

Styles of Evangelism

CONFRONTATIONAL

Theme Scripture

2 Timothy 4:2

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction

Characteristics

- Confident
- Bold
- Direct
- Assertive
- Skips small talk, likes to get right to the point
- Has strong opinions and convictions

Cautions:

- Be sure to seek God's wisdom so you will be appropriately sensitive and tactful.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to restrain your desire to come on strong in every situation.
- Avoid judging or laying guilt trips on others who approach evangelism with a different style.

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- Ask friends for feedback on whether or not you have the right balance of boldness and gentleness. Keep in mind Paul's phrase in Ephesians 4, "speaking the truth in love." Both truth and love are essential.
- Prepare yourself for situations where you will stand alone (read about Peter in Acts 2 and other scripture). The non-believer you confront with the truth will sometimes feel uncomfortable. Even non-confrontational Christians who are with you will sometimes feel that discomfort. That's okay. Under God's guidance challenge people to trust and follow Christ, and He will use it.
- Practice the principle of "Putting Others First." It is critical that you listen and value what others say before telling them what you think they need to hear.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

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INTELLECTUAL

Theme Scripture

2 Corinthians 10:5

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ

Characteristics

- Analytical
- Logical
- Inquisitive
- Likes to debate
- More concerned with what people think than what they feel

Cautions:

- Avoid getting stuck on academic points, arguments, and evidence. These are mainly to clear the way back to the central Gospel message.
- Remember that attitude is as important as information. 1 Peter 3:15 says to have "gentleness and respect."
- Avoid becoming argumentative

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- Set time aside to study and prepare. This style, more than the others, relies on preparation. Take serious action on what it says in 1 Peter 3:15:
 - *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*
- Avoid doing all your preparation in an academic venue. Get out and talk to others. Try out your arguments and answers on real people, and make refinements as needed.
- Develop your relational side. Talk to people about everyday events, and what is happening in their life and you
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

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TESTIMONIAL

Theme Scripture

1 John 1:3a

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us...

Characteristics

- Clear communicator
- Good listener
- Vulnerable about personal life, its ups and downs
- Overwhelmed by the account of how God reached them
- Sees links between their own experience and that of other people's.

Cautions:

- Be sure to relate your experience to the life of your listener. This requires first hearing enough about your friend's life to know how to relate your story to their situation.
- Do not stop with merely telling your story. Challenge them to consider how what you learned might apply to their life.
- Avoid downplaying the value of your story because it seems too ordinary. The ordinary story is the kind that relates best to ordinary people!

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- Practice so you will be able to tell your story without hesitation.
- Keep Christ and the Gospel message as the centerpiece of your story. This is an account of how He changed your life.
- Keep your story fresh by adding new and current illustrations from your daily walk with Christ.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

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INTERPERSONAL

Theme Scripture

1 Corinthians 9:22

I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

Characteristics

- Conversational
- Compassionate
- Sensitive
- Friendship-oriented
- Focuses on people and their needs

Cautions:

- Beware of valuing friendship over truth. Telling them the 3 are sinners in need of a savior will test the relationship.
- Do not get so involved in the process of building friendships that you forget the ultimate goal: bringing people to know Christ as forgiver and leader.
- Do not get overwhelmed with the amount of needs your friends might have—do what you can and leave the rest to God.

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- Be patient. This style tends to work more gradually than others. Look and pray for opportunities to turn conversations toward spiritual matters.
- Continually create and plan opportunities to interact with new people through social events, sports, etc.
- This will put you in a position where your style can flourish.
- Practice telling the Gospel message so you will be prepared when the opportunity arises.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.

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INVITATIONAL

Theme Scripture

Luke 14:23

"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.

Characteristics

- Hospitable
- Persuasive
- Enjoys meeting new people
- Committed (believes in the things in which he or she is involved)
- Sees outreach **events as unique opportunities**

Cautions:

- Do not let others do all the talking for you. Your friends and acquaintances need to hear how Christ has influenced your own life. In addition, your friends have questions you could answer concerning the implications of the Gospel in their own lives.
- Carefully and prayerfully consider which events or church services you take people to. Look for ones that are truly sensitive to spiritual seekers that will help them in their journey toward Christ.
- Do not get discouraged if people refuse your invitation. Their refusal could be an opportunity for a spiritual conversation. Also, their "no" today may be a "yes" tomorrow.

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- When inviting people, try to get written details about the event into their hands (either preprinted or handwritten out). Whenever appropriate, offer to pick them up and do something together before the event.
- At events, put yourself in the place of the other person. Ask yourself if you were that person, whether the event would relate to your concerns and mindset. Reinforce those things to the person you invited.
- Offer positive and constructive feedback to the events sponsor consisting of specific and realistic ideas on ways you think they could improve the event and make it more compelling to the people you bring.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you to reach.

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SERVING

Theme Scripture

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father heaven.

Characteristics

- Patient
- Others-centered
- Sees needs and finds joy in meeting them
- Shows love through action more than words
- Attaches value to even menial tasks

Cautions:

- Remember that although "words are no substitute for actions," "actions are no substitute for words." In Romans 10:14 Paul says that we must verbally tell people about Christ. You can do this in many ways as you point to Him as the central motivation for your acts of service.
- Do not underestimate the value of your service. It is your style that will reach those persons who are the most negative and hardened toward God. Acts of loving service are hard to resist and difficult to argue with.
- Be discerning as to how much you can do realistically, without depriving yourself or your family of needed care and attention.

Suggestions for Using and Developing this Style:

- Find creative, non-imposing ways to communicate the spiritual motivation behind the physical acts of service you offer to others. It could be through a word, a card, an invitation in response to thanks for your service. ("Well, one thing you could do for me sometime would be to come to one of our services at church.")
- Seek God daily for opportunities to serve others for eternal purposes. He will open your eyes to areas you would have missed. Be ready to follow His leadings, even if they seem a bit out of the ordinary.
- Be careful not to impose your service on others. Pray for wisdom so you will know where to invest your efforts in ways that will be strategic for the Kingdom of God.
- Team up with friends who have other styles that may be better matched to the personality of the person you hope to reach.