

Series: Basic Evangelism

Title: Excuses, Excuses

Text: Colossians 4:6

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Shortly before ascending into heaven, Jesus gave His earliest followers an edict. We commonly refer to it as the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:18-20). In it, He commissioned us to actively lead others into a relationship with Him. Through living lifestyles which reflect His nature, and through using words which tell of His truths, we are to continually point others towards His spiritual realities (Colossians 4:6). If you are like me, you have found that it is often hard to do this. Sharing the life and love of Jesus is something most of us aspire to do, but actually doing it is another matter altogether. I've discovered there are different reasons that believers often fail in this area. In this lesson, we will examine some of the most common excuses people give for not witnessing.

Seven common excuses for not witnessing....

1. It doesn't work.

Some don't share their faith, because they believe that it is useless. They doubt that anyone will respond to the gospel message. I've felt this way before. However, experience has taught me that the life-transforming power of God doesn't reside in the messenger. It abides in the message. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). When we speak the truth of Christ, supernatural, otherworldly power is unleashed into the souls of men and women.

2. People don't want to hear.

Many are silent about Jesus because they assume others don't want to hear about God. Contemporary culture's emphasis on tolerance and inclusivity has increased this pressure. Sure, we want to be respectful of the ideas, preferences and opinions of others. But we should assume that no one wants to hear about our faith. Statistics reveal that most Americans profess belief in God and that they are very interested in spiritual things. - In addition, there are many people in our cities who will come to salvation if we will simply share (see Acts 18:10).

3. Talking about Jesus is for weirdos.

Some shutdown towards spiritual conversations because they falsely believe that such talk is for strange people. Modern movies and media often depict Christians as out-of-touch, neurotic weirdos. Sure, there are a lot of zany, religious fanatics in our world, but the presence of such people shouldn't detour us from Jesus' desires. The presence of religious confusion necessitates that God's people lovingly share His spiritual truth. The world is in desperate need of individuals who both walk the walk and talk the talk. If you are afraid of being labelled strange for your faith, pray that God would help you. Commit

to simply live a gospel lifestyle and share the gospel on a regular basis. Seek to love others. Don't believe the lie that you need to be a loud-mouthed, super-spiritual, fringe-movement fanatic in order to make a difference. Most people are turned-off by religious braggarts who condemn everyone who isn't like them, but they are impacted by a Christian who quietly lives the Christian life, while serving and loving others. In time, such a lifestyle makes a positive impression, and it opens the door for gospel conversations.

4. It's too hard.

Some shy away from speaking about Christ because they feel that it is a task which requires an expert. Pastors, Deacons, theologians, and seminary professors are best equipped to speak of divine things. Such thinking is faulty. It assumes that the Christian religion is overly complex and too technical to explain. It overlooks the reality that Christianity is primarily about a relationship, not religion. One can talk about Jesus as if he or she is talking about a close friend. Memorized lines and canned sales pitches aren't needed. To share the gospel, you only need to tell of your experience with Jesus (see Acts 4:13-19).

5. Talk about Jesus is for ministers.

I believe that the modern approach to church has hamstrung the church in the area of personal evangelism. Because ministers are paid to serve within the church, some assume (whether consciously or subconsciously), that it is the responsibility of such ministers alone to talk about Jesus. Yes, preachers and pastors have a special obligation to proclaim Christ in a public fashion (see 2 Timothy 4:2), but all members of the church have a role in gospel proclamation as well (see 1 Peter 3:15). Ministers are only different from members in that they exist to lead the members to fulfill its purpose of making Christ known (see Ephesians 4:11-12).

6. Living a good life is enough.

Lastly, some think that a compelling lifestyle is good enough. Being nice to co-workers and friendly to strangers will suffice. This perspective fails to see the importance of words in witnessing. No one has ever come to Christ without understanding the concepts of the gospel. We must speak or share truth in order for people to be saved (see Mark 16:15). The Bible encourages us to be ready to give an answer to those who ask us about our faith (1 Peter 3:15).

7. Talking about Jesus is for gifted people.

In most churches, evangelism and witnessing is seen as something reserved for the spiritually elite. It is falsely regarded as the "gift" of a select few. The New Testament church knew little of this idea. Instead, the apostles and early believers saw each member as having a gift which individually helped the church accomplish its purpose of shining the light of Jesus (see Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-10). Let your light shine for Jesus by using the gift He has given you!

