

## The Sermon - In 10 Sentences Or Less

Surprise the World (Week 1): Evangelism for the Rest of Us:



1. "Evangelism" is a word we've come to equate with "proselytizing," complete with the negative stereotypes we sometimes associate with that.
2. So the first thing we need to do is "unbox evangelism," that is, free it from the cultural constraints we've put on it: e.g., it's not merely transactional/contractual, it's not principally about what happens to you after you die, it's not "one size fits all", etc.
3. 1st Peter 3.15 tells us that we don't need to have all the answers we engage with a non-Christian, we just need to have an answer our "hope"; we may not be an expert on everything, but we certainly are experts on that.
4. Colossians 4.5-6 instructs us to conduct ourselves wisely toward those outside of the Christian faith, which in part means to ensure our speech is always gracious toward them.
5. Their questions are an opportunity for connection, not correction.
6. Spiritual awakening in adults and teens has some predictable facets: the first is "coming to the end of yourself," which proves to be the catalyst for all subsequent steps.
7. Those beginning to wake up spiritually will be "questing" (seeking, learning, exploring, etc.), even if no one can tell, and then they'll need to encounter an "advocate/ambassador" (2nd Cor. 5.18-20) who will invest in and walk with them.
8. Often, they will need to belong before they believe, that is, become a part of a community of faith who receives them graciously, embraces them in their messiness, is not intimidated by their questions or hurt, etc.
9. Those awakening up spiritually will come to a point of commitment, far more often than not this is gradual, not dramatic.
10. Let's save the word "evangelism": it comes from the New Testament word "euangelion," which simply means "good news," as in, God is doing a new thing in Christ, and it is good news that you and I have been invited to get onboard with what He is doing.

## More on "Evangelism for the Rest of Us"

1. Evangelism as "nudging" (a term coined by Leonard Sweet): [Devotional: Can you become an evangelist by 'nudging'?](#)
2. Evangelism as a part of discipleship in the Gospels, and thus for us too (from Alan Hirsch, a partner of Michael Frost, who wrote "Surprise the World"): [Why Evangelism Cannot Be Our Focus](#)

## Prayer this Week

Pray this for yourself and KirkWood this week (from the church of New Zealand):

*"Draw Your church together, oh God, as a great company of disciples, following our Lord Jesu Christ in every facet of life, serving Him and His mission in the world, and proclaiming His love to every person everywhere.*

*We praise You, oh Lord, for calling us to serve You right here, right now in this broken world, offering healing and wholeness through Christ.*

*Save, oh God, us from hurrying away because we don't want to love, or don't know how. Give us the courage to invest the best of ourselves in others, and in so doing bring them nearer to Your Son, this we ask for the sake of Christ's Kingdom, amen."*