

What is Evangelism?

Evangelism is “that set of intentional activities which is governed by the goal of initiating people into the kingdom of God for the first time.” (William Abraham, 95, *The Logic of Evangelism*, Eerdmans, 1989; emphasis supplied)

“Evangelism... is intimately related to the sweep of God’s action in history. It arises out of the inauguration of God’s sovereign rule on earth, and its central aim is to see people firmly grounded within that rule so that they can be agents of reconciliation, compassion, and peace.” (Abraham, 101)

The Gospel and Kingdom go together! The **Gospel** announces the Kingship of Jesus. The aim of **Evangelism** is to initiate people into the kingdom of God through faith in King Jesus.

“To be **initiated** into the rule of God is to encounter a transcendent reality that has entered history and to find oneself drawn up into the ultimate purposes of God for history and creation.” (Abraham, 101)

“[I]t follows that **evangelism is necessarily a polymorphous activity** [= takes many forms]. It is more like farming or educating than like raising one’s arm or blowing a kiss.... Evangelism will involve such acts as proclamation, basic instruction, prayer, and ensuring that those who respond are brought to baptism or confirmation. It may require acts of mercy, patient conversations, stern rebuke, or the organization of mass meetings. It may depend on the sharing of one’s personal spiritual pilgrimage, or on an act of calculated silence, or on the ministering of a special rite of exorcism, or on the provision of catechesis, or on the laying on of hands, or on widespread use of the mass media, or on the development of small groups. No rule exists for setting or limiting the boundaries of action that the responsible evangelist may have to perform in order to carry out fitting and appropriate acts of evangelism. **What makes the actions evangelism is that they are part of a process that is governed by the goal of initiating people into the kingdom of God.** (Abraham, 104)