

WHY 98% OF CHRISTIANS DON'T DO EVANGELISM.

Let's face it, most Christians struggle with "evangelism," even the very thought of it.

Reputable research reveals that only 2% of Christians in the Western Church now practice evangelism.

Just the sound of the word causes the vast many to shudder and recoil in horror. Try blaspheming in a church service.

Today, you'll get much the same reaction when you mention the "E" word.

There are reasons why this is so (83 of them in fact) and my book reveals what they are.

Below are the first eleven. Each has tremendous power to negatively influence evangelism activity in a church. Generally speaking, there is usually no one "knock out" reason why an individual does not participate in evangelism.

Typically, it's a combination of reasons, and it will usually be a different combination for each person.

1. **Not living under the authority of Scripture.** When one 'drills down' to examine why people don't do evangelism, the root reason is usually that they do not accept the Bible as the final authority for the life and conduct of a Christian. Many people think they do, but *really* they don't (e.g. Matthew 7:21-23). That is to say, they have accepted Jesus as Saviour, but never made Him their Lord (Matthew 7:21-23). Try finding a liberal who is active in evangelism. You won't.
2. **"I don't like being told what to do!"** Many Christians claim to have been put off doing evangelism, so they say, because they object to being told what to do by evangelists (or pastors). The truth is, even when they were *not* being told to do evangelism by anyone, they were still not doing evangelism i.e. their 'reason' is a cop out. Their real reason for not doing evangelism has to do with pride. That is to say, they don't want to look silly or be embarrassed in any way as they give the gospel. Evangelism is perceived as a risky / scary potentially highly embarrassing exercise. In short, they are ashamed of the gospel (Romans 1:16). This 'reason' for not doing evangelism is an outcome of (1) above.
3. **Church leaders failing to lead by example in evangelism.** If the leaders in a church aren't seen by their congregation to be doing evangelism regularly, the people in the their church (with a few rare exceptions) will not do evangelism either. End of story. Evangelistic fire must start with church leaders, and be fuelled by them. Worse still, church leaders who talk / preach about the importance of doing evangelism but who don't do it unwittingly inoculate their people against evangelism (James 1:22). How so? The people in the congregation (quite rightly) reason, *"If it's so important, why aren't our leaders doing it? We never see them out on the street or going door to door. They don't come to church each week fizzing with excitement about their evangelism encounters. If they are not doing it, it can't be that important, so we won't make it important either. If it's a theory for them, I'll make it a theory for me too."*

4. **Widespread ignorance about the mission of the Church.** The mission of the Church is to evangelise the world for the glory of God. That is to say, it is the priority of the Church (and that means every individual in the Church) to ensure that every person on the earth hears and understands the gospel message, delivered with love and grace, at least once (better still, multiple times). Put another way, the ultimate end of all our camps, conferences, sermons, studies, reading, worship, prayer, and fellowship is that the world is evangelised. Most Christians (and this includes pastors) simply don't know this. And not knowing this, they have not made it the priority. How can people make a priority of something about which they are not aware? Tragically, instead of being top priority, the evangelisation of the world has slipped to last priority in most churches. Or, it's simply been put out of mind and shelved, or put into the 'too hard' basket.
5. **Defining evangelism un-biblically.** A plethora of unbiblical understandings of 'evangelism' are currently circulating in the Church. Each is undermining the mobilization of people to actually do evangelism. '*Having gentle conversations with the lost about God is evangelism*' and '*engaging in social action is evangelism*' are two examples. The most damaging of all is defining evangelism as '*the winning of souls*'. This puts pressure on people to think that every time they share the gospel **they** must 'win a soul.' Most people dislike the thought of having to become like a second hand car salesman in order to 'win a soul', so they shudder at the thought of doing evangelism. They have forgotten that it is only God who can 'win the soul' (e.g. John 6:65). Because the line between our responsibility and God's has become very blurred (2 Timothy 2:15), people run a mile when the "E" word is mentioned.
6. **Confusion about the phrase 'the gospel'.** Many Christians have become confused about the difference between the words, works, and effects of the gospel. When Jesus commanded "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel*" (Mark 16:15), He was referring to the words of the gospel, not the works or effects. For example, if I pray for a sick person, my prayer is a work of the gospel. If the person prayed for is healed, this is an effect of the gospel. But have they heard the words of the gospel? No, they have not. Biblically, it is only when the words of the gospel have been communicated, that evangelism can be said to have taken place. Most Christians think that if they pray for a lost person, they are doing a bit evangelism. The truth is, praying for a lost person, or even seeing them healed (as good as those behaviours are) are not to be equated with evangelism. Today, most people think the works and effects of the gospel **are** evangelism, when in fact they are not. Hence, very little genuine evangelism is actually going on.
7. **Defining the words of the gospel un-biblically.** According to scholars, in order for someone to say "*I have faithfully communicated the words of the gospel*" certain content must have been covered, namely a clear explanation about : (1) why we must be saved (2) how Jesus can save us (3) what we must do to be saved (4) the cost of being a disciple. Many Christians have simply made up their idea of what the words of the gospel message should be e.g. "*Jesus loves you.*" They think (in error) that every time they tell a non-Christian '*Jesus loves you*' they are doing some

evangelism. Then when the pastor (e.g. from the pulpit) exhorts them to do evangelism, those listening gleefully nod and say to themselves *“Amen pastor! I am already doing evangelism. I told three people this week that God loves them!”* What’s most tragic of all is that the pastor will not be aware that he and his people are not ‘on the same page’ with respect to evangelism. As long as this confusion remains unaddressed, attempts to mobilise all the people in a church for evangelism will struggle to get traction.

8. **Confusion about the ‘the Great Commission’.** In it’s simplest form, the Great Commission has four parts: (1) go, (2) proclaim the gospel, (3) baptise those who are saved, and (4) disciple those who are baptised. Most Christians today have in error come to believe the Great Commission is all about (4). This is because most pastors are focusing only on (4). They get this from Matthew 28:19. That is to say, they think that if they focus only on discipling their people, they will be preparing them to participate in (1) and (2). They believe that if they disciple their people for long enough, one day their people will mystically ‘break out’ and evangelise the world. In my experience, it will never be so. I visited churches 20 years ago who had this plan. Today if you visited them, they are still ‘discipling their people, getting the ready to evangelise the world.’ Most pastors / leaders don’t understand that desire for evangelism is created by doing evangelism, not by talking about it, preaching about it, holding seminars about it, typing it in bold in mission statements, or trying to build in the minds of church people a higher view of God through endless discipleship programs and sermons. On the contrary, the best way to create a desire for evangelism is to do evangelism. Nothing quite connects people with the reality of Jesus and the power of the work of the Holy Spirit like doing evangelism. Doing evangelism brings life into the life of a believer like no other Christian behaviour. Most pastors are not aware of this truth, or the truth that endlessly discipling people through sermons and studies will not result in their people doing evangelism, so evangelism has all but ceased in the Western Church (but ‘discipleship’ is flourishing!).
9. **Confusion about how the lost are drawn to Christ.** There are six steps in the process of drawing the lost to Christ: ploughing, sowing, watering, growing, harvesting, and discipling. In error, most Christians today think that all six steps are ‘a bit of evangelism’ when in fact, only one step (sowing) is to be equated with evangelism. The other parts are pre or post evangelism. That is to say, most people in churches think that by participating in one of the other five steps, they are already doing evangelism. They reason *“Verbalizing the words of the gospel is only one way of doing evangelism. There are other ways. I’ll stick to handing out food parcels thanks or running programs for un-saved mothers. This is more in line with my gifting.”* This confusion is stopping many from engaging in true evangelism.
10. **Viewing evangelism as a process, not an event within a process.** The process is the six steps in (8) above. Evangelism (i.e. sowing) is an event within this six-step process. Again, in error, most Christians think that if they are involved in any one of the steps, then are going ‘a bit of

evangelism' so they see no need to verbalise the gospel. Hence, very little true evangelism is actually going on.

- 11. Having a un-biblical understanding of the chief motive for doing evangelism.** The chief motive for doing evangelism is to glorify God, not to win souls. How does this work? As the gospel is being explained by a Christian to a non-Christian, Jesus is being exalted, honoured, esteemed. Jesus is being glorified because the gospel is all about Jesus and his excellencies, merits, and accomplishments. Many Christians are not aware that this is the chief reason / motive for doing evangelism. Rather, with respect to evangelism, they ask questions like *"How many souls have you brought into the church?" "How many people have been won over?" "What fruit are you seeing?"* and so on. This betrays the fact that they erroneously view evangelism as the winning of souls. Fruit, souls, conversions etc are all highly desirable (and Biblical) outcomes of evangelism, but they are not the chief motive for doing it. Please think this through. If absolutely every non-Christian on the earth heard an uncompromising gospel message, delivered with love and grace, and not one person was converted, Jesus would be satisfied, since His name had been glorified. Habakkuk 2:14 *"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."* *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."* 1 Corinthians 10:31. If the Bible says only God can win souls, and quite clearly it does teach this, who are we to say/ act otherwise? Our job is to evangelise the world. His job (if it so pleases Him) is to cause our efforts to be fruitful. Let's not continue to get his job /our job all mixed up. The confusion is stopping Christians from evangelising.

These are 11 of 83 reasons why 98% of Christians in the West don't do evangelism. Singularly, each reason has power. Collectively, they have become a potent unstoppable force which has caused the virtual shut down of evangelism in the Western Church.

To read about the other 72 reasons, cut and paste this link into you browser: <https://drive.google.com/drive/#folders/0B7xzcZRI29iKYVJzQIQ4TVItSHc> or email julian@esisite.com to have the link sent to you.

After 30 years of experience, we have found the to mobilise the other 98% into evangelism, a church must pass through three distinct phases.

Phase 1: prepare the church for evangelism. This is involves teaching people about the 83 reasons why Christians don't do evangelism. People won't start in evangelism if they are not aware of what is stopping them starting. Awareness is the key to change.

Phase 2: equipping the people to do evangelism i.e. showing them how to do it.

Phase 3: implementing specific strategies in a church to maintain evangelism momentum. It's one thing to mobilise a church into

evangelism. It's quite another to keep the momentum going. What's the point of going to the effort of pulling off 1 and 2, if you can't achieve 3? There is little point.

PREPARE – EQUIP- MAINTAIN. Skip any of these 3 phases, and your plan to mobilise your church for evangelism will fail - guaranteed.