

RE-imagining Evangelism

“Christians and non-Christians both have something in common. We’re both uptight about evangelism.” Rebecca Pippert

A Metaphor for Evangelism: Gardening

For those of us who are not inclined towards gardening, at some point in our lives we should ask an avid gardener about their enthusiasm for their hobby. What we hear may surprise us. And it may help us understand something about life.

1. Cultivation: building relationships

Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Matthew 22:37-39

“You are the salt of the earth...” Matthew 6:13

For salt to render an impact, two things must be true:

- It must be...
- It must have...

2. Sowing: injecting your faith naturally

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:5-6

“Our problem in evangelism is not that we don’t have enough information – it is that we don’t know how to be ourselves.... Our uneasiness with non-Christians reflects our uneasiness with our own humanity.... Yet how often have we told our skeptical friends that that’s why we are hesitating? “Look, I feel really bad. I am very excited about who God is and what he’s done in my life. But I hate it when people push religion on me. So if I’m coming on too strong, will you just tell me?” Rebecca Pippert

3. Harvesting: inviting a response

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. 1 Peter 3:15

“A person’s coming to Christ is like a chain with many links. There is the first link, middle links, and a last link. There are many influences and conversations that precede a person’s decision to convert to Christ. I know the joy of being the first link at times, a middle link usually, and occasionally the last link. God has not called me to only be the last link. He has called me to be faithful and to love all people.” Cliffe Knechtle

For Further Reading:

Evangelism without Additives by Jim Henderson
Out of the Saltshaker by Rebecca Pippert