



## Helping Evangelists Mature

by Brandon Kelly

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Throughout this year we've been walking through a significant aspect of ministry and leadership in the Church. Often referred to as the Five-Fold Ministry, or APEST, it's the description of roles given by God to equip and build up the Church for its mission which is found in Ephesians 4. This month and next, we'll look specifically at evangelists.



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You can read the initial article about evangelists, *Evangelists: Sharing Good News*, in [The Church Advocate](http://www.cggc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/AdvocateAugSept18Web.pdf) here: <http://www.cggc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/AdvocateAugSept18Web.pdf>.

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In the latest issue of the Advocate, we took time to explore the first vocation of the Five-Fold Ministry: the evangelist. The evangelist is someone who shares good news. They are storytellers, recruiters, and messengers who convince those who are not a part of the Kingdom of God to join the family. Evangelists are excited by the work of the Church, the movement of the Kingdom, and the mission of Jesus, so they want to share that excitement with everyone they meet. They also tend to occupy a unique position of having one foot in the Church and one foot in their community. This allows them to help Christians engage their community and non-Christians find community amongst the Church.

As with all of the Five-Fold Ministries, an evangelist will land somewhere on the spectrum between immature and mature. As evangelists are just discovering their gifting, they most likely will lean towards the immature side. This means we have to disciple them, walk with them, and pair them with mature evangelists to help them grow. Below are three key signs of an immature evangelist. Use these as a tool to help the evangelists grow, but be cautious not to use them as a weapon to beat someone down with.

3 Keys Signs of Immaturity in Evangelists:

1. **Simplistic Gospel.** In an effort to spread the message far and wide, evangelists can reduce the Gospel to such a simplistic form that it loses meaning and significance. Often this reveals itself in a “heaven or hell” message that is entirely focused on what happens after you die. A full Gospel is one that also includes the good news of redemption in all of creation, rescue and redemption in

one's life now, and the power to participate in God's plan of reconciliation. A mature evangelist will know how to contextual specific aspects of the Gospel to particular people in certain circumstances so that it has the most resonance and elicits a response.

2. **Fleeting Relationships.** Immature evangelists can wrestle with short-term relationships as they seek to spread the Good News of Jesus. With a goal of getting someone "over the finish line," evangelists can have the habit of abandoning relationships once the person has made a profession of faith. This behavior leads to a life lacking deep friendships and the possibility that the people they are walking alongside of will feel like their projects. A mature evangelist will see the relationship as the primary goal and sharing the Gospel as an overflow of their love for Jesus.
3. **Superficial Goals.** As mentioned above, the goal of an evangelist is to get the individual "over the finish line" with a profession of faith. While this is one step in an overall life journey, it's missing the greater picture of discipleship and transformation. Jesus called us to make disciples, not converts. This means moving from a momentary decision to a life-long process have growth and change. A mature evangelist will aim for transformation as the ultimate goal of their work with people.

How can you help walk with the evangelists in your life to see them grow into maturity? If you are an evangelist, what's the particular area of challenge for you and how might you step forward to overcome it?

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## ***CORRECTION!***

The date for General Conference Sessions 2019 was incorrectly listed in the Aug/Sept 2018 issue of *The Church Advocate*.

**The correct date for General Conference Sessions 2019 is *JULY 22-24, 2019*.**

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