

Dear Starr,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know what an evangelist was.

An evangelist is a preacher of the gospel or “good news” of Jesus Christ as is found in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

In Greek, eu means “good” and angelos means “messenger,” “one who is sent in order to announce, teach, or perform anything” (E.W. Bullinger Lexicon). The idea conveyed by the *evangelizo* word group is that of proclaiming a good message, or good news. In the King James Version of the Bible, the verb *evangelizo* is translated “preach,” “preach the gospel,” “bring good tidings,” “show the glad tidings,” “addressed with the gospel,” and “declared.” Bullinger’s Lexicon says it is “to bring someone into relation with the glad message of salvation.” The noun *evangelion* is always translated “gospel,” and the noun *evangelist* is transliterated into “evangelist.

The words “evangelist” or “evangelists” are used only three times in the New Testament. The first time we encounter “evangelist” is in Acts 21:8 where Philip is referred to as “the evangelist, one of the Seven.” “One of the Seven” means that he was one of the seven deacons originally appointed at Jerusalem (Acts 6:5). In Ephesians 4:11 the word “evangelists” is used to describe those who would help the church grow not only by conversion, but also, as the scripture says, “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” The last time we see the word “evangelist” is in 2 Timothy 4:5 where the Apostle Paul advises Timothy, “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist [a teacher and expounder of the Gospel], discharge all duties of your ministry.”

We hope we have explained the meaning of “evangelist.” Jesus explained it well when he told his disciples as he ascended into heaven, “Go into the world and preach the good news to all creation.” (Mark 16:15)

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Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio