



## *Outline*

Ravi Zacharias, a renowned speaker on apologetics aptly put forth how the gospel could be made known to the modern man.<sup>2</sup>

- Not merely content, but conviction
- Not merely conviction but communication
- Not merely communication, but consistency

Though Ravi Zacharias did not mention this, I think that the other vital aspect in evangelism, beyond individual action, is involvement in evangelism as a community. As mentioned in the previous section, there are many aspects in which OCFers can be involved in making the gospel known.

Integrating the definitions of evangelism, the objectives we hope to achieve and the outline, the framework for the 2 training sessions would be as such:

### ➤ Commission, Content, Communication and Conviction

- This session would address issues more geared toward the 'narrow' definition of evangelism, specifically dealing with issues in street outreach like (1) What is the importance of taking the initiative to meet other non-Christian students? (2) What are the essentials of the gospel I must share? (3) How do I share the gospel with clarity and conviction?

### ➤ Consistency and Community

- The next session would address broader issues of outreach (1) What kind of lifestyle would facilitate the growth of the gospel? (2) I'm not a preacher but I would like to see others come to faith in Christ, how can I still be involved?

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<sup>2</sup> No reference is provided. These appear from a series of talks from Ravi Zacharias International Ministry called "Biblical Authority and our Cultural Crisis".

## **COMMISSION: The necessity of the gospel**

So why should I personally be involved in sharing the gospel with others?

### ⇒ **Commanded Great co-mission with God (Matt 28:18-20)**

- Matthew 28:18-20 - Wording from Philip Ryken (2001)
  - ✦ Universal Authority
  - ✦ Universal Audience
  - ✦ Universal Obedience
  - ✦ Universal Presence
- **This command is binding for us, and not merely for the apostles.**
- **The means by which unbelievers eventually come to faith in Christ (Rom 10:14)**
  - ✦ No other name in heaven and on earth by which man can be saved (Acts 4:12)
  - ✦ Example of DL Moody
- Do we believe that there is no other way in which people can come to God? Then we must share the gospel.

### ⇒ **Glorification of God**

- The Westminster Catechism: "To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever"

### ⇒ **Growth in faith**

- Personal faith
- Propagating faith
- Primacy of Faith

## **CONTENT: Understanding the Gospel**

What are the essentials of the gospel I must share?

### **What is the gospel?**

- ➡ It is the good news that God has fulfilled His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and made it available to everyone (1 Tim 1:15)

### **What are the characteristics of the gospel?**

- ➡ Romans 1:1-6 (GOSPEL) - Adapted from John Stott (1994)
  - Goal: The glory of Jesus Christ
  - Origin: The gospel is of God, not of man
  - Substance: Jesus Christ who died and rose again
  - Purpose: To bring to obedience to the faith
  - Extent: To all nations of the earth
  - Legacy: It is the fulfilment of what the Scriptures have said and what the prophets have been proclaiming

### **What are the essentials of the gospel?**

**How do I communicate these essential truths using 'vernacular theology' or without Christian jargon? Definitions from Systematic Theology (1994)**

**People have different perspectives about what you want to communicate... Importantly,**

- ➡ **Understand key concepts**

- ➡ **Keep it simple**

Issue	Verse	Concepts to convey, Concerns to address	How to address concerns How to clarify concepts	Analogies
<b>PROBLEM of sin</b>	Romans 3:23 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'	<p>What is sin? - Rejection of God's rule - Failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature</p> <p>Am I a sinner? What are the tangible effects of sin?</p> <p>What is inherited guilt, inherited corruption?</p>	<p>Often, it may be useful to start with the garden of Eden (1) Start on familiar ground (2) Explain God's intention in creation and our unbroken relationship with God (3) We show how man rejected God and His goodness from the very beginning</p> <p>Talk about the actual sins which we commit in our lives. Show that God is a Holy God.</p> <p>Make relevant the world events and happenings to show how mankind is sinful. Eg, wars, famine</p> <p>At this point, it is often helpful to show how sin not only separates us from God, but also from others (self, world). This often strikes a cord within a person.</p> <p>The person may not think they have done any evil deeds. Show that in comparison to God's standard which is perfection, none of us can match up.</p> <p>Show that all of us are unable and unwilling to save ourselves</p> <p>... show that because of inherited guilt, we will eventually face judgment. We do not actually need to explicate that this guild is inherited. This links to the subsequent point.</p>	<p>A parent desires to have an intimate relationship with his/her child, similarly God desired from the beginning to have a close relationship with mankind</p> <p>As a child, no one had to teach us how to do what is wrong, but we naturally know how to steal, lie etc.</p> <p>One aspect of sin is self-centredness; this causes problems and pains in relationships. For example, I know of someone/ an event...</p> <p>None of us can be perfect according to God's standard in this life. It's impossible for us. It's just like trying to jump to the moon. Some may jump higher than others, but none of us can reach it!</p> <p>We have turned our backs on God</p> <p>All of us are like prisoners (of sin). Because we are behind bars, we cannot free ourselves.</p> <p>All of us are in the midst of an ocean without any life-rafts or safety vests. We can muster all our abilities to keep afloat, but we will eventually drown unless someone comes to save us</p>
<b>PENALTY is</b>	Roman 6:23	Judgment	Importantly, show that God is a Just God	A judge who upholds the law by

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<b>death</b>	'The wages of sin is death'		and everyone will have to face judgment.  It may be helpful to show that judgment is already at work in the present time (Rom 1:18; Jn 3:19)	punishing wrongdoing (because it harms people) is considered upright and just. God is a just God. He will punish wrongdoing. For example, if you are caught speeding and let's say you need to pay a fine of \$1000.
<b>PROVISION is Jesus</b>	Roman 5:8 'But God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us'	God's mercy and love on mankind	Show that God loves mankind. It is important to affirm to the individual whom you are sharing with that God loves him/her.  The penalty of sin is paid for by God and offered to anyone who believes	None of us has the resources to pay the fine. However, God is a gracious judge who also <i>offers</i> to pay the fine for a criminal
<b>PROMISE of forgiveness and eternal life</b>	Acts 3:19, John 3:16 '...whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life'	God's promise to whoever believes	Communicate that despite our wrong-headed lives and all our brokenness, God promises to forgive us and restore that relationship again.	For example, a woman who has been unfaithful to her husband, but the husband promises to forgive her and restore the relationship with her again.
<b>PERSONAL Response</b>	Romans 10:9	The need to personally repent and receive Jesus	'I don't feel anything special...'  Emphasize that it is a decision, an act of the will; the emotions will come along later. This is sometimes necessary to point out since we live in a world of emotionalism.	All of us have faith in things which we cannot see or fully predict with certainty. For example, I have faith that when I get up a tram, it will take me to my destination. In the same way, we can place our trust in Jesus to take us to God. The difference is, unlike Melbourne trams which may break down (or drivers go on strike), God will always keep His promise. We know this because He says it in the Bible.

## **COMMUNICATION: How can I share the gospel in Street Witnessing/Witness-pairing**

### **Street Evangelism**

Some learning advantages:

- **Conscious Commitment**
- **Cross-communication** (no pun intended)
- **Continual Dependency on God**

### **Practical Skills**

#### **☞ AUDIENCE: Finding an appropriate person who would listen**

- Introductions and Intentions
  - Smile, say hello, shake their hand!
  - Introduce yourself and your partner first and where you come from (ie, your church)
  - Put in your catch line: ...
  - 'It will only take 5 minutes of your time, could I just explain more about Christianity to you?'
  - Summary: Tell them clearly your intentions of sharing the gospel (good news that God has for your life)
- Inquiring about Rejection: 'No thanks, I'm from another religion'
  - 'I see, I only know a little about this religion, could you tell me more?'
  - 'Have you heard about Christianity before? Could I explain it to you?'
  - Continue to put you off: Smile, shake their hand, and thank them for taking time to listen. Be aware of the Religious Vilification Laws.

## ➤ Approach/Catch-lines

- Existential approach: Have you ever wondered about the meaning of life?
- Confrontational approach: (1) If you were to die today, would you go to heaven? (2) What do you think would happen to you if you were to die today?
- 'Salesperson' approach: Have you ever heard about God's wonderful gift for you?
- Direct approach: (1) Do you know who Jesus Christ is? (2) Have you ever wondered why Jesus Christ had to die?
- Indirect approach: (1) Hi, I'm here to do a short survey with you... (2) I've been tasked by my church to find out what religion you believe in and why...

## ➤ Attitude: Some general principles

- **(1) What kind of attitude would help the person be receptive to hearing this message from someone else again?**
- **(2) What kind of attitude would allow me to befriend this person?**
- **(3) What kind of attitude would allow me to hear what the person believes in?**
- Key 1: Listening
  - 1 Pet 3:15; Col 4:6
    - "I respect your view, why is it that you believe in it? Could you tell me more?"
    - Listening skills
      - ◆ Repetition of Words
      - ◆ Rephrasing of Thoughts
      - ◆ Recreation of Meaning

- Key 2: Friendship
  - ✦ More than just getting to a 'Yes'
    - Intention to befriend the person
    - Asking how you can help them in some area of their life
    - Meeting up with them. This is one way where you can get their phone number.
    - Think of investing long term.
- Key 3: Share with conviction
  - ✦ Do you believe in what you are sharing to the person?  
Does it really matter to you?

#### ➡ **Actions (Body Language):**

- Keep an open posture
- Get down to their level to talk since you most often would be speaking to those who are seated. This is less threatening.
- Eye-contact

#### Cautions

##### ➡ **Anticipate rejection**

- The gospel is inherently offensive to those who are perishing.
  - ✦ Exclusivity
  - ✦ Exposes our wrongdoings and inability
- "I did it badly..." or the person was just having a bad day

##### ➡ **Acknowledge your need for God through prayer**

- Some reasons why I believe we need to pray:
  - ✦ The empowering of your speech (Eph 6:19)
  - ✦ The enlightening of the listener's eyes (Acts 16:14)
  - ✦ The encounter of eternal consequence

## **Check List/Feedback**

### **☛ Content of the Gospel**

- Problem of Sin
- Penalty of Sin
- Provision of Jesus
- Promise of Forgiveness and Eternal Life
- Personal Response
  
- Is it free of jargon?
  
- Is it easy to understand?

### **☛ Approach**

- Manners
  
- Body Language
  
- Introduction Statement
  
- Respectful of Person
  
- Listening to Individual

### **☛ Handling Rejection**

## References

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Stott, J. (1994). *The message of Romans: God's good news for the world*: Inter-Varsity Press.