

Bold Evangelism
Trinity Baptist Church Discipleship Training
(October, 2006)

Introduction:

The purpose of this study is to encourage our congregation towards bold evangelism. There are several elements necessary in order for Christians to be effective in their Christian witness. This study will examine those elements. We will also examine the Biblical basis for evangelism and look at some practical essentials.

Bibliography:

- Dever, Mark, *9 Marks of a Healthy Church*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004.
Kuiper, R.B., *God Centered Evangelism*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1978.
MacArthur, John and the Master's Seminary Faculty, *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1995.
Packer, J.I. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1961.
Reisinger, Ernest C. *Today's Evangelism, Its Message and Methods*. Phillipsburg: Craig Press, 1982.

I. A Biblical Understanding of Evangelism

- A. Evangelism Defined:
1. What evangelism is not: (*9 Marks of a Healthy Church*, Pages 130-137)
 - a. It is Not imposition. We are presenting facts. Evangelism does not include making sure the other person responds correctly.
 - b. It is Not Personal Testimony of what God has done in your life. Evangelism speaks to the claims Christ makes on other people.
 - c. It is Not Social Action or Political Involvement. Evangelism is not a crusade for public virtues or programs of compassion or efforts towards social change. It is not the promotion of morality in a sinful culture.
 - d. It is Not Apologetics or arguing about specific Christian beliefs.
 - e. It is Not the Results of Evangelism. It isn't "soul winning." It isn't seeing people converted – this can lead to the belief that it is in your power to convert others. Evangelism is defined only in terms of the faithfulness of the messengers. It is simply announcing the good news.
 2. Evangelism is warning sinners of the consequence of rebelling against a holy God; it is delivering the message of the cross of Jesus Christ; it is declaring the need for sinners to turn to Christ in faith and repentance; it is living a holy life before them that they might glorify God in the day of visitation.

3. J.I. Packer – “It is a work of communicating in which Christians make themselves the mouthpieces for God’s message of mercy to sinners. Anyone who faithfully delivers that message, under whatever circumstances, in a large meeting, in a small meeting, from a pulpit, or in private conversation is evangelizing.”
(*Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, Page 41).
4. Ernest Reisinger – “Evangelism is the communication of a divinely inspired message that we call the gospel. It is a *message* that is definable in words, but must be communicated in word and power. “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in *power*, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance . . .” (1 Thess. 1:5). That *message* begins with information and includes explanation, application and invitation” (*Today’s Evangelism, Its Message and Methods*, Page 1).
3. “Evangelism” should be distinguished from “missions”
Evangelism is generally reaching those who live nearby - those with whom you have personal contact.
The word “missions” involves bringing the gospel to areas beyond where we live.
Acts 1:8 – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria (*evangelism*), and unto the uttermost part of the earth (*missions*).”

B. The Biblical Mandate for Evangelism

1. The mandate for evangelism was given first to the Apostles
Matthew 28:19-20 – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”
Mark 16:15-16 – “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
Luke 24:46-49 – “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”
John 20:21 – “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”
Acts 1:8 – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

2. The mandate for evangelism was then given to every believer
 - a. Evangelism is not an activity that takes place once each week when the paid minister stands and preaches the Word.
 - b. Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and give them the power to be witnesses of Christ.
The Holy Spirit has come upon all believers implying that all would be witnesses.
Acts 2:4 – “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - c. Speaking to the multitudes Jesus said:
Luke 12:8 – “Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:”
** The word for “confess” is ὁμολογέω (homologeō) – in this context means: to declare openly, speak out freely
Matthew 10:33 – “But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”
 - d. Peter makes it clear that Godly lives of every believer play a part in the salvation of sinners
1 Peter 3:1-2 – “Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.”
1 Peter 2:11-12 – “Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.
3. Effective evangelism is essential for the health of any church
 - a. Alex D. Montoya – “The greatest single reason why the church is declining is that it has ceased to go out to the lost. For some reason, evangelism has become something to do in the church – within the walls of the church building. The church today expects unbelievers to come to it, when in fact the church should go out to them. Effective outreach will take place when Christians realize that the starting point of the Great Commission is to move out from the comfort zones of ecclesiastical structures into the lives of the lost around them” (*Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, Page 307}.
 - b. Mark Dever places it as one of the marks of a healthy church. He adds: “If I had to add one more mark . . . I think I would add that we want our congregation to be outward-looking. We are to be upwardly focused—God centered. But we are also, I think, supposed to reflect God’s own love as we look out on other people and other congregations” (*9 Marks of a Healthy Church*, Page 17).

- C. All evangelism must be done under the authority of the local church
1. The keys to the kingdom have been given to the church stressing its authority.
 2. The church is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15).
 3. This does not exclude the individual members of the church from carrying on the work of evangelism. It means they must do it under the authority of the church.
R.B. Kuiper – “It does not follow that individual believers may not witness to the gospel. **They certainly must.** (emphasis mine) Yet, the fact that according to Scripture the organized church is the primary agent of evangelism has some definite implications as to method” (*God Centered Evangelism*, Page186).
 4. Steve Camp who argues that music ministry must be conducted under the authority of the local church gives five reasons why we must love and serve the church.
 - (1) Jesus Christ promised to build the Church- therefore, my commitment should be to it.
 - (2) He purchased the Church with His own precious blood – therefore, I love those for whom He died.
 - (3) The church is the predominate agency through which God's will is manifested on earth – therefore, it is the community with whom I labor.
 - (4) The Church is the only earthly expression of heaven – therefore, we must daily grow together in conformity to the fullness of Christ.
 - (5) The gates of Hades will not prevail against the Church – therefore, in light of the assured victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, our worship and toil is not in vain.
- D. Four Implications of the organized church as the primary agent of evangelism (*God Centered Evangelism*, Pages186-187).
1. The organized church *must* conduct evangelism. Evangelistic activity is a mark of the true church. Therefore the organized church may not leave the performance of that task to individual members nor to voluntary associations of its members.
 2. Voluntary associations of believers may not, under normal circumstances , presume to displace the organized church as the agents of evangelism. At most, they are to supplement the work of the church.
 3. Church councils (*groups of churches as associations etc.*) are not churches. A council of churches is not itself a church, nor should it be permitted to become a super church. For that reason such organizations ought to refrain from usurping functions which properly belong to the constituent churches. Prominent among those functions is evangelism.
 4. One reason, no doubt, why God has assigned the work of evangelism primarily to the organized church is that He would have converts unite with the church.
- D. Paul made it clear that the work of evangelism is a work that involves many laborers.
1 Corinthians 3:6 – “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”

1. Saving faith demands education (knowledge).
Matthew 13:23 – “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”
 2. A person must understand that he is a sinner and that sin is an attack upon the holiness of God. He must understand the consequences of his sin. He must understand the perfection of the work of Christ. This often takes place over a period of time through many different agents. It is seldom that one person has the privilege of planting, watering, and bringing in the harvest. Some sow, some water, some bring in the harvest.
- E. The Word of God must remain central in any work of evangelism
1. God uses His Word in the salvation of sinners.
James 1:18 – “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”
1 Peter 1:23 – “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
Romans 10:17 – “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
 2. The Word of God is the message from God and must be delivered first to the mind, not the emotions.
 3. The Word can be delivered to the lost in two ways:
The spoken word and the written word.
 - a. The spoken word takes two forms – public preaching, and individual teaching
 - (1) Paul declares the preeminence of public preaching
1 Corinthians 1:21 – “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”
 ** The word “preaching” is from the Greek word κήρυγμα – (kerugma) - that which is proclaimed by a herald or public crier, a proclamation by herald
2 Timothy 4:2 – “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
 ** The word “preach” is from the Greek word κηρύσσω (kerusso) To be a herald, to officiate as a herald, always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed
 - (2) Individual teaching is also necessary
 See Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch - **Acts 8:26-39**
 ** The word translated “preached” in verse 35 is - εὐαγγελίζω (euangelizo) – To bring good news, to announce glad tidings

1 Peter 3:15 – “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”

Luke 12:8 – “Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:”

- b. That the apostles also followed the mandate of the Great Commission through the written word can be seen in their subsequent writings

John –

John 20:31 – “**But these are written**, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

1 John 5:13 – “**These things have I written unto you** that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Peter –

1 Peter 5:12 – “By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, **I have written** briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.”

(1) The gospel can go out through books and Christian literature or through printed sermons.

(2) The mass distribution of tracts is making use of available printing technology for teaching the Gospel of Christ in written form. We trust God’s sovereignty and His promise that His word will not return void.

Isaiah 55:11 – “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.”

II. A Witness Must be a Christian

- A. A person cannot testify of what he does not know
1. The Christian is one who personally knows of God’s grace
 2. The Christian is one who personally knows what it means to be delivered from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the flesh.
 3. The Christians is one who personally knows what it is to have fellowship with Christ
 4. The Christian is one who personally knows the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit
 5. The Christian is one who personally knows the treasure of reconciliation, of adoption, of being able to call the eternal living God, Father.

- B. Ultimately, it is the assurance of our salvation that drives us to faithfulness in serving our Savior.
1. The greatest cause of unfaithfulness, or lukewarm Christianity is unbelief. If your religion is only an activity to be practiced on Sunday and Wednesday nights or if the title “Christian” is just something you wear, then you will have little compulsion to give yourself for the cause of Christ.
 2. If you have fallen in love with Christ then you will have difficulty keeping it to yourself.
 3. The reason pastors have such a difficult time finding workers is because for many people true Christianity is not a reality in their lives. They don’t have confidence that they are on a divine mission. They will always find more important things to do.
 4. If you have confidence that the most powerful being in the universe has called you and placed you in His kingdom then you will have no problem serving Him. And if you are persuaded that He will keep all that you have entrusted to Him, you will not be ashamed to even die for Him.

III. Evangelism Must be Fueled by Love

- A. All of our labors must be motivated by our love for Christ
1. We obey Him out of our love for Him
John 14:15 – “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”
John 15:10 – “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”
 2. Our lives have been captivated by our love for Christ
2 Corinthians 5:14 – “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:”
 3. Our desire to honor God and see Him glorified is our ultimate motive
- B. Christians have been given hearts of love
1. The first fruit of the Spirit is love
Galatians 5:22 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love . . .”
 2. Love for our fellow human beings is one of our Lord’s commands.
 - a. A certain lawyer came to Christ asking what he must do to have eternal life. Jesus answered:
Luke 10:27 – “. . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.”
 - b. The lawyer then replied:
Luke 10:29 – “But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?”
 - c. In answer Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan.
 3. A love for God brings us to love those made in His image. John applies this principle to our love for the brethren but it can be applied to our concern for the unsaved as well.
1 John 4:20 – “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

4. It would be the greatest height of wickedness to see a man about to perish and do nothing about it.
5. Many disregard the perishing masses because of selfishness
 - a. Evangelism is a focus outward away from ourselves
 - b. Evangelism takes effort, labor
 - c. Many don't want to be inconvenienced
6. We have the words of life. We must share them with the world.

IV. Overcoming Fear

- A. One of the chief causes of not evangelizing is fear
 1. We fear rejection
 2. We fear personal hardship
- B. Fear is not of God

2 Timothy 1:7 – “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

 1. Fear is consistent with unbelief

Revelation 21:8 – “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

 - a. Adam - **Gen. 3:10** - "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked and I hid myself"
 - b. The parable of the talents -

Matthew 25:24-25 – “Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.”
 2. Fear comes from the blindness of our own heart and the lies of Satan
 3. Fear denies and mistrusts God's Sovereignty. Fear doubts that God is able to accomplish His purpose for the good of His people.
 4. Richard Baxter: “Observe the sinfulness of your fear in the effects; how it driveth you from God, and hindereth faith, and love, and thankfulness, and discourageth you from prayer, and sacraments, and all duty. And therefore it must needs be pleasing to the devil, and displeasing to God, and no way to be pleaded for or justified.”
- C. God commands us not to fear
 1. The phrase “fear not” appears 63 times in the Bible
 2. This has been God's command to His covenant people from the beginning.

Genesis 15:1 – "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward."
 3. God sends affliction to try and test us but commands, "Fear Not"

Exodus 20:20 – "And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not."
 4. God's command to His people has not changed

Phil 4:6 - "Be careful for nothing"

- D. Christianity is described as a warfare
1. In **Ephesians 6** Paul describes the Christian armor that we wear as we go into battle.
 2. We are to be valiant soldiers
1 Timothy 6:12 – “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”
 3. We must march forth with boldness.
Hebrews 13:6 – “So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.
- E. Courage and bravery are excellent Christian virtues
- ^{NAS} **1 Corinthians 16:13** – “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”
1. The Bible continually stresses courage
 - a. Moses’ charge to Israel:
Deuteronomy 31:6 – “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”
 - b. The charge to Joshua as he entered into Canaan:
Joshua 1:9 – “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.”
 - c. Hezekiah’s charge to courage as the Assyrians surrounded Israel
2 Chronicles 32:7 – “Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: for *there be* more with us than with him:”
 - d. David’s charge to Solomon:
1 Chronicles 22:13 – “Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.”
 - e. David in the Psalms:
Psalms 31:24 – “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD. he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”
 2. How much more must we march forth in boldness and confidence? We have been assured of power.
Acts 1:8 – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

- V. Types of Evangelism** (there are two primary types of evangelism)
- A. Personal Evangelism – by every Christian. All evangelism is ultimately personal evangelism, one-to-one, whether it involves a preacher preaching to individual sinners in a crowd or an individual speaking personally to a lost man. Personal Evangelism in a stricter sense, however, involves one person bringing the message of the gospel to another person
 - B. Purposed Evangelism – organized by the church
 - 1. Preaching the Gospel with an eye to addressing the lost condition of the unconverted – even during times when all present profess to be believers.
 - 2. Printing and distribution of literature
 - 3. Various planned evangelistic campaigns
 - 4. Home Bible Studies

VI. Six Biblical Guidelines About How to Evangelize

(9 Marks of a Healthy Church, Pages 126-130)

1. Tell people with honesty that if they repent and believe they will be saved—but that it will be costly.
 - a. We must not hold back parts that seem too awkward or difficult to explain.
 - b. Making people away of their lost and sinful condition is part and parcel of sharing the Good News.
2. Tell people with urgency that if they repent and believe they will be saved—but they must believe now. Evangelism must go forth with urgency.
3. Tell people with joy that if they repent and believe the Gospel they will be saved. However difficult it may be, it is all worth it!
4. Use the Bible.
5. Realize that the lives of individual Christians and of the church as a whole are a central part of evangelism.
 - a. God is glorified not just by our speaking the message but by our actually living consistently with it.
 - b. Live a life of committed love to the other members of your local church, as a fundamental part of your own sanctification and of your evangelistic ministry.
 - c. Our individual lives are not a sufficient witness. Our lives together as church communities are the confirming echo of our witness.”
6. Remember to pray.

VII. Guidelines for measuring true evangelism

(Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God, Pages 86-87).

“So, in the last analysis, there is only one method of evangelism: namely, the faithful explanation and application of the gospel message. Let us work this out. It means that we need to bring under review all our evangelistic plans and practices – our missions, rallies, and campaigns; our sermons, talks, and testimonies; our big meetings, our little meetings, and our presentation of the gospel in personal dealing; the tracts that we give, the books that we lend, the letters that we write – and to ask about each of them questions such as the following:

1. Is this way of presenting Christ calculated to impress on people that the gospel is a word from God?

2. Is it calculated to divert their attention from man and all things human to God and His truth? Or is its tendency rather to distract attention from the Author and authority of the message to the person and performance of the messenger? Does it make the gospel sound like a human idea, a preacher's plaything, or like a divine revelation before which the human messenger stands in awe? Does this way of presenting Christ savour of human cleverness and showmanship? Does it tend thereby to exalt man?
--or does it embody rather the straightforward, unaffected simplicity of the messenger whose sole concern is to deliver his message? . . . fearing nothing so much as that men should admire and applaud him when they ought to be bowing down and humbling themselves before the mighty Lord whom he represents?
3. Is this way of presenting Christ calculated to promote, or impede, the work of the word in men's minds? Is it going to clarify the meaning of the message, or to leave it enigmatic and obscure, locked up in pious jargon and oracular formulae?
4. Is it going to make people think, and think hard, and think hard about God, and about themselves in relation to God? Or will it tend to stifle thought by play exclusively on the emotions?
5. Is this way of presenting Christ calculated to convey to people the *doctrine* of the gospel, and not just part of it, but the whole of it – the truth about the Creator and His claims, and about ourselves as guilty, lost, and helpless sinners, needing to be born again, and about the Son of God who became man, and died for sins, and lives to forgive sinners and to bring them to God?
6. Is this way of presenting Christ calculated to convey to people the *application* of the gospel, and not just part of it but the whole of it – the summons to see and know oneself as God sees and knows one, that is, as a sinful creature, and to face the breadth and depth of the need into which a wrong relationship with God has brought one, and too the cost and consequences of turning to receive Christ as Savior and Lord?
7. Is this way of presenting Christ calculated to convey the gospel truth in a manner that is appropriately *serious*? Is it calculated to make people feel that they are indeed facing a matter of life and death? Is it calculated to make them feel the greatness of God, and the greatness of their sin and need, and the greatness of the grace of Christ? Is it calculated to make them aware of the awful majesty and holiness of God?