

## EVANGELISM

### SMCC Core Class

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#### Review

1. Who made us, and to whom are we accountable?
2. What is our problem? In other words, are we in trouble and why?
3. What is God's solution to that problem? How has He acted to save us from it?
4. How do I myself, right here, right now – come to be included in that salvation? What makes this good news for me and not just for someone else?

This is where Paul focused. This is where we want to focus in clearly understanding the gospel – proclaiming and meditating on what God says in His Word about these 4 questions.

1. God
  2. Man – Sin
  3. Jesus
  4. Response
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#### I. FIRST QUESTION

Why don't we evangelize? How can we overcome the reasons we resist?

##### A. Lack of Love

###### 1. Love for God

"Because I love Christ, I will gladly tell others about Him.

**2 Corinthians 5:11** Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. **12** We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. **13** For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. **14** For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; **15** and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

## 2. Love for people

"I love my neighbor, so I want to tell him about the good news of Jesus Christ."

**Galatians 5:13** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **14** For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

### a. Both to a specific unbeliever...

**Mark 10:21** And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

### b. ... and to unbelievers in general:

**Romans 5:8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

## B. Absence of Joy

"I am so blessed by what God has done in my life that I want to share it with others."

**Acts 2:46** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

**Luke 8:38** The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, **39** "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

## C. Presence of Fear

Fear of ridicule and persecution

"I'm afraid people will ridicule me and shun me if I am open about my faith."

Antidote: Do not expect to be treated better than Jesus was. Be willing to endure a little hardship the way Christ endured much greater hardship.

**Matthew 10:22** and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. **23** When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. **24** "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. **25** It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household. **26** "So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. **27** What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. **28** And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **29** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. **30** But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. **31** Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

#### **D. Fear of rejection**

"I don't think people will listen to me or respond positively."

Antidote: Face it. They might not listen or respond well. Though your message will be rejected by some, it may also be accepted by others. In both cases God is pleased if we trust him and obey.

#### **E. Fear of offending people (seeming judgmental and mean)**

"My plan is just to live the life in front of those who don't know Christ."

Antidote: Sinners are not brought to repentance and faith merely through people being nice to them or living moral lives. Realize that your "living the life" is not equal to evangelism, but merely provides the credibility for performing evangelism. At some point in time, people need to actually hear the message of salvation.

**Romans 10:8** But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); **9** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

**Romans 10:14** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? **15** And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah

says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" **17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

#### **F. Fear of not knowing enough**

" I could never share the gospel with anyone - I wouldn't know what to say"

Antidote: Realize, first, that it is not your knowledge, intellect, power, or speaking ability that will bring someone to Christ. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of the blind and grant them faith. Human persuasion does not change a heart, only the Spirit of God can do that. We need only be faithful to proclaim the gospel.

**1 Corinthians 1:18** For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. **19** For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." **20** Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. **22** For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, **23** but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. **26** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **28** God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, **29** so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

## **II. SECOND QUESTION**

What do we believe about evangelism here at SMCC? What is our theology and our philosophy and our approach?

### III. THIRD QUESTION

How do I handle common objections and questions that come up when I share with non-believers?

People will not be moved by how many smart answers you have.

But maybe they will remember that you loved them and listened to them.

**1 Peter 3:15** but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

**Colossians 4:5** Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. **6** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

**Proverbs 15:1** A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

#### A. Principles in Answering Questions

Remember that you cannot argue someone into the kingdom of God. It is not the cleverness of your answers or your ability to fight off objections that will lead someone to Christ. It is only the Holy Spirit who will bring someone to a saving knowledge of the truth.

At the same time, it is good to demonstrate the reasonableness of our faith. In other words, having clear, concise, reasonable answers to questions demonstrates that Christianity is not merely some myth.

If you don't know the answer to a question, then tell the person that. Be honest. However, many times difficult questions that are raised are only raised in order to distract from the main issue. Use that difficult question to redirect to a more important question.

The appropriate response to all challenges to Christianity resides, ultimately, in Scripture. Use it! Your responses should consistently be from Scripture. When people challenge the validity of Scripture, go ahead and be clear that is the point which we cannot compromise or move away from.

#### **2 Timothy 3:15-17**

**15** and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**B. A few fairly reliable resources to find answers online:**

<https://www.gotquestions.org>

<https://christiananswers.net>

<https://www.gty.org>

<https://www.desiringgod.org>

<https://www.ligonier.org>

**C. Sowing Seeds**

**Matthew 13:18** “Hear then the parable of the sower: **19** When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. **20** As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, **21** yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. **22** As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. **23** As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

**1 Corinthians 3:6** I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. **7** So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. **8** He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.

What is success in evangelism? Is it when the person you witness to comes to Christ? Certainly that's what we want to happen. But if this is success, are we failures whenever we share the gospel and people refuse to believe? Was Jesus an "evangelistic failure" When people like the rich young ruler turned away from Him and his message? Obviously not. Then neither are we when we present Christ and His message and they turn away in unbelief. We need to learn that sharing the gospel is successful evangelism. We ought to have an obsession for souls, and tearfully plead with God to see more people converted, but conversions are fruit that God alone can give. - Donald Whitney

**IV. Homework** – Spend about 15 minutes every morning in prayer about evangelism

- Pray that God would open doors.

**Colossians 4:2** Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. **3** At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— **4** that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

- Pray that God would open mouths

**Ephesians 6:18** praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, **19** and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

- Pray that God would open eyes

**Romans 10:1** Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

**2 Thessalonians 3:1** Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you,

- Ask God for alertness.
- Ask God, every day, to keep you ready for the opportunity that He will bring your way.
- Pray for three people by name.