

## Evangelism Part One

### I. The Imperative.

- A. Be prepared (1 Pe. 3:15).
  - 1. Prepared.
    - a. Know what to say.
    - b. Know how to say it.
  - 2. Always.
  - 3. Gently.
- B. Make disciples (Mt. 28:18-20)
- C. Look at the harvest (Jn. 4:35-38).

### II. The Need.

- A. We live in a rapidly changing world.
  - 1. Population growth.
    - a. In 8000 BC, 5 million.
    - b. At birth of Jesus, 200 million.
    - c. In 1800, 1 billion.
    - d. In 2000, 6.5 billion.
    - e. Today, about 7.9 billion.
    - f. By 2057, 10 billion.
  - 2. Cultural shifts.
    - a. Pre-modernism.
      - 1) History prior to the seventeenth century (Medieval, Renaissance, and Reformation periods).
      - 2) The objective foundation for truth, meaning, and purpose, and value is found in God.
    - b. Modernism.
      - 1) A period which ran from the Enlightenment (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) through the end of the Cold war (late twentieth century).
      - 2). The objective foundation for truth, meaning, purpose, and value is found in man, nature, and science.
    - c. Post-Modernism
      - 1) From the end of the Cold War to the present.
      - 2) The objective foundation for truth, meaning, purpose, and value does **not** exist.
  - 3. Rise of anti-Christian philosophies, esp. in the US.

## B. The decline of Christianity in America.

1. In 2016, Wheaton College Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals found 30-35% of US population were evangelical.
2. In 2023, Gallup reported 12% of American adults identify as evangelicals.
3. Protestant population now 46.5%.
  - a. Evangelicals and black Protestant have held steady.
  - b. Among Protestants, evangelicals about 55%.
4. About 23% of American adults say they are not affiliated with any religion, and many say they are atheists or agnostic.
5. The Four Horsemen of New Atheism.
  - a. Richard Dawkins (biologist, *The God Delusion*).
  - b. Christopher Hutchins (journalist, *God Is Not Great*).
  - c. Daniel Dennett (philosopher, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*).
  - d. Sam Harris (philosopher, *The End of Faith*).

## III. The opportunity.

- A. The Church militant (Mt. 16:18).
- B. Christians have no business retreating into a fortress.
  1. Bill Bright: 1 of every 4 is ready to accept Christ.
  2. Augustine: You have made us for yourself....
  3. Population movement.
    - a. The mission field is coming to us.
    - b. We must be ready.
    - c. No excuses.
- C. This generation is the most depressed generation in history.
- D. Why don't Christians share the Good News?
  1. Fear.
    - a. Of mockery.
    - b. Of rejection.
    - c. That others know more.
  2. Don't know what or why they believe (unprepared).
  3. Don't know any non-Christians.
  4. Don't know how to start a conversation (unprepared).
  5. Live no differently from the world.

IV. The Method.

- A. The message must never change.
- B. The method must change with the times.
  - 1. The Church is typically one generation behind.
  - 2. Today we are “living” in a Modern culture ministering to those in a Post-Modern culture.
- C. Oddly, we must bring them back to a pre-modern understanding.
  - 1. Is there absolute Truth?
  - 2. Does God exist?
  - 3. Are miracles possible?
  - 4. Is the New Testament reliable?
    - a. Who is Jesus?
    - b. What did Jesus say about the Bible?
    - c. What about errors in the Bible?
    - d. What if Christianity is true?

V. We have the greatest story to tell the nations.

- A. Although separated from God by sin, there is reconciliation through Jesus Christ.
- B. Telling the old, old story in a new, new way.