

## *Appendix 1: Evangelism*

‘Evangelism’ is a key word in this debate. The overwhelming majority of believers simply assume its meaning. Evans does! In his book, where does he define it? Nowhere! He offers no attempted definition whatsoever of the vital word, and yet his book is all about how to do it. How to do what? And why? Biblically, I mean. Of course, we all know what the word means in the English dictionary. But that just regurgitates Christendom’s mantra, and is guilty of arguing in a circle. What does the Bible say about it? That is the question.

For a start ‘evangelism’ is not a biblical word at all. Staggering as that may sound to some, it is a fact. Nevertheless, the various forms of *euaggelizō* (to bring or announce good news) are, of course, plentiful in the New Testament. As for ‘evangelist’, this is all we are told:

We entered the house of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8).

[Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love (Eph. 4:11-16).

As for you [Timothy], always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry (2 Tim. 4:5).

And we know what ‘ministry’ Timothy had. He was Paul’s delegate or representative in Ephesus:

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As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3).

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth (1 Tim. 3:14-15).

Additional light is shed upon the scene when we compare what Paul said to Timothy's fellow-worker, Titus:

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you (Tit. 1:5).

Just now I quoted Ephesians 4:11-16. Notice where the 'evangelist' appears in that vital passage; right in the middle of the list of workers Christ gave (and gives) to his *ekklēsia*, all of them engaged in edifying the saints, with nothing at all being said about their doing anything to reach the lost. I am simply stating the case! I am not saying that addressing sinners with the gospel, aiming to persuade them, is not part of Timothy's and Titus' 'ministry', but look at what we are told. 'Evangelism' is all to do with the saints and the *ekklēsia*, their edification, their scriptural reformation. Pause for thought?

But, let me put everybody's mind at rest. I fully accept that *euaggelizō* means 'to bring or announce good news', and so I am willing to make use of 'evangelism', though my cautionary remarks still apply. And I am not alone in saying it.

J.Mack Stiles:

I don't think Christian people set out to write books on evangelism based on unbiblical principles. But it happens. It happens because there are wrong ideas about the critical components of evangelism. Usually, these wrong ideas are based on marketing principles or on human understandings about how to argue someone into the kingdom. It has more to do with results and effect, which is the realm of the Holy Spirit, rather than faithfulness in proclaiming the truth, which is our job description. If we don't have biblical evangelism

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nailed down, we... spend much time doing things we call evangelism, but may not be evangelism at all.<sup>1</sup>

Quite!

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<sup>1</sup> J.Mack Stiles: ‘How Should We Define Evangelism?’ Sadly, Stiles failed to do what he announced in his title!