Elements of Effective Evangelism (Part 3)

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[0:00] Acts chapter 10, where we've been going through the conversion of Cornelius.

! Tonight we'll cover verses 37 through 43.! Through verse 43.
So Peter opened his mouth and said, Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who hears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all.
You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism that John proclaimed. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.
He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.
[1:16] But God raised him on the third day and made him to appear. Not to all the people, but to us who have been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.
Now, you've probably heard someone at some point in time, maybe someone in the church say this. Preach the gospel if necessary, use words.
You're going to have to raise your hands if you've ever heard that before. Preach the gospel if necessary, use words. I remember when I first heard that for the first time as a youth pastor quoted by someone else on staff.
And initially that statement sounds wise, but if you really think about it and when you read your Bible, you'll see that that statement truly is dumb.
[2:23] It's truly a dumb statement. No offense to any of you who have used it before. I'm not saying you're dumb. I'm saying the statement is dumb and I'll explain why. That statement also has been wrongly attributed to Francis of Assisi.

He didn't actually say that. And it's often used by proponents of the social gospel as a way to push back on those who are dedicated to sharing the gospel as Jesus has commanded us to, as Jesus has instructed us to.
Including the truth that faith in him is absolutely necessary for salvation. That Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life that no one can come to the Father but through him.
While we've already seen here that Cornelius, though again a devout man, a man who feared God, that he had yet to hear the gospel. And so he was not yet saved.
Though again he had done good things, including giving generously of his possessions to the poor. We could say that he was somewhat of a social activist in that regard.
[3:30] He was a philanthropist. But again, none of those good things brought this man salvation. And so as we've gone over, God sends Peter to him.

Cornelius must hear the gospel and he must put his faith in Christ if he is going to be forgiven of his sins and if he is going to receive the righteousness of Christ.
And when Peter gets there, he doesn't perform some kind of mime show when he acts out the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus without using words.
In verse 34 we see that Peter shared the gospel. In order for him to do so, it says there that he opened his mouth. To share the gospel, it's required that we open our mouths and then speak.

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Likewise, all the sharing of the gospel recorded in Acts comes as a result of people speaking. People sharing with their mouths. Articulating in words the good news of Jesus Christ.
[4:38] Again, they share it with their words. Now, sometimes our good actions, our obedience to what Christ has commanded for us and how we are to live, that people see that.

And at times that can grant us an audience with them when they see us and they wonder why we live so differently, why we speak so differently. But still, even if we are given an audience with them, it's still necessary that we share the gospel with them, which requires that we use words.
I remember in college, my pitching coach was deaf, but he'd learn to read lips. It was really fun to sit around him, especially when the other team's coach went out to talk to the pitcher.
And if they weren't covering their mouths, he could tell us everything that they were saying, especially if we got to watch football games with him. He would tell us what the coaches were saying to one another on the field. And he also was the deaf pastor for his church.
And even though he couldn't hear, he still communicated in language, sign language, or with his words, he could speak the gospel because that is the way that this truth is best communicated, through our opening our mouth and speaking.
[5:52] So it's essential that the gospel be shared, again, using language. However, that attitude, that practice of preaching the gospel, if necessary, use words, I think, has been used as an excuse primarily by those who say that, so that they don't feel as maybe ashamed for the fact that they haven't been sharing the gospel as Jesus has commanded us to do according to his great commission.

Honestly, as well, I think that Satan would want nothing more than for Christians to think that they can share the gospel without actually sharing the gospel, without actually speaking, without actually sharing and telling people about Jesus Christ, who he is, what he's done about his death, and about his resurrection.
If you were in Satan's place, you would want nothing more than to shut Christians up by thinking that the gospel can be communicated without words. It was God's word, after all, his speaking that created everything.
The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the word of God who became flesh. He preached. Jesus taught. Jesus did so by using words.
The church was established on the day of Pentecost as a result of Peter's preaching the gospel, again, using words. So to say that you can preach the gospel and, if necessary, use words is a statement that goes against what we read in Scripture.
[7:30] It's illogical. You wouldn't tell your child if they went out and they got all covered in dirt and they stunk. You need to take a bath and, if necessary, use soap, right?

You wouldn't advise the young married couple who were about to enter into that covenant of marriage to, well, be committed to one another and, if necessary, love each other, right?
We wouldn't say something like that. At least I hope that you wouldn't. While our lifestyle should be a testimony to God's saving work in us, as we see in Scripture, the Great Commission requires us to go and make disciples, and we do that by communicating this great truth of Christ using our mouths and speaking words.
So again, just to remind us all of where we've been, we know that to this point God has prepared Peter and Cornelius for this divine appointment where he will bring the two of them together.
Peter will be the Lord's instrument to begin spreading the gospel to the Gentile nations. The Gentiles, of which Cornelius was one, had not yet received the Holy Spirit, but that was all about to change.
[8:48] The Lord prepared Peter by giving him a vision, and in that vision he realized that the Gentiles were no longer to be considered that outside group, that God was interested in and was going to save them, that they were not beneath the Jews in any ways, that they would be a part of God's people.

Cornelius, again, he feared God. He respected and honored God. He prayed. He, again, he gave to the synagogue, but in order to be saved, despite whatever good deeds he had performed, he had to hear the good news of Jesus Christ to be saved so that his sins could be forgiven and so that he could have eternal life.
And so Cornelius sends for Peter. Peter goes to Cornelius with a small contingent of other Jewish believers, and then they enter Cornelius' house where they find that Cornelius has gathered his

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family and his close friends there with him to receive Peter so that they can also hear what God had to say to them through Peter.
And so this study, again, is focused on the elements of effective evangelism. These elements are present in Peter's witness to the Gentiles who were gathered in Cornelius' house, and so they should also be present in us as we seek to fulfill the great commission which the Lord has commanded all of his followers to be involved in, which is to go and make disciples.
So the main idea for our study tonight continues to be the same as this is the second part, I believe, third part of our time here in this study.
[10:31] And so the main idea is this. The Lord desires that his disciples make more disciples. To make more disciples, we must be willing to go, share, and teach those whom God brings to faith in Jesus Christ.

Whom God brings to faith in Jesus Christ. And so again, a quick review to cover some of the elements that we've already discussed. That first of all, it's important that we have a submissive will in this.
Again, remember Peter dropped everything when God gave him that vision, when Cornelius' men were there to receive him and take him back to Cornelius.
He didn't express any kind of indication that he preferred that God would ask somebody else to do this. He was willing to go in submission to God's will. He was obedient. So we must be too.
If you're going to make disciples, then you must be submissive to the Lord's will to make a disciple maker out of you. Second, a salvation presentation is obviously necessary to be effective in evangelism.
[11:40] So again, when Peter arrives at Cornelius' house, he establishes a rapport with Cornelius and with those who had gathered in his house. He asked Cornelius some questions about why he had called for him.

He learned in that interaction that it was God who had directed Cornelius to do so. And so now he understood more clearly what the Lord had commanded him to do through that vision that he received, that the Lord wanted to save these people, these people, again, whom the Jews had rejected, who the Jews had despised, who the Jews thought were outcasts.
They would now, Peter realizes, become his brothers and his sisters in Christ, his spiritual equals.
The third element we saw was to examine your audience also, to gather as much information as you can about them.
That's what Peter did when he got there and he asked Cornelius some questions. He found out that Cornelius was a God-fearing man. And so he was able to know then where he could start in his sharing the gospel with him.
And so we do the same. Whenever you're seeking to share the gospel with somebody, ask some questions. Try to find out what they believe about God. What do they believe about God?
[12:53] Do they believe in God at all? Well, what do they think or what do they say about Jesus? How long have they been in the church? Have they ever been in church at all? And then being able to have the answers to those questions through examining them, you have a better indication of where it is that you need to start with them as you seek to be used by the Lord to share the gospel with them.

And then fourth, explain God's truth. Explain God's truth. Again, Peter isn't interested in converting these Gentiles to Judaism. He's not concerned with converting them to his culture.
He's not concerned with expressing his anger towards the Roman government. Many of them were Romans who oppressed his people for so long. He's concerned really only with explaining the truth of God to them, the truth that is embodied in Christ, who again is the source of truth, which leads us to the fifth element of effective evangelism.
That comes from verses 37 through 43, a large chunk here in Peter's message, which is to point them to Jesus. Point them to Jesus.
I'm gonna read verses 37 through 43 again. Peter, again speaking, says, you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.
[14:22] He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

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They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him appear not to all people, but to us who have been chosen by God as witnesses who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.
And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him, all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.
And so in your handout, the next sub-point under that fifth element is this, point them to the historicity and ministry of Jesus.
So as we're pointing them to Jesus, point them to the historicity and ministry of Jesus as we saw Peter do in those verses.
[15:29] Again, Jesus, Peter is saying, was a real person. People need to know that as we witness to them today, that people need to understand that Jesus wasn't like Mickey Mouse or some other make-believe character.

He was a real, live person. They need to know that Jesus actually walked on this earth, that we have witnesses to his life and to his miraculous works.
Not only witnesses here recorded in Scripture, but secular witnesses who were not believers in Jesus Christ. they recorded that Jesus of Nazareth was a real person who was said to perform miraculous things and who also claimed to be the Son of God.
So we need to tell them that Jesus is a real person. C.S. Lewis, in Mere Christianity, wrote something that has been well-known by many Christians today in the past about how when we understand that Jesus is a real person, then we can either draw one of three conclusions about him.
Have you heard this? That he's either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. And so I want to read to you what he had to say about that. He said, I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him, him being Jesus.
[16:53] I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

He would either be a lunatic on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the Son of God or else a madman or something worse.
You can shut him up for a fool. You can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher.
He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. Now it seems to me obvious that he was neither a lunatic nor a fiend and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that he was and is God.
And so that's what we've got to bring people to. Jesus was a real person. And what you say about him will determine, right, how you know him will determine the rest of your eternity.
[18:08] Do you know him as Lord or do you say that he's something else? And if you say that he's something else, then you've got to say that he is one or the other. And so again, as we break down Peter's words here, he begins by saying to them, you know what happened throughout all Judea.

So again, the four gospels indicate that news concerning Jesus, words and his deeds, that it spread far and wide. It wasn't just contained there in that region.
It was going out. In fact, we have testimony, Matthew 4.24, as an example that people were hearing about him and they were coming from far distances in order to see him and to hear him.
And so Peter confidently and emphatically said to his listeners that the things that they had heard about Jesus and they had heard something about Jesus, he's telling them that these things that you've heard are true.
They had only heard them, but Peter was there as a personal witness testifying to the reality that what they heard about Jesus was in fact the truth.
[19:16] In verse 38, Peter says that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with him.

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So Peter's presentation of the gospel follows a chronological order of the ministry of Jesus, beginning with the beginning of his public ministry, which occurred at his baptism where he was baptized by John the Baptist when the Holy Spirit, if you remember, descended upon him as he came up out of the water.
Matthew 3, 16 through 17 records that event. It says, and when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him.
And behold, a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased. Peter includes this testimony from heaven which confirmed Jesus' true identity as the Son of God who came in fulfillment of the promise that God had made that he would one day send the Messiah who Jesus was.
Isaiah 42, 1 is an example of one of those promises, one of those prophecies about the coming of our Lord. It says there, behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen and whom my soul delights.
[20:38] I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations. And so again, we understand that Cornelius was a God-fearing man which meant that he more than likely had understanding of the scriptures which then meant that he would have heard these prophecies about this Messiah who would one day come, who would be the Lord's anointed.

And so here, Peter refers to Jesus' anointing as indication to Cornelius and to the other listeners that Jesus is this promised Messiah.
And speaking of that moment when Jesus was baptized, Charles Spurgeon said, some seem to suppose that Jesus Christ is our Savior to the exclusion of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. But this is a most erroneous idea. We are saved by the precious blood of Christ, but God the Father and God the Holy Spirit have had their share in the great work of our salvation as well.
In order that we might not fall into the error in which some have been entangled, it pleased God to give us at the beginning of Christ's public ministry a distinct intimation that he did not come alone and that he did not overtake the work of our redemption apart or undertake the work of our redemption apart from the other adorable persons of the ever-blessed Trinity.
[22:07] And so Peter continues giving witness to Jesus' ministry. Again, he begins with the beginning at his baptism. And then in verse 38, he says that he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil for he says there God was with him.

And so we understand in Jesus' ministry that he took ground from Satan. He overcame Satan in every instance, even in his death, as he atoned for our sins on the cross and then rose again on the third day.
We see that the devil was no match for Jesus Christ. And therefore, Jesus is a superior being to him. And that solidifies his testimony that he is the Son of God and equal with the Father.
And then at the end of verse 38, Peter says, for God was with him. Most commentators that I've read on this passage agree that Luke, right, who's the human author of Acts, inspired by the Holy Spirit, that here what he's really doing is presenting an outline of Peter's sermon.
That he's merely recounting the major bullet points that Peter hit on as he was preaching about Jesus' ministry. Note also that to this point, Peter has yet to speak of Christ's divinity, which Doylene had a great question.
[23:38] She had noticed that a few weeks ago. That to this point, nothing has been said about Jesus and his divinity. Peter recounts only the external manifestations of Jesus' power, which he explains by saying that God was with Jesus, that God enabled him to perform these miracles and signs because of the Father's presence in his Son.

And so, I look through, I don't know how many commentaries I have on Acts, maybe close to 10, close to 10. None of them said anything about that Peter didn't refer to his divinity in particular.
And so, Tom came in a couple weeks ago just to talk and so I asked Tom and he, you know, we kind of went back and forth about, well, why isn't it there and what else could be referred?
So, he went home and looked through his commentaries and he came back with one. One that said something small about this. And so, a great question.
Here's, here's the possible answers. But this is why we have Bible study, right? This is why we have Bible study and I love those questions because it causes us to dig deeper into God's Word which is never a bad thing.
[24:59] Okay, so it could be that since this is an outline of Peter's sermon that Luke is only, again, recording the major sections or bullet points of Peter's message and some things could have been

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said between the black lines and the white space.

So, you know, you think like on Sunday morning I give you a note page which is an outline of my sermon but it's one page and, you know, usually I have 14, I think, 12 to 14 whenever I'm preaching.
So, you get the major points but there's a lot of other, so, you know, we call it the skeleton but a lot of the flesh isn't there. So, that could be one reason.
It could be that Cornelius was able to make the connection to Christ and his divinity by Peter's referring to him as the Lord's anointed. So, again, it could be that Cornelius already had this understanding of who the Lord's anointed was going to be and so when Peter made that connection, Jesus is the Lord's anointed that he would have understood that this is not a ordinary man, that this is God's son.
also, when Peter said that Jesus is Lord of all, that could have been another, you know, he could have said that and then gone deeper into what does that mean or he might have just understood because, again, being a Roman soldier and knowing who Caesar was and he claimed to be Lord of all, that Jesus was greater than that.
[26:30] Referring, again, to the fact that he's not an ordinary man, that he was divine as well.
Peter indicates that Cornelius had heard of the person and ministry of Jesus so, again, perhaps he had heard of Christ's claims as well so if it says that they'd heard, the word had spread to them, they knew about Jesus when Peter came about his ministry so this wasn't new news to them and so maybe as a part of not only knowing that he was crucified and that it was said that he performed these miracles and rose again that also he claimed to be the son of God and so that could be the case as well and then ultimately, I think we all agree, we can't argue with the results which was that they were saved.

So, a great question when we get to heaven, we can ask Peter. Peter, yeah, what's up? What is up with this?
And then he can tell us. And also, it could be that for many of us too, you know, when you're saved as a child, you understand the gospel but then as you get older, I mean, we're just learning more and more and more.
It's so simple that we can understand to believe but then as we get older, we realize just how deep and great the word of God is. I think, when I thought about that, I think of, well, my son Jack who will often speak of God and Jesus but not the Holy Spirit, you know, I'll say, well, what about God and Jesus this or God and Jesus that?
I'm like, yeah, God and Jesus are great but there's a third person, the Holy Spirit and so, you know, his theology is still taking shape in his little mind and that happens because as we know, I know it's the case for me, few of us go from conversion to the next minute being as great of a theologian as someone like R.C. Sproul or something like that, you know, we're all growing and deepening in our faith so, you know, maybe there was something like that with Cornelius as well.
[28:35] He understood the simple message of the gospel later on all these other deeper, richer truths came to him as well and again, these are great questions that we should seek answers to and I enjoy that a lot.

You might put me on the spot in the moment but I enjoy going and working because I think, you know, those books are tools and I enjoy having those conversations as well.
Okay, and so the next sub-point there is point them to the cross and the empty tomb. Point them to the cross and the empty tomb. So again, as we've seen in the American Gospel series, there are a great many, unfortunately, teachers out there who either are denying or ignoring the reason and the purpose for which Jesus died.
And so I know I've talked about this book before, Save from What? by R.C. Sproul. I wanted to read a couple things from it about this very thing, how important it is that we point them to the cross and the empty tomb.
I remember, again, in seminary getting this book not really knowing who R.C. Sproul was, only having heard of his name and thinking, oh, I'd like to read something from him and I'll tell you that a few books have had a greater impact on me than this one.
[30:06] So I want to read a couple of things out of here. In the very beginning of the book, he says, Save from What? And he tells this story. Are you saved? I recall vividly a time more than three decades ago in 1969 when I was asked this question.

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There were the volatile, these were the volatile days of the 60s, the era of the cultural revolution in America. I was a professor of theology at the Conwell School of Theology on the campus of Temple University in Philadelphia.
The days were anything but Halcyon, H-A-L-C-Y-O-N. Anybody on the level of intellect as R.C. Sproul who understands what that word is?
Maybe some of you? Okay, I'm guessing hectic. They were turbulent, marked by demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, paroxysms of rage punctuated student protests and sit-ins.
The academic world was in a state of unprecedented turmoil and upheaval. I recall trying to lecture about the den of bullhorn with the den or above the den of bullhorns outside the classroom window as I competed with the students for a democratic society for my students' attention.
[31:21] On one such day I sought an hour's solace and quietude from this cacophony in the faculty dining room. I stretched my lunch hour to the limit in order to squeeze out every moment of peace that I could enjoy.

As the new hour ended I deposited my lunch tray in the bin and began my trek across the plaza to my classroom. I was walking briskly to avoid being late.
I was alone minding my own business. Suddenly apparently out of nowhere a gentleman appeared in front of me blocking my forward progress. He looked at me in the eye and asked directly are you saved?
I wasn't quite sure how to respond to this intrusion. I uttered in response the first words that came into my mind. Saved from what? But I was thinking what I was thinking.
But had the grace not to say was I'm certainly not saved from strangers button-holing me and asking me questions like yours. But when I said saved from what I think the man who stopped me that day was as surprised by my question as I had been by his.
[32:30] He began to stammer and stutter. Obviously he wasn't quite sure how to respond. Saved from what? Well, you know what I mean. You know. Do you know Jesus? Then he tried to give me a brief summary of the gospel.

This serendipitous encounter left an impression on me. I experienced real ambivalence. On the one hand I was delighted in my soul that someone cared enough about me even though I was a stranger to stop me and ask about my salvation.
salvation. But it was clear that though this man had a zeal for salvation he had little understanding of what salvation is. He was using Christian jargon.
The words fell from his lips without being processed by his mind. As a result his words were empty of content. Clearly the man had a love for Christ and a concern for people.
Few Christians have the courage to engage the perfect strangers engage perfect strangers in evangelistic discussion. but sadly had little understanding of what he was so zealously trying to communicate.
[33:35] Then another section I want to read to you where he talks about salvation is from the Lord. Here he says at the core of the biblical message of salvation is another concept rather obscured in modern thought.

Salvation is of the Lord. No human being has the resources the power the money or the merit to save himself. The necessary power for rescue is not in us it must come from God.
Salvation is of the Lord because only the Lord can accomplish it. A few years ago I was in the hospital for kidney stones. If you ever had kidney stones you know what catastrophe means.
It was Christmas time and I was lying in my bed and looking at the television set on the wall. Spinning the dial I came to a worship service that was coming from a church in California. California the pastor was reading the Christmas story from Luke.
I had heard this text read a multitude of times for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2 11 as I heard the story this time I said to myself oh that is what I need right now I need a Savior.
[34:49] My soul was fine but my kidney needed to be saved and fast. At that moment God had my undivided attention and I knew I was in need of rescue.

The doctors rescued me from my calamity but the only person who can rescue anyone from the wrath that is to come is God's appointed Savior. The only salvation that ultimately matters is of the Lord.

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However when the scripture tells us that God saves us that salvation is of the Lord we tend to forget that salvation is also from the Lord. What do we need to be saved from?
We need to be saved from God. Not from kidney stones not from hurricanes not from military defeats. What every human being needs to be saved from is God.
The last thing in the world the impenitent sinner ever wants to meet on the other side of the grave is God. But the glory of the gospel is that the one from whom we need to be saved is the very one who saves us.
[35:52] God in saving us saves us from himself. Woe unto those who have no Savior on the day of wrath. The Bible says that on that day the unbeliever will scream to the mountains to fall upon him and the hills to hide him.

People will be looking for refuge from nature itself crying cover me give me a shield. But there is only one shield that can protect anyone from the wrath that is to come.
It's the covering of the righteousness of Christ. When we put our faith in Jesus God cloaks us with the garments of Jesus and the garments of Christ's righteousness are never ever the target of God's wrath.
He who flees to Jesus has peace with God and there is no condemnation left. When calamity struck in the days of Noah the day of the Lord came and almost all of the world perished in the flood.
But for Noah and his family the day of the Lord was their day of salvation. For the unbeliever the day of the Lord is a day of darkness with no light in it. For the Christian the day of the Lord is a day of light with no darkness in it.
[36:57] Are you saved? That question is the most important issue any person will ever face.
When we consider even for a moment the frightening dimension of the unbridled outpouring of God's wrath we tremble in our souls.

When we consider that we deserve to be consumed by his fury and realize that his fury was instead consumed by Jesus in our place. When we recognize the greatness of the peril we then are able to see the greatness of the salvation that he has bestowed upon us.
How shall we escape if we neglect so great a Savior? Very good book. I encourage you to read that. Just a great book and there it says it, right?
We've got to point people to the cross. We've got to tell them why the cross was necessary for our salvation. If we haven't done that then we haven't truly shared the gospel. That's critical and crucial in our evangelism.
And then number three the sub point there point them to their need to believe in Jesus and warn them about what will happen if they don't. And that point comes from verses 42 through 43.
[38:10] Point them to their need to believe in Jesus and warn them of what will happen if they don't. Again, Peter says there and he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead.

To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. And so again Peter makes it clear as we should in our evangelism as well that no person is able to escape the judgment that is coming for everyone will appear before God.
Peter uses the expression the living and the dead to indicate that everyone is included when Christ will judge the people. And so here then Peter warns the members of his audience to seek forgiveness forgiveness for their sin through faith in Christ so that when they appear before the God appointed judge they will be acquitted.
So we must tell them about the cross. We must tell them about why that was essential. We must tell them about the resurrection of Jesus Christ and we must warn them of what the outcome will be for those who reject their only Savior Jesus Christ.
So now let's move on to application. Application. the first point there I think that it's important for us to take from this passage and apply to our life is that it isn't the method of evangelism but the message that is most important.
[39:38] I know we've talked about this before. I think it's good to talk about it again real quickly. It isn't the method of evangelism but the message that is most important. So as we share the gospel we must be careful that we're not just simply trying to regurgitate as much information as we can.

You know if you're using the three circles that we used and you don't get to the third circle it's okay right? As long as you're continuing to have dialogue with that person if you go through some kind of acronym I know there was a gospel acronym and if you don't get to E or L right?

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Don't freak out and don't be so focused on the method that you forget about the person that you're talking to and how important it is that you communicate the message that the methods may change the message stays the same.
Second give your listener opportunity to ask questions. They may have questions and so listen to the questions that they ask and if they ask a question and maybe you're not quite sure about the answer it's okay to say I don't know go and research for yourself talk to somebody else say I don't know but that's a good question and I'm going to come back with an answer and I encourage you to do that.
And then finally call your listener to a decision. Call them to a decision. Now I want to clarify what I mean by call them to a decision.
[41:07] A decision. You know often when we think of decision we think of an altar call. You know when I read the scripture when I read Peter Peter the apostles when I read Jesus preaching he always at the end of his teaching or his message gave some kind of an invitation and that invitation wasn't to walk down an aisle but to respond to what he had to say.

This is you know this is the teaching this is how you should respond. How are you going to respond? There's an invitation so I think eventually we've got to get to the part where we ask that person do you believe?
Where we call them to make some kind of decision but that doesn't mean that we try to force a decision upon them. So again that's why sometimes we have altar calls because whatever the text is that's being preached there is some kind of invitation to respond in some way.
You can respond through prayer if you need to come forward in prayer to ask or because you've been convicted and you need to pray whatever the case may be. If you have a question or you just want to talk to me and so I think it's good that we give people an opportunity to have that immediate invitation to act in some way based upon what they have heard and however the Holy Spirit has been working in their heart but we cannot and will not try to force a decision out of them because that that's not saving genuine saving faith.
We're not going to continue to have the praise team play it again play it again until somebody comes forward and you all are just looking around somebody go forward right? We're not going to do that.
[42:56] We're not going to do that. I know we're excited when people come forward. I know that we thank God whenever we see I know I do when we see God has the Holy Spirit has worked on that person and they come forward to pray especially when somebody else comes and prays with them that's encouraging to me whatever the case may be and so I think it's good that we call for a decision but again sometimes we bring them to that decision and then ultimately from there it's up to however God will work in their heart.

We've done our part and then we've been used by the Lord and we trust that he'll do his whether that person will be saved or not that's out of our hands we just go and we share the good news of Jesus Christ.
Let's pray. Lord we're thankful for you we're thankful for the people like Peter whom you have brought into our lives people who were willing to be submissive to your will whether that was one of our parents or a Sunday school teacher a youth pastor a pastor just a friend Lord somebody whom you put it on their heart to share the gospel with us and through your working in us Lord through your Holy Spirit you enabled us to see to believe and to trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and so God we thank you for those people whom you've used to do that and Lord I know my prayer and I believe everyone here would echo the same request God that we would ask that you would use us in the same way maybe you have in the past Lord we pray that you would continue to use us to be involved in your great commission that we'd be willing to go that we would be so filled with your word having abide in it and understanding the salvation that we've received from you that we would be willing again to go and to share our testimony and to give witness to what Christ has done for us and is doing in us so Lord we pray that as we go that we would be obedient to what you've called us to do to be a part of your great commission knowing that the results are yours Lord and knowing that in the end as we go and as we do what you've commanded us to do we give you glory and so Lord we pray that you would be glorified by us and the lives that you've given us to live we ask this in Jesus name amen you

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