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A Study of

# Personal Evangelism



*Learning to Be Fishers of Men*

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# Our Mission: To Carry On the Work of Christ

## Introduction

1. I believe “There is a God in heaven” (Daniel 2:28):
  - a. Who “breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life.” (Genesis 2:7)
  - b. Who then “has spoken to us” (Hebrews 1:1-2).
  - c. And told us He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16).
  - d. Who came:
    - 1) “Not to judge the world but to save the world.” (John 12:47)
    - 2) “Not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:28)
    - 3) “Not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Matt. 9:13)
    - 4) “To seek and save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10)
2. “Follow after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17)
  - a. Here, at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus emphasizes to the disciples the great need to save the souls of men.
  - b. This lesson will allow us to watch and see how Jesus personally does this and then how His disciples imitate Him.

## I. The Mission of Jesus

- A. The great multitudes. (Matt. 9:35-37)
  1. Jesus loved the masses and preached publicly to them. (Matt. 5-7)
  2. It grieved Him to see them refuse His word. (Matt. 23:37)
- B. The individual.
  1. While the masses rejected Him and even “many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him” (John 6:66), Jesus did His greatest work on the personal level.
  2. Some examples.
    - a. Nicodemus. (John 3:1-22; 19:38-42) A religious leader who later even helped Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus.
    - b. The Samaritan woman at the well. (John 4:1-42) An adultress whose life was changed by Christ and who, in turn, led many others to hear and obey.
    - c. Zacchaeus. (Luke 19:1-10) A rich tax collector who had salvation come to his house upon the Lord’s visit with him.
    - d. Mary. (Luke 10:38-42) She sat at His feet to learn of the spiritual truths He had to reveal.
    - e. Cleopas. (Luke 24:27-32) He walked with Jesus after the resurrection and his heart burned within him when listening to Christ speak.

## II. The Transfer to the Apostles

- A. The Savior transferred His mission to seek and save the lost to His apostles, first on a limited scale (Matt. 10), and then, after His resurrection, on a world wide scale.
  1. Go...make disciples...baptize...teach...be with you. (Matt. 28:18-20)
  2. Go...preach to everyone...baptize believers. (Mark 16:15-16)
  3. Preach repentance and remission of sins to all nations. (Luke 24:46-48)
  4. Witnesses of Christ unto all the earth. (Acts 1:8)

- B. In the great commission, the Son of God left them with a great responsibility.
  - 1. The great claim: all authority in heaven and earth.
  - 2. The great charge: bring all men under Christ's rule.
  - 3. The great promise: I am with you always, even to the end of the world.

### III. The Transfer to the Saved

- A. As Jesus transferred His mission to save the lost to His apostles, the apostles transferred their mission to all the saved.
  - 1. They had taken the gospel to all the world (Colossians 1:23), having traveled from Jerusalem to Rome.
  - 2. Those taught were to feel indebted to teach others until the whole world would be brought to Christ.
    - a. This is the same indebtedness felt by the apostle Paul. (Romans 1:14-15)
    - b. The faithful were to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)
  - 3. The first century Christians accepted this challenge.
    - a. Those scattered from Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the word. (Acts 8:4)
    - b. The church in Thessalonica sounded forth the word until it was heard in every place. (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8).
  - 4. We must accept this challenge too.
- B. This is God's greatest personal work program: the law of procreation. As sure as an acorn produces an oak tree, when one Christian plants the gospel seed it will produce another saint. To accomplish this task, it takes one who is:
  - 1. Willing.
    - a. "Whom shall I send? Here am I, send me." (Isaiah 6:8)
    - b. The success of the Macedonians can be attributed to the fact that "they were freely willing...they first gave themselves to the Lord." (2 Corinthians 8:3-5)
  - 2. Wise.
    - a. "He who wins souls is wise." (Proverbs 11:30)
    - b. It takes the wise application of Bible knowledge to win souls.
      - 1) Take heed to self and doctrine. (1 Timothy 4:16)
      - 2) Be diligent to show yourself approved. (2 Timothy 2:15)
      - 3) Be ready to give an answer with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3:15)
    - c. One must deal wisely with people in order to win souls.
      - 1) Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. (Matt. 10:16)
      - 2) One's speech must be with grace, seasoned with salt. (Col. 4:6)
      - 3) One must become a servant of all, all things to all men. (1 Cor. 9:19-23)
    - d. An illustration of how to be unwise. "We are finally convinced that personal work, one-on-one, is the best way to teach our neighbor the gospel, so we call on our friendly barber who lives just down the street. He greets us with a smile, and the conversation goes something like this.
      - 'Glad to see you, Reverend! I have intended to talk with you for some time but . . .'
      - But, we cut him off.
      - 'If you read your Bible you would know that 'Holy and Reverend is God's name' (Psa. 111:9), and we should not give flattering titles to any man.'

‘Sorry, Pastor. I just meant . . .’

‘Pastor? Don’t you know ‘pastor’ means ‘shepherd,’ and the shepherds of a church are the bishops? I’m no pastor, I’m just a soul-loving preacher, taking the blessed gospel to poor lost souls in this wicked world...’

‘Well now, uh, preacher, I didn’t mean any harm. You see in our church we...’

“OUR church? You folk talk about YOUR church as if the Lord didn’t have a church. The church belongs to Jesus Christ, who purchased it with His precious blood. The churches men have planted will all be rooted up.’

If he runs us out of the house we can always report our ‘persecution’ at the personal work meeting, and counter adverse criticism by saying, ‘We really told him the truth.’” (Robert Turner)

- C. “The Lord didn’t lay the task of evangelism upon machinery; he laid it upon men. All the mass media, however helpful, cannot substitute for the saint communicating the one gospel to one sinner. That’s the way the world will be saved...if it is ever saved. God did not give his commission to angels, or even to a committee, but to men...to **individual** men (and women). The church is shrinking because members of the church are shirking. And Heaven isn’t prepared for shirkers.”(Ruel Lemmons)

#### IV. The Transfer to Sinners

- A. Our heart’s desire and prayer to God should be that the lost might be saved (Rom. 10:1), but the soul-winner must realize the power of conversion lies not in himself but in the gospel.
1. We are nothing but those who plant and water. It is God who gives the increase. (1 Cor. 3:6-7)
  2. It is our duty to cry aloud and not hold back. (Isa. 58:1)
  3. As the watchman warned of coming doom and men paid no attention, their death was of their own doing. (Ezekiel 33:2-11)
    - a. As the prophet sounded God’s warning but sinners failed to heed, then their blood was upon their own heads, not the prophet’s.
    - b. So we must transfer the burden of the decision upon the lost.
  4. The soul-winner who tried will be saved even if those he tried to teach are lost. (1 Cor. 3:11-15).
- B. Yet, the Christian who fails to warn of the coming judgment will be held responsible.
1. “Is the seed yet in the barn?” (Haggai 2:19)
  2. As Israel desired the blessings of harvest without first planting the seed, many in the church desire the fruits and rest of heaven without taking the seed from the sack and toiling.

#### Conclusion

1. How wonderful to have the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of the Lord and continue His mission.
2. Are you doing your part?

# “Why Aren’t More Christians Involved in the Work of the Lord?”

## Introduction

1. Those deeply concerned about the salvation of souls and the progress of the church often face discouragement.
  - a. Discouragements can be such things as unconcern on the part of the lost or opposition from false teachers.
  - b. The greatest discouragement: a lack of involvement on the part of so many “Christians.”
2. This lesson will look at some reasons why some do not become involved.

## I. A Lack of Conversion

- A. The basic idea of conversion is change. This change must include a change of:
  1. Heart—intellect, will, and emotions.
  2. Conduct. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 6:1-4)
  3. Relationship. As:
    - a. Servants. (Rom. 6:17-18)
    - b. Citizens. (Colossians 1:13)
    - c. Children. (Galatians 3:26-27)
- B. If one has not made these changes, is he really converted?
- C. Some have only been “churched.”

## II. A Wrong View of the Local Church

- A. Some view the church as an agency that will have an impact on the world simply because of numerical strength, size of building, and wealth.
  1. This view is manifest by such thinking as, “If I join up, support expansion, increase wealth, I am a Christian.”
  2. This outlook destroys involvement because it makes the church an agency.
- B. The church becomes an agency that:
  1. Allows one to hire another to do his work.
    - a. The preacher does the teaching, deacons see to the poor, elders tend to the wayward, etc.
    - b. Thus, the only responsibility of the individual member is to show up and pay his dues.
  2. Exists for the sole purpose of serving its members.
    - a. These are the people who demand attention.
    - b. These must be constantly catered to, visited, called upon, patted on the back, etc.
  3. Exists only when it assembles.
    - a. This makes collective responsibilities only such things as ushering, leading singing, making announcements, etc.
    - b. These complain when they are not used enough, meaning not used in a public way at least every week.

### **III. A Lack of Understanding of Individual Responsibility**

- A. A common expression often heard is, “I don’t want to get involved.”
  - 1. Being a Christian means getting involved. (Joshua 24:15; Rom. 6:16-18)
  - 2. Involvement in the local body is a must. (1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:11-16)
- B. One cannot avoid individual involvement by being part of a group.
  - 1. Consider:
    - a. On a ball team, each player must be involved in the game.
    - b. In a chorus, one must sing his part.
    - c. On a police force, each officer must patrol his area.
  - 2. When one is added to the church, he is not credited with the efforts of others.

### **IV. A Failure to Understand That Success of the Local Church Demands Individual Effort**

- A. Consider:
  - 1. The collective expressions of worship—individual involvement is demanded for success.
  - 2. Church discipline, though a collective action, involves each individual.
- B. The example of the healing of the paralytic. (Mark 2:1-11)
  - 1. The four who brought the paralytic to Jesus.
    - a. Their mission was to bring their sick friend to Jesus so that he could be healed.
    - b. They worked collectively—cooperating with the others in order to reach their common goal.
    - c. They worked individually—not a one of them loafed or gave up.
    - d. They worked to remove the obstacles that would have kept their sick friend from coming to Jesus.
  - 2. The application.
    - a. The mission of the Christian is to bring sin-sick humanity to the Great Physician for forgiveness of sins.
    - b. Christians must work collectively—cooperating with other Christians in order to reach their common goal.
    - c. Christians must work individually—no one is to be idle or to give up.
    - d. Christians must work to remove the obstacles that keep people from coming to the Lord.

### **V. A Lack of Sincere Dedication and Commitment**

- A. Dedicated people have changed sacred history: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Ruth, Nehemiah, Esther, etc.
- B. The history of the first century church is a record of people who were willing to get involved.

# Essential Attitudes for Doing the Work of the Lord

## Introduction

1. Often the Lord's work is not accomplished because those who claim to be "Christians" do not possess the proper attitudes to accomplish it.
2. This lesson will seek to list and explain some attitudes which the productive Christian will possess.

## I. A Powerful Faith

- A. If one believes nothing, he will do nothing.
  1. If we do not think we can do something, we are not going to try it.
  2. The example of the spies. (Numbers 13:17ff; 14:11-12)
- B. With faith "all things are possible." (Matthew 17:14-21)
- C. No works = no faith (James 2:14ff). Conversely, no faith = no works.

## II. A Joyful Heart (Philippians 4:4)

- A. Christians should not always be despondent and down-hearted.
- B. There are so many good things for which the child of God can be thankful.
- C. One should rejoice for the opportunity to be of value and service to his Lord.

## III. A Continual Reliance on Prayer

- A. The prayer of the righteous avails much. (Jas. 5:16ff; Matt. 21:18-22)
- B. People who are interested enough to pray are interested enough to work.
- C. We know and are assured that:
  1. God answers prayer. (Matt. 7:7-11)
  2. Prayer changes things.
    - a. We should pray to the one who can change them. (Ephesians 3:20)
    - b. We should pray about things that can be changed.
    - c. If God does not see fit to change things, we should pray that our desires may change to conform to His.
    - d. We must never give up our desire to make things change for the better by our prayers.

## IV. A Personal Love

- A. A love for the Lord. (John 14:23-24; cf. 1 John 5:3; 2:4).
- B. Love for the brethren. (Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 4:20-21; Heb. 10:24-25).
  1. To function collectively there must be love and unity. (1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:1-4)
  2. Some would rather "bite and devour" others. (Galatians 5:15).
- C. Love for the lost.
  1. Consider Luke 19:10, the mission of Christ.
  2. We should have heaven's attitude toward the lost as it is seen in Luke 15.
- D. If you do not have love, you will not care but then it really does not matter. (1 Cor. 13:1-3).



## **V. A Persistent Effort**

- A. Persistency of effort is the secret of success. (Luke 18:1-8)
- B. Some examples of the success of persistency.
  - 1. Noah took 120 years to build the ark. (Genesis 6:3)
  - 2. The apostle Paul. (Phil. 3:12-15)
- C. We are to be living a life of constant, persistent service. (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58)
- D. We must not be discouraged by lack of results.
  - 1. The Lord judges, not on results, but on effort.
  - 2. We will not be condemned for a lack of results but for a lack of effort.

## **Conclusion**

- 1. Every disciple needs to possess each of these attitudes.
- 2. If the work of the Lord is going to be accomplished, it will be by those who are loving, joyful, faithful, prayerful, and persistent.
- 3. Do you have what it takes to work for the Lord?

# What Is Personal Evangelism? Why Do It?

## Introduction

A church that is doing nothing is on its way to the cemetery, its members who do nothing are acting as pallbearers; the brother who says nothing is driving the hearse.

## I. Personal Work versus Personal Evangelism

- A. Personal work encompasses a broad area of responsibilities and opportunities including personal evangelism.
- B. Personal work is:
  - 1. Discussing Christianity or studying God's word with a friend.
  - 2. Giving someone a tract on a particular subject.
  - 3. Telling and showing your neighbor the happiness of being a Christian.
  - 4. Inviting someone to services with you.
  - 5. Canvassing for a gospel meeting.
  - 6. Teaching a Bible class in someone's home.
  - 7. Visiting the home of a visitor to worship services.
  - 8. Gathering your neighbors into your home for a Bible class.
  - 9. Bringing a friend to the church's Bible classes.
  - 10. Telling a fellow-worker (student) about Jesus, the way to heaven.
  - 11. Planting the word in someone's heart.
  - 12. Writing a letter to a loved one expressing your interest about his/her soul.
  - 13. Having someone with whom you are studying or with whom you would like to have a study into your home for a meal.
  - 14. Encouraging a new member.
  - 15. Exhorting one another to assemble in the scheduled services of the church.
  - 16. Teaching, reproving and rebuking the worldly, the indifferent and the wayward among those who claim to be Christians.
  - 17. Encouraging and strengthening the faint-hearted and comforting the bereaved among the family of God.
  - 18. Visiting and admonishing those who forsake the assemblies.
  - 19. Bringing cheer to and helping meet the needs of those who are elderly, sick, hospitalized or shut-in.
  - 20. Volunteering for tasks that need to be done within the congregation: building maintenance, lawn care, etc.
  - 21. Seeking and saving the lost.
- C. Personal evangelism: "One person talking to another person about his need for the salvation found only in Jesus Christ, with the purpose of bringing him to a decision." (Mid McKnight)

## II. Why Do Personal Evangelism?

- A. Its advantages.
  - 1. All can do it.
    - a. Usually only a handful in each congregation can preach effectively.
    - b. Every Christian with average intelligence and concern for others can do personal work.
    - c. Every situation in life offers opportunities to do it.

2. It can be done anywhere.
  - a. There are just a few places where one can preach to large numbers.
  - b. Personal evangelism demands no pulpit, meeting house or large crowd.
  - c. The office, school, factory, living room, car, park, jail, etc., are just a few of the countless places personal evangelism can be done.
3. It can be done anytime.
  - a. Preaching time is very limited.
  - b. Personal evangelism can be done any time of the day at the convenience of the other person.
4. It reaches all classes.
  - a. Many who cannot be reached in any other way may be taught through personal evangelism.
  - b. Those who cannot or will not attend services may be reached this way.
5. It “hits the mark.”
  - a. Preaching, by necessity, is general in nature.
  - b. Personal evangelism is direct and “personal.”
6. It works.
  - a. Many who have been unmoved by eloquent sermons have responded to personal teaching.
  - b. Heaven alone knows the uncountable multitudes who will be saved eternally as a result of the personal efforts of sincere, dedicated Christians.

**B. But, why me?**

1. I am a Christian and Christ expects every Christian to bear fruit. (John 15:1-6)
  - a. We are created in Christ Jesus for good works. (Eph. 2:10) As a matter of fact, we are to be “zealous” for them. (Titus 2:14)
  - b. If I am not accomplishing any of the good works for which I was created, of what value am I to the Lord?
2. To express my love for God, Christ and my fellow man. (John 14:15; James 2:14-26)
3. One of the greatest joys a Christian can have is leading another to Christ. (3 John 4)
4. I will be following the example of Jesus.
  - a. He loved people. (John 15:13)
  - b. One of the ways He showed that great love was by personally teaching men and women the truth. (Luke 19:10)
5. Christ commanded me to do it. (Matthew 28:18-20) Those who have been taught and baptized are, in turn, to teach others.
6. To follow the example of the first century Christians who “went everywhere preaching the word.” (Acts 8:4) Not even persecution stopped them from reaching out to those in need of Christ.
7. I will be considered a faithful Christian because faithful children of God are to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)
8. Self-preservation.
  - a. Teaching others is vital to my growth and development as a child of God. (Hebrews 5:12-14)
  - b. By constantly teaching others I maintain an interest in spiritual things.

9. To save the souls of others, the greatest work that I can do. (Matt. 16:26)
10. I can increase the teaching power of the local congregation.
  - a. Though members might differ as to knowledge and/or ability, all should be actively teaching. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)
  - b. I should not think my knowledge is too limited to possibly teach someone else. If I knew enough to become a Christian, I know enough to tell others what I did and why I did it.
11. I will be setting a proper example for my brethren.
12. God will consider me “wise.” (Proverbs 11:30)

## **Conclusion**

“This one makes a net,  
“This one stands and wishes.  
“Would you care to make a guess,  
“Which one gets the fishes?”  
(Unknown)

# Things Which Hinder Personal Evangelism

## Introduction

Our *curse*: Cold hearts, tearless eyes, closed lips, heavy feet, and fruitless lives in a world of sin and sinners.

## I. Lack of Effort

- A. Ignorance of the fact that it is our duty.
  - 1. It is not an optional thing.
  - 2. It is a matter of duty to *all* Christians.
    - a. Matthew 28:18-20: “Go therefore and make disciples...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”
    - b. 2 Timothy 2:2: Faithful men are to teach others.
    - c. Hebrews 5:11-14: “...by this time you ought to be teachers...”
    - d. Matthew 25:14-30: The parable of the talents. The master dealt with the servants individually, not as a group.
- B. No interest in the lost.
  - 1. Luke 19:10.
    - a. Seeking and saving the lost was the primary concern of Jesus.
    - b. It is to be our primary focus.
  - 2. Romans 9:1-3 and Romans 10:1-3 illustrate the apostle Paul’s concern for the lost.
- C. An improper attitude toward the lost. Some “Christians:”
  - 1. Reflect the self-righteousness of the Pharisees. (Luke 18:9-14)
  - 2. Have the attitude of the prodigal son’s elder brother. (Luke 15:25-32).
- D. Waiting for the church to organize a program.
  - 1. Every local church needs to be greatly concerned with the task of reaching the lost.
  - 2. As individuals, though, we have the responsibility to seek out and teach lost souls whether or not the church ever organizes a program.
- E. Spending all our time talking about it.
  - 1. Personal evangelism needs to be considered and discussed among brethren.
  - 2. However, merely talking about it will not accomplish anything.

## II. Inadequacies in Our Effort

- A. Being overly cautious.
  - 1. This is being afraid to offend anyone.
  - 2. This attitude causes one to soften and compromise the message of the gospel.
- B. Being overly anxious.
  - 1. This causes one to want action right away.
  - 2. Quite often those with this attitude will resort to “high pressure” tactics in their teaching.
- C. The use of wrong appeals.
  - 1. Friendliness of the congregation, the building’s air conditioning, beauty, or comfort, etc., are typical of the improper appeals some use to attract the interest and attention of others.
  - 2. There is but one valid appeal: You cannot go to heaven if you do not obey the gospel.

D. Ungodliness in our own lives.

1. To be a positive influence for good, you must live a godly life.
2. Consider Romans 2:21: “You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?”

E. A lack of conversion.

1. Too many “Christians,” no matter what they profess, are still living for self.
2. They have failed to deny self (Matthew 16:24) and be transformed into living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2).
3. They do not view themselves as servants. (Romans 6:17-18)

F. Improper tactics.

1. Bluntness or harshness.
  - a. Some seem to delight in telling people they are going to hell.
  - b. We must speak the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15)
2. Approaching a person at an inappropriate time.
  - a. Cornering someone in an embarrassing situation—in the vestibule, in front of friends or family, etc.
  - b. Consider the barber who raised his razor and asked his customer, “Are you ready to die?”
4. Some proper tactics.
  - a. Speak the truth in love. (Eph. 4:15).
  - b. Be gentle. (1 Thessalonians 2:7)
  - c. Be wise as serpents, gentle as doves. (Matt. 10:36)
  - d. Answer others with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3:15)
  - e. Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt. (Colossians 4:6)
5. If people get offended, let it be because of the truth not because of our blundering efforts.

G. Deficiency in our knowledge of the Bible.

1. Did you ever have a salesman try to sell you a product about which he knew absolutely nothing?
2. God’s worker is to study so that he/she might properly use the word. (2 Tim. 2:15)

**Conclusion**

“If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon the immortal minds, if we imbue them with principles, with the just fear of God and love of our fellowman, we engrave on those tablets something that will brighten to all eternity.” (Daniel Webster)

# Characteristics of a Successful Personal Worker

## Introduction

1. Christianity will not mean anything to the world until it means *everything* to us.
2. The gospel is to be adorned by our lives. (Titus 2:10)
  - a. A delicious-looking apple offered by a dirty hand full of sores, dirt under fingernails, etc., will suddenly become unappetizing.
  - b. The priests of the Old Law were condemned for not making their lives consistent with the Law. (Malachi 2:4-8)

## I. Committed

- A. One's life must be wholly surrendered to God and Christ. (Matthew 16:24)
  1. One must seek the Lord, His kingdom and His will first. (Galatians 2:20)
  2. One cannot be lukewarm and be successful before the Lord. (Revelation 3:14-16)
- B. Selfishness is the greatest enemy of personal work.
  1. If one is to be useful in personal work he must put away personal interests, comforts, ease, pride, and feelings.
  2. He must live up to his confession when he became a Christian.
- C. One must be committed to the Lord's cause.
  1. The Lord needs people with the zeal and dedication of the apostle Paul. (Philippians 3:8-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-8)
  2. A suggestion on how to get such dedication: Take every member and allow them to experience hell for five minutes.

## II. An Assurance of One's Own Salvation

- A. One must be thoroughly convinced and fully converted before he can begin teaching others the way of salvation. (1 John 5:13)
- B. An unconverted church member can expect little success at winning others to Christ.
  1. You cannot interest others in serving a Savior you are not serving.
  2. You cannot lead someone to where you have never been.
- C. Three "musts."
  1. Have a knowledge that your own sins have been forgiven because you have been obedient to the will of Christ. (Romans 6:17-18)
  2. Realize that the blood of Christ continues to cleanse you from sin if you confess them and ask for forgiveness. (1 John 1:7,9)
  3. Surrender your will to Christ as your Lord and Master. (Gal. 2:20)

## III. A Clean Life

- A. One demonstrates the truth he teaches by his own life. (2 Tim. 2:20-21)
- B. One must be clean within and without, not just outwardly as the world sees you but inwardly as God does—and as you do too. (1 John 3:19-20)
  1. He practices what he preaches. (Rom. 2:21)
  2. He lives daily by the principles of the gospel. (1 Peter 3:16)
- C. "God does not demand a beautiful vessel for His work, but He does demand a clean one."
- D. The ultimate test of one's faith is not the words of his lips but the actions of his life. (1 John 2:3-6)

#### **IV. Both Positive and Negative in Attitude**

- A. Positive: he is for something.
  - 1. He is for the Father, the Son, the Spirit, and Their word.
  - 2. He is for love and the salvation of men and women.
- B. Negative: he is against that which opposes God and His word.
  - 1. But even his negatives are rooted in positives.
  - 2. He is like Jeremiah: in converting people he must “pull down,” “destroy,” and “weed out” as well as “build and plant.” (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

#### **V. A Firm Conviction**

- A. He has a firm conviction that every person who has not obeyed Jesus and His gospel is lost. (John 8:24; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)
- B. He follows the example of Jesus (Luke 19:10) and Paul (Acts 20:26-32).

#### **VI. Love**

- A. Love: good will which actively works for the good and salvation of others.
- B. One who has never been brought to a deep realization of his own sinfulness before God and how great the love of God was in forgiving him will never have love for others. (See the Parable of the Unjust Steward in Matthew 18:23-35)
- C. He speaks the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15)

#### **VII. Humility**

- A. One’s attitude must fall between two extremes: conceit because of success and discouragement because of failure.
- B. The power is in the word. (Rom. 1:16)
  - 1. We can interfere with its power but we cannot add to it.
  - 2. The “planter,” “sower,” and “waterer” are “*nothing*.” (1 Corinthians 3:5-7)

#### **VIII. Perseverance and Patience**

- A. No other work requires so much patience and perseverance. (Matt. 10:22; Gal. 6:9)
- B. People are not usually won to Christ “in a day.”
- C. The personal worker who truly converts people is one who patiently teaches and discusses the word of God with others.
- D. He is not impatient with those who are slow to respond to his teaching. He remembers:
  - 1. How long it took him to understand and do certain things.
  - 2. The patience others had with him and especially how God has been patient and longsuffering with him.
- E. Perseverance prompts one, after teaching one person—whether he succeeds or fails—to seek out another person, then another, then another, ad infinitum.

#### **IX. Hope**

- A. He has conviction he will reap in due season. (Gal. 6:9)
- B. While being realistic and not naive, he can teach in hope because:
  - 1. There are still many good and honest hearts.
  - 2. The word he teaches is powerful.
  - 3. The more he sows, the more he will reap. (2 Corinthians 9:6)



4. He has a mighty fellow-worker, God. (1 Cor. 3:9)
5. God will reward all his labors. (1 Cor. 15:58; Hebrews 11:6)

#### **X. Prayer**

- A. He knows that God honors and answers prayer. (Matt. 7:7; James 5:16; 1 John 3:22)
- B. One needs to pray for:
  1. Help in recognizing open doors and the strength and energy to take advantage of them. (Matt. 9:36-38)
  2. The ones with whom he studies to have open hearts and minds so that they can be touched by the gospel. (Rom. 10:1)
  3. Courage to speak the truth boldly. (Eph. 6:16-20)
  4. The ability to teach in a way that others can easily understand. (Jas. 1:5)

#### **XI. A Practical Knowledge of the Word of God**

- A. The New Testament was given to:
  1. Produce faith in Jesus. (John 20:30-31)
  2. Convict people of sin. (Acts 2:37)
  3. Convey heaven's terms of pardon. (Heb. 5:8-9; 1:1-2)
- B. To be a fruitful personal worker you must know your Bible, how to use it to produce faith, conviction and conversion.

#### **XII. Constant Activity**

- A. He follows the advice of Ecclesiastes 11:6.
- B. The successful personal worker is always working. (John 9:34)
- C. This world is not a time of rest for the Lord's servants. (1 Cor. 15:34; Eph. 5:14; Rom. 13:11)

# The Example of the Fourth Chapter of John

Text: John 4:1-42

## Introduction

1. In the above text, Jesus is trying to get His disciples aware of the grander aspects of life— those things spiritual in nature.
  - a. Their focus was on the material. (vv. 8, 27, 31, 33)
  - b. They needed to start concentrating on spiritual things because they are more important.
2. Sometimes we, as His disciples, are guilty of the same-shortsightedness.
  - a. We easily get caught up in the material.
  - b. Even in spiritual matters we close our eyes to that which is really important and look only to trivialities.
3. There are many areas in which we need to “lift up our eyes” (v. 35) or broaden our horizons but none is more necessary than in evangelism.
  - a. According to Brent Hunter in *Personal Work 101*, within the next:
    - 1) Minute, 156 people will die without hope.
    - 2) Hour, 9,360 people will die without hope.
    - 3) Day, 224,640 people will die without hope.
    - 4) Week, 1,572,480 people will die without hope.
    - 5) Year, 81,768,960 people will die without hope.
    - 6) 2.6 seconds, someone will die without hope.
  - b. If you were to put into a line those people who are without Christ, the line would be 750,000 miles long, could circle the earth 30 times and grows 20 miles longer each day. (*Pulpit Helps*, Vol. 13, No. 5, March 1988)

## I. The Focus of the First Century Christians

- A. The New Testament reveals that the church in the first century was fervently active in evangelism.
  1. Even facing persecution, they went everywhere preaching the word. (Acts 8:1-4)
    - a. It was not just the apostles and elders.
    - b. The church multiplied in a way that has never been matched in history because of the impact of thousands of people doing the work of the Lord.
  2. The example of the Thessalonians. (1 Thessalonians 1:2-8)
- B. They preached to all the world in about thirty years. (Colossians 1:6, 23)
  1. They began as one congregation.
  2. They concentrated on Jews only for ten years.
- C. The keys to their success: commitment, enthusiasm, determination, steadfastness, a willingness to sacrifice, love for the Lord, and an understanding of what life is about.

## II. A Contrast of Our Opportunities

- A. Opportunities were limited in the first century. Consider:
  1. Their lack of transportation.
  2. Their lack of communication.

3. How large and formidable their world was to ours.
    - a. Racial and national barriers were even greater then.
    - b. There was domination and persecution by the Romans plus that of the Jews.
  4. How most disciples were of a lower economic class. (1 Corinthians 1:26)
- B. Our opportunities are almost limitless.
1. Consider the great advances in transportation and communication.
  2. We enjoy freedoms, socially and politically, those of the first century never knew.
  3. We are abundantly blessed economically.
  4. We have greater education and experience.
  5. More people are now living than at any other time in history.

### III. Why We Do So Little

- A. As individuals.
1. Are our lack of commitment, enthusiasm, confidence in our abilities, and/or energy (versus laziness) really the major problems? I think not.
  2. Our real problem: we do not lift up our eyes.
    - a. We get caught up in the material (Not always by choice).
    - b. We “major in minors.”
    - c. We just do not realize what should be and can be done or how we can do it.
- B. As a congregation.
1. The problem is the same as with the individual Christians: we do not lift up our eyes.  
As a congregation we:
    - a. Emphasize the material.
    - b. “Major in minors.”
    - c. Do not realize what can and should be done, how we can do it or that we can do it.
  2. It is not enough to understand truth, we must obey and implement it.

# The Example of Philip

## Introduction

1. Philip first comes to our attention in Acts six as one of the seven chosen for the work of benevolence in the early church.
  - a. Such a man was to have been of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. (Acts 6:3)
  - b. Philip was not content to simply “serve tables.”
2. When persecution arose scattering the disciples, he went to the city of Samaria and preached Christ there.
3. When Philip was having great success, God called him away to teach one sincere, searching soul. (Acts 8:26-27)
4. There are many lessons we can learn from Philip on the proper attitudes to have and the proper techniques to use to reach others.

## I. Proper Attitudes to Reach Others

### A. Obedience.

1. When God sent orders for Philip to leave Samaria and go to the road that led from Jerusalem to Gaza, he obeyed. (Acts 8:26-27)
  - a. “He arose and went.”
  - b. He obeyed God without question.
  - c. Even though he had great success in Samaria, when he was commanded to leave, he went.
    - 1) It may have sounded somewhat strange and irrational.
    - 2) He was a man who knew God’s way was best.
2. If we are going to be effective workers for the Lord, we must be submissive.
  - a. We must, at all times and at all cost, be willing to do what God wants us to do not what we want to do.
  - b. He knew God’s way was best.

### B. A willingness to teach one as well as many.

1. God commanded Philip to leave the multitudes in Samaria and travel about 50 miles for one lost soul.
  - a. He was willing to travel that distance, more if necessary, to achieve God’s mission.
  - b. Such dedication takes real love.
  - c. He, like Jesus, was willing to leave the crowds for one individual.
2. We must understand that one soul is a large enough crowd to be concerned about.
3. We must be willing to leave the ninety-nine and bring that one lost soul back into safety. (Luke 15)

### C. Unprejudiced.

1. The Ethiopian, though a proselyte, was still considered an outcast in the full sense of the word. (Deuteronomy 23:1)
  - a. Since he was not entirely Jewish, he was in the same category as the Gentiles.
  - b. No ordinary Jew would dare talk to him about his soul.
  - c. It took a miracle for Peter to go into a Gentile's house and teach the gospel. (Acts 10)
  - d. Yet, without hesitation, Philip was willing to teach a Gentile. (Acts 8:27)

2. We must be like Philip.
  - a. We must be color-blind in doing personal evangelism.
  - b. We should look at the condition of the soul not the color of the skin or the size of the pocketbook.
  - c. Since neither God (Acts 10:34-35) nor Christ (Mark 16) is a respecter of persons, why should we be?
  - d. All need salvation (Rom. 3:23), therefore, all need the gospel, God's power to save. (Rom. 1:16)
- D. An urgency to reach others.
  1. When the Spirit told Philip to join himself to the chariot, Philip "ran to him." (Acts 8:29)
    - a. He knew the urgent need the man had.
    - b. He did not waste time for there is none to waste.
  2. This kind of enthusiasm is desperately needed today.
  3. As the early church was very zealous when it came to soul-winning, we need to restore that same kind of zeal today.

## II. Proper Techniques

- A. Ask questions.
  1. Philip asked the Ethiopian a question to get the discussion started. (Acts 8:30)
  2. This question was not only an icebreaker but it showed a real concern.
  3. If we would do the same, we would win more souls to Christ.
  4. Questions arouse greater interest in study and discussion.
- B. Know and use the Scriptures.
  1. When the Ethiopian asked him about a certain passage in Isaiah, Philip knew to whom the Scripture referred. (Acts 8:31-35)
  2. If we are to be effective teachers, we must know the Scriptures.
    - a. We cannot remain ignorant of God's word and expect to win souls. (Heb. 5:11-14)
    - b. Only the word of God can bring about salvation. (John 8:32; Rom. 10:17; Jas. 1:21)
- C. Preach Jesus.
  1. After reading Isaiah 53, Philip began to preach "Jesus" to the Ethiopian. (Acts 8:35)
  2. We are not to teach opinions, "think-so's" and feelings.
  3. The only message that can save is "Jesus" for He alone has the words to eternal life. (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
  4. Jesus is to be our drawing power and His word our message.
- D. Look for more opportunities.
  1. Philip was not content in winning just one soul to Christ.
    - a. After baptizing the Ethiopian, he went on his way preaching to others (Acts 8:40).
    - b. If we are going to be successful "fishers of men" we must cast our nets into the deep again and again.
  2. The whole world lies in need before us.

## Conclusion

1. We need more "Philips." We all need to be more like Philip.
2. He may not have been an apostle or as famous as Paul or Peter but he was a dedicated, effective servant.
3. Following his example, we also can be and must be effective workers for the Lord.

# Time Management for the Christian

**Text: Ephesians 5:15-16**

## **Introduction**

1. Time is a valuable commodity. When we fail to properly esteem it we fall prey to many troubles.
2. Most of us fail to make the most of our time.
  - a. The worldly recognize this. All sorts of methods have been developed to help people better budget their time.
  - b. Someone has said, “Don’t squander time for it is what life is made of.”
3. The Scriptures have a lot to say about time, our regard for and use of it.
  - a. The way one uses time reveals a lot about the character of an individual.
  - b. More importantly, the way one uses time may well determine where he/she will spend eternity.

## **I. We Should Try Not to Waste Time**

- A. I would imagine that wasting time is something all of us have in common.
- B. Sometimes the use of our time is out of our control. (Should not be frustrated by it).
  1. Waiting at a traffic signal, at doctor’s or dentist’s office, at the license bureau, etc.
  2. Some things have to be done whether we want to or not—military service, class period at school, etc.
- C. But that time over which we have control should not be wasted. Time can be wasted by:
  1. A lack of application and organization. Consider the ant. ( Prov. 6:6-11)
  2. Vegetative pursuits: Television, cheap literature, etc.
  3. An overemphasis on recreation and entertainment.
  4. An overemphasis on work.
  5. Pondering past mistakes and embarrassments. (Phil. 3:13-14)
  6. Reliving personal injuries.
  7. Worrying about what may happen in the future. (Phil. 4:6)
  8. Gossiping and listening to gossip. (1 Tim. 5:13)
- D. The Bible condemns laziness and idleness. (Prov. 19:15; 23:31; 1 Tim. 5:13; Matt. 20:6)

## **II. We Must Recognize the Value of Time**

- A. Time is valuable in that it allows for:
  1. Character to be built and rebuilt if broken (Peter).
  2. Health lost to be regained.
  3. Hearts broken to be mended.
  4. Lost friends to be regained (Paul’s regard for Mark).
  5. The sinner to repent. (2 Pet. 3:9)
- B. The Bible tells us there is a time for everything. (Eccl. 3:1-8)
  1. It means that we should keep things in perspective in relation to time. There is a time for:
    - a. Work. (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thes. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8)
    - b. There is a time for rest. Jesus was weary at times. (John 4:6)

- c. There is a time for relaxation and recreation. Jesus told His disciples to “rest awhile.” (Mark 6:31-32)
- d. There is a time for God. (Matt. 6:33)
  - 1) Many Christians fill their days with too many useless things and leave no time for God.
  - 2) Some place too much emphasis on secular work.
- C. We must acknowledge its brevity and uncertainty. (Psa. 39:4; 90:12; James 4:13-15)

### III. Using Time Properly

- A. Walk in wisdom, redeeming the time. (Eph. 5:15-16; Col. 4:5)
  - 1. Walk carefully and thoughtfully.
  - 2. “So you must be very careful how you live, not thoughtlessly but thoughtfully, and continue to make the most of your opportunities, for the times are evil.” (*Williams Translation*)
- B. Do not take tomorrow for granted. (James 4:13-15)
  - 1. God considers such as arrogance.
  - 2. Realize what Job did. (Job 7:7). [“Oh, remember that my life is a breath!”]
- C. Use your time properly. (John 9:4)

### Conclusion

The best motto in relation to time may be: “Live as though Christ died yesterday, arose this morning and is coming back tomorrow.”

# Developing Courage

**Text: Joshua 1:1-9**

## **Introduction**

1. When Joshua was appointed by God to lead the children of Israel in conquest of Canaan, God told him to “be strong and very courageous.”
2. Courage is essential for a soldier in battle and for a soldier of Christ in the fight of faith. (Ephesians 6:10-18)
  - a. Courage is the strength of the soul.
  - b. God has no use for cowards. (Hebrews 10:38-39)
3. Spiritual strength includes steadfastness, bravery, faith in God and honesty.
  - a. It does not come by accident.
  - b. It is deliberately developed.
4. This lesson will show areas in which Christians need to be strong and courageous, sources of courage and how they must build their lives and service upon a foundation of courage.

## **I. Areas in Which One Needs to Be Strong (Illustrated by the Faithful)**

- A. Courage to worship God: Daniel. (Daniel 6)
  1. He was one of the three princes under the king of Babylon.
  2. He was impeccably honest. (vv. 3-5)
  3. He openly served God knowing that he was risking his position and his life. (v. 10)
  4. He would not compromise his service to God for any reason.
  5. He overcame through God. (vv. 16, 22)
- B. Courage to stand against sin: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. (Dan. 3)
  1. They would not go along with the crowd or succumb to sin.
  2. They did not even pretend to worship the idol. (vv. 15-18)
  3. They overcame through God. (vv. 24-28)
- C. Courage to flee evil: Joseph. (Genesis 39)
  1. No one would have known of his sin except God.
  2. His livelihood in a strange country was at stake.
  3. He overcame with God’s help. (Gen. 41:39-44)
- D. Courage to fight (even when no one else will): David. (1 Samuel 17)
  1. He was alone and physically overpowered.
  2. He knew that he and God made a majority. (vv. 33, 37)
  3. He overcame with God’s help. (vv. 43-45, 50)
- E. Courage to teach the truth: Nathan. (2 Samuel 12)
  1. His teaching could have cost him his life.
  2. Yet, he taught fearlessly, plainly and convictingly.
  3. Consider also God’s charge to Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 3:1-11)
    - a. God knew the people would not want to hear.
    - b. “Tell them...whether they hear, or whether they refuse.” (v. 11)



## II. Sources of Courage

### A. God.

1. The Father (1 Sam. 30:6), The Son (John 16:33) and the Holy Spirit in His revelation. (Romans 15:4-5)
2. Prayer to God.
  - a. It is help in time of need. (Heb. 4:16)
  - b. Ask for boldness in preaching the gospel. (Eph. 6:19-20)
3. If God is for us, who can be against us. (Rom. 8:31ff)

### B. Brethren.

1. Hebrews 10:24-25. Brethren are to encourage one another.
  - a. Encourage: to inspire with courage, hope and spirit.
  - b. Faithful attendance at assemblies allow brethren to revive one another in study and worship.
2. Hebrews 3:13. Brethren are to exhort one another.
  - a. "Daily:" continually, day by day.
  - b. Preventively: "lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Brethren are to edify one another.
  - a. To edify is to strengthen, encourage, or build up.
  - b. Too often the opposite is true.
    - 1) Brethren tear one another down or watch other Christians ridiculed and never say a word in defense.
    - 2) The "Christian" who seeks the world over his brethren is not trying to be strengthened.
4. Acts 28:15. Good brethren can be a great source of courage in time of need.

## III. The Christian Must Build on a Foundation of Courage

### A. He must possess a good conscience knowing he has obeyed God. (Heb. 10:22-24)

1. God knows every thought and motive. The Christian must be sincere.
2. He cannot attain courage unless he knows he is doing right. (Proverbs 28:1)
3. This is the "Blessed Assurance" of which we sing.

### B. He must place his unfailing trust in God.

1. He must believe He will be with him. (Rom. 8:31-39)
2. He must put Him first and foremost. (Prov. 29:25)

### C. Both a good conscience and an unfailing trust come with study.

1. One must study to build faith and to understand how to obey the Lord.
2. One must study to learn more of God and to develop a greater appreciation for and trust in Him.

## Conclusion

1. The Christian must purpose in his heart to build courage by taking courage in those who have overcome before him, by seeking the encouragement that is in God and by seeking the encouragement of true Christians.
2. Each one needs to trust in God and be strong and courageous in his service.

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