8 is adequate scriptural ground for motivating me to preach the gospel, even before I have developed a relationship with someone...

“When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

Professor: But surely that doesn't mean you need to witness or preach to everybody. Just those people whom you feel “led” to talk to. And I don't usually feel led to talk to too many people about the Lord because I don't feel I have the right to impose my religion on them, especially if I have not yet “earned a hearing” with them.

Evangelist: The “right” to preach the gospel is not a right anyway... it is a command. We are duty bound to our Savior by our blood-bought salvation to preach the gospel to all whom God puts in our path (within reason of course), be they in our path for one minute or for many years. We should all have the zeal and impatience and love for God to share the gospel (or our testimony) of the woman at the well in John chapter 4. And a paramedic doesn't wait until he feels led to administer first aid to an injured person. He does what his job requires him to do and he does it as soon as he notices the need. If only more Christians would take responsibility for loving the lost and doing whatever it takes to bring the Gospel to them instead of coming up with reasons for doing it “later” or for worrying about how other Christians could do it better. If we are truly saved and truly honest with ourselves we will more than likely find ourselves being convicted by the Holy Spirit for neglecting witnessing opportunities and staying in our comfort zone more than being convicted for witnessing when we should not have.

Professor: I still think you should try to build a relationship with someone before you talk to them about their soul. So many church evangelism

programs teach that formula for soul winning nowadays. It must be the most effective, right?

Evangelist: The bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, not by the amount of quality time I spend building a relationship with the hearer. God can convict a sinner in an instant, with just a word or two, if He so chooses.

Professor: Well just make sure that it is the Gospel that is the offense and not you. And I'll just sit on the sidelines and critique you if you don't mind, that way I can be sure that I am not a stumbling block to anyone who sincerely wants to come to Christ.

Evangelist: You will be their biggest stumbling block if you never open your mouth... and you may avoid being an offense to the sinner but you will end up being an offense to Christ who said:

"Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

[Matthew 10:33]

Our silence concerning the preaching of the Gospel is one of the most common ways we deny Christ. While it is certainly a good idea to minister to the non-spiritual needs of others, that is not sharing the Gospel. Sharing the Gospel must include words coming out of your mouth.



"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

[1Corinthians 14:8]

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