

How to Pray Evangelistically

By Chuck Lawless

Three years before my father passed away, he turned to Christ for salvation. It was amazing, actually. My dad had quite a temper prior to his conversion. My childhood memories of his displays of anger still echo in my mind. Though my grandmother was a strong believer, Dad never showed interest in Christianity. In fact, he first believed that many routes lead to God; “we’re just following different paths,” he told me.

We prayed for more than 30 years that Dad would become a believer. Then, it happened. Dad called my little brother to say he wanted to talk about following Jesus...right then! God so transformed my father that we spent the final years of his life getting to know a new man. He was a trophy of God’s grace, an undeniable example of 2 Corinthians 5:17a—“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (HCSB). God graciously answered our prayers.

Are you praying for non-Christians to turn to Christ? In my book, *Serving in Your Church Prayer Ministry*, I describe a simple way to pray evangelistically by praying the acronym, “GOD’S HEART.” I’m grateful to my friend Chris Schofield, whose writings about prayer first helped me to think about this kind of process.

Maybe this pattern will help you as you pray evangelistically for others:

- G** = Pray believers, beginning with yourself, will appreciate *God’s grace*. When we really appreciate what God has done for us, we naturally want to tell others about Him. That’s why new believers are often most willing to do evangelism—their salvation is so fresh they almost can’t avoid telling the story. We stop evangelizing when we take grace for granted.
- O** = Pray for believers to live in *obedience* to God. We can’t change another person’s heart. Only God can do that, as He did in response to our prayers for my dad. If we’re not walking in obedience to God, though, our disobedience hinders our prayers (Isa. 59:1-2). Abiding in Christ really does matter when we pray (John 15:7).
- D’** = Pray believers will *decide* to tell others. Evangelism doesn’t just happen. Telling the story of Jesus is a choice . . . an action . . . a decision. Too many Christians know they should do evangelism, but decide not to do it. Pray that won’t happen.
- S** = Pray that believers will *speak* the gospel fearlessly and clearly. In fact, that’s the way Paul taught us to pray in Ephesians 6:19-20 and Colossians 4:2-4. If Paul – the apostle extraordinaire – needed others praying for him to do evangelism, how much more do we need that kind of support?
- H** = Pray for nonbelievers to have a receptive *heart* to the gospel. Apart from Christ, all people are dead in their sin (Eph. 2:1), held under the devil’s sway (Acts 26:18). Only God can make our hearts open to the good news.
- E** = Pray their spiritual *eyes* will be opened. Non-believers are blinded to the truth of the gospel (2 Cor. 4:3-4), and the “god of this age” does all he can to keep them in darkness. Nothing we do apart from the power of God can open their blinded minds.

A = Pray they will have God's *attitude* toward sin. Understanding God's remedy for sin begins with understanding our sickness. We're all sinners (Rom. 3:23), and we must see our sin as God sees it – as wrong against a holy God.

R = Pray non-believers will *repent* and believe. The message of Christ is clear: we must turn from our sin and trust Christ for salvation (Mark 1:15).
God gets the glory as He frees nonbelievers from the domain of darkness (Col. 1:13).

T = Pray their lives will be *transformed*. Only God can change a man like He changed my dad. Here's the good news, though – He's still doing that!
When God does that, the non-believing world takes note.

Who is praying for you to speak the gospel boldly and clearly?

Are you praying for other believers to be evangelistic?

Are you praying for non-believers?

Are you asking God to save and transform a specific person?

Even if you've been praying for someone for many years, don't give up.

God still responds to the prayers of His people. That's His heart.

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