

What is messy Evangelism?

We hear it all the time don't we? "Jesus loves you!" We read it on everything from bumper stickers to the bathroom stall. Often times we'll see it coupled with the feel good "purpose" statement added, "Jesus loves you and has a purpose for your life."

Messy evangelism takes place when we start telling people that Jesus loves them without letting them know just HOW he showed it. Telling someone that Jesus loves them and has a purpose for their life and leaving it at that, gives a wrong perception of Christ and it makes his love sound ordinary. His love is not ordinary, it's extraordinary!

You see, most people have an idea about what love is, but their idea falls drastically short of Jesus' display of love. Many people see love as a mushy, tingly feeling you either have or don't have for another person. But, Jesus' idea of love is far from tingly, it's hardcore. Jesus' idea of love is death.

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. " - Jesus (John 15:13)

God became a man to live the perfect life (the life we could never live) in our place. Love is him willingly suffering and dying an excruciating death on the cross in our place

and then rising from the dead three days later in victory over sin and death. Love is bloody. Love is painful. Love is brutal. Love is hardcore.

This is the gospel. And this is the simple message of Christ that we as Christians are commissioned to take to the world through evangelism. How ironic is it that “messy” evangelism is really what happens when we try to leave the mess of sin and the cross out of the picture?

Stating that Jesus loves someone won't be what saves them. They'll be saved when they understand the glory of HOW he's shown his love for them, repent, and love him back.

“We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19)

We must realize that:

- We can't save ourselves

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Isaiah 64:6 But we are all like an unclean [thing], And all our righteousnesses [are] like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

- Jesus is the only way

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Acts 4:12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

So don't leave the messiness of sin and the cross out of your evangelism. No other message is sufficient to save people.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,

Yes, tell people that Jesus loves them, but don't forget to tell them just how he showed it. Don't let your evangelism be messy.