



Evangelistic Function in the Church

by Brandon Kelly
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Throughout this year we're 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. Last month and today, we're dealing specifically with evangelistic ministry.



Brandon Kelly, Director
of Transformational
Ministries

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

And you can read last month's blog post, *Helping Evangelists Mature* here: <https://cggcenews.weebly.com/blog/helping-evangelists-mature>.

In the latest issue of *The Church Advocate* and last month's blog post, we took time to explore the third 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.

While the role of an evangelist is important, as are all of the Five-Fold Ministry roles, their purpose is to help the whole body of Christ grow and mature into the image of Christ. Every church and every network of churches needs to function in all five of the ministries, including the evangelistically. We need to evaluate our ministries and Kingdom work to see if we're functioning like evangelists as a whole body.

So here are three ways in which your church or ministry can aim to function evangelistically:

1. **Speak the Gospel at Every Opportunity.** While all Christians love and follow Jesus, we sometimes have difficulty making Jesus and His Good News the center of our conversations. Sure, when we're studying the Bible together, worshipping, or setting to the streets to purposefully share the Gospel, Jesus will be our main topic. But what about when we're sitting around the table as a family after a hard day? Or when we're catching a baseball game? Taking every opportunity to speak the Gospel means overflowing with your love of Jesus to such an extent that He peppers every word you speak. If this doesn't happen naturally for you and your community, make it a practice – something you purposefully set out to try to do.
2. **Look for Community Problems and Identify the Good News.** As you walk through your neighborhood and community what are the problems and pains that you see? Are there homeless? Are homes in disrepair? Is there an opioid problem or a lack of jobs? As a community of Jesus followers, become experts in the problems and pains of where you are on mission. Then take time to identify the Good News that Jesus brings to every situation. Practice speaking how Jesus is better and brings the better life. For example, if homes are in disrepair in your neighborhood, you might share the Good News that Jesus prepares the better home with a tremendous family for each of us. This spoken Good News coupled with the demonstrated Good News of helping to repair someone's home will create a transformative experience. Remember, though, to always bring a spoken and demonstrated Gospel. If you do one without the other, you'll lose a significant aspect of evangelistic ministry.
3. **Live Both Proactively and Reactively.** While apostles tend to operate proactively in mission – identifying a missional target and adapting their life and ministry towards the culture – evangelists tend to do a much better job of operating reactively. Reactive mission is to be prepared to engage every relationship that passes in front of you. If you're at the grocery store and someone holds the door open, then begin a conversation with them. If you're at the bank and the teller mentions something specific about their life, go deeper and keep the conversation going. As faith communities, we need to actively pursue the mission that God calls us to and be responsive to the individuals that God brings into our lives.

Do you see these functions in your church or ministry? If not, how can you take a next step towards functioning evangelistically?