

Doctrine of Pre-Evangelism

1. It is incumbent upon professing Christians to be able to witness for the Lord Jesus Christ and to give a reason for the hope of the Christian faith.
 - *1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*

2. Christianity involves, not only the proclamation of the gospel, but a defense of the faith being proclaimed.
 - *Luke 1:1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;*
 - *1 John 1:2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us ;)*

3. While God the Holy Spirit must change the heart of a person, the Lord has given us the privilege and responsibility of being witnesses for Christ.

4. There are some who believe that Christians are not under bondage to witness since God will convert the elect. Such a position fails to understand that God has ordained not only what will happen, but the means by which His will is accomplished. God has ordained that the gospel be preached.
 - *Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*

5. There are some who belittle formal education, and logical arguments in defense of the faith, because of a misunderstanding of Paul warning the church to “beware” of “vain philosophies.” Question. “How can a person ‘beware’ of something they are not even aware of?” It is not wrong to be informed.
 - *Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

6. By defending the truth of Christ, we are defending Him, and His honor. This is done in two ways.
 - Pre-evangelism. Before a person can respond in faith, they must have information. This is what pre-evangelism does. It prepares the heart of a person to receive Christ. In pre-evangelism the Doctrine of Justification by faith alone is presented.

It is important to understand this Bible doctrine, for it is the heart of salvation. The only faith that saves is a “living faith”, a “vital faith”, for faith without works is dead. This saving faith has three components.

- ❖ Notitia (Notae). Saving faith must have notitia or, “data”. It must have an object. The object of saving faith is Christ. There is a certain content that is part of Christianity. There is certain information which must be embraced in order to be born again.

1 Corinthians 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Before a person is called upon to believe, the mind must be engaged, and able to process certain information. A person must understand that they are a sinner. They must understand they need a Saviour. There must be an understanding that God exists. To cry, “No creed but Christ” is foolishness.

- ❖ Assensus. This is the Latin word for intellectual assent. Saving faith consists of “date”, and it consists of “consent”. Question. “Do you believe that George Washington was the first president of the United States?”, you say, “Yes”. However, to assent to the historical reality of George Washington does not mean you have put your personal faith and trust in George Washington to be your savior, and to forgive you of your sins.

The mind must say “Yes” to the proposition of the resurrection of Christ, or else faith is united to a dead corpse. It is not enough to merely have an intellectual assent to Christ, for even the devil believes Jesus is real. *James 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.* People can be convinced of the truth of Christ, and yet hate Him, like the demons hate Him. The Holy Spirit must move the soul from “data”, to “intellectual assent” to *fiducia* or living faith.

- ❖ Fiducia. Saving faith must have fiducia or personal trust and faith in Jesus Christ. There is a genuine affection for Christ. This can only be engendered by the Holy Spirit. This is not a leap of faith into darkness, but just the opposite. The Bible calls individuals out of the darkness and into the light.
- Post-evangelism. Once a person has embraced Christ with fiducia, or personal faith, movement must precede to the work of apologetics. Christ was not secretly raised from the dead. The gospel is not work that is done in a corner.

Acts 26:26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. 28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

7. Christ is honored by setting forth the truth contingencies of Scripture. The Holy Spirit will do His work as Christians do their work, and set forth the testimony of the Bible.