

Leadership on Evangelism

John Maxwell says that everything rises or falls on leadership. Let's test that idea on the topic of evangelism and see if it's true.

I have worked alongside pastors and ministry leaders my entire adult career. It is my observation that most Christian leaders don't evangelize and Pastors are no exception. Furthermore, their congregations know it.

I am not saying that we are all evangelists by gifting but we are all to be evangelizers by calling.

It is a fact that most pastors are not gifted as evangelists; they are usually gifted as pastor and teacher. The problem arises in that they are leaders and their flock needs leadership in the highest calling of life – to tell others about Christ.

Evangelists do exist in the local church. I have found that usually ten to twenty percent of any gathering of believers is in this category. But many evangelists lack other skill sets that might make them more effective when it comes to incorporating themselves into the body of Christ. Therefore they are marginalized and rendered less effective at leavening the entire lump – the local church.

So we have ungifted pastors and ineffective evangelists. What is a leader to do? How about exercising leadership to bring about evangelization in the local church?

I am thoroughly convinced that evangelism is our highest calling and form of worship. If you agree that it is even in the top two or three priorities for a believer, then you must have a strategy to incorporate it into the life of your church.

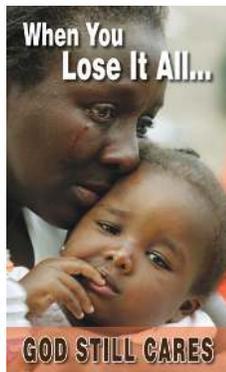
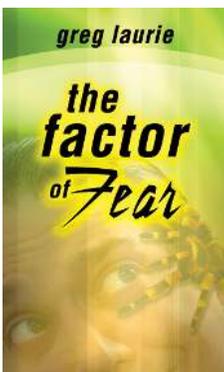
I hope your strategy is not the old stand-by to “just let your light shine.” There are two big problems with that approach: 1) Your light don't shine that bright and 2) Someone has to open their mouth at some point and tell them who flipped the switch. After all “evangelism” means to proclaim, doesn't it?

And then there is the concept of “friendship evangelism,” which states that evangelism works best through a long-term relationship. I agree with that but this is usually misapplied to give us enough wiggle room to never actually get around to telling our friends about the gospel. Most Christians unashamedly admit they don't even know anyone that is unsaved! When are we going to pull the trigger?

It's time to start leading our followers to evangelize by our personal example. What is your personal plan to talk about Christ? I'm not talking about what you do in your official capacities behind the pulpit or “up front.” What do you do to tell others about Christ when no one is looking?

Do you even know the names of your new neighbors? Most of us don't, yet we cling to the old paradigms and end up doing nothing. I am sympathetic and want to help you with this dilemma. Keeping Jesus to ourselves is breaking our Heavenly Fathers heart.

My personal plan is to find at least one person each day that I can share the gospel with in some form or fashion. I let God bring them to me and my job is to be ready when they show up. The way I do that is to ask God each day to open my eyes to these people and give me the opportunity and resources to meet the opportunity. I use tracts to help meet my goal and you can too.



Tracts are not that old fashioned and awkward piece of paper that your grandmother used to use – they can be very relevant and contemporary. If you choose them carefully they can really work and fill a tremendous need in your life to be a faithful evangelizer. Visit our website www.ATStracts.org to get more details on how you can use tracts effectively.

The last step is to talk about your experiences as a witness – model it for those you lead. If they see that it is a part of how you live your life they will follow suit and you will have led them in the most important endeavor they will ever engage in.

Daniel Southern
October 2005