

The Evangelist

2 Timothy 4:5, “But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

Introduction: The term “evangelist” is not one we normally hear in everyday language. Yet, it was a key role within the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11). Sometimes the Biblical role and work of the “evangelist” can be in danger of being reshaped by the ideas of men and evangelists may be expected to do work that is either not the church’s work or is given to other individuals within the church. So, it is essential both the evangelist and those where he might serve know “the work of an evangelist” (2 Timothy 4:5). So, today, let’s take a look at the Scriptures to carve out the evangelist’s role to establish proper boundaries and expectations.

I. The Evangelist Is Not...

A. The Church’s Hospital Chaplain

1. There is nothing wrong with the evangelist visiting and praying for the sick as “*the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*” (James 5:16).
2. However, James specifically says, “*Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him...*” (5:14).

B. The Official Church Intercessor

1. Some may have a Catholic view of the evangelist, as if they need to confess their sins to him as they would a priest.
2. Yet, this is a role any “righteous” person may fill as James 5:16 suggests, “*Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*”

C. The Church Welfare Agent

1. Benevolent needs among the needy will arise in a church and sometimes they get sent “to the preacher.”
2. In the early church, deacons were assigned to deal with benevolent problems so the apostles could attend to “*prayer and to the ministry of the word*” (Acts 6:1-4).

D. The Preacher’s Wife

1. Question for the wives: when your husband interviewed for his job did they interview you to ask what you could do to help in his job? Doubtful.
2. The preacher’s wife is just like any other wife in a congregation, but she is not the preacher and should not be expected to fill those roles (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

E. The Church’s Secretary

1. There are things that need to be done in a church—typing, filing, correspondence, printing, folding, publishing online.

2. Yet, if the preacher is consumed by these things it may very well eat away at the time God calls upon him to “*give attention to*” in his primary work (1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16).

F. The Social/Recreational Organizer

1. Spending time with one another outside of the assemblies is a fun way to connect and hospitality and socialization is essential to growing together (Acts 2:46-47).

2. Yet, to “*be hospitable*” is a work enjoined upon all Christians (Heb 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9).

G. The Youth Director

1. When I was younger I was asked a lot “are you the youth minister?”

2. God’s Word never delegates the teaching of youth to youth—but to “*older men*” and “*older women*” (Titus 2:1-8).

H. The Church Foremen/Interior Decorator

1. Inevitably, there is work which will need to be done on the physical premises of the building and it is easy to ask the preacher to do it when he is at the building often.

2. Yet, again, are there not capable and trustworthy men who can make sure they attend to “*the affairs of this life*” so the preacher can do his work (2 Timothy 2:3-4)?

I. The Social Media Liaison

1. It is important to get the message out via as many avenues as possible.

2. Yet, there are surely others who can utilize their skills to help invite, publish and share via social media—maybe even women (Romans 16:1-7).

J. The One-Man Pastor

1. The work of shepherding and overseeing is a work given to the shepherds/elders of the church (1 Peter 5:2-3; Acts 20:28; cp. Luke 15:3-7).

2. When the shepherds do their primary work, it makes it easier on the evangelist to do his chief work (Titus 2:15).

Transition: Now, that we have eliminated a few of the misconceptions about the evangelist and his work, let’s take a look at what the Bible would teach about what the evangelist is and what he does.

II. The “Evangelist” Defined...

A. The term “evangelist” has a root word within it... “angel.”

1. “Angel” is AGGELOS and means “one sent” or “messenger” (see Luke 1:19).

2. EUAGGELIZO is “bring you glad tidings”—the message of the angel (Luke 1:19)...in English this is the verb “evangelize.”

3. EUAGGELISTES is the noun “evangelist” (2 Timothy 4:5)—a “bringer of glad tidings.”

- B. There are other words connected to the “evangelist” as well.
 - 1. “preacher” one who is charged to “preach the word” (2 Timothy 4:2; Romans 10:14).
 - 2. “minister,” more specifically a minister “of the word” (Acts 6:4; 2 Timothy 4:5).
 - 3. “herald,” one who brings a message not of himself, but of the King!

III. The Five W's of Evangelism

A. Who?

- 1. The evangelist is commissioned to go wherever the gospel needs taught (Mark 16:15).
- 2. This may include evangelizing in a locale but traveling to evangelize as well.

B. What?

- 1. 2 Timothy 4:2 says, “*Preach the Word!*”
 - i. Paul declared “the whole counsel of God” in Ephesus (Acts 20:27).
 - ii. This means preaching on “*difficult*” and “*hard*” subjects (John 6:60; 2 Peter 3:16).
 - iii. This will take work...and work takes time and diligent effort (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:5).
- 2. This involves the need to “*convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching*” (2 Timothy 4:2).

C. When?

- 1. Preachers cannot always have “banker’s hours”—we must work with others’ schedules for Bible studies, funerals, weddings, gospel meetings, etc.
- 2. We are always on the clock.
- 3. Paul said he did “*not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears*” (Acts 20:31).

D. Where?

- 1. The preacher’s work may extend beyond the pulpit.
- 2. Paul said of Ephesus: I “*taught you publicly and from house to house*” (Acts 20:20).

E. Why does the preacher do his work?

- 1. Before Paul charged Timothy to preach, he wrote, “*Jesus Christ...will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and kingdom*” (2 Timothy 4:1).
- 2. Preachers show the only way to salvation, Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

F. How is this work to be done?

- 1. 2 Timothy 2:24-25 mentions three traits that are important for the teacher—gentleness, patience and humility. Preaching does require timeliness and tact!

2. Allen Webster wrote in an article titled “The Preacher’s Work,” “The most important work that is done in any community any week is the work of the gospel preacher. And that includes New York, Hollywood and Washington. What happens in New York affects world finances or fashion; the talent in Hollywood produces entertainment that keeps a few faces famous, a few wallets fat, and several million amused; and decisions made in Washington change the world for better or worse, but **what the preacher does will matter when the world is on fire** and Wall Street and Rodeo Drive and Pennsylvania Avenue are no more.”

IV. The Evangelist's Duties

- A. First, the evangelist has a goal **toward God**—to please. Ex. Facebook employer– “God”
1. “*For do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be the servant of Christ*” (Galatians 1:10).
 2. Ministers are servants. Servants work to please their Masters, Jesus Christ.
- B. Second, our goal **toward sinners** is to reconcile (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
1. “Reconcile” means “to make friends again...”
 2. In this case, we are changing the situation sinners are in with God.
 3. As sinners we are His enemies, when forgiven we become God’s friend (John 15:14).
 4. Since all are sinners, this means all people are an audience for our message!
- C. Third, the evangelist’s goal **towards his brethren** is to edify (Acts 20:32).
1. Our goal towards brethren is to help them constantly “*add to their faith*” (2 Pet. 1:2-11).
 2. Part of this job includes developing teachers from among the “*faithful*” (2 Timothy 2:2).
- D. Fourth, the evangelist has a duty **to himself**—to guard the faith.
1. False teachers and heresies within the church will arise (1 Corinthians 11:19; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 2:18-19).
 2. We must “*contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3).
- F. Finally, a goal of an evangelist **toward the congregation** should be to set it in order (Titus 1:5).

Conclusion: In today’s lesson we have: 1) Tried to properly define the “evangelist.” 2) Rooted out some of the false ideas some have about the evangelist’s work. 3) Given a brief overview of the evangelist’s work in various areas. 4) Provided several goals the evangelist should have as he serves the Lord and His church.

As we switch gears and offer an invitation, we need to not focus on the work the evangelist does, but the work we all have in responding to the teaching of the evangelist.

As a person, the evangelist is no more important than other Christians (1 Cor. 3:5-7). Yet, there is no more important work than preaching—God’s means to save the lost (1 Corinthians 1:21). If you love God’s Word you will love those who proclaim it and support them to do so (Galatians 6:6; Romans 10:15). If you hate the truth, you will hate those who teach it (Jn. 17:14-18). There is no greater blessing for an evangelist than for those he teaches to have a Berean attitude (Acts 17:11; cp. 1 Thessalonians 2:13). Will you respond to the word with an obedient faith is a question not just for today, but every day (Romans 10:15-17)?