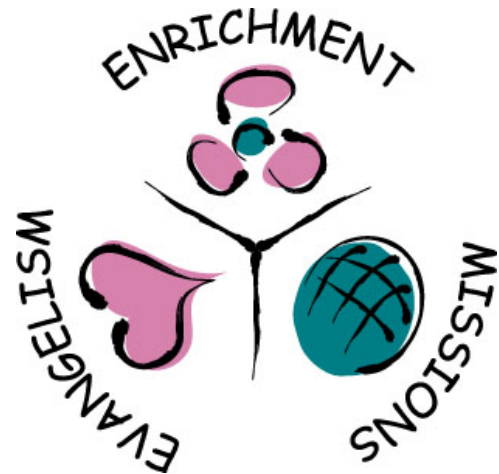


Equipped for Evangelism

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

If you've been a believer for any length of time, you've learned that introducing your friends to Jesus is no ordinary task. We can't force anyone to accept forgiveness and be freed from the burden of their sin. Salvation is a supernatural work of God; we can't *make* it happen. Recognizing this critical truth positively impacts our effectiveness in bringing others into personal relationships with Christ.

The only way to reach people who are blind, captive, and dead is through the divine work of Almighty God who is **“not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance”** ([2 Pet. 3:9](#)). We are His tools, but He is the power. We are indeed “ambassadors for Christ,” and like earthly ambassadors, our function is to faithfully represent the One who has sent us.



Since salvation is the supernatural work of God, He must have some divine tools that we can use as His earthly agents. Timothy summarized those tools this way: **“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline”** ([2 Tim. 1:7](#)). Some translations render the word “discipline” as “a sound mind.” In other words, three tools God gives us for witnessing are power, love, and a sound mind.

Power

There are three supernatural change agents we can depend on when sharing our faith.

The Power of the Gospel

The gospel is the light that can open blind eyes, rescue the captive, and revive the dead. It is simply this—the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sharing our faith is sharing this foundational truth: Christ died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and rose again from the dead. Believing anything else will not regenerate an unbeliever.

Focus your conversation on the person of Jesus Christ. Questions like “Who do you think Jesus Christ was?” or “Why do you think Christ died?” bring the non-Christian to consider the core of saving faith. The apostle Paul wrote: **“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”** ([Rom. 1:16](#)). Any rejection involved thus centers on Christ,

not you.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

The task of the Church after Jesus' resurrection and ascension was to proclaim the forgiveness of sins to all nations. How were they to undertake such a colossal task?

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The Spirit of God will lead you, empower you, and enable you as you seek to share Christ with others. He works to prepare their hearts to receive the truth and guides your mind and heart as you present it. Salvation cannot occur apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

You cannot convict friends of their sinful state. You cannot convince them of God's holiness. You cannot persuade them of God's eternal judgment. Who can? **“And when [the Holy Spirit] has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment” (John 16.8).** How does the Holy Spirit do this? He uses the Word of God.

The Power of Prayer

Sharing our faith means we have entered into spiritual warfare. The forces of darkness will always strive against the power of God. Our mightiest weapon is specific, persistent prayer on behalf of our lost friends. When we pray for an unbelieving friend, we confess our dependence upon God for His leadership, His wisdom, His timing.

It is amazing how fervent we are to see a lost friend come to Christ and yet how little time we spend directly interceding on his or her behalf. We can pray for that friend's family, job, and personal needs. Few people are reluctant to let someone pray about their problems. Doing so prepares the way for introducing him or her to Christ.

Love

Love, the greatest force on earth, is the second tool that empowers witnessing (2 **Tim. 1:7**). The unconditional, caring love of Christians attracts the unbeliever to the reality of Christ. Love is the music that authenticates the lyrics of salvation. **“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).** We express this love in two ways that demonstrate Christ's presence in our lives and manifest the remarkable change that salvation brings.

Love **“in deed” (1 John 3:18)**. There are so many practical ways we can show God's love to others. For example, we can showcase the love of God by keeping a couple's children in order to give them a special night out, by inviting them over for dinner, or by bringing them food during sickness. Unless we are willing to take the time and make the effort to incarnate the love of God, few people will bother to listen to our words.

Love in word ([Prov. 31:26](#)). Having loved through service, we can also love in word. That means we encourage, praise, and point out the positive qualities of our lost friends. Our language, our conversation reveals so much of our faith. Do we gossip? Do we talk sarcastically of others? Do we grumble and complain? Our verbal lifestyle testifies to the inner reality of Christ. Do our words attest to the care, concern, and compassion that Christ has for the lost?

A Sound Mind

The third tool God has given us is a sound mind. Christian faith is based on fact—not fiction. Josh McDowell, a leading Christian apologist, says, “**My heart cannot rejoice in what my mind rejects.**” Thus, sharing our faith doesn't mean we are unreasonable or irrational. Rather, we offer the historical, trustworthy testimony of Scripture. Such evidence includes:

The fact of the Resurrection – Not only did Jesus' doubting disciples witness the Resurrection, but “**After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time**” ([1 Cor. 15:6](#)). The Resurrection is indeed a concrete, historical fact.

The fact of fulfilled Scripture – Hundreds of Old Testament Scriptures are fulfilled in the New Testament, thousands of years after the prophecies were written. They include the amazingly accurate prediction of many of the intricate details of Jesus' birth and death.

The fact of manuscript and archaeological evidence – The canon of Scripture is one of the most verifiable documents in all of history. There are thousands of venerable Greek New Testament manuscripts and numerous Hebrew Old Testament copies. Archaeological evidence through the centuries has consistently verified the cultural data presented in the Bible.

The evidence of history validates the truth of Scripture. It is a valuable tool in presenting the gospel message, for people must believe, not only with their wills and hearts, but also with their minds.

Through the tools God gives you—the power of the gospel, of the Holy Spirit, and of prayer; unselfish love for unbelievers; and a mind equipped with the historical facts of our faith—you can reach out to your non-believing friends, ready to share your faith with confidence and joy.