

22 Styles of communicating the Gospel

And also 20 Ways that God Has Made Us All for to Embody His Love

Often people want to engage in evangelism through established training programs that involve tried-and-fruitful uniform patterns—programs such as Evangelism Explosion, or the Four Spiritual Laws, or the Romans Road. These programmed methods are informative and helpful—and even empowering. They can be weak, however, in the areas of both sincerity and spontaneity. We need and want to be real and honest in our communication of the Gospel, because it so shapes our motives and decisions. We need to be vibrant and personally engaged when we live, talk about and share our Source of Life.

Each of our lives is hugely complex and yet transformed by simple Gospel truth:

6 Faith’s way of getting right with God says, “Don’t say in your heart, ‘Who will go up to heaven’ (to bring Christ down to earth). 7 And don’t say, ‘Who will go down to the place of the dead’ (to bring Christ back to life again).” 8 In fact, it says, “The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart.” And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: 9 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. 11 As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” = Romans 10:6-11 (NLT)

The living Gospel is so much more than clever words and well-planned steps and methods. “It is on your lips and in your heart” means that we believers, we people of the way, should look to both (1) the styles we already have and (2) the truths about what we are in order to achieve the most effective Gospel communication. After all, the Gospel is “communicable,” and grace is intentionally, divinely “contagious.”

*What we have are many styles of communication already, and any of them can be used to relate the Gospel story. The Bible offers at least 21 different styles of communication, and each of these 21 is exemplified in our own time by effective contemporary communicators of the Gospel—some of them listed on Chart I. The first six styles were suggested by Bill Hybels in *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, but developed differently here.*

Deeper yet, the ways God has made us matter even more than the styles He has given to us through those excellent examples in the Bible and in our time. Chart II presents 20 ways God has made us that imbed the essence of the Gospel into our very persons, our characters.

May these two charts stir in you a deeper awareness of your own grace-filled giftedness in the Gospel. And may you be liberated and empowered to represent Him and the Gospel with joy, love, boldness, creativity, shrewdness—and abundant fruit.

Which styles are in your spiritual and natural DNA?

Chart I: 22 Styles of Communicating the Gospel:

Which ones are in your spiritual and natural DNA?

Communicating the Gospel, through Godly character, conduct and commitment	Some Biblical Models Background: Jesus Christ is always the best model of these Gospel styles	A Few Contemporary Models	Rooted in multiple, diverse aspects of our relationships to God
1. Confronters	<u>Prophets; Peter in Acts 2;</u> <u>John the Baptizer</u> - <u>Theme: II Timothy 4:2</u>	Tom Skinner; Harry Jackson; James Kennedy; TD Jakes	All us humans are accountable to God, and thus can and should be confronted concerning our relationships with God.
2. Intellectuals	<u>Paul in Acts 17 and</u> <u>throughout Acts & Romans</u> - <u>Theme: II Corinth. 10:5</u>	Ravi Zacharias; C.S. Lewis; Josh McDowell; Lee Stroble	All us humans should love God with our whole mind, and thus use our entire minds in excellent divine service.
3. Testifiers	<u>Healed blind man in John 9;</u> <u>Mark 5:19;</u> <u>Paul in Acts 9, 22, and 26</u> - <u>Theme: I John 1:3</u>	Nicky Cruz; Charles Colson; Kittim Silva; Joni Ericson; Prof. Alan Donagan; and you & me	All of us humans should reflect, to one another, God’s living presence. (Gen. 1: 26-28; II Cor. 3:18 & 5:16-17) Each person’s story affects others’ stories.
4. Relationship Builders	<u>Matthew in Luke 5;</u> <u>Cornelius in Acts 10</u> - <u>Theme: I Corinth. 9:21-22</u>	<u>Rick Warren; Alpha Program;</u> <u>Bill Hybels</u> <u>Transformational Development (www.transform-world.net)</u>	All of us humans are relational and should be incorporated into the Lord’s koinonia, community of faith, His Body, the Church.
5. Inviters	<u>Woman at the well in Jn. 4; Andrew in</u> <u>John 1, 6, and 12</u> - <u>Theme: Luke 14:23</u>	All who bring people to church to meet Jesus & worship him—or even to watch others worship	All of us humans should be invited into a restored, healthy relationship with our Creator. People who know the way should enthusiastically invite others.
6. Servants	<u>Tabatha [Dorcas] in Acts 9:36;</u> <u>Martha at end of Luke 10</u> - <u>Theme: Matthew 5:15-16</u>	<u>Miles McPherson (www.sdrock.com);</u> <u>Mother Teresa;</u> <u>Jimmy Carter</u>	All of us humans should have the mind of Christ, the model servant, who lovingly sacrificed himself in terms of his service for all people.
7. Exemplary Leaders	<u>Moses; David; Nehemiah; Paul; James;</u> <u>Peter</u> - <u>Theme: Matt. 10:16</u>	Charles Malik, Martin Luther King; Sam Ericsson; Bill Wilson; Orlando Costas	All of us humans, God’s images, inheritors of Adam and Eve’s estate, are stewards of the earth and decision-makers in our lives and communities.
8. Embodiments of Truth	<u>Joseph, Genesis 50:20 ;</u> <u>Daniel, Daniel 6;</u> <u>Stephen, Acts 7</u> - <u>Theme: John 1:14-17</u>	Ruth Bentley; Mary Nelson; “Andrew”; Watchman Nee; Richard Wurmbrand; Nicolai Gorgestia; Irene Johnson	All of us humans need living models of truth—true ethics and right doctrine—Gospel behavior and belief. Exemplary behavior is the most powerful sermon many will hear—while words are still essential for full communication.

9. Narrative-Givers; Story-tellers	<u>Moses;</u> <u>The Apostles;</u> <u>Luke</u> Theme: II Sa 12:1; Joel 1:2-3	Victor Hugo; J.R.R. Tolkien; C.S. Lewis; Dorothy Sayers; Madeline L'Engle; Frederick Buechner	All us humans need to hear others' stories—excellent fiction and non-fiction—in order to know God's ultimate Gospel story and to make sense of our own stories.
10. Artists	Crafts-people, metal workers & potters in the Bible Theme: Exodus 31:1-6	Tim Botts; Mako Fugi-mori; Hudson Valley Artists	In creativity, all of us humans are creative creations of the Creator, who created a splendid world and “signed” it with his own living presence.
11. Musicians; Poets	Miriam (Moses' sister), David, Paul Theme: Psalm 150	J.S. Bach; Andre Crouch, Larry Norman; Mylon LeFevre; Virgil Fox; Fanny Crosby; John Wesley	God created sound, filling the universe, and he sings over all of us. (Zeph 3:17) Let us make creative praise for him.
12. Visionaries; Dream Interpreters	<u>Both Josephs (OT & NT); Daniel; John the Apostle; Peter; Paul</u> Theme: Acts 2:16-18	M.L. King; R.G Letourneau; Ken Hanson; Sam Ericsson; Dirk and Max DePree;	All of us humans need other people who will listen to our dreams and visions (and help interpret the dreams) —and also act together on those dreams and visions that are from God.
13. Sports Exemplars	<u>Samson; David; Paul</u> Theme: Eccl. 9:10	Mariano Rivera; Tim Tebow; Jeremy Lin; Eric Liddell	God is the ultimate audience for all athletic excellence, and athletes should acknowledge his presence & assistance.
14. Praying Partners	<u>David; Daniel; Paul</u> Theme: Romans 15:30	Nick Sovoko, David Bryant; YWAM; NYCI; COPI	All of us humans need Divine help, and so we need others to stand (or kneel) together before the Almighty.
15. Weeping Partners	<u>Jeremiah (Jer 9:17; 31:9-16) Jesus. (Mt 5:4. Luke 23:28, John 11:35)</u> Theme: Matt 5:4; Ro 12:15	“Wailing Women Ministry” in Brooklyn; all who take time to weep with those who weep, and to bring joy.	All of us humans need to share sadness (and joy) with other people—and also with the Lord. In sharing sadness and joy, deeper relationships are achieved, all benefit, and God is more recognized.
16. Protectors of Creation; Godly Ecologists	<u>Adam; Moses; Noah;</u> <u>Paul in Romans 8</u> Themes: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15; Romans 8:19-22	John Muir; Francis Schaeffer; Jack Schafer; National Association of Evangelicals; Evangelical Environmental Network	The Creator cares about His creation and from the beginning commands all of us to do the same. Real creation-care behavior helps distinguish the true children of God. (Romans 8:20-25)
17. Courageous defenders of Truth; martyrs of the faith	<u>Jeremiah; Daniel; Stephen; Paul</u> Theme: Matthew 10:16-20; I Peter 2:21	Jim Eliot; John Brown Corrie ten Boom; Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Raul Wallenberg; Oskar Schindler;	God inspires all of us (1) to be bold in the face of persecution and even death, and (2) to protect and benefit those who are persecuted and abused. Jesus is our ultimate model on both points.
18. Listeners, Observers	<u>Jesus: (Luke 24:13-29) & Philip (Acts 8:26-35)</u> Theme: James 1:19	True brothers and sisters in the church, and skilled Christian Counselors	All we humans are created to listen; the first recorded event in human history is our listening as God speaks to us. All appreciate others who listen to them.
19. Engaged, Unfeigned Worshippers	<u>Paul and Silas (Acts 16), New Priests (I Peter 2:4-10)</u> <u>Also John 9:38; Matt 15:25</u> Theme: Psalm 150; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Peter 1:3-5	<u>Anyone, anywhere, genuinely worshipping & praising the Lord.</u> <u>Even pictures say it: laniemcnulty.com and click on “Lifted Up in New York City”</u>	All us humans are created to reflect back to God his glory & excellence. Gospel music, vibrant worship, verbal praises (“Thank you, Jesus”), hymns, religious jazz or classical, and even pictures of worship re-ignite this truth.
20. Being our grace-transformed selves for communicating his love. See more in Chart II below	<u>Moses: Strong-humble leadership: Numbers 12:3</u> Theme: II Cor. 3:18; 5:17	Natural Church Development; Donald Miller's Blue Like Jazz	Holy Spirit works to redeem & recreate all of us into vibrant multi-faceted Godly beings—that also draw others to Him, utilizing those new natures.
21. Questioner	<u>Philip (Ac. 8); Paul (Rm. 1)</u> Theme: Isaiah 11:9; Hab. 2:14	<u>Q-Place; Q-Surveys;</u> <u>7WordWonders.com</u>	People have an awareness of God, and questions help bring out that knowledge
22. Or Much MORE... Mergers, Alloys and Comprehensive – including many or all of the above in one person.	<u>Jesus in Revelation 1:4-8, 17; Romans 11:36 and such.</u> <u>Paul: I Cor. 4:16; 9:14-25; 11:1; Rm. 5: Gal.; Phil.</u> Theme: I Thess. 5:23-24	Yuan Zhiming; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Watchman Nee; Tony Evans; Orlando Costas; Corrie ten Boom; Ezra N. Williams	All of us humans should be taught (and empowered/inspired) to love God with all that we are—our entire DNA, biological, mental and spiritual—by the light of the Word and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Chart II: Who are you?

The starting point of the 20th method in Chart I above is how God has made/remade us now, not in the “sweet by-and-by.” These 20 identities that follow embody who we are, in love with God—who we are created and re-created to be. These nouns do not merely describe our condition; the issue is not merely our “adjectives.” These strong words of Scripture are often softened by modern translations, but here are 20 transforming Biblical identities of who you are in Christ. Do these Biblical nouns help define, empower us?

1. Ambassador of Christ [II Corinthians 5:20]
2. Brother or sister of Jesus [Romans 8:28-29; Jesus is the first-born of many brothers and sisters]

3. Child of God [John 1:12; Acts 17:29; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 5:1-2; I John 3:1,2; 5:2];
4. Common clay, shaped, and with eternal treasure inside [Genesis 2:7; II Corinthians 4:7]
5. Example of the believers [Phil. 4:8-9; II Thes. 3:7-9; I Timothy 1:16; 4:12; II Timothy 1:13]
6. Light of the world [Matthew 5:14-17; Ephesians 5:8; Philippians 2:15]
7. Living sacrifice [Romans 12:1,2]
8. More than a victor, more than an overcomer [Romans 8:37; Revelation chapters 2 and 3]
9. Open letters, opened and read by all people [II Corinthians 3:1,2]
10. Partaker of the Divine nature [II Peter 1:3-8]
11. Priest of God [Exodus 19, I Peter 2; Rev. 1:6]
12. Reborn person, born again, through the profound, creative work of the Spirit [John 3:3-8]
13. Righteousness of God [II Corinthians 5:21 – not NLT: one “made right with God”]
14. Salt of the Earth [Matthew 5:13]
15. Sheep that are both (a) blameless, harmless [Matthew 10:16; Romans 12:18-19; Phil 2:15; 3:6; II Peter 3:14] and (b) shrewd [Matthew 7:24-27; 10:16; Luke 16:8]—to effectually represent the brilliant Lamb of God [John 1:29, 36].
16. Sons and daughters of Abraham, father of the faithful [Romans 4]
17. Sweet aroma of Christ to God [II Corinthians 2:14-17; Ephesians 5:2]
18. Triple source of love—from our purified hearts, good consciences, sincere faith [I Tim 1:5]
19. Well of living water [John 4:10-15; 7:38-41]
20. *Witness of Jesus [Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8]—We are all witnesses; the only question is how good is our witness?*