

God's Love Is Worth Sharing

Westlake VBS 2017

“Thus, I am eager to preach the good news to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the good news, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who believes, to both Jew first and Greek” (Rom 1:15–16).

Gospel: The word *gospel* (Gr *euangelion*) means “good news,” an adequate description of the message that God loves us and wants to save us – Rom 1:16–17.

1. The gospel is simple but multifaceted; the verb form (Gr *euangelizomai*) is associated with a variety of biblical concepts: (a) the kingdom of God – Luke 8:1; Acts 8:12; (b) the Lord Jesus Christ (and his resurrection) – Acts 5:42; 8:12, 25, 35; 11:20; 17:18; (c) the word – Acts 8:4; 15:35; (d) peace – Acts 10:36; Eph 2:17; (e) the Abrahamic promise – Acts 13:32; Gal 3:8; (f) repentance – Acts 14:15; and (g) the faith – Gal 1:23.
2. God works through the gospel to save us; his word is powerful—producing faith, stirring repentance, and inspiring obedience – Heb 4:12–13; John 6:63; Rom 10:8–17; 2 Tim 3:15–17; Jas 1:18–25.
3. The gospel is also universal, capable of leading anyone (“Jew and Greek,” “Greeks and barbarians,” “wise and foolish”) to faith in Christ – Rom 1:14, 16; see 2 Pet 3:9.
4. But, though the gospel and salvation are available to all, not everyone will be saved; only those who believe and obey the gospel will be saved by God – Rom 1:16–17; Mark 16:15–16; see 1 Cor 1:18; 15:1–2.

5. Since belief in the gospel is necessary for salvation, that means evangelism is also necessary – Rom 1:15; 10:14–17.

(Isn’t it amazing that God has entrusted us with the gospel, even though he could have chosen any number of ways to spread his message?)

Evangelism: The word *evangelism* (from Gr *euangelion*) means “the preaching the good news,” yet it effectively describes our God-given responsibility and privilege. Moreover, from Rom 1:13–16, we learn that there are certain things needed to effectively evangelize:

1. We must plan – Rom 1:13; Prov 16:3; 21:5.
2. Yet, even with the best of plans, we must remain flexible – Rom 1:13; Prov 19:21.
3. We must maintain a sense of indebtedness toward others – Rom 1:14; 1 Cor 9:16.
4. We must be impartial – Rom 1:14; Jas 2:1–4.
5. We must be eager to evangelize and recognize the urgency of saving souls – Rom 1:15; 13:11; 2 Tim 4:2.
6. We must be fully convinced by the gospel and not ashamed of it – Rom 1:16; Mark 8:38; 1 Tim 1:12.

(In addition to these, Acts 5:42 indicates that we must be committed to preaching the good news that Jesus is the Messiah daily, publicly, and privately – see also 20:20.)

Methods: There are few specific evangelistic strategies supplied in the Bible, but there are a variety of generally authorized approaches that we can employ.

(Some have designated the following as evangelistic methods: “lifestyle evangelism” and “servant evangelism” – see Matt 5:16. While these are essential to evangelism, these are an incomplete form of evangelism—if they are evangelism at all. Prayer, likewise, is another necessary initial step but not evangelism in the strictest sense of the word – see 1 Tim 2:1–7.)

1. One way to evangelize is to invite others to the assemblies of the church or to some other special preaching event – see 1 Cor 14:24–25; John 1:40–51; 4:25–30. (Westlake will soon have new invite cards.)
2. Another method is a personal or small group Bible study. Even if we do not personally teach or host the study, we can use this to evangelize our family and friends – see Acts 5:24; 18:24–26; 20:20.
3. There are various Bible tracts, CDs, MP3s, and DVDs available that can be given directly to those who need to hear the gospel. Similarly, there are many opportunities to share God’s love using the internet and social media. (Our website is www.westlakechurchofchrist.org, and our Facebook page is “Westlake church of Christ” or @westlakechurchofchrist.)
4. Perhaps one of the most important methods of evangelism is simply one-on-one conversation with the lost, telling them of God’s love and looking for the opportunity to study with them – see John 1:40–42.

Conclusion: God’s love is worth sharing with others! Are we eager to share his love? If so, we will find a way to evangelize those around us, and when we do, we will see God give the increase – see 1 Cor 3:6.

Into Our Hands
Ruth J. Carruth
G-3-Sol

1. Swiftly we’re turning life’s daily pages,
Swiftly the hours are changing to years;
How are we using God’s golden moments?
Shall we reap glory? Shall we reap tears?

Into our hands the gospel is given,
Into our hands is given the light,
Haste, let us carry God’s precious message,
Guiding the erring back to the right.
2. Millions are groping without the gospel,
Quickly they’ll reach eternity’s night;
Shall we sit idly as they rush onward?
Haste, let us hold up Christ the true light.
3. Souls that are precious, souls that are dying,
While we rejoice our sins our forgiv’n;
Did He not also die for these lost ones?
Then let us point the way unto heav’n.