

What Happens After We Evangelize / Why Should We Evangelize?

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Date: 06 October 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] You know that we have been looking through this book, Devers' book, Non-Evangelism, and I have used the book to help us!

And this has been my desire from the very beginning to help us understand that the greatest program for evangelism we have as a church, any church has, is seated right there where you are. And it's not a program, it is all of God's people individually being obedient and doing what God has called us to do, commanded us to do.

And so we don't have to have a program, though we're still going to have some program for that. We can as we go.

And I believe that that is how I understand the Great Commission. Those given to the church, clearly, given by Christ to the church.

[1 : 17] The obedience to it is fulfilled individually as well as the church corporately. He said go, or literally going, make disciples.

As you go. And so we are to be evangelists everywhere we go and as we go. We've looked at a number of key elements to this.

And we're going to see the final two tonight that is presented for us in Devers' book. Tonight, what should we do after we evangelize?

Now, the subject here is not discipleship. Most of us, I think, would come to that conclusion immediately. What do we do after evangelism?

And we would say, well, then what we're talking about here is what does the church do now that we've evangelized? As a person is saved, they come into the church, they're baptized, so forth.

Now, what do we do?

[2 : 22] Now, that's an important subject. But that's not the subject here. The subject here is after you share the gospel and receive a response, what do you do then?

Well, it depends on the response, doesn't it? And there are a number of responses. But I would say to you, and I don't have any doubt about this, that there is always a response to the gospel.

Now, what do you think about that? Is that true? Now, not necessarily the response that you're hoping for, praying for.

The response that in your heart of hearts you desire. That when the gospel is shared with a friend, a family member, or maybe it's just someone you don't even know, and you give a testimony, you share the gospel.

We all want a certain response, do we not? But there's always a response. Not some of the time, not most of the time, all the time.

[3 : 31] There's always a response. Whether it is, and these are Devers, his terminology, what he calls contact evangelism.

And what we're talking about there is, we could include in that cold turkey, we could use a cold turkey evangelist, where you share the gospel with someone you do not know.

Maybe you've knocked on the door. Maybe it's a neighbor you've not even met yet, and you go and you share the gospel. Or it's someone in line at Walmart, you know, wherever it may be, where you make contact with someone and share the gospel.

You have an opportunity, you take the opportunity to share the gospel. I would also include in this category pulpit evangelism, where the gospel is presented and there is a response.

So there's always a response, whether it is contact evangelism or something more personal, what Devers calls long-term relationship evangelism.

[4 : 33] I'm not talking about, and he's not talking about, relationship evangelism in the sense that you just simply model, you know, a life dedicated and living for Christ, and somehow the model of your life is going to save someone.

It certainly contributes to the gospel. It certainly validates the truth of the gospel. But the gospel is comprised of the facts of Scripture.

But in personal, long-term relationship evangelism, this is where you build a relationship, share the gospel. It could be a friend, it could be a family member, and it's an ongoing kind of dialogue and relationship that you have with someone, and where you a number of times, repeatedly, share the gospel.

Regardless of the context or the approach, whether it's a one-time shot or a long-term relationship type of scenario, there is always a response to the gospel, always.

So whether positive or negative, responses to the gospel do not all look the same.

[5 : 50] There are a number of different responses. Even silence is a response. Now what we want to do is consider these negative and not positive responses.

There is only one positive response, but there are a number of negative responses. Let's just consider some of these negative responses. And some of these, really all of these, are going to be quite familiar to you.

They may be articulated different ways, but the first one is, I'm undecided. Ever had anybody respond to you in that way? Maybe you didn't necessarily share the full gospel, but you've shared your faith in Christ, and maybe the response is, you know, I've heard all that, and I understand what you're saying, and I'm just not really decided about that.

I'm thinking about it. It's an undecided type of response. And that's a very typical response to the gospel. There are people who sit in the pews, like you're sitting right here, and not just in pews in this church, but in churches all around the world, who will hear, people who will hear the gospel, articulate it, presented, declared very clearly from God's Word, and they consider it, but they have not decided whether to believe it or not, or whether to respond in faith.

And they're undecided. And I would say to you that there are people who are genuinely undecided. It's not a smoke screen, at least not in their minds.

[7 : 28] It's not a diversionary tactic. It's not, you know, some delay tactic, you know, just to get you off their back.

You know, I think sometimes that's valid. I think sometimes people will say anything just to get you to move on. You know, well, I haven't decided about that yet. But I would say that there are people who are genuinely undecided when they hear the gospel, and maybe they've heard it a number of times, and they are undecided.

And I would say for a number of reasons. First of all, they do not know the seriousness of their unbelief, their condition. Because if they did understand the seriousness of unbelief, I think there would be a different kind of response.

Many people that you talk to do not have any concept in their mind how serious unbelief is, and just what unbelief really, really is, in relation to a holy God.

And so people are undecided because they don't understand that. They don't understand the seriousness of their condition, their unsaved condition, their unbelief, their rebellion, if they even understand it in those terms.

[8 : 47] John 3, 36, He who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. Most people that you would share the gospel with do not understand that.

I'm not saying you have to understand that in order to be saved. That's not the point. But the response of, I haven't decided about that. I'm going to continue to think about that and decide later. That person does not understand the seriousness of their unbelief, that the wrath of God abides upon them. They're also ignorant of key doctrinal issues.

So they're undecided because they don't believe in these things. They don't understand these things. For example, even the very existence of God. Or any depth of understanding whatsoever about God and who God is and so forth.

Or, not only that, but the person of Jesus Christ. So they have made a decision. They have responded, I'm not decided about that yet because they are ignorant of key doctrinal issues.

[9 : 59] The existence of God. The person of Jesus Christ. Also, the sinfulness of man. And that gets back to the first thing that I said. The sinfulness of man.

Not just simply an understanding that people sin. I mean, everybody knows that. You'd have to be an idiot to deny that. Now, I understand that some people can redefine and are redefining sin. And so what we would call sin, the Bible calls sin, not everybody would agree with that. But at some point, everybody's going to agree that there is such a thing as sin. But that's not an understanding of the sinfulness of man.

The utter sinfulness of man. And so they're undecided. And even, I think, some theological facts of the gospel. The basic elements of the gospel.

Jesus Christ. The cross. The resurrection. You know, the atonement. Though they certainly don't have to understand all those theological terms.

[11:04] But, again, I'm not suggesting that a person is never going to be saved. Not going to respond to the gospel until they understand all of these things.

My goodness. There are believers who don't understand everything about these theologies and doctrines. They're learning. Growing. And they're understanding, hopefully. But I'm saying that the excuse, the reason, the basis for a person saying, you know, I'm undecided about that is based upon some of these things.

The key ignorance concerning key doctrinal issues. Or they're just simply indifferent to the gospel. You know, a lot of times people will say, I haven't decided about that because they just really don't care about it.

They're just indifferent. Different. Now, I know at some point all of these kind of blend together. I mean, all of these are kind of, in some sense, are at play in a person's mind and thinking.

But if you could isolate it down to one thing that would cause a person to say, you know, I hear what you're saying. I just haven't decided about that yet. That would you boil it down.

[12:19] There are many who are just simply indifferent. Indifferent to the gospel. One way or the other. Or, I think they're not convinced of their own personal sinfulness.

And this kind of gets back to the one I said a moment ago. You know, understanding the basic biblical teaching of the sinfulness, the utter sinfulness of man. But this brings it to a more personal level.

Most people that you meet have not come to grips with the fact of their own sinfulness. Personal sinfulness against God. That's why I think that this needs to be very much part of our gospel presentation.

That, you know, that we're lawbreakers. And we have sinned against the holy God. And that God is offended. We leave the sinfulness, personal sinfulness, out of our gospel message, our gospel presentation.

And we really have no basis upon why a person would need to be saved. Or understand that he or she needs to be saved.

[13:27] And so, we're just talking about why people would be genuinely undecided. And one of those would be because they're not convinced of their own sinfulness. And so, we're just talking about why people would be genuinely undecided. Now, the sad reality is that undecideds get no credit from God.

Do you understand what I mean by that? I like this quote. If people tell us that they can't make up their mind, we cannot force them to, right?

We can't, can we? No. But at the same time, we must not comfort them or give them any kind of comfort in their indecision. As if God recognizes the validity of a kind of spiritual in-between state. You understand what he's saying there? You know, we're just patting somebody and saying, you know, that's all right. God will understand. At least you're close. Well, that's not going to bring them any credit with God.

I'm not saying that this is part of what you say to a person, though in some way you can articulate this from Scripture. There's no in-between state. In humanity's rebellion against God, there is no neutrality.

[14:43] That's just a sad fact from Scripture. All right, so I'm undecided is a response.

It's a negative response, certainly. And equal par to any other response, because the person's still lost, no matter what kind of negative response, they may genuinely feel and give.

The second one is, I want to wait. Or, not now. Now, I'm putting two together here. Dever actually separates this into response number two and number three, but really, virtually, there's no difference between these two.

I want to wait. Not now. You know, and it comes to mind some pretty key characters in Roman history, and Paul had encounters with Felix, as well as King Agrippa, and both of those said, you know, not now.

Now, they both had different motivations for putting Paul off. I think Agrippa was genuinely wondering about this, and he said, not now.

[15 : 55] We'll talk about this some other time. But it's a response, is it not? And it is certainly a negative response. And people usually wait, want to wait, because they are not ready for the consequences one way or the other.

Or they don't feel like they're ready. And I say the consequences one way or the other, because on the one hand, they do not want to close the door on Christianity by out and out rejecting it.

Because there may be something to it. And there may even be some kind of fear in their own heart and mind that if I say no to this, just outright reject this, then, you know, maybe that's, you know, maybe I'll never have another opportunity.

And I'd like to find out more about this. And so I just don't want to close the door on it. And I'm going to keep my options open. You know, that's what a lot of people think. And so that's on the one hand, and we could even say in a kind of twisted sense, that's kind of a positive way to look at this response, not now.

Because in a positive sense, they don't want to just reject it out of hand, you know. But on the other hand, they do not want to repent of sins, at least not yet.

[17 : 21] I've had the impression, sometimes maybe you have too. In fact, not just an impression, I've had a person say to me very clearly that if I trust Christ right now, trust Him, repent of my sin and trust Him, then that's going to change my plans for this weekend, and I don't want to change my plans for this weekend.

I stood at the door, and I will forget this, and I have related this before, so you probably have heard this, but it's a classic example of this.

I stood at the door of a young man who had visited our church, not this church, it was a previous pastorate of mine, and as we stood at the door, he did not invite me in, I spoke with him, shared the gospel with him there at the door, and he related to me that he was living with a young lady there in the house.

They were living together, not married. And I could really sense that there was conviction in his heart about his sin, about the gospel.

And he said, not now, in so many words. And he said, because if I trust Christ right now, then I'll have to move out of this house.

[18 : 46] See, he knew that it was a sinful type of situation. This was sin. He was living in sin. And he wasn't willing to give up the sin. You'll confront a lot of people like that.

And so their, I want to wait, or not now, is because they know that if they, you know, they trust Christ, that means they must repent of sins. And they're not willing to repent of at least certain sins in their life, at least not yet.

And you might even meet some young people who say, you know, I haven't lived any yet. You know, I want to live a little, and then, you know, after I'm kind of, have sown my wild oats, then I'll come to Christ.

They don't think of it necessarily in those cold facts, but in their heart, and in the direction of their life, that's what they're thinking.

So, it's a negative response. I want to wait. Not now. What should we do when someone says, I want to wait? Well, a lot of answers to that.

[19 : 55] I, I think it depends on the situation, but, we should respect, wait. Respect that answer.

I mean, you don't just say, beat them over the head. Say, you idiot. You know, what do you mean, wait? You can't force them. Can you? No.

I mean, if you could, then somebody else could force them out of it. You know, it's not anything that is done or takes place through our persuasion, our forceful persuasion.

You have to respect, at least initially, that answer, that response of not now, or wait. that doesn't mean that you have to just let them go.

You know, never, never, never approach them again, those people again. Need to understand, though, and this is more in our own minds and hearts, to be 100% convinced of this reality that wait is the same as no.

[21 : 01] Just like with the other one, I'm not, I haven't decided. Decided is the same as no. God doesn't give any credit for those who are on the fence, you know, so to speak.

There's not even any such middle ground, actually, when it comes to responding to the gospel. And likewise, with this particular response, not now, it's the same as no.

Remember that. And so, that response ought to break our hearts and ought to cause us to want to go a little bit further with them as God allows.

need to pray for them. In fact, it's a good idea to ask if you can pray for them right then. Well, you know, I respect your answer.

And, you know, I don't understand everything behind it, but I respect that. Could I pray for you? And you can, by the way, give the gospel in your prayer as well.

[22 : 04] Make sure that they understand what they, what you have said. That's another thing that you could do in response. Say, now, let me make sure you understood what I said.

And you can just briefly go back over that. Did you understand what I said about Jesus, what I said about sin, and so forth. The third response is the one I think most of us think about when we think about negative responses to the gospel and that is no, never.

A very resolute, very dogmatic, very mind-made-up kind of response, never. Now, obviously, this kind of response is one that a person really hasn't thought out usually.

But it can include those who've really thought this out. You know, they have, you know, they have considered, you know, the claims of Christianity.

This is kind of what they might be saying. I've considered the claims of Christianity, the gospel, you know, I've looked into these things, heard these things, I've heard what you've said, and I've concluded that it's just not true.

[23 : 17] Ever met anybody like that? They may not say it exactly like that. They might say, well, that's good for you, if you want to believe that, that's all right. You know, but I just don't believe it.

I mean, that's a very typical response. There are many people out there, they understand the facts of it, it's not that they are ignorant of them, or have never heard of Jesus.

Now, in some parts of the world, certainly you'll find people who've never heard about Jesus. they're probably more open to hearing what you have to say about the gospel than people right here in this country who've heard about Jesus all their lives.

And so it's just not that they don't understand these things, have not heard these things, it's just that they have heard these things and considered them, and they've just decided it's not true, at least it's not true to me.

And so it's not that they're saying wait until I think about this a little bit more. It's not that they're saying, you know, I think I really want to do that, but I'm just not ready, not now.

[24 : 27] It's just no, never. That is a very typical response and one of the most negative, the most negative responses that anyone could ever make, and I would even say a very dangerous response if they really mean it in their hearts.

Though no never sounds very resolute, and this is what we ought to understand from this and how we ought to respond. It sounds very resolute, but it's not necessarily final.

And just because a person says never, that's not for me, doesn't mean that they will never ever be saved. I mean, consider Paul. Paul's probably the prime example of this.

You think Paul was one of these, you know, I'll just wait on this, this thing about Christianity. Or, you know, let me go ahead and finish my plans to kill Christians and then I'll come to Christ.

It wasn't not now where I'll wait. He wasn't undecided on it. He was very resolute to the point of having Christians put in prison and watching them as their stone to death as he did with Stephen.

[25 : 48] I tell you, Paul could not have been more resolute in his conclusion that this Christianity is not only false, but it's dangerous and we've got to stamp it out.

Now that's pretty resolute. And yet we know, of course, what happened to the Apostle Paul. And so this is what we do after evangelism.

When someone gives us a no, not ever kind of response, you know, then we understand that the no, not never is not necessarily never.

And God may get a hold of this person's heart and so we need to continue, continue to pray for them and love them and share the gospel with them.

We show respect, certainly, for that response, but we continue to share the gospel with them.

Positive response, of course, really the only one, would be yes.

[26 : 46] I mean, that would be, in one word, that would be the response to say yes to the gospel. A person responds with a heart of belief, repenting of sin, trusting Jesus Christ as Lord, Savior.

here. That's the only positive response. There's no middle ground. There's no, you know, preliminary responses that God is going to, you know, going to accept and give some credit for. There's only one response and that's a wholehearted, unreserved yes to the gospel. And so then, if that is the response, when that response takes place, what should happen then?

Well, they should be brought into the fellowship of the local church. Right? Now, let's think about that just a minute. Brought in, or they're brought in to the fellowship of the church.

church. Not, they're allowed to find a spot on a pew and sit all by themselves and no one ever makes contact with them.

[28 : 06] No one ever welcomes them in. No one says, why don't you come to my Sunday school? Or no one receives them. You know, sometimes, in fact, most of the time when an unbeliever is gloriously saved, that unbeliever continues to be somewhat of an outsider in the family of God, not be that way.

In fact, we need to understand that there are even some believers that God leads our way to come and they're never ever really embraced and received and shame on us.

That's happened right here in our church. We have a tendency, you see, because we're all human, we have a tendency to just stay with the people that we enjoy being with, you know, the friends and we sit usually in the same place except for the Chastains and they have three or four different places they sit, you know.

They're on a schedule. Did you know that? That they have an actual schedule. I wouldn't be surprised if it's not on the calendar on the refrigerator at home that this Sunday we sit in such and such place. Actually, I think it's a pretty good plan.

Maybe you ought to try it. I only get to stay in one place, so I guess I could bring my pulpit over here and over there. But what I'm talking about is we have a tendency to kind of stay with the people that are like us and that we enjoy being with and the people that we, quote, trust.

[29 : 36] And consequently, then, there are people who come right into our fellowship, either by salvation or they are new members of the church and they're not embraced, not brought in, like it says here, into the fellowship of the church.

Now, I put that out there to you as a challenge. Not a reprimand, though maybe a reprimand.

Maybe that would be all right. Let's be careful that because there are some people that might be in our church that are different than you, that we don't embrace them and love them and include them. Even sacrificing our own kind of comfortable zone, you know. Hmm? Okay.

What else should we do? They should be given family privileges and responsibilities. I like, this comes right out of Devers' book. He articulated it this way.

Family privileges. That goes back to fellowship and being welcomed and all the privileges of being a part of the family of God in the context or confines of the local body of believers.

[31 : 06] But they all should be given responsibilities so that everyone has a job. Has some, some contribution to serving the Lord and serving his church.

And, you know, that's what should happen. And people are much more likely to, to stay with, with the church and grow in their maturity when they're given a responsibility.

And they feel like they are wanted and feel like they're part of the fellowship and feel like that they're part of the family. I don't know why he put it in this order. I probably would have put this one first.

They're to be baptized. Be baptized and welcomed to the Lord's table. That's the, the Lord's supper. And those are family privileges too.

But, but to be baptized, you know, obedience to scripture, sure, that, that should happen. They must be giving counsel and guidance and love and support and care and teaching, all those things that we all need.

[32 : 18] And so this is what happens after evangelism, after a positive response, which, which is, yes, it's the only positive response.

They should be discipled in what it means to follow Jesus. It should never be a mystery in the mind of a born-again believer.

It should never be a mystery about what it means to follow Jesus, to live for him. We, we, we are, we have a responsibility as a church to fill in all of those gaps in a person's thinking and mind and understanding.

This is what discipleship is. A discipleship means means that, that we're all becoming followers of Christ. Effective, biblical followers of Christ.

And that comes through instruction and comes through encouragement. And, and we're to be involved in that. I would also add that sometimes yeses, not sure that's a word, yeses are false.

[33 : 31] Well, how would you spell it? Okay. Yeah. Well, this is Dever spelling, okay, so you'll take it up with him. Yeses are false.

Sometimes they are, aren't they? Okay. For some of these, only eternity will, will reveal the truth. I'm convinced that in any given church, there are a number of people who have never truly been converted. And, uh, one of the strange things, one of the unexplainable things, I think, in my mind, is that many times they even become leaders in a church.

And, many of them, uh, their true spiritual condition is undetected by, by God's people.

Because they talk a good talk and walk a good walk and, and yet they're not truly saved. Now, I'm not saying that we can go around and find out who these people are and we ought to go on a hunt and, you know, kind of an inquisition into Highland Park Baptist Church, find out who the unbelievers are.

[34 : 49] You know, maybe we ought to put a panel together and have everybody interviewed and maybe fill out one of these kind of psychological, although we couldn't call it a psychological inventory, it'd have to be some kind of spiritual inventory, you know, and make sure that, you know, every, and then when they fill out all those yes and no's and maybes and, uh, you know, uh, then we have some kind of key that it's sanctified, you know, and, and the Holy Spirit uses us to identify the false believers.

Now, we're not going to do that. It's just that we should know and admit that sometimes there are those who have said yes to the gospel, but they're not truly believers, true believers, never been truly born again, and they're in the church, and for many of those, only eternity is going to reveal that, sadly.

It doesn't mean that we shouldn't be alert to that, and, uh, God may identify something that would cause maybe an individual in the church to befriend that person, maybe get honest with that person, and maybe God would use you, uh, to, uh, bring that person to genuine faith.

But also, for others, time will tell. Time will tell, and it does, doesn't it? I mean, how many times have you seen people who've come forward, maybe even in tears, and even baptized, and maybe a week or two weeks or a month or a couple of months, and then suddenly they're gone, and you, you, you know, uh, have heard that they're right back into the sin that they were in prior to their so-called conversion.

That happens all the time. And, uh, though we don't judge the heart, it's a pretty good indicator that, not that they had the salvation, it just didn't last, but they never were truly saved to begin with.

[37 : 02] Like this, uh, quote from George Whitefield, there's so many stony ground hearers who receive the word with joy that have determined to suspend, I have determined to suspend my judgment till I know the tree by its fruits.

I cannot believe they're converts until I see fruit brought back. It will never do a sincere soul any harm. You understand that last statement? Because we might say, well, you know, that would be just really ingratious and ugly, you know, to doubt a person's salvation.

But he said, a true, sincere soul will never be harmed by that. Then the final thing we want to consider, we'll go through these real quickly because we're about out of time, and it is why we should evangelize.

And we've really kind of talked about this a number of places, even early on in our study, but let's just consider a few reasons why we should.

And number one is obvious, the desire to be obedient. We should all have that desire. That doesn't mean we're all going to be, you know, flaming evangelists and, you know, like a Billy Graham or something like that.

[38 : 26] And there are some personality things that, you know, that make us all a little bit different and wired differently. But we can all be evangelizers in some respect or another.

And we do so and should do so out of a desire to be obedient to God's word. I mean, the Great Commission is the first place to begin there. Go and make disciples of all nations.

It's a command out of Matthew 28, 19. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9, 16, necessity is laid upon me.

Yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. You say, well, that's fine. For Paul, he was a preacher and a missionary and apostle. But the same desire he had should be our desire.

And we should actually understand this reality that necessity is laid upon me. Yes, woe is me if I do not evangelize.

[39 : 28] And that, by the way, the word preach is yungalitso. That's the word from which we get evangelized. I'm a debtor. We should be familiar with this passage because of our gospel debt, missions fund.

He said, I'm a debtor. So as much as in me, as is in me, I'm ready to preach the gospel. There it is, yungalitso. So a desire to be obedient.

Number two, a love for the lost. A love for the lost. I think this is one element that's really missing. Now, there's some lost people we do love.

Because they may be close to us. Family members. Dear friends. Close friends. And so it's easy for us to kind of, you know, have that passionate feeling.

We love love them. And we love the lost. So we want to evangelize. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. It's the same love that God has for the lost that we ought to have as well.

[40 : 41] Number three, love for God. Love for God. And though this one's listed last, it really ought to be first. And let me give you this quote.

John Cheeseman. Love for God is the only sufficient motive for evangelism. Self-love will give way to self-centeredness. As you just love yourself as an evangelist.

You know, I love myself and I want to love for the lost. That is a motivation. But a love for lost will fail with those whom we cannot love.

Or refuse to love. I mean, not everybody is as lovable as, in fact, there are some people just flat unlovable. Right? You know I'm right.

Okay. And so, if that's the motivation, love for the lost, then it's going to be limited. It's going to be missing in some places, in some big places.

[41 : 44] Because there's some people we cannot love. And when difficulties seem insurmountable, only a deep love for God will keep us following His way, declaring His gospel when human resources fail.

And finally, some encouragements to share the gospel. Ask for personal testimonies. A personal testimony, when you ask a person about their testimony, or you share your testimony, and then say, what about you?

Has anything like this ever happened to you? Then when they have no testimony, it is a tremendous encouragement and an opportunity at that point to share the gospel.

I've told this story, I know I've told it here at least once, but how about twice? And some of you are fairly new, maybe you've not heard it. But when I was in seminary and not pastoring and kind of just, you know, preaching every opportunity that I had, and a lot of times in small little churches, and there was this one church very near where we lived, that I think on a good Sunday we might have had seven or eight people, you know.

And so, one Sunday, I was preaching, and after the service, a young man came forward and trusted Christ. And I was speaking to him, and because I knew I hadn't shared the gospel with him prior to that, didn't know anybody else in the church who had, and I'm just curious, I said, what has happened in your life that brought you to this point?

[43 : 36] And he said, well, I was at a family reunion, and all the, my grandma, my mom, dad, grandma and grandpa, and cousins, and all those uncles and aunts, they're all Christians.

And I thought I was too, he said. He said, at one point, one evening, we were all sitting around the room, and grandma decided we would just go around the room and share our own personal testimonies, how we were saved.

And so, she told hers, and then grandpa told his, and he said, they kind of went around the room and got to me, and I didn't have one. I knew I needed to be saved.

Because he didn't have a personal testimony, and so he trusted Christ and was saved. Personal testimonies. You know, you share yours. Do you have one?

What has happened to you? You know, and it's an opportunity, encouragement, to share the gospel. Number two, consider the reality of hell. That's a real encouragement. Wasn't it William Booth, founder of Salvation Army, who said that if he could have his way, he would send all his

workers to spend three days in hell.

[44 : 54] He said, nothing motivates a person to share the gospel, like spending two or three days in hell. The reality of hell. Great encouragement to share the gospel.

Consider God's sovereignty in salvation. You say, well, how does that work? I mean, God's sovereign in salvation, and I'm not sovereign. He knows.

I don't know. And, well, the point of the fact is that God's sovereignty in salvation assures our success. in evangelizing.

That if we will share the gospel faithfully, people will be saved. And we don't have to make them saved. God does that business.

And so we're assured success. That's a great encouragement for evangelism. So when you walk away from the person who says, not now, or not ever, you don't have to feel like, well, I've just failed.

[46 : 01] I must not have done it right. Or, or, or something. No. God is, salvation's His business. And we're just, you know, we're just privileged to get in on that.

God has included us in His plan to save. And so that's His business. And this is a great encouragement for sharing the gospel. Like my favorite professor, founder of Mid-America Seminary, Dr. Gray Allison.

He says, just amazing. I can still hear him say this. He said, men, it's amazing how many of God's elect show up when you share the gospel.

Number four, meditate on the gospel. Just meditate on the facts of the gospel. The very basis of the gospel.

What Jesus did for us. And, you know, the cross, His suffering, the cross, the atonement, the, you know, the resurrection, all of the elements of the gospel.

[47 : 13] Just meditate upon those truths. And it'll warm your heart and encourage you to share the gospel. And with that, and this is really the ultimate thing to meditate upon in the gospel, and that is to consider the cross of Jesus Christ.

Keep the cross always before us. And it's a great encouragement to share the gospel.