

Effective Evangelism, Part 1

**This 2 part series was taught at North Christian Church on 11/27/19 and 12/1/19. Please visit www.nccdighton.org to watch or listen.*

In this study, we're going to see the biblical role of the Law in evangelism, and a real life example of leading someone to repentance and faith in Christ.

First, we will introduce why and how even Jesus used the Law to lead people to salvation.

Then, we will see more from the apostles on this and how they lived out the Great Commission in the same way.

But first, here's a little introduction explaining some of my concerns today...

A problem in contemporary Christianity, and therefore with today's evangelism, is that it's lopsidedly focused on God's love without going into the inevitable results of His Justice upon those who refuse to believe in the Lord. **Joh 3:16-18,36**

Jn 3:16-18 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*

Jn 3:36 *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*

God so loved the world that He sent His Son, but unless someone humbly RECEIVES His gracious offer ala **Jn 1:12** he "takes hold of" Christ by faith, then that person remains under God's judgment.

It's almost like Christians say to unbelievers "God loves you, so don't worry about anything"... but that's actually incomplete and misleading!

There is something each and every person needs to reconcile between themselves and God if they want to be saved.

Does the Bible say that all men will be saved in the end? NO, on the contrary, Jesus said even though many are called, "few" are chosen. **Mat 22:14**

And when He was on earth, our Lord talked about hell A LOT MORE than He talked about heaven.

So for us to bring up God's love WITHOUT bringing up the reality of one's guilt before the Righteous Judge of the Universe... that's doing someone a great disservice.

And if a person doesn't really believe he's a sinner, and thinks he's good enough to save himself, then how will he see the need to turn to Christ in his heart to be saved?

These people will remain in self-deception, blind to the Truth about eternal life and eternal judgment.

And they will be robbed of the opportunity to receive the love of God!

My dear Pastor Collins once said to me, and I'm summarizing:

People are being robbed of the chance to love God as they should... He who is forgiven much, loves much, as in Lk 7:47. If people don't come to see their own depravity and how much they're forgiven of, they won't be set free by the love of God.

Let's remember what the apostle Paul, whom many call "the apostle of grace", stated about his preaching of the Gospel on his missionary trips...

... and let me remind you that in the book of Acts we see **evangelism in action**, not the letters to the churches which were largely encouragement and instructions to believers.

Ac 17:30-31 *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*

Notice, GOD commands all people everywhere to repent... and why is that???

Because of the coming day He will judge the world!

Put those two things together; there is a very real danger unbelievers need to be told about, and with a sense of urgency.

If someone's about to get hit by a bus, you don't take your time in warning them.

We need to let people know we care about them and what will happen to them one day.

Paul goes on to describe his personal method of evangelism...

Ac 20:21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here we see a vital part of Paul's preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; he stressed the importance of both repentance and faith.

In other words, he graciously told people the whole story without holding back so they wouldn't be left in the dark, thinking they might somehow be OK on their own.

For a person to be saved, there must be a transfer of trust to Christ alone.

Unless someone sees that they shouldn't trust in themselves, or in their church or religion to be saved... then they won't transfer their trust to the Person of Christ alone for their salvation.

They will sadly remain stuck in a false concept of salvation; which is usually an attempt to satisfy God by their own goodness or religiosity.

Again, look at what Paul, the apostle of grace, actively preached while evangelizing people:

Ac 26:19-20 *"Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that **they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.***

If we heard a modern-day preacher say that, then some hyper-grace Christians would cry out "*Blasphemy!*" ... but that's only until they realized that was said by the apostle of grace!

This is part of what the apostle Paul actively preached when sharing the Gospel.

Some Christians today would wrongly be appalled at that, but that right there is where the rubber meets the road.

Paul was basically telling people to not deceive themselves in any way. (i.e. - many people SAY they repent, but go on living life for themselves, deceiving themselves! ... living life totally for one self is a sign of spurious faith. But it's between each person and the Lord.)

For some reason, Christians don't want to bring up sin when preaching the Gospel, wrongly believing "it's not the way of grace".

However, my friends, it's NOT gracious to hold back the very reason someone needs to receive the grace of God!

Let's remember, our Lord was full of grace AND truth!

Jn 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Jn 1:17 *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

And this is also how Jesus Himself preached the Gospel!

Think about it: If Jesus preached all grace, they probably wouldn't have strung Him up on a cross.

But He preached uncompromising truth, as well, often direct and even insulting, out of His tremendous love for His creation. (this is why some Bible teachers even call Jesus a "Judgment Preacher")

Think about it, my friends: if people aren't aware of the serious problem they have before their Creator, then why would they repent at all? And why would they look for a Savior, honestly?!

As William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, stated before his death in 1912:

William Booth - *"The chief danger of the 20th century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell."*

Apparently, Mr. Booth had the gift of discernment or prophecy.

Today, political correctness (PC) in our world has led people to compromise the whole Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is unfortunately where a lot of Christian churches find themselves; **they're unwilling to tell people the whole truth so they might turn to Christ from the heart, and not in religious pretense.**

For example, why are many churches today teaching *forgiveness without repentance*?

Some go so far as to say that because God is love, He forgives everyone,... but is that found in Holy Scripture??

It's like they want to skip a step so they don't offend anyone, and that is a bad preacher/church. (there's the curse of today's P.C.)

And here's what's really painful: **they end up denying people the opportunity of true freedom by repenting towards God and turning to Christ in humility.**

The Bible consistently teaches there is no forgiveness without repentance.

For example, in one passage about the Great Commission, Jesus Himself makes it clear how forgiveness comes:

Lk 24:45-48 - *Then He (Jesus) opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His*

name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. "You are witnesses of these things.

Part of the Great Commission that we are to obey is preaching *repentance for forgiveness of sins*, per our Lord's own command to us!

And the apostles understood this truth and followed the Lord's direction in their own evangelism. We've already seen this in how Paul habitually preached the Gospel.

We also see this in Peter's evangelizing in the book of Acts, immediately after the Lord's ascension into heaven (and please notice **the order given** in these verses) :

Acts 2:38 *And Peter said to them, "**Repent** and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 3:19 ***Repent** therefore, and turn again, **that your sins may be blotted out.***

Acts 5:31 *God exalted him (Jesus) at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give **repentance** to Israel and **forgiveness of sins.***

The implication is that if a person refuses to repent, then they will not receive forgiveness of sins.

This is why repentance must be preached as "the other side of the coin" of faith.

And let's also remember that even repentance COMES FROM GOD. He gives it as a gift to the humble, as He does with faith (Eph 2:8-9). It really is a supernatural thing.

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also **God has granted repentance that leads to life.**"

2 Tim 2:24-25 *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. **God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,***

The implication is that if God doesn't grant repentance to someone, then they will not receive forgiveness of sins!

This is why the unbeliever must cry out to God for mercy, as our Lord revealed to us in **Luk 18:9-14**.

Now, let's simplify this by looking at real life forgiveness; **how can someone experientially forgive someone else if they refuse to apologize?**

Think about that. (and hopefully we believers carry forgiveness in our hearts either way, but what about both parties EXPERIENCING forgiveness?)

Look what Jesus said:

Lk 17:3-4 *Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, 4 and if he sins against you seven*

times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

So said Jesus! - And to our main point, do you see the proper order of things?

This is how life works, and how RELATIONSHIPS work, according to our Lord.

Now, let's take this truth back to the Gospel: Unbelievers won't be forgiven by God unless they're willing to repent and turn to Christ, as we saw in **Ac 20:21**.

That's the biblical fact of the matter. This is how God designed life to work.

The evangelism example we are about to see is connected with this:

Effective Evangelism - God's Law should be used to help people come to repentance and see their need for the Savior.

We might say God's moral law is seen in the 10 Commandments...

... and remember it's called the "Law" for a reason; it's not just a list of guidelines.

The God-given "Law" should make us think of God's courtroom in heaven, and the inevitable Justice that must be served for wrongdoing.

And the 10 commandments should be rightly used to humble people to the point of genuine repentance.

Again, some of you might be saying to yourselves *"is that biblical?... aren't we now under grace?"*

Amen, we are under grace!... at least WE BELIEVERS are under grace (think about that).

But what are unbelievers still under? - Condemnation and wrath, according to our Lord Jesus and John the Baptist! (**Jn 3:18,36**)

Therefore, it's very gracious to tell people the whole Truth and to not "beat around the bush" to protect your own reputation...

... that type of **selfishness** prevents people from seeing the whole picture in the process.

Again, God's Law should be used to help people see their need for the Savior.

We'll see the biblical nature of this evangelistic approach in a moment.

Charles Spurgeon preached the value of using the Law in evangelism.

He was a Pastor who was very eager not only to teach the people in his church, but also to lead people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Charles Spurgeon - *"I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel who does not preach the Law. The Law is the needle, and you cannot draw the silken thread of the gospel through a man's heart unless you first send the needle of the Law to make way for it."*

Now obviously, even though this is a good analogy, God is the One who does this type of work within the human heart. We are merely planters and waterers, as in **1Cor 3:7**.

1 Cor 3:5-7 *What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

But taking this analogy, shouldn't we plant and water the best way we know how?

Shouldn't we give the Gospel in the most biblical way we can?

Even the Lord Himself used the 10 Commandments to lead people to repentance. He preached the truth, in love, to bring people to a realization of their need for Him as their Savior.

And we also must recall; the Bible says it's the **kindness** of God that leads us to repentance.

Ro 2:4 *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?***

Remember when the Lord had dinner with the prostitutes and tax collectors... He was not sitting there condoning their sin, saying "it's no big deal because God loves you".

He was kind and loving, but He was also telling them the Truth to lead them to repentance! (think of **Lk 13:1-5**)

The Bible says He was leading sinners TO REPENTANCE. Lk 5:32

Luke 5:29-32 *And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. 30 And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" 31 And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous **but sinners to repentance.**"*

And why did Jesus call sinners to repentance? - **Because, as we have seen, without repentance there is no forgiveness of sins!**

And without repentance, there is no coming to GENUINE faith in Christ as one's Lord and Savior.

Without a willingness to repent, no one will humble themselves to trust in Christ from the heart. (i.e.- **Rom 10:9-11**)

Mt 21:28-32 *"What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 And he answered, 'I will not,' **but afterward he changed his mind and went.** 30 And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go.*

31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when

you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

There's repentance and faith, my friends! (and notice that genuine repentance/faith ends up "doing" the will of the Father, vs. 31a)

Even though the prostitutes and tax collectors sinned against God, many of them acknowledged it and changed their minds and trusted in Christ to be saved!

Look how the NIV puts it:

Mt 21:32 NIV- *For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.*

Maybe, just maybe, we should follow our Lord's example in reaching people with the Gospel.

Here's one of our main points in this lesson:

Effective Evangelism - In His evangelism, Jesus often used the Law to lead people to a knowledge of their sin against God. (i.e. **Mt 5:17-30, Lk 18:18-20, Jn 4:16-18**)

In Jn 4, with the woman at the well, Jesus alluded to her living in adultery, which certainly tweaked her conscience (besides the fact that He mentioned her many husbands before that).

Jn 4:13-19 *Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will*

become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” 15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”

*16 Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” 17 The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; 18 for you have had five husbands, and **the one you now have is not your husband.** What you have said is true.” 19 The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.*

In kindness, Jesus reaches her conscience through the Law she had broken, humbling her and helping her seek Him as Savior.

A healthy fear of God is a very good thing, and that's why it's very valuable for a person to realize they have broken God's Law...

... and to come to the knowledge of the truth that we are all sinners and we need to cry out to God for mercy.

In **Mt 5**, Jesus brings up breaking the commandments against murder and adultery,...

... and He makes it even more convicting by letting us know that when we've even just INTENDED those things in our hearts, we are still guilty in God's eyes, because God looks at the heart.

Mt 5:17-22 *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not*

a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'* 22 *But I say to you that **everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.***

Look at vs. 27-28... *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'* 28 *But I say to you that **everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.***

Hopefully, you see that we've all broken God's Law, and NONE of us has any hope of satisfying God's Justice on our own!

We are all GUILTY by His standards!!! - And this is what we must communicate as we spread the Gospel.

Again; **Effective Evangelism** - In His evangelism, Jesus often used the Law to lead people to a knowledge of their sin against God. (i.e. Mt 5:17-30, Lk 18:18-20, Jn 4:16-18)

It's knowledge of one's sin that leads a man to be humble before his God and Creator, our Judge in Heaven.

Honest people will admit they cannot keep these righteous commands perfectly, and therefore this will cause them to reach out to our God and Savior for mercy.

However, in **Lk 18**, we see a man who wasn't willing to be honest about his sin.

Jesus spoke to the rich young ruler and mentioned the 10 Commandments to hopefully lead him to humility and bowing the knee before Him.

Unfortunately, instead of responding to Jesus' call, he walked away.

Luke 18:18-27 *And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 20 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'*" 21 *And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth."*

22 *When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." 23 But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. 24 Jesus, looking at him with sadness, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." 26 Those who heard it said, "Then who can be*

saved?" 27 But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Certainly, none of us can keep all the commands of God perfectly. This is why Jesus pointed out to him that only God is truly good (Jesus, Himself, also being God).

Apparently, this young man thought he was good, when only God is good, truly.

This rich young ruler was unwilling to admit he had broken God's Law... so Jesus went to the next step to reveal his weakness and his bondage to earthly things.

But again, the point of these passages is to see that **Jesus led sinners to repentance by using the Law.**

So, if our Lord used the Law to show people their sinfulness and helplessness, then why don't we do the same, as His followers?

Why don't we use the Law to help others along to see the whole Truth? - The apostles did, too!

Even the apostle Paul, the so-called "apostle of grace", also wrote about the value of using the Law in evangelism.

And he did this immediately after his writing: "there is none righteous, not even one."

Ro 3:19-20 *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that **every mouth may be stopped**, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the*

*law no human being will be justified in his sight, since **through the law comes knowledge of sin.***

Think about it... "**through the law comes knowledge of sin.**"

If someone doesn't even know they've broken a law, even in the secular realm, then why would they be convicted to turn from it or to show remorse?

That's why this is part of our job as evangelists.

Satan and his world's system has done an excellent job convincing people they aren't all that bad, even helping them turn a blind eye to what's wrong in their lives.

As Isaiah put it:

Isa 5:20 *Woe to those who call evil good and good evil,*

who put darkness for light and light for darkness,

who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

Does this not describe our world today?

Why does this reality exist right now in our societies?

It's because lies have been beaten into our souls by Satan's world system (by the media, for example), to prevent us from recognizing sin and evil,...

... and **therefore...** to prevent us from seeking God's mercy to save us from our sins!!

Do you see the connection??

So, we see one function of God's Law in **Ro 3** is to "stop the mouth", to stop it from justifying oneself as in vs. 19-20.

We might say to someone whose going on and on with their mouth; "*stop it... just stop justifying yourself, and stop making excuses!*", right?!

The wonderful thing about God's Law is that it *stops the mouth*; really it stops our arrogance. It stops self-justification in its tracks.

And, most importantly, through the Law comes a very vital knowledge of one's sin against God.

Ask yourself this question; if a person doesn't come to realize they have personally sinned against and offended God, then why would they look to God for mercy?? And why would they seek a Savior?!

Effective Evangelism - The Law, and a man's conscience, are two of our best friends in witnessing to others about Christ.

Again:

Ro 3:19-20 *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

Understanding God's Law, and that we couldn't keep it all, is what acted as our tutor/teacher, to lead us to Christ.

We, as evangelists, can call on the Law as a tutor in leading others to Christ, who are unaware of their desperate situation!

Gal 3:21-24 *Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. **But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin**, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*

*But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. **Therefore the Law has become our tutor** to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.*

Hopefully that makes sense to you all.

Hopefully you now see the biblical way to use the Law as a tool to lead people to Christ.

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At this point, I want to share a real life example with you that will illustrate using the Law to close people's mouths so they will actually humbly listen to their need for the Savior.

And all of this is all done in the gentleness and love of Christ - that is very important.

The only time Jesus became righteously indignant was with those who were arrogant and wouldn't listen. (namely the Pharisees and lawyers)

Otherwise, He operated in the gentleness He was well-known for.

Again, it's the kindness of God that leads man to repentance. **Ro 2:4**

Now back to our real life example...

As you might know, some of us do surveys for the church at the local park or mall.

Let's call this segment: "Just Another Walk in the Park", for two reasons.

One is obvious, that this encounter takes place in a public park.

Two is not so obvious, and that is that we shouldn't make a big deal out of such encounters.

This should be our norm as believers living in the world.

To witness for Christ is WHO WE ARE and WHAT WE DO. It BECOMES us as we grow in the Word.

We all should have a desire to see people saved and we should have a desire to help them see their need for Christ.

And that will make these experiences more "normal" to us; just another walk in the park!

After asking a person's background and basic beliefs, such as where they are from and what religion they grew up with, then the key question we hope to get to is this;

"If you were to die tonight, WHERE are you going, and WHY?"

or "Do you believe there's an afterlife?"

By the way, you can arrive at a question like this in all sorts of ways, even through casual conversation at first, just talking about how difficult life can be.

You might end up simply asking someone "do you believe there's an afterlife?", **to see where they stand before going on, you can see what they believe in their hearts.**

Let the Spirit guide you as you approach people in His love and gentleness.