

There is No Such Thing as the Gift of Evangelism

As part of my ministry, I always try to encourage Christians to engage in the work of evangelism. I am amazed at how many times I have heard Christians say, “I am not like you. I don’t have the gift of evangelism.” So, to set the record straight, there is no such thing as a spiritual gift of evangelism. In passages that list the various types of spiritual gifts bestowed on individuals, there is no mention of a spiritual gift of evangelism (See I Corinthians 12 and Romans 12.) But there is a gift bestowed on the Church called the evangelist.

*“He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and **some as evangelists**, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12).*

To reiterate, there is no such thing as the spiritual gift of evangelism. But God has given some men to the Church in order to **equip the members of Christ’s Church to do the work** of service in order that the Body of Christ is built up.

Like the woman at the well in John 4, when a man is regenerated by God, he spontaneously desires for others to hear the about Jesus. He probably cannot articulate the gospel immediately, but he still desires that it be proclaimed. He might only be able to say something like, “*All I know is that once I was blind but now I see*” (John 9:25). Or he might say, “*Come see a man who told me all the things I have done*” (John 4:29). It is possible that a person cannot say anything because he is physically unable to speak. But when God regenerates even a person like that, he still has a desire that others be told about Jesus. When a new Christian reads or hears Matthew 28:19-20, he naturally wants to play some type of role in the fulfillment of the Great Mission that Jesus gave to the Church. He might not know exactly what to do or how to do it, but he wants to be involved because his Good Master wants His desire to be carried out. Proof of this is evident by the response of the Christians of Thessalonica:

*“Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. **For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you**, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything” (I Thessalonians 1:5-8).*

The Apostle Paul commended these Christians for their obedience to the Master’s marching orders. Notice that he attributes this response to the reception of the gospel. It was not just head knowledge to them. Rather, the power of God was evident in that the gospel effectually changed their lives. They became imitators of Paul and of the Lord so that they became examples to all the believers around them. Paul said that the evidence of their faith in the gospel was seen in the sounding forth of the Word of the Lord by them. Paul addressed these words to the entire Church, not a few select men.

If you have excused yourself from the work of evangelism because you don’t think God gave you the “gift of evangelism,” you need to adjust your thinking to come in line with God’s Word. There is no such gift. On the contrary, the Bible teaches that every Christian should spontaneously desire that the gospel is proclaimed and that every Christian is called to be involved in the Great Mission in some capacity or another.

The proclamation of the gospel is always a component of the disciple making process.

The gospel is not communicated simply by our good living. In other words, we cannot fulfill our role in the Great Mission just by living exemplary lives. Yes, our lives must reflect the life of Christ. But to evangelize, we must somehow communicate the gospel. Since regeneration produces a spontaneous desire to carry out Jesus’ desires (John 14:15), and since making disciples is impossible apart from the proclamation of the gospel (Romans 10:14), those who are led by God’s Spirit (the regenerate) naturally desire to be involved in the proclamation of the gospel. If they are unable to speak because of a physical impairment, they will still find a

way for the gospel to be proclaimed. They want people to know about Jesus. Perhaps they give gospel literature to people. If they cannot purchase any, they might write a letter explaining the gospel. If a professing Christian does not have the desire to be involved in the proclamation of the gospel in whatever capacity God enables, he is spiritually dysfunctional. He is either unregenerate or in need of spiritual revival.

According to the Bible, what can every Christian do?

Every Christian **can and should desire** to be used by God in a MIGHTY WAY to communicate the gospel. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this desire. Evangelism begins with a desire.

Since this is a good and godly desire, every Christian **can ASK GOD TO USE HIM MIGHTILY in the communication of the gospel** in order that the Great Mission is carried out. There is absolutely nothing wrong with such a prayer. It is in keeping with Jesus' instruction and promise.

“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it” (John 13:14-14).

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples” (John 15:7-8).

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8).

“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him” (1 John 5:15-15).

Since we know that it is Jesus' will that the Great Mission be carried out, and since it cannot be carried out without the proclamation of the gospel, we have every reason to pray the following prayer:

(Try to imagine the song “I surrender all” being gently sung in the background as you read the prayer.)

Father, I pray that you do whatever is necessary to make the gospel sound forth through me, your servant. Teach me how to articulate it clearly. Give me boldness to proclaim it continually and in spite of persecution. Cause millions of people to hear and understand the gospel through me, your servant. Give me ever increasing knowledge of the gospel so that I eventually am able to articulate it as effectively as the Apostle Paul communicated it (whether written or spoken). Since effective gospel proclamation is necessary for the Great Mission to be carried out, and since it is your will that the Great Mission be carried out, and since you have promised to hear and answer anything asked according to your will, do this great work in and through me!

If you are a Christian, there is no reason NOT to pray such a prayer. If you are a Christian, there is no reason NOT to desire God to do this for you. Would you like Him to do this for you? If not, in my opinion, you are in need of either spiritual revival or regeneration.