



SESSION OBJECTIVE: VARIOUS TEXTS

To gain a general understanding of the Biblical evidence of spiritual gifts.

Evangelists and Faith

Tonight, we examine two gifts that are central to salvation - faith (the means by which we come into salvation), and evangelism (the means by which salvation is proclaimed). Both are integral to the building up of the body, and both apply to a multitude of scenarios.

Evangelists

The gift of the evangelist is, again, an office created by Christ for the church, “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” As an office, it isn’t necessarily a gift in the way we think of the other spiritual gifts, but falls into the category of pastor, prophet, apostles, and teachers (Eph. 4:11). A good working definition for the evangelist might be, “The special ability that God gives a person to effectively proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus that leads to people responding by faith.”

Evangelists are teachers of the Word, but specifically oriented towards leading others to faith. They likely had at least two jobs in the early church that translate well today.

1. **Make Disciples** - The pattern of the New Testament is that the apostles would go into untapped cities and preach Christ crucified, followed by planting churches for those new converts to grow in. After the apostles would move on, the evangelists remained to continue to make disciples by sharing the Gospel. As a result of their work, the churches would continue to grow.
2. **Teach Disciples** - The other role of the evangelist was to teach other Christians how to effectively live out and share their faith with non-believers. Paul specifically includes the evangelist in the list of offices that are meant to equip the saints. While the evangelist is a gift to the church, evangelism is an act that all Christians are expected to engage in. The evangelist trains Christians and encourages Christians to continue in their witness regardless of what negative outcomes might befall them.

SOME BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

Acts 21:7-9 - "When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day. 8 On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven (Acts 6:3-5; 8:6; 12-38), and stayed with him. 9 He had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied."

2 Timothy 4:1-5 - "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

STRENGTHS

- Enjoys talking about Jesus to the lost (Acts 8:5).
- Very instrumental in leading others to believe in Christ as Savior (2 Timothy 4:5).
- Has a burden for the lost (Romans 9:1-3).
- Enjoys being with unbelievers in order to share the gospel (Acts 8:25).
- Is able to persuade people to make decisions (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).
- Able to sense when a person does not know Jesus Christ, and to have compassion for that person (Acts 8:34-35).
- Feels a life calling into the evangelistic ministry.
- Enjoys equipping themselves with memorization of the Word.
- Enjoys meeting and connecting with new people.
- Ability to effectively share with others encouraging stories of God's work in their own life.

WEAKNESSES

- Judgmental toward others who are not actively involved in evangelism (Luke 9:45-46).
- Rely on own power of expression or persuasion to convert people (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).
- Because emphasis is on winning the lost, could be viewed as lacking spiritual depth.
- Eagerness to share Christ with others could be viewed as forceful or abrasive.
- May come across too aggressively, causing more harm than good for the cause of Christ.
- May thrust other believers into evangelistic situations they are not yet equipped to handle.
- Potential to rely on techniques that may no longer be relevant or appropriate for those they are trying to reach.
- Tendency to fall into debate; may be more concerned with winning the argument than the soul.

PLACES TO SERVE

- Outreach initiatives
- Response team
- Life Group leader
- Prison ministry
- Discovery 101

Faith

Faith is a separate gift apart from the general faith that all Christians are required to have. Paul says in Romans 1:16-17, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone

who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”” (c.r. Hab. 2:4) This kind of faith is a faith for all who follow Jesus.

The gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:9, however, is one that exceeds ordinary faith. A helpful definition might be, “The special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for His work.” It is a powerful tool in encouragement, and is strategically placed right before the supernatural and miraculous gifts in Paul’s list.

SOME BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

Acts 11:22-24 - “The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”

Acts 27:21-25 - “Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. 22 Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, 24 and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ 25 So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.”

STRENGTHS

- Often more interested in the future than history (Acts 27:25).
- Unmoved by circumstances, suffering, or obstacles (Acts 13:46-52).
- Great trust in God (Acts 14:8-10).
- Positive attitude, hopeful.
- Often are visionaries, dreamers, promoters (Acts 9:27).
- Very courageous (Acts 6:5; 7:1-60; 27:25).
- Senses the moment when “prayer of faith” is needed (Acts 3:1-10).
- Is goal centered (Acts 27:25).
- Actively reminds others of the promises of God.

WEAKNESSES

- May be viewed as non-realist because of positive attitudes.
- Can become impatient when others don’t have their kind of positive faith outlook.
- Have a difficult time understanding “the system” and why it works as it does to slow down progress.
- Exercise Gift of Faith without works.
- Often irritated by criticism because they are assured they know God’s will.

PLACES TO SERVE

- Prayer ministry
- Pastor/Elder
- Leadership
- Encouragement