

THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF EVANGELISM

BY

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"And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me" (Col 1:28,29).

INTRODUCTION

*"but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,-
and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,
and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

One of the most splendid and awesome truths in the Universe is that God has chosen to appoint Christians to take His message of salvation to unsaved mankind. He could have selected angels, a choice cadre of "superstars," or any number of methods, but He did not. God designed His perfect plan to include common, every day men and women to be His co-workers in the glorious task of bringing His magnificent salvation to those who believe.

Personal evangelism is every believer's duty and delight. It is the supreme display of love we can offer to mankind, and the chief act of gratitude we can display to God as we respond to His love by obedience to His good command to *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation"* (Mark 16:15).

But like preaching, teaching, reading, writing, arithmetic, or learning to cook or drive a car, evangelism does not come naturally. Like anything else in life, evangelism is a largely a skill to be learned and developed. It involves hard work, training, perseverance, prayer, encouragement, motivation and planning.

Yet, it is one of the easiest and most rewarding of our Christian privileges. Personal evangelism can be learned in a few minutes; yet, it may take some time to perfect, and takes continual practice to stay sharp. The best way to learn is to just do it. While some people have the gift of love, everyone is to love. The same is of true of evangelism. While it is true that some people are more gifted in evangelism, everyone should be involved.

In this little booklet our goal is to outline and summarize in a very brief fashion the most important factors in evangelism. We will examine the biblical foundation for evangelism, how to prepare for evangelism, how to overcome obstacles, what are some tools of persuasion, the persuasion process, how to effectively present the gospel to someone and how to do follow-up. The final two chapters shift gears. Chapter eight is a study of evangelism in the book of Acts and chapter nine gives personal testimonies of individual Tongans who have accepted Christ as Savior.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Willis C. Newman had eight years' experience in pastoral ministry before going into Teaching at the Bible College and Seminary Level. At the pastoral level, over 900 people prayed to receive Christ as their personal Savior. He is a graduate of the University of Portland, Multnomah School of the Bible, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, California Graduate School of Theology and Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary. He is Professor of Theological Studies at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, Principal of the Bible College of Tonga and Director of Polynesian Missions. 1976.

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They have an extensive ministry in Liberia, West Africa, where they founded, along with Rev. Eric Sumo of Village Ministries, the Newman Bible Academy. They hold regular pastor's conferences in that land with hundreds of pastors attending.
Dr. Willis Newman, 2013.

HOW TO BE SAVED

The Bible gives us the message (gospel) of how to be saved. By this we mean how to gain forgiveness for our sin and how to gain eternal life. Summarized below are the steps of salvation as presented in the Bible. We invite you to receive Christ as Savior.

1. Agree in your heart with God that you are a sinner in need of His salvation:

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

2. Know in your heart that there is a penalty to your sin:

"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23a).

3. Believe in your heart that Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead to pay the penalty for your sins and to give you eternal life:

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)... "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23b).

4. By faith pray to God: tell Him you believe the above in your heart and ask Him to save you through Jesus Christ. Remember that God is more concerned with the attitude of your heart rather than your exact words.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one would boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

"if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation" (Romans 10:9,10).

"Behold, I (Jesus) stand at the door (of your heart) and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

"But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12,13).

The following is a suggested prayer:

Heavenly Father, I admit to you that I am a sinner in need of your salvation. I believe that Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead to pay for my sins and to give me eternal life. I believe that only through Christ can I be saved. I ask for and accept by faith your free gift of salvation. Please come into my heart and be my Savior and Lord. Thank you for doing so. In Jesus' name, amen.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FOUNDATION FOR EVANGELISM

"Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" (John 4:35).

As we begin our short excursion through the process of evangelism, we need to first lay down a firm foundation, then build up from there. In this chapter we will list, define and give Bible proof of eight key principles that form our foundation for evangelism: definitions, the need, our authority, our power, our strategy, our example, and the place of the Bible.

THE DEFINITION

It is always important to first define our terms so people will know what we are talking about. Evangelism comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, which means "good news." The English word "gospel" is the equivalent of *euangelion*. An evangelist is one who proclaims glad tidings, good news or the gospel.

The gospel is the good news of salvation, motivated by His love, established by His grace through the work of Jesus Christ. This salvation is received by faith alone on the basis of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, that is, His death, burial and resurrection (Acts 15:7; 20:24; 1 Pet 4:17; Gal 1:6-9; 1 Co 15:1-4).

That act of God's grace paid forever all the sins ever committed by all those who believe on His name, that is, who personally receive the pardon God offers. This action involves the believer being spiritually born again and in the possession of eternal life. When suffering on the cross, Christ took on Himself the guilt of all of our sins, and upon our trust (personal belief) in His work, His righteousness is attributed to the believer.

It would be good at this time to discern from the experts and Scripture about the Gospel of Christ, and the Christians' Great Commission.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

1 Corinthians 15:3,4:

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures..."

Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words:

"...it denotes the good tidings...of salvation through Christ, to be received by faith, on the basis of His expiatory death, His burial, resurrection, and ascension..."

Unger's Bible Handbook, p.465:

"...the term "gospel" (cf. Mk 1:1) is used in the sense of the good news of salvation provided by the death, burial and resurrection of Christ..."

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, p. 1281.

"It is the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins and sonship with God restored through Christ. It means remission of sins and reconciliation with God,"

Scofield Reference Bible, p. 1343.

"This is the good news that *Jesus* Christ, the rejected King, has died **on** the cross for the sins of the world, that He was raised from the dead for our justification, and that by Him all that believe are justified from all things."

Baker's Dictionary of Theology, p. 255.

"The gospel is the joyous proclamation of God's redemptive activity in Christ Jesus on behalf of man enslaved by sin."

Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 712,713.

"The central truth of the gospel is that God has provided a way of salvation for men through the gift of His Son to the world. He suffered as **a** sacrifice for sin, overcame death, and now offers a share in His triumph to all who will accept it. The gospel is good news because it is *a gift* of God, not something that must be earned by penance or by self-improvement (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8-11; II Cor. 5:14-19; Tit. 2:11-14)."

FOUR KEY ASPECTS OF THE GOSPEL:

1. All men and women are sinners **it** (Rom. 3:23).
2. Sin carries with it the penalty of death (eternal separation from God in punishment Rom. 6:23).
3. Christ died to pay the penalty of sin, and rose to give eternal life (Romans 5:8)
4. Individuals must personally receive by faith (belief) Christ's payment (pardon) to be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Note: The object of one's faith is what saves. Faith is to cast our trust (or believe) that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is sufficient to take away the penalty, or guilt, of our sin and infuse us with eternal life and all its benefits. The effect is that the believer is born again, forgiven, has eternal life, is reconciled to God, and has become a child of God through spiritual rebirth and adoption. The believer is justified by faith.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission is found in many places in the New Testament. Below I list a sample.

MATTHEW 28:19, 20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

MARK 16:15: And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

LUKE 14:23 "And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in that my house may be filled.'"

LUKE 24:45-48: Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

JOHN 20:21: Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

LUKE 19:10: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

ACTS 1:8: but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

ACTS 10:42, 43: "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins."

II COR. 5:18-20: Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

ROMANS 10:13-15: for "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved." How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in His whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, 'How Beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!'"

ACTS 2:41: So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

SIX EVIDENT TRUTHS

Following these Scripture verses, we can glean six principles that also speaks to the process of evangelism.

- Soul winning is a command, not an option!
- Christians are to take the Gospel to every human being.
- Converts are to be baptized and brought into a local church.
- Converts are to be taught everything Jesus commanded, which includes soul-winning.
- The cycle is to remain unbroken until Christ returns.
- There is only one way to be saved, and that is only through Jesus Christ.
- Every Christian is to be involved as God gives opportunity.

Consider this exclusive verse from Jesus Himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6). Even Peter got into the dogmatic attitude when he said, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Let me expand on this issue.

THE NEED

I must clearly stress the desperate need for evangelism. Christ has commanded evangelism (Acts 10:42, 43). Further, people who do not know Christ will go to a fiery hell (Matt 25:41, 46; Rev 20:10-15), Christ is the only way to be saved (Acts 4:12), the only way for people to hear

the gospel to be saved is if people tell them (Rom 10:14-15). There is great warning to those who neglect evangelism (Eze 3:16-21).

Consider this scene: if we saw a home burning and filled with sleeping people, we would urgently seek to warn them and rescue them from a horrible death. Likewise, when we see people all around us who are headed for the eternal blazing fires of hell, how urgent is the need to rescue them. Honestly, I hate to use such “fire and brimstone” language, but it is true – a rock solid fact. The only other option is to call Jesus a liar – and that is risky! Listen to His words.

“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels...And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life’” (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Dear reader, I hate to use such grave language. Normally, I am a positive person who focuses on the good things that God brings to us. But, at times like these, I must be frank to be faithful to my calling. According to the verse I just quoted, these conditions await all those outside of the salvation of Christ.

- They will be separated and excluded from the presence of God.
- They will be cursed.
- Their destination is into a place likened to eternal fire.
- Their neighbors will be the devil and his angels.
- Their lot will be that of intense punishment.
- The constant punishment is forever – never to end.

I know that some believe the unsaved will be given a second chance, or that their terrible punishment will someday cease. However, according to Jesus Christ, if some have an eternal life, then others have an eternal hell. The same word (eternal) is used for both conditions. It truly is an either-or situation that last forever.

As to the importance of evangelism, consider this comparison. If a lawyer loses the case, then the person only goes to jail. If a doctor mishandles a case, the person merely dies. But, if the preacher neglects evangelism, the person goes to hell! Which job is most important?

I don't mean to stir up guilt in you, nor to be heavy handed and scold you. I am just telling you what God has said in the Scripture, and I, too, am reminding myself of the great and wonderful gift of salvation – but also of the dread for those who reject such a grand offer.

Next, let us go to our authority. Some might say, “Who gave you the right to preach the Gospel to us and talk about heaven and hell?” Below is the answer – it is from Christ Himself.

OUR AUTHORITY.

Jesus said: *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation”* (Mark 16:15; cf. Matt 28:18-20; Luke 14:23; 19:10; 24:45-48; John 4:34-35; 15:16; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 10:42,43; Romans 10:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eze 3:16-21; 1 Peter 3:15). We will do well to remember that evangelism is not a suggestion, but a command from the One who has all authority in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18).

Maybe it is well to remind ourselves again of that great utterance by Jesus to His disciples. It is

written of Jesus, “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’” (Matthew 28:18-20).

In this case, what authority can tell Christians not to witness? No authority can overrule Jesus – not any government, company, person, demon, political party, judge – not any one or thing. Jesus even over rules the Supreme Court of any land!

Now, this doesn’t mean we should not be wise. For example, if we start street preaching in a country where Islam is the dominant religion, say Afghanistan or Iran, – we will surely be inviting death. A dead preacher or missionary is not much good for the Great Commission! We need to be careful in those situations – and sometimes go underground in secrecy.

OUR POWER

The Holy Spirit supplies the power for the soul-winner (Acts 1:8; 1 Pet 4:11; Col 1:29; Matt 28:20), plus the spiritual rebirth that takes place in the one being converted (John 1:12, 13; 3:5; Titus 3:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13). If we try evangelism depending on our own power or clever plans, then we will fail. Though we carefully, prayerfully plan and work hard in our evangelism work, our trust and dependence must be entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit.

We can use advertising. We can dig wells, give clothes to orphans, and do other humanitarian work as a point of contact for the Gospel and to build positive relationships in the community. However, if we expect spiritual results, then we need spiritual tools and to deliberately depend upon the Holy Spirit to open doors, direct our efforts, convert souls, establish churches, and provide the means for local churches to prosper and grow in their spiritual work. That is what Jesus meant when He said He would be with us.

OUR STRATEGY

Evangelism can be of many forms: open air, radio, TV, gospel literature and tracts, drama, gospel movies, child evangelism, home Bible studies, Church sermons, door-to- door visitation, witness to our neighbors and family and to our co-workers. World evangelism is the primary function of the church.

Personal soul-winning is simply a conversation between people with the Christian explaining the gospel message and trusting (expecting) God to bring results. The soul-winner is to seek out prospects with earnestness and heart-felt compassion. God opens the heart of the unsaved to believe for salvation (Acts 13:48; 16:14; cf. Luke 14:23; Acts 5:42; 20:20; Psalm 126:5,6). Evangelism is like one beggar telling another beggar where he found food!

Here is a simple strategy statement. We must use every available method at every available time to reach every available person for Jesus Christ. We can build bridges to people by helping them at a point of need, such as when hardship comes to visit them. Many times we need to earn the right to speak to people. We do this by our genuine concern and friendly attitude and actions toward people.

OUR EXAMPLE.

Our great example for evangelism is Jesus Christ who said: For *the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10). Two famous examples of His evangelism

are with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21) and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4-42). Other Bible examples include Peter (Acts 2:14-40), Philip (Acts 8:26-40) and Paul (Acts 17:16- 34; 26:1-29). The soul-winner would do well to prayerfully study these examples from the Bible and learn the principles used by those experts.

THE BIBLE.

Our motives and methods for evangelism must be taken from principles found in the Bible. Our authority to evangelize is from God, but the only way we can know what God has said is from the Bible. Such things as political activity are not evangelism, nor will they bring church growth. Specific methods change from time to time, but they are always based on principles in the Bible. For example, TV and radio did not exist 200 years ago, so people then could not use them as evangelism tools. However, the Bible principle to preach the Gospel to every person is permanent and is the biblical justification for the use of TV and radio. Particular methods may change, but basic principles and the message stays the same.

When we preach the Bible, it has a power that convinces people. It should, because it is the Word of God, and God has an impact on people. The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to persuade people. When we preach the Bible, it gives us an authority to our words.

Now that we have the several stones of our foundation to evangelize firmly in place, we go to the next chapter, which is to look at an actual case study of evangelism in action: that of Jesus Christ and the Samaritan woman recorded in John chapter four.

CHAPTER TWO

EXAMPLE OF JESUS & SAMARITAN WOMAN

I think a very good example of personal evangelism is found in the story of Jesus when He saved the Samaritan woman at the well. I adapt this story from my commentary on the Gospel of John. Let me first set the actual Gospel story of John before us, then draw several powerful principles from this exchange. The Scripture is from John's Gospel, chapter four, verses 1-42. The numbers in the text refer to the verse numbers.

THE STORY IN SCRIPTURE

When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John 2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), 3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. 4 And He had to pass through Samaria. 5 So He came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; 6 and Jacob's well was there.

Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 The Samaritan woman therefore said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do you get that living water? 12 "You are not greater than or father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw."

16 He said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. 22 You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

25 The woman said to Him "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us."

26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He had been speaking with a woman; yet no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"

28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city, and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" 30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him. 31 In the meanwhile the disciples were requesting Him, saying "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

33 The disciples therefore were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?"

34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work. 35 Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. 36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows, and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." 40 So when the Samaritans came to Him, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world."

THE HISTORICAL, CULTURAL CONTEXT

Before we first learn some principles of evangelism we need some background. The origin of the Samaritan people starts from the time Israel was taken into captivity by Sargon II of the Assyrians in 722 B.C. Many Jews were deported to that far land. Sargon then repopulated the northern kingdom of Israel with peoples from other lands he had captured. This followed his policy to deport some local residents from captured lands, and then replace them with captives taken from yet other conquests.

Mixing of the races and religions in Israel produced a half caste mixture that became known as the Samaritans. The Samaritans accepted only the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) as Scripture and claimed that Mt. Gerizim, not Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, was the true place of worship. There was racial prejudice, conflict and hard feelings between Jews and

Samaritans.

The story unfolds as Jesus and His disciples were traveling from Judea north into the area of Galilee, about 50-60 miles north of Jerusalem. The main road went through Sychar of Samaria where Jacob's well was located. Sychar is about half way to Galilee from Jerusalem. Tired and hungry from the trip, the disciples left Jesus at a particular village well and went on into the village to get food for the evening meal. While Christ was waiting for their return, a woman walked along a path from the village to draw fresh water from the well.

She was an immoral woman, having been married five times and now living with a man outside of marriage. Jesus started a conversation with her and she was saved. The excited woman rushed into town, told all the men who then came to hear Jesus. She probably knew these men very well! Many people were saved, as a revival broke out. Jesus also used the occasion to teach several principles of evangelism to His disciples.

We now turn to five eternal principles that guide us in evangelism. Actually, there are more than five, but I will limit the principles. Following a discussion of the principles of evangelism, we can learn more about Jesus Christ Himself that will help us in our efforts.

HE TOOK THE INITIATIVE

First, Jesus went out to people to explain the way of salvation (vv. 3-5). He waited by the community well for someone to show up. The first person was the woman who came for water. He started the conversation with the woman. Jesus illustrated the great missionary command to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15).

We see Jesus at noon, thirsty, hungry, hot, tired, dirty from the long trip: yet, He took the time to witness to that poor woman about the eternal destination of her soul. He was more interested in her salvation than getting a cool drink of water and to wash up - or even to eat the meal the disciples brought back. In fact, He put His reputation on the line for the sake of her salvation. Jesus was a Jewish Rabbi, forbidden to speak to women in public - and even then, a Samaritan woman! But her salvation came first. What a wonderful example.

Many times we are reluctant to go out and win others to Christ. We are fearful of their rejecting us because of our witness. Sometimes we simply get too busy, tied up with things in our lives **or** too busy just keeping the church programs going. Other times Christians think that if people are going to get saved they should come to church. It is interesting to note, however, that the Bible never commands sinners to enter church, but it does command Christians **In** go out to sinners: "Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house maybe filled" (Luke 14:23).

Throughout the world, whether in Africa, South Pacific, Philippines, America, or everywhere, we see the cults and other religions being very aggressive in their seeking members. Daily we see them on the road, going from house to house. Sadly, in the church too many other issues and causes take first place in the programs. Issues such as gaining more status in church, collecting more money, having a bigger building, pushing politics, but the gospel is left out or forgotten. Not so with Jesus, He went out to people with the gospel message...the gospel message!

PERSONAL CONTACT

The second principle is that personal contact is required in evangelism (vv. 39-42). We must get in front of people. Jesus witnessed one-on-one and to crowds. Evangelism is like one

beggar telling another beggar where he just found food. In our case it is one sinner telling another sinner where he or she found salvation. In this chapter of John, Jesus dealt with the woman individually, but also with the rest of the village in open air meetings and probably small groups. He delayed His journey to Galilee two extra days to continue preaching the gospel and do follow up work.

Someone asked what is the best method of evangelism? The answer: use every available means at every available time to reach every available person with the gospel of Christ. This is a good answer, but we must remember, that personal contact is a vital part of every successful method.

ALERT FOR OPPORTUNITIES

The third principle is that Jesus was alert to opportunities (vv 28-32). In fact, I could say that Jesus made the opportunity. The disciples were dull, they were more interested in eating than evangelism (v 31). In fact, it's quite possible that Jesus sent them to town to buy food to get them out of the way so that He could minister to this woman. Merrill C. Tenney (The Gospel of John, p. 54) says the following about her coming to the well at the noon hour: "It was an unusual time for women to come to a village well for water. Perhaps the Samaritan woman had a sudden need, or perhaps she did not care to meet the other women of the community. In consideration of her general character, the other women may have shunned her." It's quite possible that the initial reaction of the disciples to her might have made it less likely for Jesus to be able to minister to the woman, so He needed to be alone with her. Christ was busy building friendships with those around Him and being alert to their interest in spiritual matters. He did not look at a person's race, where they lived, their social status, reputation or religion. He crossed racial, national and cultural lines to witness. He saw all people in great need of salvation and eternal life.

Not only do the people of your village or city need to hear the salvation message, but also in the next village and country. Those living on the plantations need to hear. The politicians ruling the nations need to hear. The expatriates working as traders and in government need to hear. The mothers left behind in the villages taking care of several children while the husband is working overseas need to hear. The sailors riding over the sea roads in the great ships need to hear. The fishermen getting fish from the ocean need to hear. Farmers in the bush need to hear. As servants of the Most High God, we Christians must be alert to opportunities to reach others with the gospel of Christ.

SUCCESS IS GUARANTEED

The fourth principle is that Jesus said it is impossible to fail in evangelism (vv 35-38). Jesus said the fields are white, ready for harvest. He meant that many people are waiting for the gospel message. We do not need to wait for a better time evangelize or send missionaries. Now is the time. The mission fields are waiting, and our neighborhood and village is part of the mission field. In another place, Jesus said: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest" (Matt 9:37-38).

The problem is not with the harvest, but with the workers. Christ tells us to direct earnest, prevailing prayer to God to raise up, motivate, train and send more missionaries, evangelists, church planters and soul-winners into the villages to win people for Christ and ground them in the Christian Faith. This does not mean that everyone is waiting with open arms to hear the gospel, but many are and will receive Christ when they hear.

Consider the rats. When they see the coconuts in a tree, do they say, "Oh, we must wait and not

climb the tree. The birds will bring the coconuts to us?" No, they climb the trees and go aggressively, but effectively after the nuts. Likewise, Jesus tells us to go out and get those converts He has prepared. We go aggressively, systematically, prayerfully, effectively and with faith, believing God will give us souls just as He promised. When I mention, "aggressive," I don't mean to yell and be mean spirited. It means to deliberately go with a determined purpose, but in a friendly, loving manner.

ACTUALLY PRESENT THE GOSPEL

The fifth principle we learn is the method by which Jesus actually presented the gospel. He started talking about common everyday things, in this case getting a drink of water. He used that as a starting point from which to go into spiritual matters: from physical water to living water which is eternal life (vv 10,14,19). He did not argue nor go off on tangents (v 20), but stayed talking about the important things. The subject matter in Christ's presentation included God, eternal matters, sin and how to get saved.

There was a simple, fivefold process that Jesus used:

- First, He struck up a kindly, friendly conversation with the woman to establish a good relationship (v 7).
- Second, He secured her interest, curiosity and attention (vv 9-12).
- Third, He gently but firmly pointed out her spiritual need for eternal life, her sin and led her further into spiritual matters (vv 13-18).
- Fourth, Jesus pointed to the provision for her need: receiving Christ as Messiah & Savior and true worship (vv 13-14, 24-26).
- Fifth, Jesus began His training of her as his follower by telling her to go tell others in the village about salvation (vv 16, 28). Her evangelism training lasted just a few minutes as she was off to tell others where to find salvation.

How precious are the words: "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life" (v 14). In other words, Jesus satisfies, both in this life and the next.

There are so many distractions and worries in this life that rob our peace and happiness. We constantly need to come up with money for school fees and uniforms, collections for church, airfare to go overseas. We need to buy fish, rice, cassava, and yam from the market for food or funerals. Sometimes our children get into trouble and disappoint us, or husbands and wives fight too much. The cares of this world can weight us down, like carrying big rocks in a sack - they are heavy.

Likewise, sometimes religion becomes a burden to carry, just like sin. For example, one does not know for sure if God is ever satisfied with us, or if He will forgive us even though we work so hard at church and do everything we are told. We are as good as we can be, but we never know if that is good enough for God. But know this, Jesus will satisfy. He is different than religion. Religion, sin and life's worries will never satisfy, but Jesus will - and that is fact. He promised eternal life, which is a life that satisfies. He says we will never thirst. Our sins are forgiven.

LESSON ABOUT TRUE WORSHIP

In this conversation we also learn about true worship. The woman asked Jesus who had the right religion, the Samaritans or Jews. She was trying to get Him off track. His answer was that true worship is a matter of two things: spirit and truth (v 24). By spirit Jesus meant that true

worship does not consist of outward doing good works for salvation, religious ceremonies and rituals, performed by going through a certain set of motions & practices, saying certain words, repeating chants - things outward or external from our heart and spirit.

By truth is meant sincerity. We cannot put on a mask and fool God about our relationship with Him. He knows our heart, as the Old Testament writer put it: "for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sa16:7).

True religion is a personal relationship with the living God of the universe: Jesus Christ. It is not a formal set of procedures we perform. Many people are indifferent to God, their hearts and minds are far from Him. They are dishonest in their dealings, they lie and are unfaithful. They go to church, however, go through the motions of outward religion and think they have worshiped God. That is what the Samaritans and Jews did, and sadly, that is what too many people do today as well.

True Christianity is not a religion, which normally just a particular set of beliefs and rituals that pass for trying to appease God. Christianity is all about a relationship between an individual and the living God of the Universe. It is about the restoration of a personal relationship that was broken by that disease called sin that erupts in hostile acts toward God. Those actions can be passive indifference, or overt hostility.

Along with that broken relationship, we become an enemy of God, "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Rom 5:10). When we receive Christ, we are reconciled to God, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8).

Like the Samaritan woman, many people will try to get us off track and start arguing about which religion is best – theirs or yours. It becomes a fruitless effort. It is true that Christianity has particular beliefs, but more importantly, it involves a living, dynamic, personal relationship that turns us from an enemy of God into His precious child by spiritual birth and adoption.

Jesus said, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12, 13; cf. Gal 3:26; 4:5, 7).

This restoration of our favored and unique relationship to God is by faith, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Eph 2:8, 9)

Before we leave this wonderful story and the lessons that it teaches, let me identify two truths about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

LESSONS ABOUT JESUS

Another great lesson we learn from this incident is about the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. We see Him first in His humanity. He was "wearied from His journey" (v 6). Jesus was truly human because He had hunger, pain, experienced thirst and became tired. He still, however, possessed all the attributes of Deity, but He voluntarily limited the full exercise of some. As we are told elsewhere: "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest In things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17).

We also see Christ in His Deity. He is called the Messiah, and accepts the title (v 25,26), is the giver of eternal life (v 14), expresses the attribute of knowing all things by knowing the woman's past history (v 18-19), with authority He taught the true form of worship (vv 23), and is called the Savior of the world (v 42).

We learn many things from this section of the Gospel of John that pertains to evangelism. We witnessed Jesus in action, and watched Him as He led a person to Himself. I selected out five major principles that governed this episode. Maybe you can find even more. We learned what true worship is about. Finally, we learned that Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God in the single Person of Jesus Christ.

From here, we go on to more practical things in discovering how to prepare ourselves for evangelism.

CHAPTER THREE

PREPARATION FOR EVANGELISM

"Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19).

When we get ready to go for a trip to another country or overseas, we make preparation. In the same way we need to prepare for evangelism. In this chapter we study ten principles which are vital in getting ready for evangelism.

PRAYER

Pray for souls to be saved (Rom 10:1), boldness (Eph 6:19), opportunity (Col 4:3), sensitivity to opportunities (Col 4:2), more soul-winners (Matt 9:37, 38), faithfulness to soul-winning (Eph 6:20), and follow-up (1 Thess 1:2; Col 1:3). Talk to God about men and women before you talk to men and women about God. Saturate your efforts in prayer. "Pray *without ceasing*" (1 Thess 5:17).

Even the powerful evangelist, Paul, needed prayer to witness, "and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph 6:19, 20).

There is a twist to the issue of prayer. Sometimes people use prayer like magic. That is, if they just pray, the thing prayed for will happen. They believe that is all they need to do is pray about things. However, prayer always carries with it the willingness to be part of the solution or answer to prayer. For example, if we pray for souls to be saved, then we must have a willingness to become involved in leading people to Christ. God uses means to bring about His ends.

It may be that all we can do is pray, and God will bring about the answer apart from efforts on our part. But the willingness to become involved needs to be in our heart.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is the major means used by the Holy Spirit to bring a sinner to salvation (Acts 19:10, 20, 26; 1 Thess 1:8; 1 Pet 1:23-25). The Bible says: "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17). The Bible is the Word of God. Paul reminds again of the mechanism of salvation, "God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (2 Thess 2:13). The Holy Spirit sets us apart for salvation as we express faith in the gospel message that is deposited in the Bible. The Bible is truth.

In another place, Paul explains the place of the Bible in the sequence of a person getting saved, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph 1:13).

In yet another place, Paul points to the importance of the Bible, "And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe" (1 Thess 2:13).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Always recognize the part of the Holy Spirit in the evangelistic experience. God is the one who

saves (Acts 2:47). Let Him lead you to those whom He has prepared. Be filled and walk in the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16,18,25). The Holy Spirit convinces people of three things. First, He convinces of the reality of sin, and secondly the need for righteousness, which is only possible through Christ. The third thing He convinces people of is the final judgment for those who reject Christ (John 16:7-11).

We are co-workers with God (1 Co 3:9) and cooperate with Him, helping Him to do what He does in convincing people to be saved. We present information in a clear, effective manner which informs people of the things of which the Holy Spirit is convicting.

Consider the example when Paul and his crew traveled into Europe, and opened up a work in Philippi. They came upon a group of women who were praying by a riverside. Paul started explaining the gospel, and look what happened, "And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul" (Acts 16:14).

It was God who opened up her heart to believe, not Paul. He was just earnestly explaining the gospel of Christ. This is an example of the close cooperation between the soul-winner and the Holy Spirit in evangelism.

PERSONAL HOLINESS

Confess and put away all known sin (1 John 1:9; Prov 28:13). Do not harbor bitterness, greed, pride, lust or secret sin. Walk upright before God in the power of the Holy Spirit. Do not grieve or quench the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19). We witness with both our walk and our word. If people see that we do not live like a Christian, they will not believe our message. We lose our credibility. We must walk our talk before we talk our walk!

Paul said: be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following...discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness...godliness is profitable for all things" (1 Tim 4:6-8).

Paul sets the example for us in relating his work among the Thessalonians, "You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers" (1 Thess 1:10).

SOUL CONSCIOUS

Always keep in mind how you might witness to people. View people in terms of where they will spend eternity (Col 4:2). A business person views people on how to make money. A teacher views people on how to get them to learn. Many locals view tourists on how to get their money! A soul-winner begins to view people on how to win them for Christ.

That is what Jesus meant when He said, "Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" (John 4:35).

PLAN YOUR WORK

Success favors the prepared. That is why training and practice is so important. If we just leave evangelism to happen by itself, it will not happen. As we carefully plan for a wedding, church service or any other activity, we must plan for evangelism. **Plan your work and work your plan.** Be consistent. Pay attention to the details in your plan.

Included in the plan is a well thought out gospel presentation. Memorize a plan and stick with it

as much as possible. At times the Holy Spirit may lead another way; however, stay with the plan until it becomes part of you. Memorize the words and remember the ideas. When we first memorize a presentation it seems awkward and unnatural. However, the more you practice the presentation, the more natural the delivery becomes. We have a suggested plan in chapter six.

If you are planning a city wide crusade, spend time on how you are going to conduct it. You need to set up your goals, get the venue, finance the project, find the evangelist, practice the music, do the advertising, get many churches involved, institute prayer, get radio or TV time to advertise, enlist the help of many, decide how to get people to come, make sure everything works – including the generators and lighting – plan the follow up.

One way to figure out the plan is to visualize every detail in your mind of what needs to happen. Start at the first, and think through everything that must happen, and then write down your thoughts as you picture them. Anticipate what can go wrong, and craft a secondary plan. Give yourself enough lead time to carefully plan the event so things will go smoothly. A sloppy put together plan will turn off people. They will think that the things of God must not be really important, because you didn't think it was important enough to devote adequate time to planning and preparation. The same principle applies for regular church services: put on a good show. Show people that you really care about God and His work.

If you are evangelizing your village or town, then plot out where people live, train your workers, then systematically go through the homes offering the gospel. Leave tracts along the way, and invite people to church. Try to determine who is the most likely to respond to the gospel, and go to them first.

For example, people new in the neighborhood are more likely to be open to the gospel. They do not yet have their circle of friends, and they are looking for help in settling into the community. Displaced refugees are responsive, as are people in trouble because of the loss of work, or house fire, or sickness.

One good motto is this, **“Find a need and fill it; find a hurt and heal it.”** When you look for and find a person's “felt need” then you can devise a program to meet that need. That is a point of contact for the gospel message. When people see that you care for them, a positive relationship is formed, and they will be more likely to listen to the gospel.

Remember, a well-conceived work plan; with efficient time management will ultimately bring results. Set your goals, organize your time, and establish your priorities: it will put you in the driver's seat on the road to success in soul-winning and discipleship.

DETERMINATION.

The one major reason we do not win souls is that we do not persevere - we do not keep working at evangelism. Do not expect everyone to receive Christ, but some will if we do not give up. We will reap what we sow (1 Cor 15:58; Gal 6:7). The evangelism program of the church deserves as much planning, finances and persistent effort as any other program of the church. When a church ceases to be a missions church, it becomes a mission field. It all comes down to obedience. When we quit evangelizing, we quit obeying God.

Consider the seriousness of Paul, “I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome” (Rom 1:14, 15).

We can again see Paul's attitude, "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Cor 9:16). Or still again, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor 5:10, 11).

One can see from his attitude, that the Apostle Paul was, indeed, very determined to evangelize.

As a side bar, the "judgment seat of Christ" that is spoken of doesn't refer to our salvation. This judgment is only for Christians and will determine the nature of our reward in heaven. The "great white throne" of Rev 20:11 is the one that all those outside of Christ will appear before. Only non-believers will appear before the Judge, who will determine the degree of eternal punishment.

FAITH

Believe that God will give you results — expect them. Know beyond any doubt that you can win souls. We have God's word on it: "Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with hill" (Psalm 126:5,6).

Consider the field of the farmer. When he plants cassava and sweet potatoes he believes it will grow. If the farmer didn't believe the seeds he put into the ground would grow, he wouldn't plant them there. He goes by the law of sowing and reaping.

In the same way, when we get out the Word of God we believe God will give us results: "So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11).

It may be that we will not immediately see the results of our evangelism or gospel work. In fact, we may never see all the harvest, but know this: God will bring results. Paul explains it this way, "What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed; even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos water, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth" (1 Cor 3:5, 6).

Many times missionaries will go to an area and labor for years. They may never see any results. But, years later another person will come and see the results of many conversions. The first missionary planted the seed, and the second missionary reaped the spiritual harvest.

LOVE PEOPLE.

Our attitudes and actions toward other people must be of love. Love is having the genuine welfare at heart of the object loved. Be sincerely helpful, kind, friendly. We are to love and pray for our enemies (Matt 5:44), and love fellow Christians (John 13:35). Coldness of heart and meanness in our treatment of others will hinder evangelism.

Positive relationship building is a key part of evangelism. This means positive relationships among gospel workers, and with the people to whom we minister. Consider the words of Jesus, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

Consider the love, kindness and positive relationship Paul established with the Thessalonians. He writes,

“For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed – God is witness – nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having thus a fond affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us” (1 Thess 1:5-8).

MOTIVATION

Why should we bother about evangelism? Many times when we try to win others to Christ we are rejected, mocked, marginalized, and mistreated. Some will say we are stupid, and maybe even fire us from our jobs. In some places they will kill us. Why do they do that? Jesus explained it this way. People hated Jesus. He said to His disciples, “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:19).

This, then is how, we are to understand this ill treatment against Christians. Ultimately, the world’s hatred is directed against Jesus Christ. The real issue is between them and God. Jesus explains, “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me” (John 15:20, 21).

So, when we are rejected and treated badly because of our faith, don’t take it personally. Their persecution and abuse is actually being directed against Jesus Christ. If the abuse or torture comes against us, granted, it is hard to not take it personally! We are the one’s suffering!

However, this truth will help us in our pain, “and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we many also be glorified with Him” (Romans 8:17; cf. 2 Cor 1:5).

We don’t want to carelessly invite persecution, but if we are bold in our faith, abuse will come from someone somewhere sometime. Paul wrote to Timothy, “And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3:12).

Consider also the role Satan has in bringing harm to Christians, and resistance to the gospel message, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12).

In the face of the rejection, here are 10 motives to start and sustain us on to victory in evangelism. I ask you to contemplate upon them, and consider (memorize) the Scripture verses. 1. Motivated by obedience to Christ (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 10:42,43; Acts 5:20,29; 1 Co 9:16,17). This is very important. Sometimes people say that we should be a missionary or soul-winner because we have love for others, or maybe feelings of pity. I would submit that if our motivation is grounded only in this very legitimate and worthy motive, we will fail. That is because when we go to a strange country to do missionary work or evangelize, and we run into hardships or maybe even persecution, the feelings of love and pity will soon evaporate. Unless motivated by obedience, we will soon quit and go back home where it is comfortable.

2. Motivated by Christ's love for us (2 Co 5:13-15). When someone loves us, and has our genuine welfare at heart, we want to reciprocate the good will in some way. Here is an example from the days when I was a rodeo cowboy. I rode bulls and bucking horses – the rough string as they were called.

At one rodeo, I drew a very mean bull to ride. I took my seat on his back, the chute gate opened, and the ride was on. He was a spinning bull, and after few lurching leaps, my spurs lost their grip, and I was pulled down on his head. The bull violently thrust his horned head backward, and my skull collided with his horn. I still carry the scar from my fractured skull.

Needless to say, I was knocked unconscious, and fell off the bull. However, he did not buck away from me, but started spinning on the top of me as I lay unconscious on the ground. His hooves were missing me by inches. At the time, I was traveling with a dear friend named Jim Starr, who was an accomplished and experienced rodeo hand and bull rider. On occasion, he also worked as the rodeo clown whose job it was to save cowboys from the bulls when they were bucked off and vulnerable.

Jim, without thought to his own safety, quickly dashed in while the bull was still spinning on top of me, grabbed my limp body by an arm, and dragged me to safety away from the rampaging bull. I had blood streaming down my face, and looked a mess. My wife drove me to a hospital and the doctor fixed me up. Jim could have just watched like everyone else who were too frightened to risk their own neck. Jim, however, put his own life on the line for me, when I was helpless.

To this day, I sense a special feeling of obligation and loyalty to Jim that I simply don't have toward other friends and family. I would do anything in my power to help him in need. Why? Because he saved my life by pulling me out from under that raging bull bound on doing me very serious danger.

The same idea applies to our relationship to Christ. He literally saved us from an everlasting hell. When we were helpless and hopeless, Christ went to the cross and took the penalty of our sin. He took our guilt upon Himself, and granted His righteousness to us. He didn't have to. He could of just as easily turned away and let us go to hell. But He didn't. Like Jim, only far more so, Christ took our suffering and went to hell in our place.

With a love like that, why in the world would we refuse to serve Christ with all our heart? We cannot. Just as I owe my life to Jim Starr, we all owe our full allegiance to Jesus Christ.

3. Motivated by fear of the Lord (2 Co 5:10,11; cf. Exod 3:6; Gen 32:7; Isa 6:5; Eze 1:28; 2:1,2; Dan 10:4-9; Rev 1:4-17). By this I don't mean to be terrified of God, because He does love us dearly. We must remember, however, just who He is and our position before Him. He is God, and we are his servants. Servants aren't terrified of their master, they just recognize, respect, and respond quickly regarding whom their master is and what He commands.

4. Motivated by joy and enthusiasm (Acts 5:41, 42; 4:31; 1 Thess 2:18-20). Sometimes there is great joy when we see results. Sometimes we don't see results, but we can also be happy knowing that the angels in heaven are happy, and that our efforts will never be in vain. Indeed, Scripture records, "I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

5. Motivated by desire to please God (2 Co 5:9; Col 1:10). Evangelism is pleasing to God.

Surely, we would not want to displease Him!

6. Motivated by future rewards (2 Co 5:10). Truly, there is great reward for Christian service. In fact, there is a special crown or reward for evangelism. Scripture speaks of five special crowns or rewards for various things.¹ One of those crowns is called the “soul-winners” crown. Paul wrote of his converts, “Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved” (Phil 4:1). Again, we read, “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy” (1 Thess 19, 20; cf. Dan 12:3; Prov 11:30).

7. Motivated because the lost go to hell (Rev 20:10-15; 2 Pe 2:4; Mark 9:46,47; Jude 13; Matt 13:49,50; 25:41,46). This is somber and sobering, and strikes up fear and pity in our hearts. Sinners go to hell for eternity.

8. Motivated by love and good will (Phil 1:15-17). It is a worthy thing to rescue people from hell and have them placed in a position of forgiveness and eternal life. We help our neighbors in the time of their need of food or clothing or medicine. What greater love and good will can we display than to give them the gospel of Christ.

9. Motivated by wishes of people in hell (Luke 16:19-31). This story is true. The story Jesus told of the rich man and Lazarus drives home this motive. Jesus records the conversation between the rich man in hades and Father Abraham, and this is the plea of the man in hell, “Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father’s house – for I have five brothers – that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment” (Luke 16:27, 28).

10. Motivated by sin of soul manslaughter (Eze 3:17-19; 33:7-9). There is the concept in law of “criminally negligent manslaughter.” Generally, it refers to an occurrence where there is an omission to act in the face of a clear, distinct duty to act, or a failure to act on a duty, and death is the consequence of such an act, or neglect, of the duty. The specific duty must be clear.

In the moral realm, an example would be when a boat is sinking in the ocean with passengers who are certain to die. The moral crime would be on the part of someone nearby who has the means to save the drowning victims, but fails to act or rescue them. Another example would be someone who stands by and watches a house burn down without warning the sleeping people in the house. The result is the death of the occupants of the house.

Some theologians apply this to soul-winning. We have the clear duty to evangelize. We are citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20), who are commissioned as ambassadors of Christ with the responsibility and obligation to proclaim the means of reconciliation between sinners and God (2 Cor 5:20; Rom 1:14; Matt 28:18-20).

When we fail in this duty, according to some, then we become guilty of “soul-manslaughter.” God put it this way to His prophet, “When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die’; and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet if you have warned the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself” (Ezekiel 3:18, 19).

APPEARANCE.

Have good personal hygiene, be clean, comb your hair, and wear suitable clothes.

¹ The other four crowns are the crown of righteousness (2 Ti 4:8); Crown of victory (1 Cor 9:25-27); Crown of life – the martyr’s crown (James 1:12); Crown of glory – the faithful preacher’s reward (1 Peter 5:2-4; Matt 5:19).

We now have our foundation laid and have our preparation, prayer, the Bible, Holy Spirit, personal holiness, soul conscious, planning, determination, faith, love for people, and finally, ten factors of motivation. Let us jump over to the next step: recognizing the obstacles that get in our way.

CHAPTER FOUR

OBSTACLES AND OBJECTIONS TO EVANGELISM

"And He ordered us to preach to the people" (Acts 10:42).

When we push a boat out from the wharf or beach there are many obstacles that can interrupt our journey to another island. We can run into a reef, overturn in the surf, a whale can hit us - or the engine can stop. If we know about these obstacles in advance, we can plan to avoid them. The same is true for evangelism. There are many hindrances. Below we will examine 13 common ones and give some help to overcome or avoid them.

FEAR

The biggest obstacle is that we are fearful that people will reject or make fun of us if we witness. Some suggestions to help overcome this fear are to maintain a steady devotional life of personal prayer and life related Bible study.

We can also master a workable plan, pray and trust God for boldness and result, practice, and associating with other successful soul-winners. There is the saying that soul-winning is more caught than taught. That is, we go with another successful soul-winner, and watch how they do it. Then we copy what they do. The filling of the Holy Spirit is important as is realizing the spiritual dimension, thinking about the positive results, and reading motivating stories about evangelism. We can use obedience as our primary motivation, and dwell on the other motivating factors.

The best way to learn any skill is to practice, practice, and practice some more. In the United States military, for example, training is paramount. They practice training exercises over and over so that when they are in the heat of battle, their training takes over, because they don't have time to think about the dangers.

Athletes do the same thing. Whether it is soccer, boxing, or any sport, they train, train, train, and practice, practice, and practice. When game time comes, they just act automatically as their training prepared them. Someone said that success is where preparation meets opportunity.

Another example is when I am teaching certain college courses or presenting in a pastor's conference. I have taught the material so many times, that the words come out of my mouth automatically – even when addressing a new group when I am nervous.

I suppose that fear of what people will think of us is commonplace. Consider many of the leaders who received Christ, but were afraid to admit it. Scripture records, "Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God" (John 12:42, 43).

Finally, we must get over the fear of man and loss of other people's approval while concentrating on God's approval. The Scripture states, "The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted" (Proverbs 29:25; cf. Luke 12:4 Psalm 118:6; Matt 5:10-16).

BRIDGING THE GAP

Many times we want to witness to people, but we do not know how to bring up the subject of spiritual things - how to go from the secular to the sacred. I know it is difficult. I face the same tension when I meet a stranger. We start talking about superficial things like their family, where they live, what their favorite pastime is – and then sooner or later it comes to occupation. They ask me what I do for a living. Up to this point, the relationship is friendly and open. Then I have to answer their question, “What do you do, where do you work”?

The second I tell them that I am a preacher, Bible teacher, or missionary – then the conversation become stiff, and usually ends. The same is if I tell them that I am a college professor that teaches psychology. A usual response is, “Oh, that is nice. It was good to meet you.” Then they leave!

The solution to bridging the gap from secular, safe subjects, over to the state of their soul, is to have a plan that gradually eases into the presentation. I give you one in chapter six.

ARGUMENTS.

The solution to winning arguments is not to get into one in the first place. We are not there to argue, but to explain the gospel. You might win an argument, but lose the soul. If you encounter much resistance from the person then quit talking about spiritual things, and focus on maintaining a positive relationship.

Keep the door open for when they are ready to speak of spiritual matters. Be kind, not argumentative. Keep the friendship.

We are like fruit inspectors. If we tear the fruit from the tree before it ripens, it is too green to eat, or damaged and bruised. If we wait until it is ripe, then we will have a good meal.

Likewise, we wait until the person is ready to receive Christ. But keep checking from time to time to see if they are open to spiritual matters. But do not force people to talk about spiritual things if they do not want to. Do not offend people and make them angry.

OBJECTIONS

Sometimes we think we need to know all the answers to all the objections people can bring up. This can be a cause of fear that keeps us from witnessing. That is, we think we won't know all the answers to the questions or objections they will bring up. There are several things we can consider with genuine questions or objections to accepting Christ.

First, we can eliminate objections beforehand, that is, answer most objections through the presentation. Second, we can funnel them all to the Bible and defend it.

We must also determine if the person is asking a genuine question that deserves an answer, or whether they are just trying to get off the subject or start an argument. In turning an objection, politely acknowledge that the person has a genuine point. Do not make them feel dumb for ever having such a thought. Offer a short explanation, then get right back to the presentation.

When we funnel objections to the Bible, we can defend the Bible by saying it is proven true by fulfilled prophecy and miracles, especially the miracle of the Resurrection of Christ (John 20:30-31; 1 Cor 15:1-8). We can turn objections by using the "feel, felt, found" method. This method does not offend the person and it reduces the possibility of an argument. Following is an example.

"Yes, Mr./Mrs. _____, I can appreciate how you **feel**, I **felt** that way myself at one time, but I **found** that the Bible is very clear about (whatever the objection is). The Bible is proven true because of fulfilled prophecy and the testimony of Jesus Christ. But you just think about that for a moment while I go on."

As you practice evangelism, the same objections will surface over and over again. Learn the common objections, then find the answer in the Bible. It is good to memorize the Bible verses to various objections.

Finally, in a later chapter, I will go into more detail regarding objections.

THE APPEAL

Many times we explain the gospel but are too fearful to ask the person to receive Christ. The solution? Ask the person to receive Christ! Have a plan built into your gospel presentation. Perhaps the main reason for not asking the person to receive Christ is that we think they will say no. If they say no, then we feel like a failure; consequently, we don't ask the question. To resolve this quandary, we can learn how to ask the question in such a way as to not offend.

Here is an example of how to offend people, "If you don't accept Christ right now, you are really stupid, and you will go to hell. Do it, now!"

Maybe a better way would be something like this, "Does accepting Christ seem like something that you would be interested in?" You can follow up by saying something like, "Here is how you can receive Him. You can simply pray to Him, asking Him to become your Savior. It is not the actual words that will save you, but the intent of your heart. Let's bow our heads, I will offer a prayer that you can repeat after me. I will say it in short phrases. Would that be ok?"

You can then take the person through the sinner's prayer. An example is given in the, "How to be saved" section at the front of this book, or later in the chapter on how to give a gospel presentation. But, remember to ask for the decision. It is a waste of time to lead a person up to the point of decision, and then drop them by not asking them to receive Christ.

Actually, I have seen soul-winners do just that. They will go through the presentation with a non-Christian up to the point of the appeal, and then start all over again with the presentation. This incident really happened to me one time, after about the third time through the presentation, the frustrated sinner blurted out, "I want to receive Christ...would you be quiet and let me!"

INDIFFERENCE

Sometimes worldliness or just the problems and hassle of living creep into our life, and the fervor for evangelism fades out. This is a problem of focus and priority in life. Remember, Jesus said: "*You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain*" (John 15:16).

Many times churches or individuals become "nominal," that is, they just go through the motions of Christianity, but spiritual things are not really important to them. Christ is not real to them. They are lukewarm in their walk with Christ (Rev 3:16). Staying motivated is the hardest part of evangelism. Prayer is vital in keeping motivated (Luke 10:2; Eph 6:19, 20).

Another way to stay motivated is to realize the reward of the soul-winner. All Christians will be judged at the Judgment seat of Christ and receive reward or suffer lack of reward (2 Cor 5:10). Soul-winners have a special reward. Paul said: "For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy" (1 Thess 2:19,20). Even the angels rejoice over people who receive Christ as Savior as I have noted before (Luke 15:10).

If motivation is the issue, maybe it would be wise for you to review the motives for evangelism I explained in an earlier chapter.

SIN

Sin robs us of our power, joy, and desire to win souls. Our enemies are the world, flesh and Satan (1 John 2:15-18; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 6:10-20). Three main avenues of assault on our lives are first, sexual immorality, second, greed for money and things. The third assault is pride which comes from earthly success, importance, money or position.

The solution is to keep a consistent devotional life, walk with God through the power of the Holy Spirit, count the cost of sin, and when we do sin, confess and put away our sin. We should also avoid situations which bring temptation. Being around with other soul-winners is also important. If others around us think it is important, and actually win souls, then we don't feel like we are the only one evangelizing. It keeps us accountable and encouraged.

Remember the formula for confession, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

LIBERAL THEOLOGY

This is a grave danger for the modern church. Many churches have departed from the Bible and have become involved in social concerns and political activity. Liberal theology sees salvation in terms of collective political or social salvation in this life, rather than being individually saved from sin to escape hell and go to heaven in the next life.

Liberal theology does not believe in a literal Bible, heaven, hell or that Jesus is God. Some do not believe in such things as sin, evil, or they believe that all people are already saved – or maybe that everyone gets a second chance in the next life. The key mark of Liberalism is that they don't believe the Bible is literally the Word of God, and they judge what is right or wrong by copying what contemporary society believes to be right or wrong.

DIVINE APPOINTMENT

We are to look for that Divine appointment, the individual that the Holy Spirit has prepared for us to win to Jesus Christ. Keep going and looking for that person who is ready to receive Christ.

A Scriptural example would be the case of Philip winning the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ. Philip was in the middle of an evangelistic campaign, busy preaching the gospel, and many were coming to Christ. The Holy Spirit, however, had a divine appointment for Philip. The Ethiopian official was on his way home, and God was working on his heart. Philip didn't know that fact, but being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, he went up to the official.

Through the course of conversation, Philip won the official to Christ, who then took the message back to his home country. The Holy Spirit was working in both Philip and the official, and brought them together at the right time.

Sometimes, however, we don't look very hard for someone to explain the gospel to. That is why it is important to have a definite plan that carves specific time out of the week or day to deliberately witness.

I need to develop this idea further. Sometimes people consider a "divine appointment" to mean that God will just bring the right person across our path who is ready to receive Christ. It is true. Sometimes that happens. But, most of the time, it does not. People, then, think that all they need to do is passively wait for that person to come along, and they are unable to lead anyone to Christ. Why? Because no one comes across their path.

Consequently, if no one stumbles across your path, then go find someone. Make it happen. Actively go find someone. Become aggressively engaged in developing that divine appointment. By aggressively I don't suggest that you become mean spirited, but proactively involved.

DIVISION AMONG CHRISTIANS.

Many times Bible believing Christians or churches have hard feelings between them. The common unity and fellowship are driven out by bitterness, fighting and name calling. Love is blown away like a boat in a hurricane. This hostile environment grieves the Holy Spirit and hinders His work (Eph 4:29-5:2).

People spend all their energy on fighting and getting even, and then they have no time or energy to do the Lord's work. Christians need to get along and help each other whenever they can. Other Christians are too proud of being a Methodist, Anglican, Presbyterian or whatever their denomination may be. They look with contempt on anyone who belongs to another church. This attitude is wrong. Christians should love each other.

UNSAVED CHURCH MEMBERS

One major problem with evangelism is too many church members are not saved themselves. In the South Pacific, for example, almost everyone has heard about Christ, but they have not accepted Him into their hearts. Many times they are confused on how to become a Christian, thinking salvation comes by good works such as putting on the biggest feast or giving the most money. In other cases, belonging to a church brings status to a person, or provides a way to gain contacts for business. It may be viewed as just a social club.

If people are not saved, how can they lead others to salvation? Unsaved people do not know what salvation is, thus they cannot explain it to others. Further, they will not think salvation is important.

We must be clear on the gospel. All mankind stands in need of salvation. All are spiritually dead and need to be born again (John 3:3-7; Eph 2:1, 4, 5). All have broken the law of God and need forgiveness. All of us stand under the penalty of eternal punishment. We cannot save ourselves by good works or religious acts. Only God can save us.

God provided salvation by one act of grace which produced two results. Grace is an act of undeserved mercy on those who actually deserve judgment. First, by Christ dying on the cross He paid the penalty for sin. Second, by rising from the dead He was able to provide eternal life.

This salvation is individually received by faith alone, which is to personally receive Christ as our Savior and trust Him alone to save us from our sin. The Bible says: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of*

works, that no one should boast" (Eph 2:8,9; John 1:12,13; 3:15,16; 11:25-26; 1 John 5:11-13).

The gospel is the good news that Christ died, was buried and rose again to pay the penalty of sin and give eternal life to all who will receive Him by faith (1 Co 15:1-4). To the person who has never experienced this life changing event, it is very hard to witness to another. In fact, they may even be against evangelism, because of the stigma it will bring to the church from the people of the community.

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Sometimes we expect too much from our evangelism. When everyone we talk to does not receive Christ, we then become discouraged and quit. God brings salvation. We continue to preach the gospel, pray to God and persuade men and women. If spiritual awakening comes to a city, island or land, than only God can bring it, and in His timing. If God carries on sending revival, we continue to do our part in faith and obedience, expecting results. Following are some common results and reactions to evangelism.

1. An average retention rate of those who pray to receive Christ and will be grounded in a local church is about 20% - 30%. The rate of church attendance in the islands will be greater because of family pressure to come to church. It is also seen as a social event.
2. Some people will pray to receive Christ, but not welcome you back or come to church.
3. Some people will be very excited, become involved in church, but fall away just as quickly. They will be like a fireworks display: soar brightly into the sky, then fizzle out and fall back to the ground.
4. Some people will seem to grow slow at first, but slowly mature to great depth and spiritually.
5. Some people will be on fire for Christ from the minute they receive Christ until they die.
6. Some people will be very strong into Christ, but will gradually lose their fire as the years go by.
7. Some people will receive Christ; yet, seemingly be stunted in their growth for years until for some reason they settle down and begin to grow for Christ.
8. Some children from fine Christian homes end up as infidels; some children from the worst of conditions grow up to be great preachers and Christians.
9. Some will become very religious in times of crisis, but forget God just as quickly when the trouble is gone.

For a biblical analysis on expected results to evangelism see the parable of the sower (Matt 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-21). One great Christian leader defined evangelism this way: present the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leave the results to God.

UNCOMMITTED LEADERSHIP

It is important to know that if the leadership in a church is not committed and personally involved in the evangelism process, it will not work. Individuals can still win souls and some evangelism

will occur. But for evangelism to ever become a significant part of the church, the leadership from the top on down must be genuinely involved.

The pastor sets the direction of a church. Members look to the pastor, and pick up what he thinks is important by what he says and does. If the leaders do not win people to Christ, and intentionally plan and do soul-winning, the people will not think it important. The old proverb is true: the water will never rise higher than the boat; the pew will never rise higher than the pulpit. Everything rises or falls on the leadership. Since soul-winning is so hard, because of the rejection factor, the pastor must head up and lead the efforts.

Sometimes the church as a whole does not want evangelism to happen. There may be various reasons why people do not want church growth. Perhaps church people do not want new people coming in who will be a threat to the established leadership. People sometimes resist change. This is a sure killer to church growth. On the other hand, the most important element for church growth is sincere desire on the part of the membership for growth to happen.

To recap, in this chapter I have explained 13 obstacles and objections to evangelism: fear, bridging the gap, arguments, objections, the appeal, indifference, sin, liberal theology, neglecting the divine appointment, division among Christians, unsaved church members, unrealistic expectations, and uncommitted leadership. From here, let me take you into the world of effective persuasion.

CHAPTER FIVE

TOOLS OF PERSUASION

*"Go out into the highways and along the hedges,
and compel them to come in,
that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).*

PERSUASION AND SOUL-WINNING

PERSUASION AND THE BIBLE

Psychological persuasion is a valid, biblical tool to use in personal evangelism. The apostle Paul used the techniques of persuasion abundantly (2 Cor. 5:11; Acts 18:4; 19:8; 26:28; 28:23). It is true that spiritual preparation is of utmost importance: prayer, holy living, fellowship with God, filling of the Holy Spirit, etc.

It is also true there is a spiritual dimension in soul winning such as the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the divine appointment, election, spiritual regeneration, spiritual warfare, etc. At the same time; however, there is the psychological side of human persuasion. God uses the techniques of persuasion as means of securing the sinner's salvation just as much as prayer or other means.

There are those who say we should not use the tools of salesmanship and persuasion in spiritual matters; then, with great effort they will spend the next 30 minutes intensely "persuading" you of the carnality of salesmanship of which they themselves are vigorously engaged.

Since man first learned to communicate, he has been steadily developing his power of persuasion - his ability to get others to see things from his point of view. It began in the Garden of Eden. The belief that a person is born to be a persuader has long been abandoned and given away to the knowledge that a good persuader (soul-winner) can be created: one learns techniques to study the Bible just as he learns to persuade.

Certain techniques and methods involved in soul-winning can be learned, and used time and time again to influence another. Creative soul-winning involves the effective use of these techniques and methods.

Paul said: "Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Co 5:11; cf. Acts 18:14; 26:28; 28:23). Many times Christians shy away from trying to "persuade" people to receive Christ. They may think that to manipulate others is wrong, or that it seems too much like entertainment and salesmanship. Another reason may be that it is a good excuse not to evangelize. That is, if we can put the blame on the sinner who knows nothing about Christ, then we can take away our own guilt.

The truth is that we should not manipulate people for selfish reasons and ill motives. However, we all manipulate and sell. Kids persuade their parents, and parents their kids. Husbands persuade their wives, and wives persuade their husbands. When we honk our automobile horn at another driver, we are persuading them to move over.

If you are married (or have a girl/boyfriend), you went to all sorts of ways to persuade your spouse to marry you. Bosses, union members, teachers, students, politicians, advertisers, girl

scouts who sell cookies – everyone persuades. We live in a world of people persuading others. It should not seem strange to us. Even when we get up in the morning, and trim our hair, and put on our best clothes to preach, we dress to persuade. Even when we pray we are trying to persuade God – and He invites us to do so!

Besides, the Bible says we are to “compel” people to be saved, and to “persuade” men. Compel carries a sense of sincere urgency. Persuade means to prevail, to win over, and to bring about a change of mind by the effective influence of reason or moral principles.

Granted, we do not trust in persuasion but rather in the power of God for results that are pleasing to Him. But we must also recognize that techniques of salesmanship and persuasion are inseparably linked to the Great Commission and any work of God. Whether we like it or not we are all salespeople for Christ - only some are better than the rest of us.

A good definition for persuasive soul winning might be this: without using dishonest manipulation, getting the unsaved to think, feel, and act as you want them to in regard to the gospel and in light of their own best interests; yet, in reliance upon the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

PERSUASION AND PROBLEM SOLVING:

Essentially, soul-winners are simply communicators. The more effectively they communicate, the more successful they are. The good soul-winner is not only an effective communicator, but also an effective problem solver. As problem solvers we help people recognize a need, and then show them how that need can best be satisfied to their best advantage. To be effective we must genuinely believe in the superiority of Christ and His ability to enhance the prospect's life. We never manipulate nor use any tactic necessary to simply get a "decision" for Christ for our own selfish ends- whatever they may be. The problem solver cares about the interests of Christ and the lost sinner.

SOUL-WINNING AND THE LAW OF AVERAGES

Soul-winning, like any other endeavor, has its ups and downs. That's why it is important to understand the law of averages, and then to believe in it. The law of averages arms you with a certain knowledge that conversions will come as long as you keep working.

There is a conversion ratio: the number of conversions you will get to the number of presentations you give. It stands to reason that the more presentations you give the more people will receive Christ. There are two ways; then, to get more conversions: give more and give better gospel presentations. The Bible promises results to our efforts (John 4:35-37; Gal. 6:7, 9; Psalm 126:5, 6).

In the field of sales, for example, the same principle is true. One large organization has the sales ratio of about three to five presentations for one sale. It may take, however, many attempts before you can get one presentation. One way to make a better ratio is to go to those most likely to respond.

Some say the parable of the sower (Luke 8:4-15) suggests the soul-winner can expect one genuine conversion for every four presentations. Conversions will come in bunches; thus, just take one step at a time. BELIEVE IN THE LAW OF AVERAGES - It can become a major motivator, and it works. Simply believe that God will honor obedience, and He said to be a soul winner.

In this chapter I first present a list of six “laws” of persuasion that have been researched by

social psychologists. Virtually every strategy that people use in the world of sales can fall generally under one or more of these laws of persuasion.

Secondly, I will list 11 tools or specific techniques that you can use to persuade people to come to Christ. There will be some overlap between the laws and specific techniques.

Remember, however, in the final analysis, it is the Holy Spirit who convinces people to receive Christ by making them alive in their spirits so they can express faith in Christ. It may be good to review that all important and governing spiritual law.

Paul wrote, “even when we were dead in our transgressions, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast” (Eph 2:5, 8, 9).

LAWS OF PERSUASION

With this said, I set forth six laws, or principles, of persuasion that are used by successful marketing or sales – or anybody – who wishes to get us to comply to their objectives. These are common ideas taught in marketing and social psychology courses, and they work because that is the way God has made us. An excellent book that gives scientific backing, and in-depth explanation to these laws is *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, by Dr. Robert B. Cialdini.

Law one of Persuasion: Reciprocation

This simply means that when we give something, such as a gift, it is understood that the other person is to give something back. For example, in many American stores you will see people handing out free samples of items. Why do they do that? It is to get you to feel obligated to buy their product.

Law two of Persuasion: Commitment

This has to do with how our minds work. The values and beliefs we have stored in our mind tend to be consistent and complimentary, and also consistent with our behavior. That is why if we commit ourselves to a little step or decision in a certain direction, we tend to continue in that direction. We don't want to be seen as contradicting ourselves. It is sometimes called the “foot in the door” tactic.

Law Three of Persuasion: Social Proof

This principle is simple: if everyone is doing it, then it must be right. For example, if more people buy Fords than any other car, then Fords must be the best car. Furthermore, People want to have social approval; consequently, you and I tend to do what we think others (especially people we admire or like) approves of.

Law Four of Persuasion: likeability

We tend to purchase things or agree with people that we like. Would you buy a car from a salesperson you hate? Probably not. That is why salespeople smile and are friendly to you when they are trying to sell something to you. They try to make you feel as though they have your welfare in mind as they sell you.

Tupperware parties use this principle. A host will invite her friends to a party, have good food and fellowship, and then the saleslady will present the Tupperware. People buy because they like the host who is their friend. There is the saying in sales, “People don't buy the product, they

buy the salesperson.”

Law Five of Persuasion: Authority

People defer to and obey authority. For example, when the policeman or boss tells us to do something, we respond accordingly. That is why doctors have their diplomas hanging in their office: to remind you they are the authority in health matters. We comply. That is why salespeople wear suits, which are a symbol of authority. For example, when I walk through Nordstrom’s, all the men – even shoe salesmen – are wearing suits and ties.

Symbols of authority include: statistics, scientific research studies, quotes from experts, titles, dress, jewelry, the car you drive, the setting you are in (office, podium, etc.), and the equipment you use (power point, etc.). The very big symbol of authority for the Christian is the Bible.

Law Six of Persuasion: Scarcity

This principle deals with how our minds are wired. If we think we will never have a chance to again have something, we believe we must have it now. Sales people use it in slogans such as, “limited supplies...last chance to buy...this offer will never come again...You can only get this through this TV special, etc.” It creates a sense of urgency for you to get it while we can.

These six laws of persuasion will help you as you construct your presentation to persuade.

SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES TO PERSUADE

Having now looked at the six laws of persuasion, below are 11 specific techniques or how to apply those laws of persuasion.

CLINCHER QUESTIONS

These are statements followed by a question. They are designed to keep the person thinking in the direction of the presentation, to see if they understand what you are explaining, to keep them involved in the discussion and to give control and direction to the presentation.

The clincher question is a powerful technique. It helps you maintain control of the demonstration. The clincher question displays a positive, confident, and optimistic outlook that elicits a positive response from your prospect. The power of the clincher question is that it calls for an affirmative answer.

Here is how they work: simply make a statement and ask the person to agree to it. For example, rather than saying "Isn't this a beautiful day?" try, "It's a beautiful day, isn't it?" Here is another example, "If there were a way you could know for sure you could have eternal life, you would want to know about it, wouldn't you?" Here is another example, "John, Christ died to save sinners, isn't that good news?"

Clinchers direct thinking by getting people to agree to a statement. Be sure to make statements easy to agree to in the first part of the presentation. The idea is that if we say a statement they may not believe it, but if they say the statement they will believe it. It will also get people in a positive frame of mind by saying a series of "yes" answers. Talk with the people, not at them, for example use words such as, “can't you? don't you? aren't you? don't they? isn't it?” Plant the need with clincher questions and keep them up through the presentation. Basically, clinchers perform six important functions:

- It actively draws the person into the demonstration;

- It verifies that the person understands and agrees with the ideas you have presented;
- It measures the progress you have made up to that point;
- It gives control and direction to the presentation;
- It gets the person to thinking in the direction you wish;
- It sets up a series of small logical steps and positions that fit together and support one another to such a degree that it makes it hard for the person to disagree with the conclusion because it is so obvious.

For example, if one agrees that they are a sinner, that sin's penalty is Hell, that the only way out of Hell is through Christ; then, the obvious conclusion is to receive Christ. To reject Christ then seems very irrational.

THIRD PARTY INFLUENCE

This is where one gives an example of how another (third party) has accepted Christ. These are highly credible people, a neighbor or friend. Sometimes a famous athlete at a crusade will give their testimony of how they received Christ.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

You may tell from your own personal life how since your conversion, Christ has given your life meaning, hope, freedom from guilt and fear of death, filled that empty spot in your life or taken away loneliness. Plan your testimony around three specific periods: what life was like before your conversion, what the conversion was like, what life has been like since the conversion.

Do not go into details that may be embarrassing and keep your testimony to about two minutes or less. Do not give the impression that all your troubles went away at conversion, but rather how Christ has given you the means and power to deal effectively with life's problems. Tell of your experience of God's faithfulness, what eternal life means to you, and other positive benefits.

Some specific, concrete areas of help might be how Christ gives victory over loneliness, strife, jealousy, guilt, anxiety, discouragement, fear of death. Avoid vague generalities. You may want to pick specific areas of help that the other person can identify with.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is a powerful tool. The phrase "the Bible says" packs punch, power and persuasion. The Bible has the authority of God. Sometimes it is good to read salvation verses out of the Bible to the person you are witnessing to. At other times, it may be too awkward.

ENTHUSIASM.

Be positive and sincere in your friendly excitement. Enthusiasm is catching and gets the other's positive feelings stirred toward the objective to which you are pointing them. I don't mean to be giddy, but to express a genuine belief, and act emotionally as you really do believe Christ and the benefits He brings. Sometimes tears even shows you love, devotion, and gratitude for the things of Christ.

ADD NEED, USE, VALUE.

Continually point out the person's need for Christ, how they can apply salvation to their life in a practical way, and what the tremendous value of Christ will be to them and their loved ones. Show how Christ, His life, prayer, and Bible principles can become real in the person's life. Many times this can be effectively done by the use of illustrations.

PRAYER

Use prayer on soul-winning teams, in church and personal life. Prayer also has an unusual impact upon a person if you pray for them in their problem. Talking to God in the presence of people has influence. You really are talking to God in real time on behalf of the person you are praying for.

Prayer also gives the soul-winner confidence. When we pray, we draw closer to God, and realize His presence in our lives. I go back to Paul's request for prayer,

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak” (Col 4:2-4).

Prayer is a great priority in evangelism. It prepares our hearts, the hearts of others, and the soil for good seed to fall and grow. Prayer reflects our dependence upon the Holy Spirit. James said, “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (James 5:16).

Jesus said prayer will motivate others to soul-winning, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Luke 10:2).

The great evangelist, Billy Graham, has said, “The secret of each Crusade has been the power of God's Spirit moving in answer to the prayers of His people. I have often said that the three most important things we can do for a Crusade are to pray, to pray, and to pray.”²

We pray like it all depends upon God for success, but we work like it all depends upon our efforts. Prayer is the key to effective evangelism. Action without prayer is arrogance; prayer without action is hypocrisy. We pray that God will effectively and powerfully use the persistent, heartfelt efforts of the well prepared soul-winner. We believe that He will.

FRIENDSHIP FACTOR

Be willing to be the person's friend and demonstrate genuine concern for their welfare. Get the convert acquainted with as many people at church as you can. Make the social, friendship bonds strong. Love people in attitude, action, words. Be genuine. Give your undivided attention. Make people feel special and important. Listen to people. Be warm and friendly toward people. Go out of your way to be helpful to people. Encourage people.

Avoid nagging and negative criticism. Do not manipulate people by flattery. Treat other people's opinion gently and with respect. Like people even if they disagree with you, reject Christ and church. Let others know that people can disagree and still be friends. Be a good citizen and neighbor (cf. Prov 15:1,2; 12:18,19; 10:12). If we must confront people, then point out mistakes and corrections gently and with much patience and instruction (2 Tim 4:1-2).

Churches must make newcomers feel at home. An unfriendly, indifferent church will drive new people away. It is, however, important to be careful when dealing with the opposite sex so they (or their spouse) do not get the wrong idea. Later in this work I will devote more time on

² Sterling W. Huston. *Crusade Evangelism and the Local Church*, (Minnesota: World Wide Publications, 1984), p.49.

relationships in evangelism and church growth.

QUALITY

Our plans, programs, presentations must be of the best quality possible. If we have a poorly organized outdoor evangelistic meeting, for example, then people will get the idea our message is not important to us. If we do not care, then why should other people care? In your plans, don't be careless, and don't wait until the last moment to throw together a haphazard plan. Be sure to plan carefully ahead of time.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Stories and examples which are clear and to the point impact people. Make them colorful, with plain, practical words and with an element of emotion. Tell stories that people can identify with, which touch their hearts and move their emotions. Do not make your whole program a manipulation of emotions. But let appropriate emotion carry your clear message like the surf carries a boat onto the beach. Appeal to people's consciences, minds and hearts.

SINCERITY

This tool is very important. We must sincerely believe our message. Do not manipulate people, but be sincere about what you say. Other people can detect whether or not we mean what we say. They will reject our message if we do not seem to be sincere.

Successful soul-winning is based more upon your sincerity than upon almost any other factor, except the power of the Holy Spirit. People recognize insincerity in an instant. As you go about your work, always remember - be Christ like! People respond to Christians who honestly believe that Christ is real in their lives, that Christian living is truly the finest level of life and practice it, and that the Bible truths about salvation are; indeed, true.

Nothing will so turn away unbelievers from the gospel message, whether from an individual or church, than Christians whose life demonstrates they truly do not believe what they profess. Furthermore, sincerity cannot be faked so don't try.

The great marks of a sincere believer are things like love, patience, kindness, self-control, being concerned about the interests of others and Christ's and Godly living. Strife, gossip, harshness, violent tempers, immorality, selfishness, and the like will quench not only the Holy Spirit but also your testimony. Your most important task is to communicate to the prospect you truly have his best interests at heart and that he or she can trust you.

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES AND HUMAN METHODS

Since I have devoted much time to the issues of persuasion, I need to balance it off with the spiritual side. Evangelism is a spiritual endeavor; consequently, we must use spiritual tools. Here are seven principles of putting together a church or citywide crusade that draws together both the spiritual side and human efforts. Both sides are important, and must be kept in balance.

COWORKERS WITH GOD

To develop this portion, I again quote an extended portion of Scripture, and then draw several principles. Paul wrote,

“What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing

the growth. So then neither the one who plants or the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it...each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work" (1 Cor 5-10, 12).

From this section of Holy Scripture, let me draw several universal principles relating to evangelism.

1. We are God's servants. Servants serve at the Master's (God) pleasure, and work toward the Master's perfect priorities, plans, and purposes. What is important to the Master, is also critically important to the "wise" servant.

2. Master's (God) gives opportunity to each servant. It is up to us to be alert to the opportunities God gives to each Christian and church.

3. God assigns areas of responsibility to each of His servants, churches, and ministries. He has a well-organized plan, and a place of service for each of His servants.

4. God grants success and positive results. His efforts worked out through His servants will always accomplish His purpose and goals.

5. Human effort is required. God works in and through us and our efforts. Our part is to wisely be the best prepared servant that we possibly can, given the abilities, resources, and opportunities that He has granted us.

6. Team effort is required among God's servants. The earnest involvement and carefully coordinated plans are needed to bring about God's will. (Cf. Phil 1:27; 2:2).

7. God rewards His servants based on their faithful, obedient, wise, consistent, hard labor, which displays a substantial degree of quality. God's wise servants are not careless or halfhearted. The rewards in view are for Christian service, not for salvation (cf. v. 15).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Evangelism, in the final analysis, is the work of the Holy Spirit, not solely human efforts. Evangelism success is not built on persuasion, personality, or promotion – but on the power and pleasure of the Holy Spirit. He prepares the hearts of sinners, causes them to be born again. Paul asserts, "even when we were dead in our transgressions, (God) made us alive together with Christ" (Eph 2:5).

Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Being born of water refers to our physical birth, not baptism. Jesus told us that it is the Holy Spirit who convicts the sinner of their need of salvation (cf. John 16:7-11). Prayer and dependence upon the Holy Spirit form the foundation of successful evangelism.

PRIORITY OF SOWING & REAPING.

Before we can reap a harvest, we must sow the seed. Paul said, "Whatsoever a man soweth,

that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). Jesus wrote, “Already, he who reaps is receiving wages, and it gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together” (John 4:36).

Evangelism must be important to individuals and the church. To quote Billy Graham again, “Evangelism is the central mission of the church. Without it, believers become introspective and lacking in purpose, growth stagnates, worship becomes superficial, and selfishness stifles a spirit of giving.”³

Without evangelism, the Great Commission cannot be accomplished. Peter Wagner is considered an expert in the area of church growth. He considers evangelism as the top priority of a healthy church. He writes,

“A growth problem is bound to arise when the outreach priorities are switched. This has nothing to do with other kinds of priorities, such as commitment to Christ and commitment to the Body of Christ, both of which I believe need to precede outreach. But if a church that is otherwise in good health allows nominally to dim its belief that people without God have not hope, either in this world or in the world to come, and if the church does not act on this belief with aggressive evangelism,...the church will enter a period of declining numerical growth.”⁴

RELATIONSHIPS.

I have already spoken to this issue, and have an entire chapter devoted to relationships later in this work. Each person has a web of friends, immediate family, extended relatives, neighbors, casual acquaintances and people whom they know. We are social beings who need each other. Our existence is based on our relationship to God. The heart of the Trinity is the relationships between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The wonderful example of Andrew illustrates how he first found Christ, and then went to find his brother, Simon, and brought him to Christ. This sets the basic pattern of evangelism: one saved sinner telling another sinner how to be saved.

Another real life example is that of my wife, Esmeralda (Esmie). As a young girl, a worker for Campus Crusade for Christ let Esmie to Christ with a Four Spiritual Law booklet. Esmie immediately went home and started reading the booklet to her family member, and schoolmates. Eventually, many of her family and friends received Christ as their personal Savior.

INVOLVMENT.

In crusade or other organized evangelism outreaches, involvement is critical. Many people must be involved. Involvement usually produces commitment to the cause, and the expenditure of labor and giving of funds to support the cause. For a city wide event, it is important to get the endorsement of influential pastors and community leaders.

People can get involved in prayer groups, setting up equipment, doing follow-up, preparing the event location, providing transportation, producing literature, training for counseling, singing in the choir or music numbers. The more people you have involved in the project, even more people will become attracted, and the event will become even bigger. It will take on a life of its

³ Huston, p. 67.

⁴ Cited by Huston, p. 67.

own. If pastors support and get their church involved in a city wide event, they will have more numbers come to their church by way of new converts.

ORGANIZATION.

Whether a city wide event or an ongoing evangelistic program for the local church, any event, must be well organized. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, taught Moses the imperative of organization. Moses should have known this because of his training in Egypt. Anyway, he somehow forgot his training, and needed a refresher course. The Bible records,

“13 And it came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening. 14 Now when Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, “What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?”

15 And Moses said to his father-in-law, ‘Because the people come to me to inquire of God. 16 When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and make known the statutes of God and His laws.’ 17 And Moses’ father-in-law said to him, ‘The thing that you are doing is not good. 18 You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

19 Now listen to me: I shall give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people’s representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, 20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk, and the work they are to do. 21 Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

22 And let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you” (Exodus 18:13-22).

We can learn at least three valuable lessons from this instruction to Moses. One, take the aggregate of the entire project, and divide the tasks that need to be done into smaller pieces. Gather similar tasks into common categories. Second, delegate the work to other trustworthy, skilled people of integrity. Third, deadline the work to a specific target date. In other words, whenever a particular task is given to a person, make sure they know exactly what to do, how the task is to be done, and when it is to be completed to reach your goals.

The three major functions Jethro identified were spiritual, educational, and administrative. Moses was to take matters to God (spiritual), organize the people into various sized groups that were administered by leaders (administrative), and teach to people how to live their lives (educational).

GOALS.

In another place I have spoken about goals. Here I just stress again to set your goals at the level that you believe you can reach with your available resources. Then, stretch out your faith goals. Establish goals big enough that you cannot reach with your resources, yet small enough that you can still believe you can reach them with God’s help. Be realistic, but leave enough room for faith.

For a city wide event, set goals for things like attendance, transportation, food and lodging, choir and music, ushers, counselors, literature production, funding, inviting people, witnessing, and prayer groups. Each church that is involved needs to set their goals for their level of involvement, attendance, and giving. Be sure to give yourself enough lead time to complete each cluster of tasks. One overall goal is to have every member of the congregation in some way in the evangelistic mission of the church.

TRAINING

Your workers need to be trained. Don't leave things to chance. Jethro told Moses to train the people under him the things of God regarding duties and the like. He also trained Moses on how to select leaders. Train each person for the task they have volunteered for. Don't assume that people automatically know what they have not been trained to do. Make sure they have the proper resources and materials. Let them know to whom they will be accountable. Let them know how their task fits into the overall plan, and why their work is so important for the whole to work properly.

On our brief tour of the principles of evangelism we have thus far learned about the foundation, preparation, obstacles, laws of persuasion, and 11 specific strategies for persuasion. From here we gun our engine and head for the next beach: the persuasion sequence.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PERSUASION SEQUENCE

"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ" (2 Co 5:20).

There is a sequence in giving a presentation by which we are trying to persuade people. It is wise to recognize the steps in the process. Though there is some overlap, there exists a definite, logical sequence to the process. The steps to this sequence are like landmarks we follow as we steer a boat through a cluster of islands.

SELL YOURSELF.

We do not want people to avoid us, but be inclined to give us their attention. Genuine friendliness and sincere, warm concern for others is the best way to have people give you the opportunity to talk to them. Indeed, if we are mean and cold, people will avoid us. Our physical appearance is also important. The first impression we make on people can be set in their mind. If it is a bad impression, it will be hard to overcome.

The prospect must perceive you as a friendly, credible person with a credible message who sincerely has his interests at heart. There are several things you can do to convey this image: Smile, become genuinely interested in the other person, remember and honor the other person's name. Be a good listener and encourage others to talk about themselves. Talk in terms of the other person's interests.

Wear appropriate clothing to get that good first impression. Become genuinely interested in other people. Smile warmly and from the heart. Remember, use and honor a person's name. Be a good listener and encourage others to talk about themselves. Talk in terms of the other person's interests. Give genuine approval, recognition, appreciation, and encouragement. Show people courtesies and recognize their good qualities. Give sincere compliments. Do not; however, use insincere flattery.

The best place to find people to talk to about Christ are those you know: friends, family, neighbors, people in the same village, those who have some contact with your church, and business acquaintances. The hardest people will be complete strangers. But even they need to know the gospel of Christ.

It is good to build bridges to people and to build points of contact for the gospel. The best way to build bridges is by helping people who are in trouble. For example, go pray for them when they are sick. Be genuinely helpful. Even if they do not receive Christ it is good to show the mercy and goodness of God to people. Make up a prospect list of people and begin to pray for them.

In order for your message to be credible you must live a life consistent with the Christian faith; hence, be a person of the Book, pray much, live a holy life separated from sin, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and have your heart full of love and concern. As I have mentioned before, sincerity, enthusiasm, and having the other person's welfare at heart along with a warm friendly spirit, working in cooperation with the Holy Spirit are your major assets.

GET THE INTERVIEW

After we secure the person's attention, we must persuade the people to listen to the gospel of Christ. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading. Find a "hook" that will grab their attention and

interest. One fine organization has the simple, "Have you heard of the four spiritual laws?" Another hook might be, "If there were a way that you could know for sure you are going to heaven, wouldn't you want to know about it?" One simple way is to just ask the person for the interview.

If you are going door-to-door on visitation, a good way to start the visit is this: "Good evening, we are from ___ Church. We are out doing some visiting for our church. If you have a few minutes we would like to come in and visit with you. Would that be alright?"

If they do not have time to visit, then invite them to church, a Bible study, church function, youth group meeting or even over to have a meal with you. Leave some literature with them to read.

PRESS THE NEED

This function is accomplished in "bridging the gap" and the presentation to be explained in the next chapter. It primarily involves identifying the person's need in a way the person can see it. The whole idea behind persuasion is to find out what a person needs, amplify that need, and then show them how your product satisfies their need. This step is like showing a fish the bait on our hook. In the case of the gospel, the great need is to gain forgiveness, and eternal life.

Encourage the people to talk, and listen. They will tell you what is their felt need – maybe not directly, but you will know. Maybe their felt need is loneliness. Maybe they have an empty feeling inside. Everyone has a sense of guilt, and all share a common fear of death. We all have a need to survive, to be safe, to belong to a social group, to feel affirmed or valued by someone, and to be recognized as significant.

Sometimes it is a lack of meaning or purpose in life. It might be the big questions like, "Who am I? Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going after this life? What is life? I recall in my own life, it was a sense of futility that I experienced. I kept thinking, "I am going to work hard all my life, retire, then get old and die." I thought, "What is the point of it all, anyway?" I had the sense that life was futile, pointless, stupid, and meaningless.

When I received Christ, He gave meaning and purpose to my existence. I became part of something bigger than myself.

Here again the saying is true, "Find a need and fill it; find a hurt and heal it." Ultimately, the real key is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and depend upon the Holy Spirit.

DEMONSTRATING THE PRODUCT

The product in this case is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The goal is to show how only Christ can give eternal life and forgiveness of sins, and meet the person's felt need. Christ can also give hope, happiness and purpose in this life. He is a Savior who satisfies - both now and forever.

A little showmanship helps sell the product, which is Jesus Christ. If you think showmanship and dramatics are to be avoided, I encourage you to read about the vivid "shows" Ezekiel put on in his prophetic ministry (Ezekiel 12-24). We need to keep the people's interest and attention. We can use volume, pace, timing to our advantage.

A properly timed pause can have people sitting on the edges of their seats. Convey enthusiasm, inject a little humor at the appropriate time and help them sit back and relax. Use gestures and body language. Stories, examples, and illustrations are excellent. Use a realistic example to show a listener another individual has made the choice he is being urged to make.

Give illustrations of how Christ has made a difference in your life - but be specific and concrete. You do not need to share with someone else all the gory details of sin, however. Illustrations have a strong emotional appeal. Be creative to hold your prospect's attention and interest by being clear, to the point, vivid.

Emotion is not enough to show a person how Christ can meet their need. We must have a good, strong logical case as well. Some opinion may be fine, but solid information to back up your case is best. Some may be convinced by the source of facts as much as the facts themselves. The Bible is our strong highly credible authority that we cite. But don't overdo citing the Bible or the listener may rebel.

Master the demonstration so you don't fumble around wondering what next to do. Understand the logical sequence of the ideas so you can be comfortable in front of the prospect. Invest some extra time and effort to learn all you can about Christ and salvation. However, the most effective way to become "expert" at gospel presentations is to give as many presentations to as many prospects as you can. Class training, on-the-job experience and time will relax you and build confidence.

Understanding the nature of resistance will help you in your presentation. Here I refer to resistance apart from the spiritual resistance mentioned elsewhere. We all have a natural type of inner resistance when making any decision. We must recognize this as normal and overcome it. Most of the time this resistance can be overcome with a little reassurance and persistence.

Your function is to help prospects make decisions. Resistance is a psychological defense mechanism triggered by a natural resistance to change. Subconsciously, prospects know they are supposed to present "sales" resistance. It is an automatic reaction and we should expect it. Others view us as trying to "sell religion." In fact, we are "selling" them on the idea that if they trust Christ they can go to Heaven.

Why do people fail to act? When individuals "buy" they normally have a stated reason and the real reason - the same is true when they don't "buy." The excuse is merely a rationalization which glosses over the real reason for not "buying." For example, one may say their reason for rejecting Christ is because the idea of the gospel is irrational, but the real reason is they love their sin too much, but who wants to admit the latter? Consequently, a sophisticated excuse must be manufactured.

On a psychological level there are generally two reasons why people do not accept what we offer: 1. one is misunderstanding, or lack of information. We will miss a few small points or minor details. People have all sorts of preconceived notions about Christianity. Any holes we leave, are often automatically filled by the prospect's assumptions. They don't ask questions because they already think they know the answer. When prospects operate on assumptions, excuses soon follow.

2. The second basic reason is that people are not sufficiently convinced of the NEED for Christ. Creative soul-winning requires a great deal of patience and persistence. You must always keep in mind that making a decision is extremely difficult for most people - and a spiritual decision for Christ is impossible without the work of the Holy Spirit. As a soul-winner working with the Holy Spirit, we just guide the prospect's thinking toward the proper conclusion which is in his/her best interest. Be courteous, friendly, and sincere.

Remember an excuse sometimes signals the person is still interested and an indication of the prospect's internal conflict. An effective answer may help resolve the conflict and bring the person closer to Christ. The time to worry is when the excuses end and they quit listening. You have lost them and must let the Holy Spirit work more.

But don't worry about exact wordings or precise presentations. Just keep adding need, use, value, and keep it a NICE FRIENDLY VISIT. Practice your demonstration 15-20 times at home, relax, and go in the power of the Holy Spirit. Have fun. Remember, the strong conviction you yourself have is a tremendous proof that what you say is true and worthwhile for the prospect. In other words, the Bible, your sincere belief in it, and the power of the Holy Spirit are powerful weapons. Use them.

In the Roman's Road presentation the "product" step is the third step with focus on Romans 5:8; 6:23. The point is to persuade the prospect that the solution to their need is only through Jesus Christ.

CLOSING THE NET

We are to be fishers of men (Matt 4:19). After we have spread the net, we must close it so as to bring in the fish. This is accomplished as a natural conclusion to the previous steps in the presentation, but is entirely dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit.

This is where you ask the person to receive Christ as their Savior. Be sure to ask. I will give more detail later in the actual gospel presentation of how you can do this. However, here are some important ideas.

Sooner or later you must ask the prospect to receive Christ – to, "call upon the name of the Lord" (Romans 10:13). Closing is not putting a magic spell on someone or to put them into a hypnotic trance. The closing success depends upon the logical steps of the presentation and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The prospect's attention and interest must have been kept, the presentation made in terms of his interests and so he/she could understand, the desire must be raised and conviction sealed by handling objections. Have confidence, assurance, and expectation. Believe they will receive Christ and communicate that to the prospect.

Be surprised if they refuse such a wonderful offer. Believe you are a soul-winner. Believe you have something worth having and that it will satisfy the prospect's needs. Here is where most of the excuses come in at, so following I offer some time proven methods and formulas for handling them. A rule of thumb is to never argue. Your job is to help the prospect come to the right decision. Use excuses as allies as they tell you how well the message is getting across. In a later chapter I will give a detailed discussion on objections and excuses.

ENACTING THE FOLLOW-UP

The process is not finished when the person receives Christ. A new baby coming in the world needs much help and care. In the same way a new convert is like a new baby. We need to care for them and help them grow in the faith. We must get them into a good church, help them learn basic Bible doctrine, how to study the Bible, live the Christian life and serve God. We will deal more with follow-up in a later chapter.

We must be reminded that people must first come to Christ before they can begin to get their

lives straightened out. You must first catch a fish before you clean them.

EVANGELISM TEAMS.

Some churches have visitation teams who go visit people in the neighborhood or village, beaches, shopping malls, parks and other places. A good size for teams are two people, at least not more than three people to a team. Two people can keep each other encouraged, yet more than three can be intimidating to the people with which you are visiting. It is never wise to send two members of the opposite sex on the same team.

During the actual presentation, only one person should be explaining the gospel. The reason why is that when everyone on the team is talking, the poor listener gets confused! Decide before hand which partner will be presenting the gospel. The silent partner can pray or take care of any distractions such as crying children.

It is sometimes better to talk to individuals by themselves. If there are other family members or friends around, they might make fun of the one who seems interested in the gospel. After any visitation it is wise to leave some literature with the person so they can read about the gospel. Invite them to church.

If a person seems genuinely interested in the things of the Lord, but does not want to receive Christ just yet, then perhaps they would be interested in a Bible study on basic Christian beliefs. You can conduct a personal home Bible study with a person or family in their home on a weekly basis, encourage them to come take classes at church, or have them join another group of new Christians who might be having Bible studies in a home.

Another way to get people into the Bible is to conduct special classes on subjects of concern to people. Such classes might be on what the Bible says about marriage and family life, finances and other problems that people have in everyday life.

To review: we have built the foundation for evangelism, worked through the preparations, planned how to handle the obstacles, learned some tools of persuasion and fixed in our mind the step by step sequence of persuasion. We now come to the actual gospel presentation itself.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GIVING A GOSPEL PRESENTATION

"We have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts" (1 Thess 2:4).

Following I have outlined a presentation of how to effectively present the gospel. This presentation can be given to a friend, adapted to a preaching situation, or used in a home visitation. If visiting in a home, then move gradually into the presentation. One can use a warm up conversation for about 10 minutes before starting the presentation.

If you are talking to strangers, and do not know what to say, then talk about family, their occupation, and/or recreation - then go to the message.

In talking to people, one secret is to get them to talk about what they like to talk about. People seldom like to visit with people who only talk about themselves. After we talk for a while, we begin to bridge the gap from the secular things of conversation over to the sacred. Here is how to do that switch. Follow this five step series of questions. Sometimes people do not want to hear the gospel – the fruit is not ripe, so to speak. In such a case, then don't push the issue. Back off, and continue building a positive relationship.

Memorize these steps. It will seem awkward at first, but after practice, the presentation will be natural. It is a good idea to practice with another Christian. You can take turns. Let your partner practice on you; then you practice on your partner. Another good idea is to practice in front of a mirror. That way you can monitor your facial expressions. Be sure to keep a pleasant face. Take a few deep breaths before you start, and relax. If you are relaxed and comfortable, your prospect will be more likely to be relaxed, and not so resistant.

1. DOOR APPROACH.

The first problem you will have, in doing door-to-door evangelism, is knowing what to say once you have knocked on the person's door. Here is a suggested approach.

Introduction: "Good evening, we are from ____ Church. Is this where Mr. and Mrs. ____ live? We are out doing some visiting for our church. If you have a few minutes we would like to come in and visit with you. Would that be alright?" Break eye contact, wipe your feet and make a hand movement. This communicates to the person that you assume they will let you in the door.

Alternatives: (a) Step in the door; (b) ask when would be a good time to call back; (c) try to turn the objection; (d) invite them to church and leave literature.

Call back option. It might be a poor time to visit with them. They might be busy, or going somewhere. If that is the case, then try to set up an appointment to return: "Oh, I'm sorry we called at the wrong time. When would be a better time to call? Would Saturday or another evening be better?" Have them choose between two times rather than a yes or no.

Excuse: Whatever the excuse is say, "Oh, this concerns the spiritual welfare of you and your family. May we come in?"

Another option to an excuse: "Has anyone ever stopped by to tell you how to have eternal life? --no-- good! That's why we stopped by. May we come in?"

As concerns you, always leave a friend. If you hit stubborn resistance, then thank them for their time, offer to leave some literature, and invite them to church. Keep it a friendly visit. Look for the Divine appointment – that person the Holy Spirit has prepared to receive Christ. You are just “fruit inspectors.” That is, you are checking to see if the person is “ripe” to receive Christ. We sometimes waste time, and do damage by trying to pick “fruit” that is not ripe. We are to inspect the fruit and pick that which is ready.

2. INTRODUCTORY TALK.

Now that you have gotten into the door, the issue is what do you say next? Here is a suggested pattern. Memorize it, and stick with the plan. Glance around the room. Look for family pictures, awards, or whatever seems to be their favorite subject, interests, hobby, delight in their life, or hints at what is important in their life. Give a sincere compliment. Smile. Be friendly. Talk about what interests them. Don't talk more than ten minutes. That is enough to break the ice. Here are some questions that will guide the conversation.

"How long have you lived here?" "Where are you from?" "How many children do you have?" "Where are they now?" Ages? Names? Interests? "What kind of work do you (or husband) do?" "Do you like it?" "How did you learn it?" "What do you like to do for recreation?" Be genuinely interested in what they say. Remember the names of their children and family.

This question starts the shift over to spiritual matters: "Mr./Mrs. Jones, you certainly have put a lot of effort into your family and work. You have a respect for solid moral values, don't you?"

Here is a summary of topics to get them talking:

FAMILY

OCCUPATION

EDUCATION

RECREATION

MESSAGE

Make it a friendly visit, not a stiff interrogation.

3. BRIDGING THE GAP

The problem is that once you have started the conversation on secular things, how do you switch over into spiritual things. The answer is to have a plan that gradually eases into the gospel presentation.

Remember, you are not there to argue. You are there to explain the gospel, not debate theology. If your purpose is to explain and not debate theology, then you don't need to memorize half the Bible. But, do memorize enough Scripture to explain the gospel. In fact, all you need to do for a minimum is to memorize one verse, if you are using the Roman's Road. First memorize Romans 3:23. Then write the next verse in your Bible next to that verse: Romans 6:23; 5:8; 10:13. The steps to the Roman's Road are:

- All have sinned.
- There is a penalty to sin.
- Christ paid the penalty.
- We must personally receive Christ, or the gift of eternal life.

Following are some suggestions.

a. *"Do you often think about spiritual things?"* If the person shows marked resistance, then do not go any further. Back off and go back to relationship building. If you feel like they don't want to talk at all, then invite them to church and leave a gospel tract. If they show interest, then proceed to the next question. At this stage you are just checking the fruit to see if it is ripe to pick, just as if you were checking to see if the mangos are ripe to pick off a tree.

Here are some optional questions: "I bet you folks think a lot about spiritual things, don't you?"
"We want to thank you for coming to church. Do you folks have a church background?"
"Mr./Mrs. Jones, we value your opinion. What would you say man's greatest spiritual need is?"
"May I ask you a question about your spiritual life?"

b. *"If there was a way you could know for sure you were going to heaven, would you like to hear about it?"* (1 John 5:13).

This question will again measure resistance and interest. It also gains the person's permission to give them a gospel presentation. Go on to the next question, if they still show interest.

c. *"May I ask you a spiritual question? If the answer is yes, then proceed. If you were to die tonight and stand before God and He would say to you, 'Why should I let you into My heaven?' what would you say to Him?"*

This step is critical, because it sets up a contrast that makes the gospel message crystal clear. Just let the person talk, then summarize: "Let me see if I understand you correctly. You would tell Him something like this: 'I did the best I could' - Is that correct?" After they agree, then proceed with the gospel presentation. Tell them the following:

d. "The Bible has good news. It tells us that God loves us (John 3:16) and has given us eternal life and forgiveness as a free gift (Eph 2:5-9). It tells us we can know for sure if we are going to heaven. That is good news, isn't it?"

These questions accomplish five things:

- Bridge the gap from secular to Sacred inoffensively.
- Measure resistance to determine a "divine appointment."
- Determines if the person is a Christian, "trusting Christ alone."
- Allows you to ease slowly into presentation, reducing resistance.
- Allows the Holy Spirit to begin and sustain conviction.

4. THE PRESENTATION

Use the following outline to make the gospel presentation. It is good to memorize all the verses in this chapter. Just follow the outline point by point with the appropriate illustrations. Many methods are used by evangelists. Some use the highly effective Four Spiritual Laws, but it costs to buy the little booklets. I strongly suggest that, if you can, do use the little booklet. It is easy, because all you need to do is read the booklet to the person, and then leave it with them, and then have them go share the booklet with other family or friends.

The method I outline below is known as the Roman's Road. The reason is that all the verses are found in the book of Romans. It is powerful if you can read the verses from a Bible, because it carries more authority.

a. The Bible tells us everyone is a sinner in need of salvation. (Rom 3:23).

b. The Bible says there is a penalty to sin. (Rom 3:23).

Illustration: "We have a very bad problem. We are told we must be perfect to stand before God, (Matt 5:48), but only one sin is enough to send us to hell (James 2:10). Let us say we only committed one sin per day. If we lived to be 70 years old, that would be over 25,000 sins. Now, if we stood before a judge and were convicted of 25,000 crimes, what would the judge do to us? He would lock us up and throw away the key, wouldn't he?"

c. There is great news, however. Christ paid the penalty for our sins (Rom 5:8).

Illustration: "We are told that all our deeds are written down in a book and we will be judged on them (Rev 20:11-15; 22:12). But we are also told that "The Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." (Isa 53:6).

d. All who receive Christ are saved and gain eternal life (Rom 10:13; cf. vv. 9-13).

How do you receive Christ? By saving faith. All faith does not save. Even Satan believes in God, but he is not saved (James 2:19). **Illustrations:** sitting in a chair. We can believe the chair exists and that it will hold us up - yet still not trust ourselves to that chair. When we sit in the chair with our entire weight we truly trust the chair to hold us up. In the same way, we must fully trust Jesus alone to save us.

Receiving a coin is another **illustration**. Holding a coin hidden in our hand we can say (extend our hand with the coin): "I have a coin in my hand and I want to give it to you as a gift. Now you can do one of three things.

First you can say that you believe I have a coin in my hand but you do not want it. Many people say they believe Christ can save, but they do not want His salvation.

Second, you can say you do not believe I have a coin in my hand. Many people do not believe Christ will save them by faith or any other way.

The third thing is to simply receive the coin as a free gift. That is saving faith. In the same way, we must personally receive Christ as our Savior." At this point, invite the person to receive the coin you hold in your extended hand.

Note: you can turn to page 97 for an expansion on these illustrations.

5. CLOSING THE NET

This is the place we ask the person to receive Christ. The "close" is just a natural outgrowth of the previous presentation. It is not a "magic spell" we cast on the person. Relax, lean back, smile, be friendly. Keep in mind that genuine conversions are by the Holy Spirit.

(Name), do you recall a bit ago I asked you the question that if you were to die tonight, stand before God and He would say to you "Why should I let you into my Heaven?" Do you remember what you said? Wasn't it "I did the best I could, or something like that?" Do you see how that was different than trusting Christ alone?

Wouldn't you rather receive Christ now and be sure than when you died you would go to

heaven, have your sins forgiven, and gain eternal life? Remember, you are trusting alone in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ to save you from the penalty of your sins, and give you eternal life.

If you mean it in your heart, just repeat this prayer after me:

My father in heaven (pause), I thank you for free salvation through Jesus Christ (pause). I admit I am a sinner in need of salvation (pause). I cannot save myself (pause). I believe Christ died for my sins (pause). I believe He rose from the dead to give me eternal life (pause). I receive Christ as my Savior (pause). I want to live in obedience to you the rest of my life (pause). I ask this in Jesus' Name, amen."

It is good to have some other favorite verses memorized that deal with salvation, and also any objections they have. If they doubt any of the verses or ideas in the gospel, don't argue with them, but just say, "What you believe may be true, but just what does the Bible say in this verse?" You don't need to prove anything, but just have them understand that the Bible does actually say what it says. From there, just go on to the next point.

6. OTHER VERSES ON SALVATION.

Rev 3:20

John 1:12, 13; 14:6.

John 11:25-27

John 3:16, 36; 6:40, 47; 14:6.

Hebrews 10:10,12,14. Acts 16:30, 31.

Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:8-13

Acts 4:12; 16:30, 31.

7. ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

After the person has prayed to believe upon Christ for their salvation, it is good to give them literature, get them involved in a follow up some assurance verses and ideas. It will also help solidify in their mind that they are saved.

a. Read 1 John 5:14, 15 - (Maybe consider verses 10-15).

b. Did you ask Christ to save you and come into your life?

c. Did He? How do you know? (Answer: because He said so)

d. If we say Christ has not saved us, what would we be calling God? (Answer: a liar).

8. FOLLOW UP

Bring the convert to church. Tell them to: a. Confess your sins daily (1 John 1:9). When a Christian sins they do not lose their salvation, but their fellowship and usefulness in service with their heavenly Father.

- Read the Bible, starting with John (1 Peter 2:2).
- Attend Church regularly (Hebrews 10:24,25).
- Pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- Witness (Matthew 28:18-20).
- Worship God (John 4:24).
- Surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ – not for salvation, but service (1 Peter 1:2).
- Serve God with the ability and opportunity He provides (1 Co 12:4-7).

9. SERMON INVITATIONS.

What we have just gone through is how to lead an individual to Christ. Many of the principles can be used in an evangelistic sermon, or at the close of any sermon. You can make it shorter if you wish. One can go through the Roman's Road very quickly at the end of any sermon.

After you have given the explanation of salvation to the crowd, there are several ways to ask people to receive Christ. 1. Simply ask them to step out and come forward. It is good to have music playing when you give the appeal, and have the congregation stand. It is easier for them to step out into the aisle. After they come forward, ask them to repeat the salvation prayer after you.

2. You can just have people raise their hands, right where they are sitting. Then pray the salvation prayer. Ask them to repeat it after you. You might want to ask them to come forward after the service and meet with you or a trained altar worker.

3. This method puts more pressure on the people. You can work it two ways. First, have everyone stand in the congregation. Then ask the people this question, "If you were to die tonight, and you are sure you would go to heaven, would you please sit down?" All the Christians would sit down, leaving non-Christians standing. Then you could ask them to come forward and receive Christ. That method might put too much pressure on people.

The second way is to say to the people (while they are still sitting), "If you were to die tonight, are you sure you would go to heaven? If so, would you please stand up?" That leaves all the non-Christians sitting, but they are not so conspicuous. Then you can say something like this, "I see that there are some of you who are not saved, or sure of your salvation. I appeal to you, don't put it off another day, and accept Christ right now. Simply stand up and slip out into the aisle and come forward. I will be right here to meet you. It isn't the coming forward that saves you, but your faith in the work of Christ to save you." At that point, you can pray the salvation prayer with them.

This is a practice that I believe is very important. Every sermon should have the gospel in it somewhere. Even if it is just a few sentences, tell people how to be saved.

10. RELIGIOUS SURVEY.

This survey can be used in "cold turkey" evangelism with complete strangers -- at the beach, door-to-door, shopping malls, etc. It can be used in place of the door approach, introductory talk or bridging the gap. It is good to have the surveys printed up, and be sure to write down the answers as you give the survey. It does two things: first, it opens the door for the gospel presentation, plus it gives you information of the demographics of your place of evangelism. It goes as follows.

"Hello, I am from church. We are surveying (seeking?) people's religious beliefs and assisting anyone looking for a faith. Will you please help us by giving your opinion to six short questions? We value your views"

1. "Of what religious faith do you belong?"
2. "What local church do you attend and how often?"
3. "What do you think man's greatest spiritual need is?"

4. "Have you come to the place in your life that if you were to die tonight you are sure you would go to Heaven?"

5. "If you were to die and stand before God and He would ask you, 'why should I let you into my Heaven,' what would you say?"

6. "If there were a way you could know for sure that you could have eternal life, would want to know about it?"

7. "This completes the survey. Your answers were helpful. Thank you. May I take a few more minutes to share with you how I came to know I have eternal life and how you can have it too?"

If no -- then invite to church, leave literature. If yes, -- then, "May I come in?" Clarify #5, begin gospel presentation.

I now bring to a close this very key chapter on the process of evangelism. We have discovered the foundation for evangelism, how to prepare for evangelism, how to overcome obstacles and objections, what are some tools of persuasion, the persuasion sequence and how to effectively present the gospel to someone. The process does not stop. We need to do follow-up. I go to the next chapter for this.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FOLLOW-UP

"Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).

Once we catch a net full of fish, we must take care of the fish, get them back to the island to sell, store or to use. We do not just leave the fish in the net. Likewise, when someone comes to Christ, we must take care of them and help them in their Christian walk.

It is like a baby. The parent's job just begins when the baby is born. The little one must be fed, taught and cared for. The same is true for the newborn Christian. We must do follow-up. In this chapter I divide this process into four steps: immediate, long range, personal and working the networks.

IMMEDIATE FOLLOW-UP.

You can explain to the new convert that now they have a new life, and they must begin to exercise and nourish that life for growth and strength —just like a new baby does. The believers should identify with the church and begin their spiritual training. The basic steps to growth are life related Bible study, prayer, fellowship, worship, witness and Christian service. If at all possible, leave some literature for the person to read.

If possible, contact the new convert within 24 hours to answer questions, give them more literature and pray with them. It would be good to go over the steps of salvation again with the new convert. Especially go over the principles of assurance of salvation with them, as they may be having doubts about their faith. Make sure they have a way to church next Sunday. Offer to bring them. Introduce them to several other church members who have common interest such as age, sex, and occupation. Set with the person in church.

Pray often for the convert and get others to pray for them. Invite them to Sunday school, preaching services, prayer meetings, socials. Get them involved in the life of the church, but do not push faster than the person wishes to become involved. Get them involved in a Christian service of some kind: choir, welcoming people to church, reading Scripture something they can be successful with. Allow God to work in their lives at His pace.

LONG RANGE FOLLOW-UP

New believers need to be placed in a long range program of study that includes the following four items:

1. Teaching on the basic doctrines of the Bible. This includes the doctrines of the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, man, the Holy Spirit, the church, future things, salvation and angels. It is important to make all doctrine related to life.
2. Teaching on how to live the Christian life. This would be on how to pray, worship, confess our sins, making the Bible apply to our life, victory over bad habits, our relationships with others, etc.
3. Teaching on the meaning and structure of the Bible and how to study it for themselves. The need to begin obtaining good Bible study tools such as study Bibles, commentaries, handbooks, concordances and the like. Teach them the "observation, interpretation,

application” method of Bible study.

4. Training in Christian service is needed. If they want to be Sunday school teachers, then provide training for them. Help them find a meaningful and satisfying place of service in church and how to succeed in that place. Find out what their spiritual gifts and abilities and interests are, and provide a place of service for them in light of their abilities. Provide them instruction on how to lead others to Christ. The main issue is to get them involved in church life.

Keep your converts supplied with good Christian literature. The Navigators, Scripture Union, Campus Crusade, Child Evangelism, Newman Ministries International, and other groups have excellent material to help in growth. Let the long range program include time with the convert on a weekly basis.

Look for those Christians who are faithful, available for training and teachable. Gradually they will mature and take on more responsibility and become fine Christian leaders. Paul spoke to Timothy: “And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2).

Some Christians will have the desire and ability to go on for advanced training. They can get training through correspondence courses or by going to Bible college or seminary. Local churches, where possible, can set up training centers. Short seminars and videos can provide some advanced training.

Remember that people grow in their Christian Faith at different speeds. Some are cautious and don't like change, while others jump right in and grow in spiritual maturity very fast. It is the Holy Spirit that motivates and causes growth in an individual's spiritual life. Don't try to force growth in the new Christian's life in the areas you think they should grow – but do these three things: pray for the person; keep them under the influence of the Word of God; let the Holy Spirit do His work in their lives.

As your group of converts (or church) begins to grow, you will find yourself too busy. Consequently, you need to start training a base of leadership to help you. Look for those gifted people who show promise of leadership and commitment to the Lord's work, and begin to spend more time with them – while not neglecting all your people. You are building disciples.

The three areas of major focus in your training are to teach them in the area of their own personal growth and devotions to Christ, how to maintain positive godly relationships with others, know the Bible and doctrine, and finally, develop the specific skill sets for ministry. The latter would include things like how to construct a sermon, teach a class, organize events, time management, and evangelize.

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP

Encourage church people of similar age and interest to build friendship links with the new convert. Do things with the convert. Thank them for their growth and coming to church. Have another church family thank them. Take them for social events, lunch, dinner, have them over to your house. Do things with them. Stay in contact. Take them to various retreats, to good speakers, evangelistic crusades. The point is to get the new convert involved in the lives of other Christians.

The key is to get people interested and involved in the new convert's life to the extent they feel

accepted, wanted and part of the group and until the church becomes "their" church. People are social beings. When they begin to draw apart from their unsaved friends, believers need to provide new friendships and a new social niche.

WORK THE NETWORKS.

Every person knows to some degree many other people. This network of acquaintances of the new convert becomes the best source for other new converts. Your new convert, then, becomes the friendship link between your church and many other new people who do not know Christ. They will be curious, open and probably friendly toward the church and its people. They will want to know what happened to their friend who is now going to church and trying to convert them. A new door is open for the gospel.

Other people in this friends-family web of relationships will be saved, and they also know still more people. Sometimes a whole family will be saved. Perhaps an entire group of close friends will receive Christ. Other friends will come to Christ over a period of time. When several of these social networks are woven into the church, then they provide a readymade social group to help "fold" still other friends into the church fellowship. Not all of the convert's friends and family will accept Christ, but some will - and it is those whom you are looking for.

When several people become solidly linked to the church, the momentum then increases as the enthusiasm of new believers continues to pour into the church.

Older Christians do not have many non-Christian friends because they have dropped away over the years. All new Christians, however, have friends who are non-Christians. The potential for prospects is greatest in this network of family and friends.

You can also ask the new convert if there is anyone with whom they would like to share the gospel. Go with them to share with that person. Be sensitive to the situation, however. It might be the better part of wisdom to just get acquainted with every one and begin to knit together positive relationships if you hit resistance.

We trust these chapters will be of great help in getting you started on a fruitful, joyful, effective lifestyle of evangelism, whether personally or for your church. We do this to the glory of Jesus Christ and betterment of mankind.

I need, however, to switch gears in the direction of our lessons on evangelism. Since we are to ground our evangelism on principles found in the Bible, then we need to see how first century Christians evangelized. In order to learn from our spiritual forefathers, we can go through the book of Acts and discover their principles. Let us turn there now.

CHAPTER NINE

EVANGELISM AND THE BOOK OF ACTS

"He who is wise wins souls" (Prov 11:30b).

One thing that greatly concerns the church today is evangelism and how to do it. The starting place to solve such a problem should always be the Bible. The purpose of the following pages, then, is to attempt a partial solution to the problem of evangelism by answering the question, "What does the book of Acts teach about evangelism?" Peering in on the history of the early Christians, three dimensions will be examined from the example they set for us: 1. their attitudes toward evangelism, 2. their general strategy toward evangelism, and 3. their specific methods toward evangelism.

THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD EVANGELISM

HIGH MOTIVATION TO EVANGELIZE

1. They were motivated by obedience. Several things caused the early church to be obedient to the job of evangelization. Christ issued the command for them to be witnesses for Him throughout the whole world (Acts 1:8). Peter realized the imperative of Christ's command when in talking to Cornelius he said, "And He ordered us to preach to the people..." (Acts 10:42). Peter was referring to soul winning.

At another spectacular event an angel performed a jail break on behalf of the Apostles and commanded them to return to the business of evangelization (Acts 5:20). This order was so imprinted upon their mind that to the civil authorities they exclaimed, "we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

2. They were motivated by fear. There was the healthy aura of awe, reverence, and fear that settled over the early Christian community that also motivated them. God was in their midst, and they were greatly aware of His presence. When Ananias and Sapphira attempted to swindle God they were struck dead. It is recorded that a "great fear" came upon the whole church and all that heard of it (Acts 5:5, 11).

Paul had a very dramatic conversion experience where it is said that those around him stood speechless (Acts 9:7). He realized that he had been appointed to evangelize (Acts 9:15), and later to the Corinthians he said, "Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11). When Paul was in Ephesus and the seven sons of Sceva were trounced by a demon it is said that a fear fell upon all the population, and the result was that Christ was magnified and the Word was growing mightily.

3. They were motivated by joy and enthusiasm. We should not think, however, that the early Christians were a pack of cowering, driven slaves. They enjoyed and had their whole heart in their work (Acts 5:42). They considered it as a way of life with so much value, that they would not trade it for anything. The apostles rejoiced to be considered worthy to suffer shame for soul winning (Acts 5:41). They were continually filled with joy and the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:52).

BOLD REACTION TO OPPOSITION.

1. They reacted in faith. The easiest thing to do when opposition occurs to evangelism is to quit, and then rationalize by saying we don't want to give offence to the gospel, or

some such thing. This was not the case with the early Christians. In the face of humiliating civil oppression the apostles believed they were witnesses of Christ to such a degree they kept right on sharing Christ (Acts 5:29, 32). They displayed great faith in this matter. If they would have lacked such faith they would have beat a hasty retreat - for who would suffer for such a cause if it wasn't true.

2. They reacted in continued persistence. Not only did they have great faith, but they continued a very aggressive soul winning witness. Paul and his team set the example for us in that while having to flee for their lives from Iconium for preaching the gospel, they traveled to Lystra and Derbe and continued to preach the gospel (Acts 14:17). The same story was repeated in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea and other places (Acts 16, 17).

REAL RELIANCE ON THE SUPERNATURAL.

1. They demonstrated it by prayer. The dependence upon the Divine was one major characteristic among the early Christians. Paul was continually going to the place of prayer while planting the church in Philippi (Acts 16:16). The church at Antioch was involved in fasting and prayer before sending Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary trip (Acts 13:3).

2. It was confirmed by Divine participation. Four things attract our attention to the real way that God participated in the evangelism of the early Christians. Angels were dispatched to set up opportunities for evangelism in the case of Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10: 3 ,7, 13). Angels were also involved in the Apostles' jailbreak (Acts 5:19).

The ministry of the Holy Spirit was obvious in that day. He empowered the people to be witnesses for Christ (Acts 1:8); the first deacons were full of the Spirit (Acts 6:3); and the disciples were continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

The early Christians were guided by the Divine. God directed them in the church at Antioch to depart on a missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3); the Holy Spirit forbid Paul not to speak in Asia (Acts 16:6); the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them to go into Bithynia (Acts 16:7); and God gave them specific instructions to go into Macedonia (Acts 16:9,10). An angel and the Holy Spirit directed Philip to go into the desert to share Christ with the eunuch (Acts 8:26, 29).

Christ is also involved in discipline to the local church who fails to evangelize. We see this from the letter to the church in Ephesus. Christ said to the church that unless they repented and returned to the deeds they did at first, He would remove any blessing from the church (Rev. 2:5). What were those deeds they did at first? The church was still separated from evil and staying true to the Word. The thing that was missing is suggested in Acts. There we see that through the Ephesian church all in Asia heard the Word of the Lord, that Jesus was being magnified, and the Word was growing mightily and prevailing (Acts 19:10,17,20). In a word, what was missing was the first love which flowed into aggressive evangelism.

THEIR GENERAL STRATEGY TOWARD EVANGELISM.

THEY WENT TO THE PEOPLE.

Many churches are of the belief that non-Christians come to church, and as a result those churches seem to be stagnant. This was not the case with the early Christians. In fact, the Bible never commands unbelievers to come to the church, but God does command

Christians to go out to reach unbelievers to bring them to Christ and the church (Luke 14:23).

The early Christians did not, however, go into a helter-skelter fashion. They went out in a prayerfully and carefully thought out strategy. When Paul went to a city it was his custom to go first to the synagogue (Acts 17:2). Where else in town could one find a place where people were more interested in the things of God? When Paul went to Philippi there was no synagogue there so he went to a place where people were assembled to pray (Acts 16:13).

The evangelists seemed to have a pattern of always going in a group whenever possible. Although Phillip went alone to the eunuch, the Apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria (Acts 8:14); Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey; and there was always a group involved in the subsequent journeys. Mark, Silas, Timothy, Aquila, and Priscilla were some of those involved.

The Apostles and others, when they went to people, went aggressively. Christ's command (Acts 1:8) implies aggressiveness; the apostles filled Jerusalem with the Word (Acts 5:28); the scattered believers went about preaching the Word (Acts 8:4); and Paul was super-aggressive wherever he went. By "aggressive," we do not mean belligerent or hostile - but persistent and consistent. They did not go with arrogance and meanness, but with love, compassion, determination.

THEY SATURATED THE AREAS WITH THE GOSPEL.

Whenever possible the disciples were involved full time in the work of Christ. The example of Paul working as a tent maker is sometimes used to justify a pastor working part time (Acts 18:3). It is often overlooked, however, that as soon as Silas and Timothy arrived Paul devoted himself full time to evangelism (Acts 18:5).

The Apostles in Jerusalem thought it wise to devote themselves full time to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). Not only did they spend as much time in evangelism as they could, but in doing so they filled the areas with the Word.

Sometimes modern evangelism declines into busy work or just talk, with no one making it to the front lines to get the Word in contact with the people. The tendency is to have too many support units and not enough advance troops. It is said Jerusalem was filled with their teaching. The Word kept on spreading through the whole region, and in Ephesus the Word was growing mightily (Acts 5:28; 6:7; 13:49; 19:20).

Now, I must recognize reality. Pastors must care for their families. Bible teachers and evangelists do not have the support that a pastor of a local church does – they too must make a living.

The ideal is that Christian workers who are called to ministry have the right to earn a living from the gospel. Paul wrote, "And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal 6:6, 7). Again, Paul states, "So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel" (1 Cor 9:14; cf. vs. 3-13).

The Apostle, John, instructed Christians to support those traveling evangelists, missionaries and Bible teachers. He wrote, "For they went out for the sake of the Name,

accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such men, that we may be fellow workers with the truth” (3 John 7, 8).

I have just spoken of the ideal – now for reality. Christian workers called to the ministry must sometimes work outside of ministry to support themselves. Indeed, Paul did, at times, have to work to support himself. Many times missionaries are sent to countries that are closed to the gospel. They work inside the country as professionals (or other jobs) to support themselves. These are sometimes referred to as “tent-making” workers after Paul’s craft.

The main problem with workers having to work outside the ministry is distraction and energy. When we get home from work, we are too tired to do ministry. But, many devoted men and women of God have supported themselves while working in gospel work.

I have been on both sides of the issue. For many years, I was a pastor, and the church paid my salary. Churches and individuals supported me as a missionary to the South Pacific. However, presently, I must work to support myself and family, and even to largely support the ministry God has given my wife and me.

Whatever it takes for me to advance the cause of Christ, I am willing to do.

THEY INVOLVED LAITY.

The officers of the church were involved in evangelism. The first deacons were to take some of the administrative load so the Apostles could spend more time directly in the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:34). Stephen, one of those deacons, was involved in confronting the Jews with the gospel (Acts 6:8ff.). Phillip was the deacon who led the eunuch to Christ, and conducted revivals in Samaria (Acts 8:5ff.).

The general membership was involved in evangelism. When the church at Jerusalem was scattered because of Paul's persecution it is said they went about preaching the Word through Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1-4). When these same scattered lay members reached Phoenicia, Cyprus, Cyrene, and Antioch, they were preaching to both Jews and Greeks (Acts 11:19-21). The mighty church of Antioch was founded because of lay people witnessing.

THEY ESTABLISHED KEY CENTERS.

The early church formed solid bases in major population and commerce centers. Jerusalem was the leading city in Israel, and was the launching pad for Christianity.

The next major base to be established was at Antioch which was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. This city became the base for the first foreign missionaries, and because of the abundant population (500,000), and freedom to preach the gospel, was a natural place to establish a large, strong center.

The next major center established by Paul was Ephesus. This was where Paul carried on his most extensive ministry from which he evangelized much of Asia (Acts 19:10). Ephesus was the headquarters of John in the latter years of his life. Ephesus was one of the greatest cities in the Mediterranean world at that time. There the Roman governor resided as it was the capital of Asia (Acts 19:10). Ephesus was the political, economic, and religious center of Asia Minor.

Corinth was another great center of early Christian activity. Corinth was one of the great seaports of Greece, and served as the crossroads between east and west.

The other great center was Rome. Paul spent two years preaching and teaching there unhindered and in openness (even though under house arrest). Rome was the hub of the Roman Empire and dominated the peninsula of Italy which in turn commanded the entire Mediterranean world.

These key centers served as strong supply trunks as the smaller branches of Christianity reached out from them. Evangelistic and church planting forays were launched out into the smaller areas from these key centers. The Lord gave the pattern of advance in Acts 1:8. The master plan instructed to evangelize Jerusalem, then all Judea and Samaria, and then to all points of the earth.

From Jerusalem Philip went to Samaria for an evangelistic campaign (Acts 8:5). After Peter and John came to help in the follow-up and evidently establish a local church, they started back to Jerusalem and were doing evangelistic work in many little villages along the way (Acts 8:25).

Paul and Barnabas conducted a tour from Antioch out to Cyprus and then on up into the mainland of Asia Minor, which is now Turkey, planting several churches along the way (Acts 13). They would return to home base at Antioch and then penetrate further into Asia on subsequent campaigns.

Finally, when the distance became too great to have short tours from Antioch the center was established at Ephesus which in turn became the base for further short campaigns into the countryside.

It is interesting to note that much successful grassroots evangelism took place before the center was established. Even though the center served as a focal point for an area, the outlying smaller churches were needed to support the center. The center and outer supporting churches complimented each other.

THEIR SPECIFIC METHODS TOWARD EVANGELISM.

PREPARATORY PLANS BEFORE MOBILIZATION.

1. Plans were based on Divine consultation. The early Christians did not leave everything to chance, but made up careful plans before they started a campaign. One important aspect of their plans was consulting God. They did this by first looking at His Word. Probably the best example is when at the Jerusalem council James appealed to the O.T. Scripture to prove that evangelism was to take place among the gentiles (Acts 15: 13-19). They also had the specific words given by Jesus, just before His Ascension, to evangelize the world. The early Christians also consulted God through prayer and fasting (Acts 13:3; 14:23).

2. Plans were based on counsel of the group. It was a group decision in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit that sent Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 11:1- 3). The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to conserve the evangelistic efforts there (Acts 11:22). When Paul and the team went to Macedonia it was a team decision confirming what the will of God was (Acts 16:10).

It was the brethren who sent Paul and Silas off to Berea when they could no longer conduct their crusade in Thessalonica (Acts 17:10). When the crusade of Philip was in full swing in Samaria the Apostles made the decision to send Peter and John (Acts 8:14). These are examples to point that plans were made in the early church by the counsel of groups.

3. Plans were based on specific goals and evaluation. The over-all goal of the early Christians was to evangelize the world (Acts 1:8; 10:42,43) They made their plans on the basis of the objective facts as they could see them, on the opportunities in front of them, on the obstacles before them, on their available resources (money, manpower, materials, etc.), and in light of their over-all goal. For example, the resources of the church at Antioch were listed before Paul and Barnabas were selected out to leave (Acts 13:1-3).

When the Apostles heard of the revival at Samaria they evaluated the situation, and then made a decision (Acts 8:14). The church at Jerusalem evaluated the facts of Peter's leading Cornelius and his family to Christ (Acts 11:1ff.). Paul and Barnabas evaluated the situation and made specific plans to return to the churches they had founded in Asia and in turn to evaluate the churches' condition (Acts 15:35, 36).

Let me take a short digression at this point, and give a description of how to make SMART goals. SMART is an acronym. The S stands for specific goals, not vague hard to measure goals. M stands for measurable. You want to know if you have reached your goals or not. A stands for attainable, or sometimes the word achievable. Aim high in your goals, but be realistic. Decide what you think you can reach, then stretch them out.

R stands for relevant. When you make up your plan, you have an overall purpose or mission. You then break that down in to major goals. The major goals are then broken down into sub-goals which are the steps you need to take to reach your overall purpose. Each sub-goal must be relevant, that is, the logical step in reaching your overall mission.

T stands for target to time. That is, you need to put each step on a time line on a calendar. In other words, you need to say something like, "By this time, I will have reached this sub goal."

INITIAL EVANGELISTIC ASSAULT ON THE TARGET AEA.

1. They preached to the public mass. One specific tactic used when the early Christians began the first stages of the evangelization of a target area was mass, public evangelism. Peter preached in the open air on the day of Pentecost to a massed crowd (Acts 2:14ff.). Paul preached in a public auditorium to a massed crowd at Mars Hill in Athens (Acts 17:19-34).

2. They preached in local synagogues. The general custom of Paul was to enter a town and start preaching in the local synagogue (Acts 17:2). From there he would pull off a splinter group of those who believed and start a church with them. The classic example was Paul's in Corinth where he went from the synagogue to the house of Titus Justus next door to the synagogue (Acts 18:7). Paul's strategy of going to those most likely to respond is reflected here.

3. They persuaded one on one. Paul would also seek to win souls individually such as at a market place (Acts 17:17), or the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:28ff.). Philip did individual work with the eunuch (Acts 8:27). Paul witnessed to the proconsul (Acts 13:7, 12). Another

tactic related to this was to find a small nucleus and build upon them. A small band was the focus at Philippi with Lydia and her group (Acts 16:13ff.). Paul started with a small band of twelve men at Ephesus (Acts 19:1ff.).

A general principle was they strove to target and approach those most likely to respond to the gospel – while not neglecting the masses.

IN DEPTH PENETRATION IN FOLLOW-UP.

1. They planted local churches. When the early Christians conducted a tour or flooded an area with the gospel they did not leave without follow-up. They planned for permanent results. Whether it was a splinter group from the local synagogue, converts from a public rally, or from a small band of interested people, the first most basic thing Paul did was to plant a local church.

On Paul's first missionary journey into Asia we are told that he appointed elders in every church (Acts 14:23). He was concerned for their progress in the faith and returned on the follow-up phase to see that the churches were being strengthened (Acts 16:5). Local churches; then, in the villages, towns, and cities became the basic, grassroots units in the early evangelism.

2. They continued aggressive evangelism. The local churches did not wait for the traveling evangelist to come back to town to do their evangelism, but kept penetrating every corner of their local area. The Apostles in Jerusalem kept right on evangelizing daily in house-to-house visitation (Acts 5:42). Paul continued this tactic in Ephesus (Acts 20:20,21).

3. Home Bible studies were another method for church evangelism. The Apostles taught in private homes (Acts 5:42), Paul evidently conducted Bible studies from his rented quarters in Rome (Acts 28:30), and in Ephesus (Acts 20:20,21).

4. Public proclamation was another method. The Apostles in Jerusalem kept on preaching in the temple as well as homes (Acts 5:42). Paul preached publicly in Ephesus after his initial campaign (Acts 20:20). Apollos publicly preached in Achaia and greatly helped the believers as well as proclaim the gospel (Acts 18:27,28).

5. They established Bible schools for training. In Antioch the school was located in the church. Paul and Barnabas were the faculty members to begin with, as they taught considerable numbers for about a year (Acts 11:26). Later on Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen were added to the faculty (Acts 13:1).

6. In Ephesus Paul started a Bible school in facilities rented from the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9). This was a very aggressive institution with stress on evangelism as it is said all of Asia heard the gospel (Acts 19:10). Paul established a Bible school in Rome where he trained those who came to him (Acts 28:30, 31).

Paul instructed Timothy "And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Ti 2:2). There are only five necessary things to start a Bible school: a teacher, a student, a Bible, a study plan, and a place to meet. As the school grows, then more manpower, material, money, and facilities are needed.

7. They utilized literature. Paul wrote letters (the epistles) and Luke wrote his Gospel and

the book of Acts while on missionary duty. The results of the Jerusalem council were written down in letter form and sent to the churches (Acts 15:20-31). The entire Bible is literature, a consistent means of evangelism and teaching God has used since the Garden of Eden (Gen 5:1).

8. They organized for further growth. Anytime growth occurs, there is a need for building the leadership and organizational structures to conserve the growth and provide for further expansion. For example, the practical social concerns of widows needed cared for in the early church. The Apostles then secured more workers to organize the project, take care of the problem and further provide for more evangelism (Acts 6:1-7cf. 1 Ti 5:3-16).

9. Raised adequate finances. As organizations grow, then finances need to be raised to run the operation. The early church was no exception. Paul took up collections to help the poor saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8,9) and he was personally supported by the people of Philippi (Phil 4:10ff.). On occasion Paul had to work at a secular job to support himself in ministry (Acts 18:3; 1 Thess 2:9). Paul also said regarding Christian workers: "So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel" (1 Co 9:14; cf. vv 4-14; Gal 6:6).

Raising money is a needed and critical part of ministry. Many times workers begrudge the need to go to people and ask for money. They think it is a drag on the ministry, and a waste of time.

However, fund raising is a main part of ministry – by God's design. The gospel worker needs to have social support and prayer for their work. They gain this through raising money. Many Christians want to become involved in a good work, they have the money, but not the credentials, call, nor time. The Christian worker then becomes the channel through which others can invest in gospel work.

By giving to missionaries, you can be involved in gospel work around the world – even though you cannot go to faraway lands. It also gives people a chance to store up reward for themselves in heaven.

Paul wrote the little epistle of Philippians basically as a thank you letter for the financial donations the Christian church at Philippi made to Paul's missionary episodes. He wrote, "Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction...for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account...what you have sent, (is) a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God" (Phil 4:14, 16, 17, 18b).

In summary, it can be said that by looking at the attitudes, general strategy, and specific methods toward evangelism of the early church as outlined in Acts, today's church can learn much, and establish from their example a sound philosophy and procedure to evangelize the world today. The methods of the early church were simple, powerful, and effective. We would do well to emulate them, using the tools God has given us in this day and age.

This work is a shorter version of the larger book on evangelism. That is why the table of contents lists more chapters, but this version gives the basics. Also, I will put in an abbreviated gospel presentation that is very simple. You might want to run off a copy and use it as a tract. If you wish to read the longer version, it as well is in this library. All the

best to you, and may God bless you with many souls.

Steps to your salvation through faith in Christ.

Promise: If there was a way you could know for sure you would go to heaven, would you like to know about it?

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13).

God loves you, and is full of grace, mercy and forgiveness, and has an abundant life promised for you. He knows about you. But, He is also perfect, just, and righteous, fair, and hates sin.

Problem: sin separates us from God, like a huge canyon between us. Sin is active rebellion or passive indifferent to God. Things like stealing, murder, lying, worshipping another god, adultery, giving false stories about others, greed, and swearing (Deuteronomy 5:7-21; Mark 7:20-23). Even one sin is enough to send us to Hell (James 2:10).

Hope: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life...For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God...For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (John 3:16; Romans 3:23; 6:23).

Question: if you were to die tonight, and God would ask you, “Why should I let you into My heaven,” what would you tell Him? Maybe you would say something like “I did the best I could, or if my good deeds are greater than by bad deeds I would be ok.”

Answer: Jesus Christ was murdered on the cross, and rose from the dead. God put all of your sins on Jesus who paid your penalty, His resurrection gives you eternal life. God offers you a full pardon. But you must personally receive Christ to obtain His forgiveness and have eternal life.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children...Behold, I (Jesus) stand at the door (of your heart) and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me” (John 1:12; Revelation 3:20).

Do you see how good works is different than receiving Christ alone? Wouldn't you rather receive Christ now so you could have forgiveness, eternal life, and enter heaven?”

Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me” (John 14:7). We receive Christ by faith expressed through prayer. Prayer is just talking to God.

Your invitation: God is not so much interested in your words, but looks at your heart and intent. Here is a suggested Prayer. Prayer: Almighty God, I admit I have sinned

against you and cannot save myself. I receive the salvation you offer based on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I believe that only through Jesus Christ I can be saved. Please come into my heart and I trust in only Christ to save me. Forgive me and let me go to heaven when I die. In Jesus name, Amen.

Assurance: your salvation is based on God's promise, not your feelings. If you invited Christ into your life, then He is there because that is His promise. God cannot lie.

What next? To grow in Christ: read, study and obey your Bible, pray, worship, join a Bible believing church, share this good news to others, do good to fellow humans.

