

How to Evangelize During the Christmas Season

*By
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Christmas season for many is a time for parties, buying gifts for others, and to send Christmas cards, but for evangelism workers it is a golden time to work for the Lord. Here're some evangelism methods that you can use during Christmas season:

1- Give Godly gifts:

Some people never allow any talk about God or church. However, during Christmas time their resistances are softer, especially when it comes to the gifts they received. Therefore, we need to pray and to think about what kind of gifts we should give to our co-workers or classmates or neighbors or friends. I remembered once I had a co-worker who doesn't really enjoy talking about God, but accepts short phrases about spiritual needs. One time I mentioned the importance of spiritual food especially that found in the Bible. His comment was that he can't find the time to read the Bible. So, during Christmas my gift to him was an easy translation of a daily reading Bible. He was very happy to receive it, and kept telling me, "I will read it." Frankly, I was hesitant to give him such a gift. But thanks to God, it was the right evangelistic gift.

Think about person's hobbies or interests and get him/her something interested to him/her; however, it also reveals something about God or it guides the person to God. For example, if a person is fond of reading of adventures, you could get him/her one part of the famous series, "Left Behind." It is full of exciting adventure, but written by a Christian author about the signs of time. Although, I disagree with the author about some details of what will happen during the last days, but here I am giving it to someone to shock him/her and to get him/her to think about God. During this stage of his/her spiritual life, I am not concern too much about details of the last days, but mainly I need to attract him/her to God.

Even if you have an atheist person or an agnostic person (agnostic is an informal word to describe a person who doesn't deny God's existence, however, doesn't care of His existence either), then you may think of giving the person a book of faith-supporting evidences, like the books of Josh McDowell or the "Mere Christianity" book by C.S. Lewis. For a person is a Christian but who does not follow God's commandments, I'll give him a modern translation of "Confessions of St. Augustine." It is important to give the person a modern good translation or a book written by a good writer, otherwise the book would never be read. Books in original languages or in old English are enjoyed by scholars and people who enjoy literary works.

For teenagers, I may give a Teenager Bible. There're so many of them. Some of these teenager bibles have more in depth topic discussion about adolescence stage than others. Therefore, depending on the person, I'll pick up the right translation and the right book.

The main point is to give a gift that is related to the person's thinking or feelings or hobbies, and at the same time it has the attraction to God.

Books are just one idea; there're other gift ideas as well. How about DVD's or CDs or movies or paintings or software? There're so many gifts. "Jesus of Nazareth" is a good movie to give as a gift for those who you would like to introduce to Christianity. There are DVD for biblical stories to pick up from. In addition, there are other materials that are not biblical but very interesting, such as "Touched By An Angel" series, on CD and DVD, which is a wonderful family gift that touches every person in the family, young or old. If you spend some time reading about its different episodes, you may get the person a story that deals exactly with his/her life situation. There is also "High Way to Heaven" series, on CD or DVD deals spiritually with so many problems and situations we face in today's world. Visiting a Christian bookstore or viewing a few on the Internet, you would be amazed at the huge number of Christian DVD, CD, games, and software.

Introduce God to the person's life through your gift. Be wise in what you select and pray for each person, asking for His guidance. When you do so, the gift would speak more eloquently than you and it could lead the person's steps to God. Even, if you think that your gift has only a few lines about God or a few referrals for eternity, don't let this thought dismay you. God can use little or few too; He can use one word or one referral or one thought. Do your job and let Him does the rest.

This way you turn Christmas gift into an evangelistic tool that is when combined with your prayers for the person, it will lead the person, at the right time, to God or it will pave the way for another work or other works that eventually will lead the person to God. As you know, you sow your seeds, and God will send water and food to help the seed to grow at certain seasons you have no idea about, but He certainly knows. You may give a book to someone who will just put it on his/her shelf. But sometime in the future there would be a personal need and the person will find your book, read it, and start following God. Does it matter when this would happen? Of course not, because you get it into the person's possessions and God will direct the rest.

2- Look for the few who're depressed

Although Christmas season for the majority of people is a joyful season full of smiles, joy, and happiness, there're a few who pass through a very difficult time during this season. Asking psychiatrists and counselors, they will tell you about the many cases they see during this season.

Think of someone who lost a father or a mother or a member of his/her family. Christmas time is a family time when members of the same family get together from every place to spend time together. Over the years, each person has a specific recipe to make or a food to offer and perhaps a specific chair to sit on.

When the family get together, each person does his/her best to entertain the others; someone with his/her jokes, another with these beautiful endless funny situations, another with his/her adventures, and so on. Each person is known for his/her input.

Christmas season magnifies the feeling of losing a member of a family. All the memories of the departed person will get back pressing hard on his/her family's members' feelings. Each person asks how we could have the same happy moments when he/she is gone for good. Briefly, this is the most difficult time of the year for those who lost a beloved one or a member of a family.

Another depression happens when a person can't go back to home on Christmas. So, many people can't go to home to be with their beloved ones on Christmas for one reason or another; it could be work, study, or being overseas, or in the military. How unhappy the person would be and how sad his/her family would be too. One of the famous Christmas song says, "I'll be home for Christmas, you can count on me." I remember that I was crying every time I heard this song when I came to USA and was alone far away from my family. Of course, this will include our troops around the globe and their families.

As an evangelism worker, share with the person his/her feelings and support the person with encouraging words. Use the occasion to direct them to the unlimited source of hope and help, their beloved God who cares about them and their beloved ones. It is a golden time for evangelism when used wisely after showing real friendship and care.

3- Sick People & Their Families

The worst time of the year to be in a hospital confined to a bed is the Christmas season. When everyone experiences the best time of the year and a person can't leave the hospital to enjoy even a glimpse of Christmas, it is not only hard on the patient but also on the family. How hard is it to see everyone goes to parties or to shopping while the family goes to a hospital? For them, it could be a time of tears and concerns.

Here comes the rule of evangelism workers to seed peace in the hearts and to refer them to the loving and caring God whom they can pray to. It is needless to say that such families need someone who can spend time with them, and can listen more than he/she talks.

4- Family Problems

Christmas season is a hard one for members of a family going through a divorce or financial problems or loss of a job or loss of a business. Can you imagine the sadness someone goes through when he/she loses his/her own home during Christmas season? Or can you think of the sorrow a person would experience if this person receives his/her lay off letter during this season?

Problems occur all the time, but problems during Christmas season are augmented and hard to deal with emotionally because in addition to the psychological load of the problems they deprive the person from the long expected joy of the season. Sufferers may need a good shoulder to cry on. The person who experiences these problems needs someone to comfort him/her, to support, and more importantly to listen and to share. There is no better person to offer all of these works than the evangelism worker, who

can, through prayers, offer comfort from God, who is the comforter of the weary especially to those who were far away from Him.

5- Disaster's Victims

How horrible is it to lose everything in matters of minutes or hours? This is what people feel when they are struck by a disaster, like fire or hurricane or earthquake or tornado or other kind of disasters. They don't have the same home to go back to, a home full of the best memories of the family and full of comfort places for them. In addition to the emotional problems, those people may have financial problems as well. The feeling of loss is so great and the sadness is also significant, especially around Christmas time.

The evangelism worker can elevate the sadness and comfort the hearts through using the words of God. It is important to be around to comfort and pat on the back. Then the evangelism worker uses the situation to open their eyes to God of salvation. Many people never come to God when they're healthy or in stable condition, simply because they don't feel they need God. But when a tribulation happens, they're ready to listen to someone who speaks about God and can show them the way to salvation.

6- Time of Concern

This is the time of the year when people think about their family members and their best friends. Parents think of that boy who left home and can't live maturely or this girl who been emotionally attached to someone with no future, or the son who has no happiness in his marriage. Friends think of a friend who can't find success or a job or a life partner. I used to have a co-worker who always asked me to pray to God to send her a husband. She used to tell me that she holds pans in her hands and ask God to fill it with a husband. It is needless to say that Christmas season was the worst time of the year for her. By the way, thanks to God; He filled the pans with a handsome husband and she is happy now.

To show that you share their feelings, you assure them that you pray for them and also pray with them asking for a solution and a comfort. You need to assure them that there is God who is in control and would heal their wounds.

7- Refuges and Strangers

People who all of the sudden were snatched out from their homes and countries-willingly or unwillingly-feel sad during this season. They leave behind all members of their families, all friends, and all the emotional and spiritual support they established for their lives over the years. This season is a very emotional one for them. They need to have friends to fill the emotional gap in their lives. In addition, they need some people who will work as emotional and spiritual support for them. Evangelism workers can approach those people and show them that God can be their ultimate support.

8- People who have nobody

You may not believe me when I say there're people who have nobody. Probably they go to work or school but they're lonely, no friend or a family. They go to church and they continue to be alone without any kind human touch or love. When they return

home they live between four walls alone. Christmas time is a time when the thoughts rush into their brains about their loneliness.

We used to have someone in our church who was very gentle and kind. All of the sudden he disappeared. When I asked about him, someone told me that he lost his job and his home. He had to sleep in his car and then disappeared. Another person told me that he became homeless. Until today, nobody knows where he has gone.

9- Broken families and broken relationships

Some families still together, however, they never get along. This son who cries because it is Christmas time and he likes to go to visit family but he thinks of his father who never gets along with and remember that how in each Christmas his father gets angry and hurts him deeply. He only visits because of his mother's tears.

Think of broken families where the mother re-married and the husband re-married too and the children don't know where to go to find the warmth of Christmas. Here are the deep wounds of hurt that need to be healed and the anger of what happened, why did it happen? And probably, why did God allow this to happen?

You need to do a good job to get those people back to the bosom of God. A lot of explanation needed to talk about the precious free will which God gives human being and how sometimes people use this freedom not as it was originally designed to be used. Then you introduce God as the caring loving God.

10- Orphanage

Orphanages are still around in the rich countries but may carry different names. I visited some in Florida, where I was deeply touched. There're so many reasons behind a child going to an orphanage, but the result is the same. Children are deprived from love, kindness, fatherhood, motherhood and warm family relationship.

The feeling of need to home is augmented during Christmas season. The work of evangelism needed to show God who is the Father of all orphans and who consider you (The orphan) as His special son. Lead orphans to feel the fatherhood of God.

11- How about your home?

In many cases we look outside for service and evangelism while there are needs in our own homes, in our families, and among our friends. Do I have peace with everyone in my family or I need to work out something to handle some hard feelings? Do I owe an apology to someone in my family or in my church? Probably, it happened sometime ago, but its impact still around, I need to face the situation and boldly I should take the first step, breaking the pride obstacle. If there's apology needed, I should offer one.

How to handle each situation:

To talk about how to handle each situation is beyond this article; it takes a lot of work and knowledge to reach that level. But there're some simple effective ways:

1- Listening sympathetically

The best part is to listen sympathetically to the person to let all these feelings out. Some feel comfortable after they say what kept pressing them. The rule of thumb is not to interrupt them, but give them the time to say all what they like to say, while you listen attentively and nod your head from time to time. Be a warm person. If the person starts to cry, do something suitable to the situation and the person, according to the acceptable social behavior

2- Time is the best gift

The best valuable gift nowadays is the gift of time; your time that you spend with the person to listen to or to talk to or to share doing something together is really the best gift. It is to fill out the vacuum in his/her life and to get him/her the feelings of worthiness of friendship and love. A word of caution here, watch for your salvation; don't get into situations the devil can use to tempt you and drag you into sin. In the same manner, you need to watch for your capabilities. For example, can I be a friend or spend time with an evil person while I am weak spiritually? Can this person benefit from me or in the process I will get exposed to a danger that I can't handle. Prayers and spiritual guidance would help directing you.

3- Introduce them to somebody who can help

After the initial process of listening and supporting, it is a good idea to introduce the person to someone or some place that can give a help that you can't give. One example is to introduce the person to your priest who would deal with spiritual needs that you can't offer, or to go with him/her to an organization that can help socially and financially.

4- If they accept, **pray with them** and teach them how to pray. Let them know that the best friend is Jesus, and ask them to try Him in faith.

Surely, dealing with people from the church would be different from dealing with people outside the church. Serving people and evangelize them doesn't mean approach them with blind trust. **Blind trust of strangers could get you into troubles.** Give love and watch at the same time. It takes a long time and experience to know people. Therefore, my advice is to ask a spiritually experienced guide before jumping into a special service.

Suggested Services During Christmas Season

1- Arrange for your youth to have a coral to go to sing Christmas songs in a hospital or senior homes or a mall and then leave or distribute a written word that talks about the loving caring God and the meaning of Christmas.

2- In your church, look to find the loneliness, people who lost jobs or a family member or a friend during this year and try to be their friend.

3- At work or at school, listen to conversations to find out who needs help and encouragement.

4- Pray to God to send you to those who need help.

My Gift to the Child of Bethlehem

All these people are the brothers and sisters of the Child of Bethlehem. The best gift He would like to receive from us is to reach out to His suffered brothers and sisters with love, a kind of love that attracts them to His bosom. A wonderful gift that would please Him a lot is to restore the soul of someone and to get him/her back to the cross to meet Christ.

Think of a gift for the Child of Bethlehem. He does not need money, but He asks to love, as it is well expressed by the following well-known Christmas song, "**Little Drummer Boy:**"

Little baby, pa rum pa pum pum
I am a poor boy too, pa rum pa pum pum
I have no gift to bring, pa rum pa pum pum
That's fit to give our King, pa rum pa pum pum,
Rum pa pum pum, rum pa pum pum
Shall I play for You, pa rum pa pum pum
On my drum
On my drum

I play my drum for Him
So to honor Him