

Go Tell It: Evangelism Planning in a Pandemic

Facilitator's Guide

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Series: P.U.R.S.U.**E**. Excellence | Unit: Evangelism

Evangelism. *We are called to **share the Gospel**. This is an individual calling, not a corporate designation. Though we gather to hear, be reminded about, and celebrate the Gospel, we depart empowered and equipped to evangelize.*

Assuming acceptance of the call to evangelize, it is usually helpful to establish a plan for success. This is especially so in the current climate. But, how do you plan for a situation that you have never encountered? What do we have available to us that addresses the current climate? These are fair questions to which there is a faithful response.

- **Psalm 109:97-104.** God's precepts apply, no matter the circumstance (_____).
- **Matthew 9:35-38, 10:1-7.** The Lord's work is to be accomplished by the Lord's disciples (_____).
- **Matthew 28:20b.** The Lord's presence guides and guards those who do the Lord's work (_____).

When facing the unknown, rely on what is known. We know that God is consistent (*Joshua 1:5; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17*), and God's consistency demands that we fulfill God's unchanged will for those who have been saved. For our purposes, it is God's will that we be messengers of the Gospel. As we proceed with this lesson, keep in mind that though God's will remains the same in the time of a pandemic, it may be the case that the way we perform the will of God may necessarily change to account for the present age.

As we plan to evangelize in a pandemic, let's consider three aspects of the plan: determining who to talk to; determining what to say; and expecting the unexpected along the way.

Determine who you will talk with

When it comes to evangelism, many times our thoughts turn immediately toward interacting with complete strangers. But, let us not venture "to the end of the earth" before we do what is required in our respective "Jerusalems." In this season of physical distancing and concentrated relationships, let's become eFranglists.

Given our current reality, we should be thinking about being **eFranglists**. And, what is an eFranglist? An eFranglist is one who shares the good news about Jesus with friends, relatives, acquaintances, and neighbors by taking advantage of the reach of digital media.



So, who will you eFrangelize this month? Take a moment, then identify two people from each category below that you will commit to reaching out to before the end of September.

- Friends _____
- Relatives _____
- Acquaintances _____
- Neighbors _____

Determine what you might say

For some of us, the difficulty with evangelism comes with trying to engage in a conversation that will lead to the Gospel. So, the following acronyms are meant to help us figure out what we can think about saying and doing to lead us in the right direction.

Talk about F.O.R.M. - When you engage someone in conversation, here is a pathway for steering the conversation toward the Gospel. As you converse, pay attention to opportunities to share Jesus.

- | <u>Networking</u> | <u>Evangelism</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ● <u>F</u> amily | <u>F</u> _____ |
| ● <u>O</u> ccupation | <u>O</u> _____ (Philosophy) |
| ● <u>R</u> ecreation | <u>R</u> _____ (Purpose) |
| ● <u>M</u> otivation (Mission) | <u>M</u> _____ |

Play a G.A.M.E. - Though we are limited to some physical activities, we can still be thinking about games while we engage with people. This acronym is another way to steer to conversation toward Jesus. Again, pay attention to opportunities to share Jesus.

- Get the ball rolling
- Ask about experiences
- Measure receptivity
- Evangelize

Expect the unexpected

We cannot know exactly what will happen (Acts 1:7), so we should be prepared to shift gears, refocus our energy, or reframe the conversation. These may be necessary as the dynamics of our encounter changes, because inevitably, something unexpected will occur. But, if the unexpected occurs, evangelism success remains possible if we stick with it. Here are some ways to deal with the unexpected.

- Pray in advance (Matthew 7:7-8; Mark 11:24)
- Remain calm and remember the purpose of the encounter (Isaiah 26:3)
- Lean into grace and hospitality (Proverbs 15:1-2; Hebrews 13:1-2)