

12. Inviting Others to Walk with You

(Friendship Evangelism)

Jesus calls people to “follow me” — walk with him

First disciples: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt 4:19)

Part of fishing for people is to invite them to fish for more people

All disciples are to fish, to invite others to walk with them

Great Commission — Matthew 28:18-20

We all are “ambassadors for Christ” — 2 Cor 5:19-21

All disciples are to invite others to walk with us/Jesus—self-replicating—cloning

Natural — think through the process with me

1. In conversion, God changed me (“regeneration”)

Changed people will/must live changed lives

Things can’t continue as they did before — new birth, life, creation — different

2. As you live out a changed life, people start to notice

Phil 2:14-15

“Light of the world” — Matt 5:14-16

Different — notice

“Salt of the earth” — Matt 5:13 (salt “is defiled,” diluted with other things)

Christians don’t live in isolation from the world — Just as salt was used to preserve meat, so also Jesus “calls his disciples to arrest corruption and prevent moral decay in their world” (Blomberg, 102).

Just as salt can become mixed with various impure substances and therefore become worthless as a preservative, so also Christians can mix themselves with the things of the world and become “worthless as *agents of change and redemption*” (Blomberg, 102).

Changed people live changed lives, and people notice

KJV of Titus 2:14

Jesus “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a *peculiar* people, zealous of good works.”

“Special,” people who belong to God — unusual — people will notice

3. As people start to notice you, they will wonder — “What’s different?”

Quotation variously attributed — “Preach at all times; if necessary, use words.”

Our lives preach louder, and our deeds proclaim truer, than words

1 Peter 3:1-4

Two ways they will respond

“But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the *fragrance* of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the *aroma* of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a *fragrance from death to death*, to the other a *fragrance from life to life*” (2 Cor 2:14-16).

1. To some we will be the aroma of life — “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16).

2. To others, we will be the stench of death, their death — 1 Peter 4:3-5

4. Key: if you smell like the aroma of life, they will ask you why

“Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person” (Col 4:5-6).

Are you ready? — 1 Peter 3:15b-16a

“Personal testimony”

Not talking to someone you don’t know on the street corner

Responding to people who know you/see change — “friendship evangelism”

Powerful examples of “personal testimony” in the Bible

John 9:24-25

Acts 4:19-20 (cf. 1 John 1:3)

1. Acronym: KISS

What life was like before you became a follower of Jesus — minimal

Why you decided to become a disciple — actual event

Difference it has made in your life (John 9:25)

Prepare — practice

2. Personal testimony is only the first step

Must be prepared to invite them to walk with you

ABC — John 3:16 in our first talk together

Rom 3:23 (“all”); 6:23 (“wages”; “free gift”); 10:9 (“confess”)

Illustration

3. Keep the focus on Jesus

Issue is not religion or good deeds or answering intellectual questions or really even you

Who Jesus is — God; Savior; Lord

What Jesus has done — cross

4. Don't take on too much responsibility

Why do some respond? Why are you an aroma?

Powerful stories? Compelling arguments?

Father draws (6:44)

Not totally passive — perhaps a time for you to push — don't necessarily wait to be asked

Holy Spirit's job to convict them on sin — John 16:8 — Paul Little (2:39)

If you share, you will never fail

You don't convict, convert, or save them

If they reject you — not you but Jesus — blessed — Matt 5:11-12

Christians are cloners

Changed in conversion — changed people lived changed lives

Stink to some, smell wonderful to other

Be prepared to tell them why

Ask the important question: "Would you like to walk this journey of real life with me?"

Let God be God — give life to the dead