

Enemies of Evangelism

Sharing Christ is not a ministry reserved for the super-brave.

Terrorism and terrorists: Since September 11 these two words have new meaning for us all. An evil plot, spawned in the mind of a treacherous enemy, has changed the way Americans live. The aim of the terrorists has been to bring down the wonderful freedom we all enjoy in this country.

Yet, are we aware that “terrorism” is assaulting the church—in the form of a hellish offensive by “anti-evangelism terrorists” to stop us from taking the love of God to others and to stifle our passion for His mission?

I’ve identified at least five of the “Most Wanted” of these “terrorists” roaming the body of Christ today. They aren’t the flesh-and-blood type, but if you’re a follower of Jesus you’re one of their targets.

Blindness. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18, KJV). This means that a Christian, a church or a ministry without a vision to bring people to Christ will stand by and watch them perish. That is a bone-chilling thought.

This is not a contemporary religious issue. Jesus addressed it with those closest to Him—His disciples.

Whether we call them His “leadership team” or His “associate ministers,” it was to those He knew the best who remained spiritually blind that He said: “Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest'” (John 4:35, NIV).

What is a “vision” for the harvest? It’s not an emotion. It starts with making God’s heart our heart (see 2 Pet. 3:9). Then we should order our lives like we believe Jesus’ heart is ours.

If you’ve lost this vision, ask Jesus to open your eyes to see the harvest. Expose yourself to solid evangelism training and ministry. Put the gospel to work by actively sharing it.

Deception. Often I hear Christians say, “Evangelism is not my ministry, my gift, my calling, my anointing.” What a lie. Sharing Christ is not a ministry reserved for the super-brave. It is for every Christian regardless of ministry gift, temperament or age.

You are never too old or young to be used by the Holy Spirit. There is no biological clock that dictates when God cannot use you. Feeling shy, quiet or inadequate is a smoke screen to divert you from fulfilling God’s desire for your life: “Not that we are sufficient of our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant” (2 Cor. 3:4-6, NKJV).

Fear. This makes us think someone will be offended or that we will be rejected if we share the gospel. It’s a strategy that has locked up many gifted believers from finding great joy in leading others to Jesus.

The Bible says, “‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you'” (Is. 43:1) and that “perfect love casts out fear” (see 1 John 4:18). With the God who is love dwelling in our hearts, we are capable of stopping this work of the enemy cold.

Apathy. This means we simply do not care, period. It may be the most lethal anti-evangelism force we face. Life's circumstances, our own blessings, our words or the words of others, faulty teaching, or something else has turned our eyes and our hearts away from the harvest right in front of our eyes.

Scripture brings some pretty stiff reproof for apathy. "A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord's work" (Jer. 48:10, NIV). Ouch!

Too often I hear, "I used to do evangelism." May I ask what happened?

Whatever the reason, return to your first love and do the things you did at first—like telling others about Jesus. God wants you to "never be lacking in zeal" in serving the Lord (see Rom. 12:11).

Ignorance. Some of us just don't know how to share the gospel. Usually, those who make the learning process long and drawn out do not witness very often. It takes longer to study than to do.

It is my guess that the sleeping church has often forfeited the heathen as its inheritance because it has complicated the process of reaching the untouched.

Let's halt the activity of these anti-evangelism agents. Jesus' mission is for all of us to preach the gospel. He's given us a sure promise to enable us to bring in the harvest: "'No weapon formed against you shall prosper'" (Is. 54:17).

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