

Life Notes *Sharing Your Faith with Pastor Justin*

4. Styles of Sharing Your Faith – Part 1

Did you know that God intentionally built diversity in the church? We are not all the same! First Corinthians 12:18 tells us that “*God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.*” Look around you, He has given us different spiritual gifts, personalities, temperaments, and even different styles of sharing our faith. When we look at the Scriptures, followers of Jesus did not all communicate their faith in the same way. They used a variety of approaches – each of them vitally important and relevant today.

Style 1 The Direct Style

Biblical Example: Peter in Acts 2

In this passage, on the Day of Pentecost, Peter did a bold thing. He stood in front of thousands of people in Jerusalem, the same city where Jesus was crucified just a few weeks earlier. He spoke directly to them telling them they had killed the Messiah and were in big trouble with God! This wasn't foreign to Peter's personality. He was a straightforward, “all or nothing” kind of person. The Direct Style fit Peter because he had a direct and forceful personality. This was just the style God needed for the situation in Acts 2, and the Holy Spirit powerfully used Peter's challenge to the crowd when he told them to “repent and be baptized.” In fact, over three thousand people came to Christ and received salvation that very day!

Characteristics: confident, assertive, and to the point.

Current day leaders who exhibit this style:

Billy Graham, Franklin Graham, Luis Palau, and Greg Laurie

Style 2 The Intellectual Style

Biblical Example: Paul in Acts 17

In this passage Paul was talking to a group of philosophers in Athens, Greece. These people were very different from those in Jerusalem, and probably would not have responded well to Peter's Direct Style. That is why God sent Paul, who used the Intellectual Style. Paul started by talking about the Athenian's idol to an “unknown god,” and then built a logical case to present the resurrected Christ. He even quoted their philosophers to make his point! God used Paul's intellectual approach, and a number of those thinkers ended up placing their trust in Christ. Notice that what Paul did here fit Paul's personality and makeup. He was a natural at presenting the gospel in a reasoned and logical way.

Characteristics: inquisitive, analytical, and logical.

Current day leaders who exhibit this style:

Josh McDowell, Ravi Zacharias, and Mark Mittelberg

Style 3 The Testimonial Style

Biblical Example: the blind man in John 9

This man, who is not named in scripture, had been blind since birth. He used to sit by the side of the road and beg for food. Then one day Jesus came by and healed him. For the first time in his life he could see! But before he had a chance to blink he found himself being questioned by the religious leaders who opposed Jesus. He didn't know the answers to all of their questions, but what he did know, he told them clearly in verse 25. In essence he said to them, “Look, I used to be blind, but now I can see – deal with it!” It's pretty hard to argue with someone's experience. It was then, and it is today!

Characteristics: clear communicators, compelling storytellers, and good listeners.

Current day leaders who exhibit this style:

Joni Erickson Tada and Lee Strobel