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## EVANGELISM CHALLENGE

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All believers have buried treasure in their hearts. God put it there. It's called salvation. We must dig up that buried treasure and begin to share it with those who do not yet possess this treasure. Such is the challenge of evangelism.

Let's examine the word "evangelism." It came from two words: "eu" for good and "angel" for message. In English, "eu-angel" morphed into "evangel" which became the Old English word "gospel" (good news). Evangelism is spreading the gospel, the good news, of God's buried treasure.

How valuable is the treasure that God has placed in the hearts of those who belong to him? The moment we place our earthly measuring devices over God's gift of salvation, we find that our instruments need recalibration. We eventually realize there exists no natural calibration to match what God has given us through his evangel (good news). We cannot measure eternity. Our eternal salvation exists as a hidden treasure in our hearts and it cannot be measured by any standard of this world.

We all know others who do not yet have this immeasurable gift of salvation. As a result, they have no idea of the value of the hidden treasure God has placed within us. In fact, according to the world's calibration, this good news is bad news, or "foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1:18). To the world's way of thinking, our evangel is a mal-angel (bad news). This world does not possess a gospel, but a badspel. And that badspel has been around since the fall in Genesis 3.

How can we confront the badspel of this fallen world with the gospel of God's kingdom? Let's take a lesson from the Apostle Paul as he visited the city of Athens. The Athenians were adherents of the badspel. Yet, they knew they were missing something. So, they had a back-up plan. In the midst of their struggle to find an answer to the mystery of life, the Athenian leaders had a monument set up that announced their ignorance. Paul was quick to take notice.

Paul spoke up in their midst and said, "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you" (Acts 17:22-23).

Paul rendered their badspel obsolete and outdated. He replaced it with the gospel which is never obsolete and is, in fact, eternal. This is evangelism. Many heard the gospel and left the world's badspel behind. They embraced the salvation offered in Jesus Christ. I'm sure all believers, along with certain Athenians, now know what was the real meaning behind that monument in Athens.

This world is lost. It is still focused on the monument to an unknown god. The world has the wrong diagnosis which continually leads to malpractice. The correct diagnosis and the cure are both found in the gospel. Enter the challenge of evangelism.

A free seminar called "Christian Basics" is being offered and you don't even have to travel to Athens. Just travel to the city of La Mesa to Lake Murray Church, 5480 Lake Murray Blvd ([www.lakemurraychurch.org](http://www.lakemurraychurch.org)). The seminar will last for ten weeks beginning Friday, January 8. There will be a 10:00 am session and then the same session repeated at 7:00 pm to help accommodate all schedules. This seminar will be a powerful tool to equip believers to be able to accurately share the gospel with others.