



Powerful Proclamation

Adapted from “Christian Discipline” series by Dennis Marquardt

The early Christians could not imagine failing to share their faith with others. In fact, describing Christians as “evangelicals” comes from the idea of *evangelism*, telling others about Christ. Evangelism for Christians should be like breathing is to the human body, it just naturally happens.

One of the cardinal disciplines of Christianity is sharing our faith with others. The final instruction Jesus gave His disciples before returning to heaven was to go preach the gospel and make disciples in all nations. It is the responsibility of all Christians to share the good news of salvation with others. The following story is a powerful example for Christians:

In the People's Republic of China, [the nation with the largest population in the world—more than one

“Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.”

billion] is what is called the three-self church. It is the state-approved church. Several of us from Wooddale, a couple of years ago, were in Beijing, and we went to one of the services of one of the three-self churches. It was an old building, built around the turn of the last century. We had a translator there. There were hymns sung, some of them were to western tunes which we knew. They read the Bible. They had prayers. There was a sermon, a Bible teaching that I thought was fine. But they are not allowed to evangelize. That is part of the deal with the state. You can do your thing as long as your thing does not include persuading somebody else. There are about 50 million Christians in the People's Republic of China who have chosen not to be part of the three-self church [as of 2015], and meet in house churches, **because they are convinced you cannot be a Christian unless you evangelize.** They say that the two go together; and if you do not evangelize, you are not a Christian. They would say that those who are in the three-self church are really not Christians, as far as the New Testament definition is concerned.¹

¹ Leith Anderson, "Making More Disciples," Preaching Today, tape 165.

COURAGE Level Questions

C1: How did you come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? Did someone share their faith with you? Be specific.

C2: As of 2015, more than 50 million people in China believe that Christianity and evangelism go hand in hand. Why do you think this is their belief?

Exercise #1: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 28:19–20 (ESV) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

C3: Jesus shared in Matt 28:19-20 (ESV) to, “Go and make disciples.” What does that look like for you today?

Exercise #2: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate yourself on how well you share the gospel with others and/or help disciple others. Write out a plan to improve within the next year.

My score:

What I plan to do in the next year:

Exercise #1: Read and answer the following.

Acts 1:8 (ESV) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

C4: What does Holy Spirit's empowerment mean to you? Have you ever experienced Holy Spirit baptism? Be specific.

STOP! Let's make sure you don't miss an opportunity. If you have NOT been baptized in the Holy Spirit, as the early church experienced it in Acts chapters 1-2, take a moment now to read the Bible passage, and then ask Jesus to baptize you in His Spirit.

C5: Why do you think God wants us to receive the free gift of baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Exercise #3: Read and answer the following.

Luke 9:1–6 (ESV) And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.” And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

C6: How long did it take you to learn the skills and responsibilities required in your current job/occupation? Were there years of study before attempting to perform those tasks?

C7: How does that relate to Jesus spending three years with His disciples before sending them out?

STRENGTH Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 28:19–20 (ESV)

S1: These verses are often called the Great Commission. In your own words, what is the Great Commission and what is required to fulfill it?

S2: What excuses have you used for not sharing the gospel with someone? What practical things can you do or change in yourself to more actively participate in the Great Commission?

Exercise #2: What does “make disciples” mean to you? Write out a plan for helping another believer become more like Jesus in his/her life (discipleship).

Exercise #3: Read and answer the following.

Acts 1:8 (ESV)

S3: Once you accept Christ as Lord and Savior, from where do you find strength to share your faith?

S4: Jesus spoke often about the power of the Holy Spirit. Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit? If so, describe your experience.

STOP! Let's make sure you don't miss an opportunity. If you have NOT been baptized in the Holy Spirit, as the early church experienced it in Acts chapters 1-2, take a moment now to read the Bible passage, and then ask Jesus to baptize you in His Spirit.

S5: The church is the only cooperative society that exists for the benefit of non-members. How are you engaged in that society?

Exercise #4: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate how well and how often you share your faith with an unbelieving person. Next, write out a plan to improve and become more active in this spiritual discipline.

ENDURANCE Level Questions

Exercise #1: One of the cardinal disciplines of Christianity is evangelism, sharing the faith with others by numerous means. Describe how important sharing your faith with others is to you.

Write out a plan on how to disciple other men in the importance of sharing their faith.

Exercise #2: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 28:19–20 (ESV)

The Great Commission was the last commandment Jesus gave before He left this earth. On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate how well you are keeping this commandment?

My rating:

Now write out a plan to improve and/or become more active in this area over the next 90 days.

Exercise #3: Read and answer the following.

Acts 1:8 (ESV)

This verse describes a time when the disciples would receive power as the Holy Spirit would come upon them. Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Describe your Holy Spirit experience.

STOP! Let's make sure you don't miss an opportunity. If you have NOT been baptized in the Holy Spirit, as the early church experienced it in Acts chapters 1-2, take a moment now to read the Bible passage, and then ask Jesus to baptize you in His Spirit.

E1: How important is the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to the Great Commission?

Exercise #4: Find three men and discuss ways that you can open yourself more to the Holy Spirit and actively participate in evangelism in your everyday life. Describe any insights you learned from the conversations.

Exercise #5: Evangelism takes work. The early Christians could not imagine failure in sharing Christ. Describe how you have either *a)* accepted failure as a Christian witness, or *b)* are working harder to disciple other men to join the family of God.