AN EVENING WITH AN EVANGELIST



by Grant Hawley

> **For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!**

INTRODUCTION

My good friend and neighbor is an evangelist. He invited me to go with him on an evangelism outing. I don't usually do a lot of cold evangelism, but this was such a great experience that I wanted to share it with you all. I hope you find it encouraging.

I asked a young man I am discipling to join us, and the three of us went to the DART (trains and busses) station, praying on the way there. When we got there, we first thought that having three guys approach someone might intimidate him or her, so we split up. We let our evangelist friend talk to the first person, so we could see how it goes, and we followed his lead. Later on we found that if we were hanging out and talking or were sitting together on the benches that people who were walking by didn't find us intimidating.

HOW OUR TALKS WENT

Here's how we approached people: "Hey friend, I'm Grant. I'm a Christian and I'm out here to pray for people and to share the gospel. Can I pray for you?"

About half of the people said, "no thanks" or something like that (Some clearly didn't want to talk to us, but no one was rude.), but the other half were happy for the prayer. To those who wanted us to pray, we asked their name and then asked, "Is there anything specific you'd like us to pray for?" We prayed with them for those things, and also thanked the Lord for sending His Son to die for our sins and for raising Him from the dead.

We prayed with several people. One man wanted a better job, a woman was concerned about her brother, one man wanted us to pray for the wars to stop (he was from Turkey and knew very little English, so we used Google Translate), and another asked that we pray general blessing for him. And there was one man who asked us to pray for him to be able to understand Scripture. He said he reads it but can't hold on to the meaning. More on him later.

We then asked them, "Has anyone explained the gospel to you before?" If they said, "yes, I'm a Christian," we would follow up with some questions to make sure they were clear on the gospel, i.e., "So you know that because Christ died for our sins and rose from the grave, by believing in Him we can know for sure that we have everlasting life and that we can't ever lose it?"

I didn't have anyone say that they had not been explained the gospel, but if I had, I was going to follow up with, "Would you like me to share with you?" My evangelist friend has been able to lead several unbelievers to the Lord this way.

With the gentleman who asked for us to pray for him to understand Scripture, I said, "I'm a pastor and explaining the Bible is what I do for a living. Can I get together with you sometime soon to talk about Scripture?" He was excited for that opportunity! I got his phone number and sent him a text so he'd have mine as well (he got the text, so I know he gave me the right number). We then prayed for him, but as we were wrapping up, the "one minute until the train leaves" announcement came on, so he had to go. He ran over to the door of the train to make sure he got on and said to me, "be sure to call me!" It was so very encouraging.

CONCLUSION

I hate being pushy. That's why I loved this approach to evangelism so much, because we asked permission for every step of the way and started with something that many people want, to share their burdens and have someone pray for them. We let them know up front that we genuinely cared about what they were going through by asking about their lives and praying for them. Approaching people this way not only helped many to let their guards down, but also made me much more comfortable and therefore, more easygoing.

I encourage you to try this approach and see how great it can be to go and get out there in the world with the good news. It's not only exciting and fun, but it is also eternally significant. It could mean the whole world to someone. As those who understand the freeness of the grace of God, we can't keep that truth to ourselves.

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Unite believers under the banner of God's grace (Eph 4:3-6), **share** the gospel and aid those who will proclaim it faithfully (Rom 10:14-15), **increase** believers' confidence in the power of the indwelling Christ (Gal 2:20), **love** without hypocrisy (Rom 12:9a), **proclaim** the hope of Christ's glorious kingdom (Rom 8:18-21), and **equip** the saints to share Christ's matchless grace and love with others (2 Tim 2:2).

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