

# Motives for Evangelism

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As you think about Jesus, what motivates you most to consider telling someone else about Him? \_\_\_\_\_

There are many different reasons why a person would do the difficult work of engaging with another person to tell them about Jesus. Some might be gripped with the terror of Hell and desire to rescue people from it. Others may be more concerned about the here and now consequences of life without Christ because Christ changes lives in the here and now. Yet others might just be so excited about what Jesus has done for them that they want the whole world to know how great He is.

These are all great. In this lesson we will not be ranking motives to see which is the most spiritual. Instead, know that there are a variety of things that might motivate one to share the Gospel as a way of life.

One way to categorize these motives would be to note the focus. In evangelism, there are three different parties who might benefit, and therefore be at the heart of the motivation: God, the lost, and you. It is good and right to concern yourself with the betterment of each of these persons, including yourself, but more on that one later.

## God: A Passionate Pursuit of His Glory

The Westminster Catechism declares: "The chief and highest end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." And so it is.

What is meant by the phrase "glorify God?" \_\_\_\_\_

The glory of God is the ultimate end not only of man, but of every created thing in the universe.

Why according to Psalm 19:1-4, did God create the world? \_\_\_\_\_

Why, according to Ephesians 1:4-6, did God save us? \_\_\_\_\_

According to 1 Peter 1:6-7, why do we suffer? \_\_\_\_\_

And from 1 Peter 2:9, why do we share the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_

Like everything else, evangelism results in the glory of God. This is true in at least two ways. First, when we are sharing the Gospel, we are giving praise to God. We are telling people about God's great love, His tender mercy, His uncompromising justice, and His sheer brilliance to devise a way to forgive us without being unjust. Even if no one ever responded in faith, proclaiming the Gospel brings glory to God.

Second, when we share the Gospel, God moves in people's hearts to produce faith, and many believe. As a result they begin to live for Him instead of for themselves, and they give Him praise. As John Piper says, "All of history is moving toward one great goal, the white-hot

worship of God and His Son among all the peoples of the earth.” As we share the Gospel, we enhance His glory.

Do you have a passion for God’s glory? \_\_\_\_\_

Evangelism can help fulfill this desire.

### **The Lost: A Heart Broken for People**

Knowing her stubborn heart and seeing the judgement she would undergo, Jesus was saddened over Jerusalem (Luke 13:34). In the parable of the prodigal son, God is pictured as a father rejoicing at the restoration of a lost son (Luke 15:11-31). In Romans, Paul says that he is so burdened for his lost countrymen that he wishes he could go to Hell in their place (Romans 9:3). Yearning for the protection of lost people is a powerful motivator and probably the most common reason people share their faith. It’s not hard to see why.

We readily identify with lost people, having once been lost ourselves. Seeing evidence of destroyed lives surround us, it’s altogether appropriate that our pity should be aroused. God lets us feel what he feels. In fact, lack of this hurt for others is an evidence that something is wrong.

Think about a handful of people you know.

What are they suffering from now? \_\_\_\_\_

What are they likely to experience in the near future? \_\_\_\_\_

How can Jesus help? \_\_\_\_\_

What will happen to them when they die? \_\_\_\_\_

We do not always know where someone is in their relationship with God. But we do know the Bible teaches not trusting Jesus death as payment for our own sin leads to eternity away from God, or Hell. While it’s not always best to confront non-believers with the reality of Hell, as Christians, it is too important to ignore.

Who, of those closest to you, is it most saddening to think of as “lost?” \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had a chance to speak with them about Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

What have you done with this opportunity? \_\_\_\_\_

### **You: The Promise of Rewards**

This is the one people are most uncomfortable with, but it’s real motivator that the Bible offers us: There will be an accounting for our lives and rewards will be given. As Maximus put it, “What we do in this life echoes in eternity.”

### **Read 1 Corinthians 3:11-15**

Heaven itself is a gift. We can’t earn it, and once received, we can’t lose it. We are invited to enjoy it not because of our righteousness, but because of Jesus’ righteousness imparted to us and received by faith. But on top of that there will be rewards, not based on our righteousness,

but on how well we invested our lives. Though the nature of those rewards is not made clear, Paul at least gives a hint in 1 Thessalonians 2:19: "For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy."

In some way, it seems that for all eternity we will have the pleasure of knowing that others are there with us because we influenced them to believe. Whatever the full nature of these rewards, we can trust God that it will be worth it.

Remember, all of these are legitimate motivators. Different people will be captured by different ones at different times in their lives. Speak often about each as you invite others to join with you in proclaiming "the most joyful news ever announced."

**Memorize: 1 Thessalonians 2:19**