How to live out your calling

**Discover Your Witness Style: The 9 Styles Explained**

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*WAIT A SEC!!! Did you* [*take the Discover Your Witness Style Quiz*](http://evangelism.intervarsity.org/sites/evangelism/files/uploaded/Develop_your_skills/Discover%20Your%20Witness%20Style%20Excel%20Quiz.xlsx) *yet? Do you* [*know why you should*](http://evangelism.intervarsity.org/how/calling/discover-your-witness-style-quiz)*? After you do, come on back to review each of the styles below with your quiz results in hand.*

**Prophetic**

People with the prophetic style attempt to use Scripture when confronting people’s sin and calling for repentance. In public or private interaction, they prefer to skip small talk in order to get to the point. They have strong convictions and opinions, but are more likely to communicate Biblical principles than personal bias. They have a sense of urgency in obtaining a response. They are willing to say hard things to anyone, and hold people and structures accountable for their values. They are bold, direct, and prefer face-to-face interaction.

**Biblical examples:**

* Stephen in Acts 7
* John the Baptist in Mark 6
* Jesus in Matthew 15

**Strengths:**

* Cut through smoke screens
* People hear the Word of God instead of men
* Respect Scripture and its ability to bring conviction
* Usually verbally articulate

**Weaknesses:**

* May fail to consider the listener’s feelings
* May lack sensitivity
* May be more offensive at times than the gospel warrants
* May need to be reminded that love through action/service is important too

**Proclamation**

Proclaimers seek opportunities and circumstances to communicate a clear gospel outline and the need to respond. In public or private interaction, these people take initiative and utilize a straightforward approach to the gospel. They have a sense of urgency that people need to hear the gospel. They are direct and verbal.

**Biblical examples:**

* Peter in Acts 3
* Philip in Acts 8
* Jesus in Luke 4

**Strengths:**

* Provide clear, insightful, and Biblical communication
* Always prepared to share the gospel verbally
* Initiate and create opportunities instead of passively waiting for them

**Weaknesses:**

* May not “connect” with all types of people
* May confuse information transfer with communication
* May rely on an outline instead of considering and responding to the unique person or situation
* May be rigid and unadaptable

**Intellectual**

Intellectuals attempt to make a case for Christianity. They use a breadth of knowledge, historic proof, philosophic constructs, scientific analysis, and common reason to make a rational appeal for Christianity. They seek to appeal to people’s wills through their minds. They often enjoy reading books. They are philosophical, theological, inquisitive, and logical.

**Biblical examples:**

* Paul in Acts 17
* Jesus in Matthew 22

**Strengths:**

* Validate and protect the truth of the gospel for all contexts and situations
* Contextualize the gospel to current events and trends
* Take down intellectual barriers that keep people from Jesus
* Tend to be teachable and good learners

**Weaknesses:**

* May get stuck on academic points and evidence instead of focusing on the gospel
* May present the gospel as a mere intellectual concept rather than an incarnational reality
* May overlook the role of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to faith
* May overwhelm or humiliate people in the process of explaining Christianity and the gospel

**Storyteller**

Storytellers try to communicate theological truths through analogies or parables. Their narration connects felt needs and contemporary stories to Jesus’ story with creativity and personal impact rather than a memorized gospel outline. They think metaphorically. They often are artists and/or musicians. They are talkative, sociable, and down to earth.

**Biblical examples:**

* King Solomon in Proverbs 7
* Jesus in Matthew 12, Matthew 13 and Luke 15

**Strengths:**

* Communicate the gospel in a captivating and memorable style
* Appeal to people’s imagination through stories
* Bring Scripture to life by connecting Biblical stories to people’s needs and spiritual blindness

**Weaknesses:**

* May get caught up in the story and fail to connect it with the gospel message
* May limit the listener’s understanding of the gospel by the limitations of the analogy being used (there are no “perfect” stories or analogies)
* May need to learn to tell stories that are confrontational in nature

**Testimonial**

Testimonially oriented people emphasize openness with their own stories. As they listen to others, they are reminded of how God has worked in their own lives. Connections with others are made through shared experiences. Their personal stories point to Jesus. They tend to be vulnerable about their personal lives, especially their ups and downs.

**Biblical examples:**

* The blind man in John 9
* Paul in Acts 26
* Jesus in John 14-15

**Strengths:**

* Appeal to the imagination and life experiences
* Identify with people and make them feel affirmed
* Build relationships through empathy and vulnerability

**Weaknesses:**

* May rely too much on experience rather than the gospel
* May communicate that the gospel is subjective
* May fail to tell the whole gospel by focusing solely on their testimony
* May assume that their listener’s experiences are like their own

**Interactive**

Interactive people tend to focus on establishing relationships as an avenue to verbalize the gospel. They are able to create space for people. They reach out to people, and quickly feel accepted and included by others. They wait patiently for strategic, teachable moments to verbalize the gospel. They are prepared to apply the gospel to the various situations and friendships they find themselves in.

**Biblical examples:**

* Andrew with Simon in John 1
* Jesus with the Samaritan woman in John 4

**Strengths:**

* Usually make people feel affirmed and heard
* Easily develop friends with many types of people
* Value the uniqueness and individuality of others

**Weaknesses:**

* May not be willing to risk the relationship by sharing the gospel
* May never get to the point of sharing the gospel
* May need to work on boldness and speaking the truth to friends
* May need to learn not to shy away from appropriate conflict

**Invitational**

People with the invitational style are the Martha Stewarts of evangelism. They are hospitable and always invite people to events. They network well to help the Christian community be effective with their friends. They are bringers, includers, and may be the life of a party or simply a quiet mobilizer. They are social, persuasive, and down to earth.

**Biblical examples:**

* The Samaritan woman in John 4
* Levi in Matthew 5
* Jesus in Mark 1

**Strengths:**

* Make outreach successful
* Aware of many circumstances that are opportunities for outreach
* Act as a bridge from the world of the lost to the Church

**Weaknesses:**

* May rely too much on others to verbalize the gospel
* May fail to experience God working through their direct ministry to others
* May need to work on dealing with the natural conflict the gospel itself brings
* May need to realize that the gospel itself saves and not the Church, events, concerts, etc.

**Service**

Servers are the Mother Teresas of the Church. They attempt to care for the real needs of people. Servers are empathetic and sympathetic. They place a high value on actions, even menial tasks. They seek to bring relief to others through practical service. They tend to have a concern for social justice. Their kindness usually comes at a personal cost. They are patient, gentle, and sacrificial.

**Biblical examples:**

1. The paralytic’s friends in Mark 2
2. The disciples in Acts 6
3. Jesus in John 13

**Strengths:**

* Speak love in practical ways
* Strong and appealing lifestyle
* Demonstrate kindness and mercy
* Break down a person’s negative stereotypes about Jesus and the gospel
* Predispose someone to really listen and hear the gospel

**Weaknesses:**

* May never get to the gospel
* May need to sharpen their ability to verbally express the gospel
* May need to connect their service with the reason for the service
* May focus so much on action that the purpose for service can be lost

**Power Encounter**

People with a predisposition for power encounters may see dramatic physical or emotional change in the people for whom they pray. Operating with spiritual discernment and insight, God gives these people divine appointments and opportunities. They may uncover deep-rooted issues and often have a keen sense of following the lead of the Holy Spirit.

**Biblical examples:**

* Elijah and Philip in Acts 8
* The apostles in Acts 5
* Jesus in John 4

**Strengths:**

* Demonstrate God’s power
* Get people’s attention
* Increase the plausibility of the gospel message
* Open to God’s direction in potentially risky ways

**Weaknesses:**

* May rely too much on experience and emotion
* May need to sharpen their personal ability to verbally share the gospel
* May create a situation in which people seek the “power” visible in their lives instead of the God behind the power
* May over-spiritualize situations

*\*The quiz and style descriptions are from Discovering Your Witness Style (IVCF). The styles here are not so much styles of* evangelism *as they are natural or default ways of* relating *to people, which then serves effective evangelism.*

**What are some practical things you've tried to work on reinforcing one of your strengths? Improving upon a weakness?** Leave a comment with your advice or experience below.