

Evangelism (Part 2)

Personal Evangelism Defined Thus far we have discussed evangelism in its general sense. As we have noted that anything that we do in connection with spreading the gospel is evangelism. Supporting missionaries, promoting gospel meetings, handing out tracts, gospel preaching, etc. are all included under what we will refer to as general evangelism. There is a difference, however, between general evangelism and personal evangelism. Personal evangelism is an evangelistic effort that involves direct gospel teaching on an individual basis. In a sermon preached to a general audience, an evangelist will strive to make a broader application of the gospel – to appeal to a wider range of individual needs. With personal evangelism, the evangelist strives to make a direct application of the gospel – based upon the individual spiritual needs of the person involved in the study. That is why in the New Testament we have instances where individual people received diverse instructions regarding salvation.



LET'S GET ENERGIZED ABOUT EVANGELISM!

We will observe two instances when people were given slightly different answers to the question of salvation.

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” ([Acts 2:37-38](#))

“And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” ([Acts 16:30-31](#))

In [Acts 2](#), Peter had been preaching to a multitude of Jews, many of whom had witnessed and had even been involved in the crucifixion of Jesus. They had been witnesses to many of the miracles and teachings of Christ. Peter had previously said to them in [Acts 2:22](#), “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.” From this we see that those Jews present had knowledge of Jesus – they at least knew who He was and what He had done. Peter then went on to tell them in verse 36, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” When they heard these words, they were “pricked in their heart.” In other words, each individual conscience was convicted of sin in rejecting the Messiah. Based upon that conviction and their evident belief that Jesus was the Son of God they needed to know what to do to be saved.

In [Acts 16](#), Paul and Silas were speaking with the Philippian jailor. He asked them what he needed in order to be saved and they told him what he most needed to hear, “believe on the Lord Jesus.” He was not told to repent or be baptized initially. Unlike the Jews on Pentecost, this man had not witnessed for himself the works of Jesus; he had not heard Jesus’ sermons; likely he had not even heard of Jesus before this instance. Therefore, Paul had to start at the beginning – believe in Jesus. What did they tell him after that? [Acts 16:32](#) says, “And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.” They taught him the gospel, beginning with faith in Jesus and from there they taught him the entire plan of salvation. That they taught him about repentance and baptism is evident from what happened in the next verse, “And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway” ([Acts 16:33](#)). He demonstrated his penitent attitude in the cleaning of their wounds and he was immediately baptized. He was eventually taught the same thing that the Jews on Pentecost were taught, but with him, Paul and Silas had to begin that teaching based upon his special circumstance. What he needed foremost was knowledge of who Jesus so that he could develop faith in Him and learn how to be saved based upon that knowledge. *Jack McNeil*

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