

Building An Evangelistic Church Through . . .

# Total Evangelism



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Bus Evangelism

Edited by  
**CLAYTON PEPPER**



## Teacher's Supplementary Manual

### **LEADERSHIP IN PERSONAL WORK MANUAL**

Compiled by Clayton Pepper

**THIRD EDITION**

Published by  
CHRISTIAN LIGHTHOUSE, INC.  
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# 1

# Building According To The Apostolic Pattern of Total Evangelism

by Clayton Pepper

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (II Tim. 2:2)

## INTRODUCTION

The glorious beginning of God's creation was soon marred by sin. Because of Adam's sin death entered the world and was passed upon all men. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) What a tragic day in the life of man. Every tombstone that you see in the cemetery is a monument to Adam's sin. But thanks be to God He did not leave man in a hopeless state. God began immediately to unveil His plan to redeem fallen man from the curse of sin by letting His only Son bear the sins of the world. (Gen. 3:15) In order to bring this about, many great men of faith were used over a period of some 4,000 years. Abraham, the father of the Israelite nation was told, "... in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) Isaiah, in speaking of the establishment of the church said, "... all nations shall flow unto it." (Isa. 2:2, 3). Since all men would need salvation, God intended that the good news of salvation cover the earth. Isaiah wrote, "... for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9). We sing a song which says, "Of one the Lord has made the race, by one has come the fall, where sin has gone must go his grace, the gospel is for all." Isaiah wrote, "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every man to his way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (cf Isa. 53:1-7). Paul wrote, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (cf Rom. 5:15-20). After Jesus' death, burial and resurrection (this is the gospel, see I Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:3-7), He said to His Apostles with all the authority of heaven and earth, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk. 16:15).

## TOTAL COMMITMENT TO TOTAL EVANGELISM

Before ascending to heaven Jesus said to His Apostles, "... ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8). There was no alternative, no debate about who was to do the job. Jesus simply said, "Ye shall."

When the gospel was preached the first time, there were about 3,000 converts. (Acts 2:41). Because of their zealous proclamation of salvation through Christ, there were additions daily. (Acts 2:47). Soon "The number of men was about 5,000." (Acts 4:4). Counting the women and children, the church probably had 15,000 to 20,000 members. It is at this point that Luke ceases to cite numbers and simply says, "multitudes of both men and women were added." (Acts 6:1). Before the Jewish council, the Apostles were told, "... ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. ..." (Acts 5:28).

Paul's deep concern for the lost is seen in the following instances:

1. When Paul was warned of danger he said, "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13).

2. Paul was always ready to preach Christ under all circumstances. While before Felix and Drusilla, Paul taught them of Christ. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." (Acts 24:25).

3. He was willing to be lost if it would result in the salvation of lost Jews. He said, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:" (Rom. 9:1-3).

They said of Paul and Silas, ". . . these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;" (Acts 17:6).

### THE APOSTLE'S PRIORITIES

When a benevolent need arose, the Apostles said, "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (Acts 6:3,4). The hungry were fed, but not at the expense of lost souls. Prayer always accompanies evangelism. The Apostles realized their dependence upon God. They were only earthen vessels through which God was working. The primary task of God's people is getting the gospel to the lost. The Apostles would not be turned away from that task.

Two of the seven were Philip and Stephen. They were not men who thought only of the body and forgot the soul. Stephen zealously preached Christ and was stoned to death because of it. (Acts 7). Philip went to Samaria and preached. Many were converted. He was called from there to teach one, the Ethiopian eunuch, who was converted. (Acts 8). These men had their priorities right and had great commitment to reaching the lost with the gospel. On the way to reach the lost, the early church did benevolence, not on the way to do benevolence, they happened to win a few lost souls! Benevolence is a means, not an end.

### EDIFICATION RESULTED IN MULTIPLICATION

Luke writes, "Then the churches . . . throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria . . . were edified: and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." (Acts 9:31). There was a relationship between what they were taught and growth. This principle should be recognized today. In congregations today where there is little preaching, teaching and leading in evangelism, there is little growth through souls being added to the church. One preacher said that he looked through ten years of one kind of adult Bible school literature for information on soul winning and could not find enough to preach one sermon!

God's kind of edification will result in multiplication. Paul wrote, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also . . . the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach . . ." (II Tim. 2:2, 24).

### FOUR THINGS NECESSARY TO MULTIPLY

The early church grew because:

1. They multiplied intent — their charge from Jesus was to take the gospel

to every creature. There was no limitation set on the number of people they planned to reach with the gospel. Suppose they had limited their effort of teaching only to those who would come to a place where the Apostles were speaking. Their intent would not have been to reach every creature!

2. They multiplied opportunity — they went to every house! “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (Acts 5:42). How many days each week could you go to your church building and find a lost person to teach? Most of the days in a week you would find none. However, most people are in their homes at night and many are there during the day. If we would win more, we too must multiply opportunity!

3. They multiplied the time devoted to teaching the lost. We noted that Acts 5:42 states that they taught daily. How much time is used today in reaching the lost? For most congregations, four hours in seven days, four hours in 168, with a few other seasonal efforts. It is reported that Christianity is becoming more of a minority religion in the world every day. We must restore a daily effort to reach the lost.

4. They multiplied the number of people working to reach the lost. The great commission has within it the great plan of passing on to all believers all things that the Lord commanded. This included the command to grow (II Peter 2:2; Heb. 5:12) and to go with the gospel. (Mt. 28:18-20; II Tim. 2:2). When persecution came upon the early church, “. . . they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.” (Acts 8:4). Taking the gospel to the lost is an “every member” job, not just a select few.

The early church had more Christians teaching more sinners more often and this resulted in more converts. When any congregation today has only a few members teaching only a few sinners, on a few occasions, the result is few conversions.

#### **THE EARLY CHURCH WAS UNITED AROUND THE ONE MISSION**

The early church was united around one common objective, one common goal, and that was reaching every man with the gospel of Christ. “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul . . .” (Acts 4:32). They were not divided in their understanding of what the work of the church was. All efforts pointed in one direction — reaching the lost! They never got side-tracked on a substitute mission. They never majored in the minors or minored in the major work that God gave His church to do.

Some thirty years after the great commission was given, Paul could write that the gospel was preached to every creature under heaven. (Col. 1:23).

#### **WHICH CHURCHES ARE GROWING FASTEST TODAY?**

The fastest growing churches today, the churches having the most conversions, are those who are committed to making all programs of the church evangelistic. The old idea of only one facet of the work being evangelistic, while numerous other programs were unevangelistic, often resulted in the indifference of the majority killing the zeal of the minority. This quarter's study is designed to help us see how the total program of the church can be evangelistic. There is something for all to do within the scope of one's talent and possible physical limitations. Use your talent and God will give you more and you can win more souls as you grow spiritually. Remember! The soul you save may be your own!

#### **THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

- (1). Can the entire Bible be described as a book on evangelism? Why?
- (2). Someone has said of John 3:16, that it glows with the flame of divine love. Why could this be said?

(3). Is there a danger of losing sight of the real priority of the Lord's work — evangelism? What might be substitute missions?

(4). Discuss benevolence and edification as means toward achieving the one mission? Is there a danger of the means becoming the end rather than a means toward a proper end?

(5). What does it mean to be united around the mission?

**Note to Teacher:** Read Chapter One of the Leadership in Personal Work Manual in preparation for this lesson.

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# Building An Evangelistic Church Today



by David Powers

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18). (Also read Acts 1:15; 2:41; 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7).

## INTRODUCTION

In our Scripture text, Jesus promised to build His church. If an evangelistic church is to be built today, it will be because Jesus builds it. Anything God controls, grows. This is true whether we are speaking of plants, animals, people, or the church. The church grew rapidly in the first century because those under the leadership of the apostles allowed Christ to rule. The rapid growth is shown by the verses in Acts in our Scripture text. Of course, if the church is after Christ's will, it will be evangelistic. Those who are interested in church growth are forever trying to find the right method. If we would just find the right program or combinations of programs, then the church would grow, it is believed. Many congregations have tried personal work classes and programs, visitation programs, radio and television programs, etc., and yet there is little or no growth. If the church is not growing, it is not being blessed by the Lord; and wise leaders, instead of trying to find alibis or making excuses, will very prayerfully and diligently seek to find what is wrong and correct it. Being the right kind of people and having the right kind of heart is much more important than the method we use to evangelize. In this lesson, we will concern ourselves with eight things the Lord will use to build an evangelistic church.

### 1. BUILD ON SPIRITUALITY. (Phil. 2:5).

The Bible says we are to become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). This means that we are to become like divinity. As we develop

spiritually, we have the mind of Christ. When a congregation begins to think like He who "came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10), we will have an evangelistic church. It takes spiritually minded people to give, work and live in such a way as to cause the church to grow. Only spiritually minded people will be the kind of teachers, bus workers, leaders, preachers, etc., needed to evangelize. People with the mind of Christ do not say, "I don't have time to visit; I cannot afford to give; I don't see how we can do more."

**APPLICATION:** Let us resolve to develop ourselves spiritually by putting in our schedule a portion of time each day dedicated to the study of God's Word and communicating with God through prayer. We should also schedule a time to go soul winning each week. We never have the time — we must make it! In this we will be "exercising ourselves in godliness."

## **2. BUILD ON LOVE. (John 13:34, 35).**

Jesus declares that love is the identifying characteristic of His disciples. He commands His people to love one another. A song popular a few years ago declared, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love." If God's people truly loved one another, people would be beating our doors down to get in and would eagerly listen to what we have to say. Our world is filled with hatred, violence, harshness, and bickering. Many people confide that they doubt very seriously if there is anyone in the world who really loves them. People rarely at work, school, play, or even at home, see acts of genuine love. If, when people of the world were around the people of God, they witnessed warm, affectionate, joyful, kind, considerate people who truly loved one another, we could not keep them away. They would want to become a part of us and would gladly listen to our message. However, instead of seeing a loving people in many congregations, we find people who do not enjoy being together, people who are harsh and unkind with one another, who cannot work together in the kingdom without backbiting, bickering, murmuring, and complaining against one another.

**APPLICATION:** Love is not just something we feel — it is something we do. It is difficult to command an emotion. Since Jesus commands that we love one another, let us treat one another always with acts of love. In doing this, we will love our Lord. This will lead us to love the lost and turn us into an evangelistic people.

## **3. BUILD AN EVANGELISTIC LEADERSHIP. (Amos 3:3).**

Any time two or more people agree to go in the same direction, they are going to have to be led. We cannot lead where we have not gone; we cannot lead people to be that which we are not. One of the greatest problems in the Lord's church today is leadership. We need strong, spiritual, loving, evangelistic elders and preachers. A wise eldership will recognize that people do not follow men who function like a board of directors, but rather are inspired by and will follow a real leader. Every great movement in the history of mankind went forward when people followed a leader. A wise eldership will make available to their congregation the benefit of their experience. They will also recognize the importance of having a good, strong leader to inspire and direct the people. How sad it is when an eldership is afraid of the preacher's influence and will not allow him to lead the people in evangelism.

**APPLICATION:** Far too often, elders meet in a closed room and decide what the members ought to do, then announce it and say "Go after it." True leaders will be out in the front setting the example for others to follow. Any elder or preacher who is not a soul winner ought to repent and set the example for the church to follow. As members of the church, we ought to encourage our leaders to set the example and commend them when they do.



#### **4. BUILD A TRAINED MEMBERSHIP. (Matt. 28:18-20).**

It is the Lord's will, that after we have taught and baptized people that we are to teach them to observe all things that He has commanded. There is to be teaching, before and after baptism. The teaching after baptism involves training converts to do all that Jesus has commanded. The apostle Paul said he wrote giving information that men might be trained how to behave themselves in the church. (I Tim. 3:15). The members of the early church, when scattered abroad, "went everywhere preaching the word." (Acts 8:4). Undoubtedly, with the modern and rapid means of transportation we enjoy in the twentieth century, God's people today can scatter more and touch the lives of more people than the average member of the church did in the first century. The sad truth is, however, that when we go, whether it be to the lady across the street or to the man who works in the office next door, we do not go with the gospel. God's people are the greatest people on earth. We do have a heart — we do care; however, most are afraid to talk with people about their salvation and are not evangelistic because they are afraid. By nature we are afraid to do anything that we have not experienced or been trained to do, and most people just have not been trained to be evangelistic.

There are not many soul winners in most congregations because we have not trained soul winners. The sad truth is that in many of our churches the preachers are not soul winners; the elders are not soul winners; and therefore, they do not train the membership to be soul winners. Many preachers have graduated from Christian colleges where they have been trained for the ministry and never one time sat at the feet of a man who did a good job as a located preacher or at the feet of a man who was a personal soul winner. Every preacher or elder who feels inadequate in this matter needs to quickly prepare himself and then begin to train the church to be soul winners. The lack of training is seen in many areas. Many bus workers go out, work, and bring in twenty on a bus when they could have fifty or sixty if they were properly trained. Many people who ride buses come only a few times and then do not return because the person responsible for the program on the bus was not trained, and the riders were bored. It is absolutely criminal the way we bore people — young and old — in our classes by teachers who are untrained. Only good training will get rid of the "ho-hum factor" in our Bible classes. This must be done if we are going to be evangelistic. Often, the song service is horrible because the song leader has not been trained. Anyone who is called upon to work in God's kingdom needs to be trained to do the best job possible. Whether we are a bus worker, a Bible class teacher, an elder, deacon, preacher, or janitor, every child of God needs to be trained to know how to lead others to Christ and to teach them the way of salvation. Without this training, it is impossible to have a truly evangelistic church.

**APPLICATION:** The solution to this problem is for every person in a position of responsibility, who is untrained, to take the initiative to get the training he needs. A wise leadership will look over every task that is being performed and evaluate the effectiveness of those who are serving in these various capacities and see that they receive the necessary training to do a good job. If you do not know where to get the training, look around for someone who is doing a good job and learn from him. Put forth the effort. God will bless you if you do.

#### **5. BUILD BY SOWING BOUNTIFULLY. (2 Cor. 9:6).**

We have the guarantee from God that if we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully. Usually, this Scripture is used in discussing money; however, the principle is true in any area that requires sowing. If we want a crop of wheat,

we must sow bountifully if we want to reap bountifully. If we want a crop of Christians, we must sow the seed of the kingdom, the Word of God (Luke 8:11), bountifully. An evangelistic church will do everything within its power to saturate their world with the gospel. We need to go with the gospel to every possible person in every possible way, teaching them with every possible means. This sowing is not something that is done once, and then it is ended; but it must go on and on. The church in the first century literally grew by leaps and bounds. It is interesting to go through the book of Acts and notice the rapid growth of the church. It is very rewarding to notice the connection between sowing bountifully and growing rapidly.

The Jerusalem church was accused of having filled their city with the doctrine of Christ. (Acts 5:28). Would not it be a wonderful thing if every congregation in America would truthfully be accused of having filled their city with the doctrine of Christ? The Jerusalem church sowed the seed of the kingdom bountifully by teaching and preaching daily in the temple and in every house. (Acts 5:42). How many congregations do you know where there is daily preaching at the church building and people going out teaching daily in every house? Even when the members were scattered by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the Word (sowing bountifully). (Acts 8:4). The early church grew rapidly because the Word of God grew and multiplied (Acts 12:24); the Word of God grew and prevailed. (Acts 19:20). To help us understand the connection between sowing bountifully and church growth, the Holy Spirit caused Luke to declare in Acts 6:7, "And the Word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

**APPLICATION:** Sit down at once and make a list of all of the various ways you can saturate your community with the gospel, and then commit yourself to the Lord. Promise Him you will do everything within your power to do it.

#### **6. BUILD EVANGELISTIC SERVICES. (I Cor. 14:15; I Cor. 11:30).**

These verses teach that we are to worship with spirit and that the Corinthian brethren were weak and sickly for not worshipping properly. In most of our congregations, we customarily sing an invitation song every time we meet; however, rarely does anyone respond to be saved. The reason is that instead of our services being designed to reach the lost, we design them for ourselves. We try to create a quiet, peaceful atmosphere and gear the singing, praying, and preaching to ourselves. Far too often our services are dull, dead, and unfruitful.

If you are trying to build an evangelistic congregation, a good place to begin is to "overhaul" the worship services. The services need to be alive and moving. We are trying to reach people from the "Pepsi generation." While all things are to be done decently and in order, our services need to be informal, warm, friendly, vibrant, and joyful. We should keep the lost in mind when we pray. Someone should be selected who will do a good job of leading the congregation. The singing needs to be spirited; the songs need to be evangelistic in nature, the preaching should be designed to teach the gospel to those who are lost and with an appeal to get them to walk down the aisle and obey the gospel. In most churches, nearly all the preaching is done to the members. A group of preachers was standing, discussing pulpit preaching some time ago. The consensus of opinion was that no one is saved from the pulpit. How sad for this attitude to prevail! If preachers will preach sermons designed to get people saved, members will become evangelistic and will try to get their friends and loved ones under the sound of the gospel. Why should they bring them to worship, only to hear the members "raked over the coals?" We strongly recommend that the sermons on Lord's Day morning be designed to reach the lost, with those on Sunday evening designed to meet the needs of those who are

members of the kingdom. If the preaching becomes more evangelistic, the church will become more evangelistic.

**APPLICATION:** Take a hard look at your worship services. Trim off the fat — so much time is wasted. Plan your Sunday morning services with the sinner in mind. Why should God send them or why should they return if there is nothing there for them?

#### **7. BUILD BY FAITH. (2 Cor. 5:7).**

How many congregations really walk by faith rather than by sight? Christianity is a system of faith. If we plan with faith, God will bless our works. Far too often when plans are being made or programs are being devised to help a congregation to become more evangelistic, if it is going to cost any money, someone inevitably speaks up and says, "I don't see how we can." We do not have to see. We do not walk by sight; we walk by faith. There are a number of things we do not know, but some things are always constant. It is always right to preach the gospel to every creature. Any effective means of doing this will be blessed by God if God's people are willing to walk by faith. Have you ever known of God's people getting into trouble because they walked by faith?

It takes a positive attitude to build an evangelistic church. You cannot build up positively while tearing down negatively. Faith creates this positive attitude. Weak faith will not buy buses, build buildings, fill buses, fill classrooms, inspire sacrifice in teachers, or cause powerful preaching. People are not motivated to sacrifice or serve very long by things. The only real and lasting motivation is not by what we shall receive, but rather by what we believe. The Sunday School teacher needs to believe that he or she is doing the most important thing in the world; the bus worker needs to believe that knocking on doors and getting people under the sound of the gospel is the most important thing in the world; the preacher needs to have faith that he is God's man and that he is doing the most important thing in the world, and that there is no more valuable man in town than he when he stands in the pulpit and preaches the gospel.

**APPLICATION:** The Bible says faith comes by hearing the Word of God. (Rom. 10:17). The Word of God says, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23). Paul declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13). The Bible says, "With God nothing shall be impossible." (Luke 1:37). If we, as God's people, will believe these truths, we will have the faith to build a truly evangelistic church.

#### **8. BUILD WITH PRAYER. (James 4:2; John 14:14).**

God blesses prayer. These Scriptures teach us that "we have not because we ask not." Most of us live as though it read, "we have not because we worry not." We worry and fret about everything under the sun, and yet we have the promise of God that if we ask, we will receive. These promises are concerned with asking for things to be a blessing to others — things that will enable you to lead people to Christ. If your prayers are selfish in nature, then do not expect God to bless you with things to satisfy your lust. (James 4:3). An evangelistic church realizes it is doing God's work; therefore, we will not only want to ask His guidance and blessing upon all we do, but we will also want to thank and praise Him for the victories He gives.

**APPLICATION:** One of the most rewarding experiences a church can ever have is to have a Saturday evening prayer service. Everyone gets down on his knees and talks to God about whatever is on his heart; praising Him for

blessings; talking with Him about our problems and needs; asking His blessing upon our work; praying for people by name. Such praying will cause people to fall in love with one another, with the Lord, to grow more spiritual, to have greater faith and dedication, and to work harder for God. The church will become a truly evangelistic church, where God is glorified (John 15:8), souls are saved, and people are joyful.

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1) Can a congregation be evangelistic and not be growing numerically?
  - (2). What can we do to sow bountifully?
  - (3). Is the failure to evangelize primarily a leadership problem? Why?
  - (4) What are some positive steps we can take to build love among our members?
  - (5). If one is a member of an unevangelistic congregation, and nothing is being done to change it, what should the individual do?
- 



## Building Through Letter Visitation

by Jimmy Dorris

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand." (Gal. 6:11).

#### INTRODUCTION

With these words written to the Galatian church, the apostle Paul was certainly pointing out the importance of using letters to teach the Gospel. Whether you understand him to mean that the original letter was in his own handwriting with the use of large letters so the church at Galatia would know by recognizing his personal handwriting that this letter was genuinely from Paul or whether you understand him to be referring to the actual length of the letter written to them, the lesson still comes through to us — Paul believed strongly in the use of letters to teach the gospel.

Hear Paul again as he refers to the repentance of the Corinthian church: "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing." (II Cor. 7:8-9). We know from this that Paul was able to use a strong letter as an instrument for so powerfully teaching the gospel that many erring Christians at Corinth were brought to repentance.

Sometime we fail to see the obvious. For all our lives we have heard much of the New Testament referred to as "epistles" or "letters", yet only recently have we begun to grasp the power for reaching and teaching the lost by means of letters. Surely, if the Holy Spirit saw the wisdom of inspiring men to write letters which contained gospel teaching for the Christians of the first century

and all centuries to follow, we ought to see that the use of letters for evangelistic purposes in our day is wise and powerful indeed.

Letters, however, were not a New Testament invention. Some kind of "written" communication goes back almost to the beginning of man's earliest attempts at using "letters" for information and communication. In Old Testament times we see such a man as David using letters to convey what was considered important communication. Sometimes evil purposes have been served by letters such as the one that David wrote to Joab instructing him to place Uriah in the thick of battle that he might be killed. (II Samuel 11:14-15). The proper or improper purpose and use of letters rests in the hands of the one writing these letters.

### **A LESSON FROM MAIL ORDER MERCHANDISING**

Many years ago enterprising business people learned they could capture the buying public's fancy by sending merchandise catalogs through the mail. The idea worked like a charm, and great business enterprises, such as Sears-Roebuck, owe their continued success to mail order merchandising. The mail carrier thus became, in a sense, a most important worker for the mail order business. Mail is used by more advertisers than any form of advertising with over five billion dollars being spent annually in this way.

Other than an actual personal contact, a message mailed directly is the most personal way of reaching an individual. Alvin Jennings, in his excellent tract "Teaching the Masses by U.S. Mail", refers to direct mail as one of the most dynamic tools of selling which is available in the twentieth century stating that it has aptly been called the "advance agent," the "missionary man," and "the handshake ahead of the meeting." He quotes Dr. Sidney Levy, well-known psychological research director, as saying, "Direct mail is very personal as compared to much other advertising, no matter what its specific form may be, merely because it does come in the front door into homes and presents itself to the individual. Then he has to deal with it — he has to take it into his hands and come to some decision about it — he has to react, respond to it in some way.

The effect of this is to force the individual to consciously think about the issue . . ."

All of this has a special message to the congregation and right on down to each individual who wants to "sow the seed of the kingdom" and publish "the word of the Lord . . . throughout all the region." (Acts 13:49).

Certainly direct mail projects, such as "Star", need to be used more and more; also, it is great to see a real emphasis now being placed on Bible correspondence courses, but I would like to suggest to you some letter projects that I have used with success for several years in sharing Christ with others.

### **LETTER PROJECTS**

First, there are those letters for sharing with your community the day-by-day things that happen, such as letters to the bereaved, the sick, the newlywed, the birth of a baby, the recently retired, the graduate, the shut-in, the new-comer, the special occasion. This is the church proclaiming herself to be a part of the immediate community she serves. Believe me, when I say that the people of a community look with great respect and favor on the church that shares life's happenings with them. The most important aspect of this community letter saturation is the fact you will find many accepting your invitation to study the Bible with them in their homes as you follow up these letters by knocking on the doors of those who have received them.

Second, are the special intra-member situations which call for a certain kind



of letter such as one to a recently restored person, a newly baptized person, one placing membership; (one to the congregation from whence the member comes) a delinquent member, (with a special form attached that may be filled out and returned stating why they are delinquent) birthday congratulations to all ages but with a special emphasis on those for small children and the aged. Of course, letters to the sick, bereaved and others among the members would also be in order here. Then there are "church" letters sent to the visitors and those letters that announce special events such as training classes, ladies classes, vacation Bible school, gospel meetings and the like. Also, letters from the elders and or preacher to the members are in order. The membership can also be encouraged to write notes of concern or appreciation to each other from time to time. These special intra-member letters will accomplish many fine results but once again the greatest result may be evangelistic. If indeed you have a congregation whose membership loves each other enough to use these kind of letters you will find a church which so loves the Lord and so loves and appreciates the fellowship they have found in Christ that it will not be very difficult to persuade them to share the Christ and His Gospel with others.

The third group of letters consists of those which are of a very special type. For some examples; I write "Message Visitations" wherein once per month I visit the shut-ins by mail and the letters read as though I just knocked on the door and was invited in to visit. (I have done this with some shut-ins for as long as four or five years.) Then, there is a series of letters to the new parents wherein once per month during the first year of a baby's life I visit by mail with the parent. A special "happy spiritual birthday" letter sent one year after a person has been baptized has proven most effective as have letters sent to bereaved families one year after the death of a loved one. There is also a special series to non-members or unfaithful ones.

Let us look a little closer at the idea of sending letters to non-members and erring children of God. You may be showing filmstrips to a prospect or using some other method of study. Now go a step further and once a week during your studies with the prospect write him a letter dealing with sin, the blessed story of God's love through Christ and the first principles of the gospel. Do not try to formalize, but rather write in a conversational way just as though you were actually talking with the prospect — share scriptures, illustrations and your own personal experiences in these letters and always try to include a good tract on the particular subject.

Perhaps, you will want to specialize in letter evangelism. This could mean that every week you would write many letters teaching the gospel to all who receive them. Keep a master record of each person you send a letter to; try to write up a series comprised of a dozen letters. You could add a new name or several names each week and have your prospects at different stages in their understanding. It would be fine if you could work hand-in-hand with those who teach home Bible studies — they go personally in the home to teach and you write and send the letters to supplement their teaching. This would be an especially good way for some who are not physically able to get around very much to help carry out the great commission.

The same things I have just said in regard to sending letters to non-members also apply in sending letters to the wayward, indifferent, erring members. After all, the Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Paul to write some very fine letters to Christians who needed to do some repenting. (I Corinthians, Galatians, etc.) Our Lord Christ Himself had John to pen seven different letters to seven churches in Asia. (Revelation, chapters 2 and 3). With Biblical authority like this we have every reason to enter into full letter ministry.

On and on I could go sharing with you in these "Mail Order Evangelism" type letters and related materials such as sending one tract per week for

several weeks to families in the community agreeing to receive them or the lengthy letter to an engaged couple wherein you really talk heart to heart with them. Perhaps, I have said enough to "prime the pump", encouraging you to investigate the great possibilities of this type of evangelistic method in your community. We must get the seed of the Kingdom sown and if you sow that seed thru mail or letter evangelism you are obeying the command of Christ to go and teach. As brother Alvin Jennings said: "God put His message in written permanent form, then told us to circulate it. Can we improve on this?"

### **SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS**

1. Letters are like animal tails! Some letters are like a rat's tail — sharp and to the point. Some are like a squirrel's tail — long and "fur" to the end. Others are like a rabbit's tail — just a suggestion!

2. Letters should be neat in appearance, written on appropriate stationery.

3. Letters should be hand written (very neatly), or typed rather than mimeographed or carbon copies.

4. Letters should always be worded in the spirit of love and the attitude of Christ.

5. Letters should always be accompanied by your earnest prayers for the recipients.

6. Before mailing, letters should always be checked for misspelled words, words omitted, grammatical errors, etc.

7. Letters you send should be recorded in some way for future reference if needed. (Kind of letter, to whom sent, date sent — if possible, it would be best to keep a file copy of each letter you send.)

8. Letters and other responses you receive should be promptly acknowledged.

9. Letters (mailings) are a good way (sometimes the only way) to get into apartment homes.

10. Letters written in the theme of certain holidays such as "Christmas", "Easter", "Fourth of July" (freedom), "New Years", etc. can be most effective and when done properly may do much to teach Bible truth as opposed to error so often associated with some of these holidays.

### **THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

(1). Suppose you had a good product to sell, what would be some good ways of getting that product before the public? Now relate this to "selling" the gospel.

(2). Sometimes we fail to see the obvious; relate this to Biblical usage of letters and the way letters could be used by you to teach the gospel.

(3). Letters to the bereaved, the sick, new parents, graduates and such like may also be considered evangelistic. Why do you agree or disagree with this statement?

(4). In what ways could you grow as a Christian by actually participating in a letter visitation program?

(5). Plan how you can get personally involved in a program of letter visitation. When did you say you planned to begin?

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A packet of numerous sample letters by Jimmy Dorris is available from Christian Lighthouse, Inc., P.O. Box 159, Madison, Tennessee 37115. Price is \$2.95. Add 50c postage (parcel post rate).

# 4

## Building Through Ministering To Spiritual Needs

by Carl W. Wade

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: . . . Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (ASV, Matt. 25:31-40).

### INTRODUCTION

"The Los Angeles Executive Club published some extremely interesting facts about salesmen's calls: (1) Eighty percent of all sales are made after the fifth call back. (2) Forty-eight percent of all salesmen make one call and quit. (3) Twenty-five percent make two calls and quit. (4) Twelve percent make three calls and quit. In other words, the difference between selling and failing to sell lies in the number of calls. It is hard to get some Christians to visit. It is even harder to get them to revisit. And yet, this revisiting insures success in both selling campaigns and church visitation programs for Christ.

"There is no substitute for personal contact. It benefits both the caller and the called upon. We like people better and they like us better as we really get to know each other. By repeated visiting our understanding is increased. Salesmen and Christians (who are salesmen for Christ) must be persistent. This is the road to success. Very few will respond on the first call.

"Apparently, both selling and visiting are discouraging to many people. All of us would like to sell every prospect on the first call. But, remember that all experience indicates this will not be done. Experience clearly shows that eighty percent of those eventually sold will be sold after and not before the fifth visit. Are you willing to work this hard to save someone's soul? Every saint this side of heaven ought to be concerned with every sinner this side of hell!" (Author unknown).

The writer of the above article has given us some good food for thought as we consider this lesson on "Building Through Ministering To Spiritual Needs." I believe the greatest amount of good to be done in visitation cannot be accomplished in one visit. Indeed, repeated, constant, consistent attention is needed in most cases where we visit.

### THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF VISITATION

Jesus taught the importance of visitation by example and command. Perhaps His most forceful application was in Matthew 25:31-40. Here the Lord likened the judgement scene to that of a shepherd gathering all of his flock before him. The inference to this is Himself being the shepherd and the flock

being the church. (Acts 20:28). From around the world the church will be gathered to give an answer "according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad". (2 Cor. 5:10). We will all give answer as to whether we have helped "the least of these" or turned away from their need and gone on our way like the "priest" and "Levite" in Luke 10:28-37.

James reminds us of our responsibility when he said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (1:27).

John commanded, ". . . let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18).

The early church was diligent in remembering the example and teachings of Jesus concerning helping others. In Acts 6:1-6 we see their concerned and loving care in assisting needy widows. The Bible states, "Neither was there any among them that lacked. . ." (Acts 4:34). This was because Christians were seeing after the needs of others. ~~This is true visitation.~~ It is not the social call to pass the time of day and talk about the weather. It is seeing a brother or sister, or any of our "neighbors", whom we are to love, in need, and supplying to the best of our ability, their needs. It is more than saying "be ye warmed and filled" (1 John 2:16). It is following the real meaning of the word "visit" which means to "inspect, to look upon, care for, exercise oversight, signifies (a) to visit with help (b) to visit the sick and afflicted, (c) to go and see, pay a visit to." (Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words). It is clear from the above passages and the definition of the word that when we "visit" someone, we see to their needs.

We must be reminded since each of us will "give an account of the things done in the body" and also to the concern we have had in seeing to the needs of the sick, stranger, poor, imprisoned, thirsty, hungry, etc., that it is the duty of each person to visit. No one else can fulfill your obligation to visit! No one else can visit for you anymore than they can give for you, partake of the communion for you, pray in place of you praying or be saved for you! We each have a responsibility to visit!

## TYPES OF VISITS

(1) **ABSENTEE:** One of the most frequent types of visits to be made is to those who have been absent on a regular basis from the worship and Bible study. We are commanded, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together . . ." (Heb. 10:24-25). The absentee needs to be "provoked" (i.e. "stimulated") into doing good. Since he or she is infrequent to the assembly, then we must go and encourage them. Absenteeism is a symptom of some underlying spiritual problem. It may be discouragement, worldliness, weakness, etc. It may be true that at one time all of us become weakened and have a tendency to slip back into an old manner of sinful living. It is at that time the church needs to maintain a strong grip on the weakening and wayward prone brother or sister in order to bring them back. Prayer, teaching, admonition and fellowship are greatly needed during this time of wavering. We are "to bear one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:4), that is; the pressing load of hardships in life. We must go to the absentee and seek out the cause of the absence. Then we must attempt to help them to return to faithfulness on a regular basis.

(2) **DELINQUENT:** This may be the hardest of visits to be made. There is great difficulty in reaching some types of delinquent members (Refer: Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:20-22). Paul said of Demas, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (2 Tim. 4:10). Some go back into sin because they love the world more than they love the Lord. We have a responsibility in trying to

restore them to their "first love" (Rev. 2:4). One of the best passages to use in teaching the delinquent member is found in Luke 15:11-24, the story of the prodigal son.

The delinquent should be shown how he is like the wayward son and how God (and the church) are like the father: (1) The young man is wasting his life in sinful living, (2) He is in the "pigpen" of life (Refer: 2 Peter 2:20-22), (3) He must "come to himself" (Lk. 15:18-20), (4) He must repent and return home (Lk. 15:21), (5) God awaits his return (Lk. 15:20), (6) There will be rejoicing in heaven at his return (Lk. 15:22-24, 15:7). The delinquent needs more than a polite "social call" to check his spiritual pulse. He is dying spiritually. He needs a transfusion by the Word of God! This should be done in love, yet with firmness to make him realize the error of his way. (See the book entitled, "Following Up New Converts and Restoring the Erring).

(3) **SICK, SHUT-IN:** Jesus said, "I was sick and you visited me. . .". That means that the "sheep", the "blessed" of the Father, saw after the needs of those who were sick. There may be dishes to wash, floors to clean, clothes to iron, a yard to mow, groceries to be bought, etc. To visit the sick means more than just sending a get-well card or wishing one a speedy recovery. Sometimes the situation may be such that there should be a very brief visit or no visit at all. The sick need rest. A young mother may need someone to take her children for a day or two. An elderly person may need someone to go get the medicine or take him or her to a doctor. Such a person may need prolonged care and repeated visits. Ask yourself, "If I were in their condition, what would I need or want the most?" Then take care of it! If the sick person is lost then it may be an opportune time to lead that one to Christ. Sickness many times softens the heart and makes a person realize their need for God.

(4) **THE NEEDY:** It is said of Cornelius, the centurion, he "gave much alms to the people". (Acts 10:2). By this generosity and his devotion to God he had a "good report among all the nation of the Jews" (Acts 10:22). His benevolent nature softened the hearts of even those who were his natural enemies. The giving of "alms" meant assisting the poor and the needy. Churches become known as compassionate, Christ-like congregations when they respond to the needs of those who may be victims of fires, floods, hurricanes, tornados or simply a family who's father is unable to work any longer due to an accident, or sickness of the mother, or some other burden is thrust upon them which requires the aid of compassionate Christians. Hearts are softened in a community when God's people go out and help the victims of some tragic occurrence of life or simply go into a poorer section of town and care for the poor. Even a "drink of cold water" will add to our reward in heaven. Benevolent visitation is not an end within itself. It is a demonstration of Christ-likeness. It opens otherwise closed doors and gives prospects to be taught the saving gospel of Christ. Jesus was not as concerned as to who was "worthy" of our help as He was with who was in "need" of our help!

(5) **NEW CONVERT:** The new babe in Christ needs immediate attention and care! Too many times we wait to "see how they're going to do." If we wait until they become absent before seeing to their needs then we have waited too long! If we treated our babies like that, the infant mortality rate would soar! Some type of "spiritual pediatric" program should be in constant service at each church. This should involve further home Bible study. Jesus said after they were taught and baptized, that we were to be "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19). The new converts in the first century "continued steadfastly (regularly) in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayers" (Acts 2:42). We must provide for the study, fellowship, worship and prayers with today's "new born" in Christ. Visiting the new convert will help him to feel a closer kinship, sooner, to his



older brothers and sisters in Christ.

(6) **NEW COMER:** The new move-in is often a prime prospect for conversion or restoration. Surveys have indicated that a large percentage of those who move from one city to another, or sometimes just across town, stop attending church services. He no longer has a "church home". Many people are not aggressive to go to a church that is new to them and make new friends. Many times this is difficult because some people treat strangers with a reserved coolness. Paul said we should be "given to hospitality" (Rom. 12:13). Information on the community and the church should be taken to the newcomer. Perhaps, take a cake, pie or some token of welcome and friendship. Leave your telephone number and offer to be of help. Many times the unpacking and setting-up house is an overwhelming burden, especially with small children. You may keep the children during the day while they are unpacking and moving.

(7) **BUS PARENTS:** Jesus commanded us to "Go out quickly . . . and compel them to come in. . ." (Lk. 14:21, 23). Children who ride regularly on the bus to church services are an indication that the parents are probably not faithful or loyal to any religious group. They are prime prospects to be taught the gospel. Many churches involved in bus evangelism are finding that this new field of evangelism is providing them with a multitude of valid prospects who have open doors and receptive hearts to the gospel.

(8) **PRISONER:** The prison ministry begun by many churches across the nation has been one of much fruit for the Lord's kingdom. A man or woman in prison has much time to think. Such a one is not distracted by the many events which take away the attention of the average person. Some will give diligent study to a systematic, easily understood study of the Bible. If a Bible study cannot be arranged in the local jail or prison, then use a Bible correspondence course to gain entrance behind the bars through the mail. Investigate with the local authorities as to the procedure you need to follow for any study with a convicted person. It may be difficult in some areas to gain access for such a study. However, prayer and persistence have proven effective in many cases to begin a prison ministry. Investigate other churches who have successful prison ministries in order to learn the necessary techniques in working with convicts and ex-convicts. I have worked in two congregations which had ex-convicts who were Christians and these men made outstanding contributions to the Lord's work.

(9) **BEREAVED:** Jesus attended to Mary and Martha when Lazarus had died. He wept with them. It is often best when visiting bereaved persons to not try to comfort them with a lot of words but to comfort with compassionate sharing of their sorrow. The presence of concerned, loving Christians is the greatest comfort of all. The reading of scripture and prayer is often appropriate. Omit such statements as, "I know how you feel", "It's not as bad as you think.", "You'll get over it with time." Romans 12:15 says, "Weep with them that weep." One of the most touching comments about our Saviour is in John 11:35, "Jesus wept". He did not try to lessen the loss of Lazarus by conversation even though he knew he would soon restore Lazarus to life. He participated with the grieving family. There is a great need for the bereaved to be visited days and weeks after the loss. The shock of the loss and all of the implications may not become a reality to the family until sometime after the death of their loved one. There will be the need of a friend who continues to be concerned and offers support during the days which follow. There will probably be many adjustments to be made and the presence of a compassionate Christian will help meet these new changes. For those who are lost, the loss of a loved one or friend can be used to remind them of their own frailty and certain death. It should be a time to show compassion and teach them the gospel. Death may open hearts which

have been otherwise closed to the gospel.

(10) LOST: (See Chapter 11, for a detailed study of this type of visitation.)

## VISIT TO BUILD THE CHURCH

The action of the early church was one of going, doing and preaching. The New Testament church did not function as just a "worshipping society". They did gather to worship and study God's word. But they also went out (Acts 5:42). They cared for the sick, the widows, the bereaved, the imprisoned, the hungry of body and soul. This is evident from the first few chapters of the book of Acts. If we summarized the church it must be said, "They cared and their caring was seen by their doing!" As James reminds us, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (2:17). The New Testament church grew to tremendous size and rapidly because their faith was translated by the love of God in their lives to a vital working of good deeds among the people as they preached the gospel. They truly followed the thoughts of Paul when he said, "...abound in love one toward another, and toward all men" (1 Thess. 3:12).

Notice the growth of the church after their outpouring of love in assisting others (Acts 2:44-46, 47; 3:1-11; 4:4, 32-37; 5:14; 6:1-6, 7). The people were drawn to the preaching of the gospel by not only the miracles performed but also by the compassionate visitation of the church among the sick, needy, hungry, etc. of the communities. This has been repeated many, many times in the church today throughout the world. Great growth has been realized when God's people cared enough to visit "the least of these." The blessings of visitation are summarized by Jesus, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34).

## HINTS FOR EFFECTIVE VISITATION

Jesus sent out His disciples "two by two". He gave them certain instructions (Luke 10:1-16). We need certain guidelines about our visiting today: (1) Set a certain day or night to do your visiting. Do not let anything interfere with this time. (2) Take someone with you — visit "two by two". This will give added strength and determination to your efforts. (3) Take different persons with you. This will encourage others to visit who might not otherwise go. (4) Be neat and clean. The first impression is the most lasting! You are a representative for Christ. Look the part! (5) Bath, shave and use a deodorant. Have shoes shined and nose powdered. (6) Do not overstay. Remember, "It is better to leave when they want you to stay, than stay when they want you to leave!" Twenty to thirty minutes can take care of most visits. (7) Keep records of who is visited and who does the visiting. Set up files with duplicate cards, keeping one copy in the office. Have a permanent secretary to keep records. (8) Look for prospects and opportunities to teach. (9) Look for every opportunity to help. The purpose of the visit is not simply to occupy time but to be of service. (10) Pray before you go out to visit. Pray for yourself to overcome the fear within you, pray for the success of the visit, and pray for the persons whom you will visit. Remember, visiting is a commanded work of the Lord. He will "be with you". God wants you to help others. He will bless you for your time invested in His service. See chapter three of the Leadership In Personal Work Manual on how to organize your visitation program.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1) What is the real meaning of the word "visit"? Compare some type of visiting done today as to the types of visiting mentioned in the Bible.
- (2) What are some of the needs of "new converts"?
- (3) Discuss the phrase "faith without works is dead, being alone", in relationship to church visitation and the individual Christian.
- (4) Examine each type of visitation in this lesson and briefly relate how they could lead to soul winning.
- (5) How does visitation show the interest of the church in the lost of the community?

**Note to Teacher:** Read chapters two and three of the Leadership in Personal Work Manual in preparation for this lesson.

# Building Through Telephone Evangelism



by Ray Frizzell, Jr.

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "... I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." (I Cor. 9:22, 23).

## INTRODUCTION

Tremendous changes are occurring in our society. Such terms as transiency, restless and on the move, tension, isolation, insulation, and selectivity of relationship, vividly portray the changing scene. In such an age, God's people must ever be alert to effective methods by which contacts can be made, concern manifest, and the teaching of God's will accomplished. Every available increase of knowledge and technological advance should be employed to herald the "good news" of salvation, joy and peace to be had through submission to the Christ and His powerful gospel (Rom. 1:16, 17; Phil. 4:4-7). We must constantly use "all means" possible for the saving of lost souls; we must do everything we can and employ every scriptural means available to cause people to know the redemptive love of God in Christ (Eph. 1:7; 2:4-8; I Cor. 9:22, 23).

A number of simple uses of the telephone in the work of the church has been witnessed over the years. Many congregations have employed such plans as a telephone "chain" or "pyramid" for rapid communication of urgent information to the local membership. The "dial-a-devotional" approach has been used in many areas as a service to the community. Invitations to gospel meetings have often been extended by telephone as pages of a local directory were divided among the members of a congregation.

Creativity on the part of many people has resulted in the awareness and increased use of the telephone as an exciting, viable, powerful instrument for both teaching the gospel and developing interest on the part of individuals to the

end that they might be taught the saving message. In the business world, many let their "fingers do the walking" both in buying and selling products and in promoting and securing services. If the telephone is effective and profitable in the business world, why should (could) it not be used successfully to reach people with the gospel? This lesson concerns some practical uses for evangelism to which the telephone may be put.

## **THE USE OF THE TELEPHONE TO SEEK THE TEACHABLE**

In his outstanding book, "Go Ye Means Go Me, Ivan Stewart tells of the successful use of the telephone in campaigns in setting up appointments for face-to-face teaching situations. Such an approach in any area, whether on a special campaign effort or in local personal evangelism programs, is certain to open many doors for teaching and winning lost souls to Christ. Both this book by Ivan Stewart, and especially his chapter on "Telephone Evangelism," would be profitable reading for all who endeavor to gain a greater "know-how" and insight into setting up home studies or cottage meetings through the use of the telephone.

A telephone survey in connection with a campaign in one metropolitan area, where the church is strong numerically, resulted in over 2,500 requests for correspondence courses, and some 750 persons being sent literature designed to answer specific questions or deal with problems which they had mentioned during the telephone interview. In this same survey, which was conducted primarily by young people, many children were enrolled for Bible classes in area congregations. The purpose of this survey was to cultivate the community in the early phases of a campaign by offering a variety of services which would turn open countless doors for teaching opportunities, as well as give a clearer picture of the religious make-up of the city. Such a service survey initiates contacts and conversations which reveal the need of individuals in the community and enables us to more effectively plan to serve those needs, and especially as relates to the well being of immortal souls. This use of the telephone serves to sow the seed of the kingdom and hear answer requests for assistance in gaining a greater knowledge and understanding of God's will for man.

In using the telephone to seek out those desirous to learn the way of the Lord, it is well to remember that the telephone is not the appropriate instrument for lengthy, in-depth studies of the scriptures; such involved studies can best be conducted in a person-to-person setting. However, the telephone is an effective, energy-saving, time-saving instrument for discovering those who are teachable and the initiating of steps for personal contact and study teaching.

## **THE USE OF THE TELEPHONE TO TEACH THE SEEKING**

While the recorded "dial-a-devotional" approach has touched many lives with brief instruction and encouragement (no doubt with great benefit in many instances), it has usually fallen short of any effective, continuing evangelistic outreach in individual lives. A "number to dial" in case further study is desired, or the offer of a piece of literature to those requesting such by mail (or phone) may find little response.

A means of mass instruction which has been developed and applied to many fields, though primarily used by the medical profession, lends itself to effective use in the area of Biblical instruction by telephone. It is basically a telephone teaching program using a given number of tapes (usually from 100 to 200), approximately five minutes in length; brochures are printed for wide distribution with the list of subjects available (e.g., various medical problems,

diseases, etc.) and the public is invited to call. A secretary will in turn play any of the tapes the caller desires to hear. This approach is one that can be effectively used through the cooperative efforts of congregations in an area, or even by one local church. Needless to say, the quality and content of such instruction by phone must be of the highest nature and finest form; each sentence must be carefully considered for clarity of thought and doctrinal soundness; the production quality and the voices used to record the messages must be the very best. To insure a personal contact from a good percentage of the calls, an offer of a special booklet or tract on the theme in which interest has been shown must be offered and ease of making the request for such clearly set forth. Obviously, such a service offered to a community must be made known through the most advantageous advertising media and a list of themes which may be requested would need to receive wide distribution.

Some congregations have found that when all absentees from the Sunday worship, are called, that the number of absentees has been reduced nearly one-half. This is done by some of the older ladies in the congregation. It is done in a very tactful way, stating that the person was missed and inquiring to see if anything was wrong. This is done on Monday.

The potential for effective evangelism through the use of the telephone has not begun to be unlocked and utilized. It is a powerful instrument which we take for granted in our daily lives for business and pleasure; it can be even more powerful for the promulgation of the gospel of Christ.

## ADVANTAGES VERSUS DISADVANTAGES

Obviously, there are numerous advantages in the use of the telephone as an instrument of outreach, or this chapter would not have been included. The more obvious advantages would include: it is inexpensive, saving both time and money; in the fast pace of our age, we are able by the telephone to get to the greatest number of people in the shortest possible time; persons can be conditioned for a personal visit or contact and thus any irritation or annoyance from being called upon at an inconvenient time is avoided; the telephone has access to persons who might not otherwise be reached, for it allows one to get past barricaded doors, and managers of apartment buildings; many persons with activity-filled lives will take a few minutes on the phone and respond favorably who might not be so responsive if approached first in person; there is also the immediacy of response; and, by no means of least importance, the advantage of private intimacy and anonymity of conversation under many circumstances.

The chief disadvantage of the telephone as a medium of evangelism is the inability to be aware of the response and reaction of a person as definitively as one might in a face-to-face study. This is true, obviously, because the perception of sight is missing as you speak with a person by telephone. In addition, the intonation and inflections which convey the earnestness and sincerity of your efforts may not come across to the same degree as in a personal meeting. In a plan whereby one would dial for a recorded message, there is no means available for accurate perception of immediate response or understanding on the part of the one who has made the call.

In planning any activities for evangelism which utilize the telephone, we should be aware of the obstacles which would be disadvantageous to our efforts and strive to implement approaches which can accentuate the numerous advantages.



## **TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF THE TELEPHONE IN EVANGELISM**

In presenting God's truth by telephone, we must work to get a response that counts, that will in time provide opportunity for personal contact and teaching. The purpose of any planned effort of "telephone evangelism" is to reach and win souls for Christ. The same basic principles which must be wisely used in person-to-person evangelism are applicable to the use of the telephone in evangelism. The practice of the golden rule, so vital to all human relationships, is especially critical for telephone evangelism since one can brush you off with one quick motion of hanging up the receiver. What is said and how it is said will receive a more immediate judgement and response than a face-to-face situation might produce. What an individual thinks about you, the church, and the Christ you represent may be resolved from the approach, the vocabulary and tone of voice used. The proper image of yourself and the church must be projected as well as the presentation of the truth of God in its purity and simplicity.

For the greatest possible effectiveness, one must project sincere love and concern for God and for mankind (2 Cor. 5:14) With kindness and courtesy, friendliness and enthusiasm, the message of redemption (which all persons need and which provides help for every problem and situation) must be distinctly, expressively and positively presented. When a child of God really loves and appreciates the gospel message, and when he truly desires the salvation of the lost, he can just be himself in clearly sharing that wonderful story of love (Acts 4:20; 8:4). Such loving concern will naturally prompt a sincere desire to be understood and well received.

In telephone efforts involving "live conversation," as opposed to taped messages, one must be alert not only to the words being spoken by the person but also alert for any needs, fears and doubts which are not verbally expressed. A word which is spoken at the proper time can change the course of another person's life.

The use of the person's name provides a personal warmth and establishes the sense of empathy which can produce an effective response. All soul winning efforts must be preceded by prayer and preparation. The preparation relative to telephone evangelism will involve a pre-planned approach and points to be noted during the conversation. Such planning must, of necessity, include the flexibility which gives due regard to listening carefully rather than present a mechanical "recitation" in which we do all the talking. Our knowledge of a person's needs or response will not be increased if we do not have the ability to adjust our planned approach or "dialogue." No one is prepared for effective telephone evangelism who has not developed skills that include an attentive, listening ear (and heart).

### **THE VOICE IS IMPORTANT**

Telephone evangelism places great emphasis upon the voice for it is only through the voice that the person at the other end of the line can perceive you, your interest and attitude. The voice has been referred to as "an extension of yourself." Since our real-self is concentrated in our voice, we should use every means possible (if we are to engage in telephone evangelism activities) to develop clarity, pleasantness and a tonal quality which is warm and pleasing. Numerous exercises involving breathing and breath control can improve our quality of voice (it is assumed that such things as correct diction, enunciation and pronunciation are understood to be vital for effective communication).

Our voice can be more effective if we will simply learn to smile more (Christians have so much about which to be enthusiastic); we are told that it takes seventy-two facial muscles to frown and only fourteen to smile. When we

are wearing a sincere smile, our voice will reflect it in our tonal values. It might be advantageous for us to spend some time before a mirror in an effort to learn how to smile (if thoughts of the joys we experience "in Christ" have not produced a radiant expression and sincere smile); such an effort will surely see an improvement in voice quality. In any event, give ample consideration to how you sound to the person with whom you are conversing by telephone.

### **CONCLUSION**

The wise, prayerful use of the telephone can result in countless souls being reached with the gospel of Christ as interest is developed and honest hearts "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21). Enthusiastic children of God trained to use the telephone can reach multitudes of people in any community in an inexpensive but highly effective fashion. (Isa. 55:11). When Christians "dial for souls," they can do so with the realization that every one contacted is a person who needs what the gospel of Christ has to offer for the betterment of his earthly pilgrimage and the hope of eternal life in that heavenly city. Let us all determine to use the telephone to reach more people and win more souls!

### **THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

- (1). Are we using the potential of communication as we should (could) to proclaim the gospel message?
  - (2). In your experience as a Christian, what use have you personally made of the telephone for the purpose of soul winning?
  - (3). What specific uses of the telephone for evangelism can be immediately implemented by this congregation?
  - (4). Relative to the use of the telephone, how have the sons of this world been wiser than the sons of God? (see Luke 16:8).
  - (5). Evaluate the statement: "the message must ever remain the same; the message of getting the message to a lost and dying world may, in keeping with Biblical principles, be altered from one age or generation to the next."
  - (6). What groups of persons (age, etc.) in the church might be effective in telephone evangelism?
  - (7). When properly done, which do you consider the "easiest": telephone evangelism, or door-to-door activities?
-



# Building Through Soul Winning With The "Way of Salvation" New Testament

by Clayton Pepper

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." (Psalm 126:6).

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years a marked King James Version of the New Testament entitled "Way of Salvation New Testament" has been published for soul winning. In the lower right front cover are the words "You Can Learn The Way of Salvation in Less Than 10 Minutes!! Please turn to page 256." This begins a chain reference of scriptures, all underlined in red. This Bible can be used to give to prospects for their own personal study or as a teaching tool for you to use, explaining the verses to the prospect. The eight cases of conversion have been published in the back of the Bible with certain passages underlined in red. Also, five charts have been included relating to salvation and the church. This one-lesson approach offers perhaps the simplest systematic approach available for teaching the lost. (Total Evangelism II is "Introduction to Soul Winning" and includes many different systematic methods of teaching the lost. You will want to study this course following this quarter's study.)

## THREE THINGS ESSENTIAL IN SOUL WINNING

Brother M.F. McKnight, who designed this method, writes: Three things are essential in developing a soul-winner. They are the message, a method of teaching the message, and motivation to get out and teach lost souls. If you leave out any one of these three essentials you will fail as a soul-winner.

**MESSAGE** - "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." (Psalm 19:7). I do not know anything that can convert the soul other than the law of the Lord. We are told by Paul (II Tim. 3:15) that the holy scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation. James 1:21 says, "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." The word of God is the only thing I know that can make us "wise unto salvation" and can save our souls. His word is indestructible. (Matthew 24:35). His word will be used as the standard of judgement "in the last day." (John 12:48). When we put the word of God from us we judge ourselves "unworthy of everlasting life." (Acts 13:46). God's word illuminates our way from earth to heaven. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway." (Psalm 119:105). It is not enough just

to know God's word, we must be able to "rightly divide it" (II Tim. 2:15).

**METHOD** - There are many methods of teaching God's word. All with which I am acquainted are good. The method is the vehicle we use in getting the message of salvation into the heart of a lost soul. We may use gestures, pictures, charts, filmstrips, movies, blackboards, flannel boards, etc. All of these are methods of teaching. They assist us in getting the message across to someone who is lost. **WARNING:** Do not place too much emphasis on the method. The emphasis must be placed upon the message. However, some method is essential in teaching His will. Quite often I hear someone say, "I showed them the filmstrips but did not baptize anyone." A statement like that one places emphasis upon the method instead of the message. I believe that this would be the proper way to say it, "I taught them God's word using the filmstrips." It is possible to employ some method without ever teaching the will of God. **THE WAY OF SALVATION NEW TESTAMENT** is a good combination of the message and a method.

**MOTIVATION** - The message and the method are useless in saving souls without some motivation. Pulpit sermons on soul winning, example, and personal evangelism training schools assist in motivation. I have found that those who are genuinely converted will find a way to win souls. Love will find a way.

### **USING THE WAY OF SALVATION NEW TESTAMENT AS A TOOL IN CONVERSIONS**

Many people would study the Bible if they had some simple guide to follow. This specially marked New Testament provides a simple method. It has a full color cover, back and front, inside and outside. A prominent sign on the front cover says, "YOU CAN LEARN THE WAY OF SALVATION IN LESS THAN TEN MINUTES, please turn to page 256." I give this already-marked New Testament to people who are concerned about their souls. The instructions are so simple that they do not have to know the books of the Bible. If they can read and count they can find God's will for the salvation of souls. Some are baptized within a few minutes but most take a few days. I average, with God's help, at least one convert per week with this tool alone. Last year two people requested baptism within eight minutes from the time I handed them the book. One Satan-worshipper was baptized in four days, three Methodist Sunday school teachers were converted within three days, several teenagers have responded after reading the marked passages. I gave a sample copy to a bus captain, he gave it to a bus-rider on Sunday and we baptized the bus-rider's mother Thursday after she had studied it. Several churches are using the **WAY OF SALVATION NEW TESTAMENTS** in their bus evangelism programs. A church in St.

Petersburg, Florida, obtained 1,000 copies to give to all newcomers to their city. A church in Dallas, Texas, obtained the same amount to use in follow-up work on their state fair. I know of some who were converted after receiving a copy of the book in the mail. Brethren, the world is lost, sincere people want to know the truth. Let us give it to them by every legitimate means at our disposal.

## THE MESSAGE AND THE METHOD

As you read these scriptures discuss how you would explain them to the person whom you might be teaching.

Paul explains what the gospel is, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third according to the scriptures." (I Cor. 15:1-4).

All have sinned: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23).

Sin pays wages; "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23) (cf Rev. 21:8).

Christ took the penalty of our sins upon Him: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:6, 8). (cf Isa. 53:3-7).

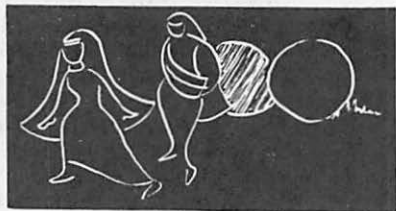
The gospel is:



The Death



Burial



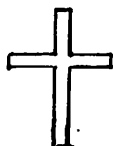
and Resurrection

Jesus said go preach the gospel to every creature: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk. 16:15-16).

How does one obey the gospel? "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of



life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.” (Romans 6:3-7).



One dies to sin  
through repentance



One is buried  
in baptism



One rises to walk in  
newness of life.

Those who have obeyed the gospel have been made free from sin: “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” (Romans 6:17-18).

The gospel was preached on Pentecost and lost men were told what to do to be saved: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:37-39).

Those who do not obey the gospel will be lost: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;” (II Thess. 1:7-9).

Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him: “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” (Heb. 5:8,9).

Man does have a part in his salvation: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” (Jas. 2:24). Those who are blessed are those who do the Lord’s commandments: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city.” (Rev. 22:14).

### EXAMPLES OF CONVERSIONS

The “Way of Salvation New Testament” has a portion of the book of Acts included in the back. This includes the following cases of conversion: The Pentecostians, Acts 2:37-47; The Samaritians, Acts 8:12, 13; The Ethiopian Noblemen, Acts 8:27-40; Captain Cornelius, Acts 10:1-48; A Merchant Named Lydia, Acts 16:14, 15; The Philippian Jailor, Acts 16:30-34; Crispus of Corinth, Acts 18:7, 8; Saul of Tausus, Acts 22:6-16.

The following charts are included in the back of the Bible for further study.

## SALVATION FROM SIN

WHAT IS SIN? I JOHN 3:4 JAS. 4:17

ALL HAVE SINNED. ROM. 3:23 I JOHN 1:8

### NOT ENOUGH TO BE

**IN A WAY** PROV. 16:25 JER. 10:23  
MATT. 7:13-14

**RELIGIOUS** GAL. 1:13-14  
ACTS 8:26-29

**HONEST** ACTS 23:1  
ACTS 22:16

**MORALLY GOOD** ACTS 10:1-6 & 48

**BELIEVER** JAS. 2:19-26

**ALMOST PERSUADED** ACTS 26:27-29

### "HEAR YE HIM"

MATT. 17:5

**BELIEVE** MARK 16:16  
JOHN 8:24

**REPENT** ACTS 2:38  
LUKE 13:3

**CONFESS** MATT. 10:32-33  
ACTS 8:37

**BAPTIZED** MARK 16:16  
ACTS 2:41

**WHO?** MATT. 28:19  
ACTS 8:12 **HOW?** ROM. 6:3-4

**THUS ADDED** ACTS 2:41-47

**REDEEMED** ACTS 20:28  
COL. 1:13-14

### ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST

EPH. 1:3

**BLESSED ARE DEAD**

Rev. 14:13

**ETERNAL LIFE**

I John 5:11

**SALVATION**

II Tim. 2:10

**NO CONDEMNATION**

Rom. 8:1

**NEW CREATURE**

II Cor. 5:17

Baptised Into Gal. 3:27

Confess Unto Rom. 10:10

Repent Unto Acts 11:18

Believe Unto Rom. 10:10

HEB. 5:14 ROM. 2:8-9

### "SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES" (John 5:39 & Acts 17:11)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Draw a line from the case of conversion to what the BIBLE says they did. Then draw a line from "YOU" to what you did to be saved.

JEWS (Acts 2:36-41)	page 173	• HEARD
SAMARITANS (Acts 8:5, 12)	page 183	• BELIEVED
SIMON (Acts 8:13)	page 183	• REPENTED
EUNUCH (Acts 8:26-39)	page 184	• CONFESSES CHRIST
SAUL (Acts 9:3-18; 22:16)	page 185	• WERE BAPTIZED
CORNELIUS (Acts 10:1-48)	page 187	• SAVED BY FAITH ONLY
LYDIA (Acts 16:13-16)	page 198	• "GOT RELIGION"
JAILER (Acts 16:25-34)	page 199	• PRAYED THROUGH
CRISPUS (Acts 18:8)	page 202	• JOINED DENOMINATION
Y O U		• ACCEPTED CHRIST

**DOES THE ACCOUNT OF YOUR CONVERSION COMPARE COMPLETELY WITH WHAT THE BIBLE DEMANDED OF THESE PEOPLE?** (Read Romans 8:16 also Jeremiah 10:23 and Prov. 14:12)

# AFTER CONVERSION

ACTS 2:38  
ACTS 22:16  
SAVED - PAST SINS

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

**NEW CREATURE** II COR. 5:17  
ROM. 6:4

**BABES IN CHRIST** I PET. 2:2  
I COR. 3:1-2

**CRITICAL PERIOD** MATT. 4:1-11  
I COR. 10:11-13

**POSSIBILITY OF FALLING** JOHN 8:31  
I JOHN 2:1-2,  
ACTS 8:17-24

**REPRESENTATIVE** II COR. 3:2  
I TIM. 4:12

**CHRIST YOUR EXAMPLE** - HEB. 12:1-2  
I COR. 3:1-7

I TIM. 4:16  
REV. 2:10  
SAVED ETERNALLY

## GOD WANTS YOU TO

**LOVE HIM FIRST** MATT. 22:37  
MATT. 10:37

**STUDY** II TIM. 2:15  
ACTS 17:11

**PRAY** PHIL. 4:6-7  
I TIM. 2:8

**ASSEMBLE** HEB. 10:25-27  
MATT. 18:20

**GIVE** I COR. 16:1-2  
II COR. 9:6-7

**HELP SAVE OTHERS** MATT. 28:19-20  
JOHN 15:1-6 & 16

# THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

**Founder Christ**  
MATT. 16:18

**Where Jerusalem**  
ISA. 2:3 ACTS 2:5,47

**When AD33**  
ACTS 2:

**Head Christ**  
EPH. 1:22

**ORGANIZATION**  
PHIL. 1:1

Elders Tit. 1:5-7, I Pet. 5:1-3, Acts 20:28, I Tim. 3:1-7  
Deacons Acts 6:1-6, I Tim. 3:8-13  
Members Acts 2:41-47, Col. 1:13, I Cor. 1:2

**NAME**  
EPH. 3:15

Church of God I Cor. 1:2, Acts 20:28  
The Body of Christ Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22-23  
Churches of Christ Matt. 16:18, Rom. 16:16  
Bride of Christ Rom. 7:4, Rev. 21:9

**NAME**  
EPH. 3:15

Disciples John 15:8, Acts 11:26  
Saints Rom. 1:7, I Cor. 1:2, Phil. 1:1  
Brethren Luke 8:21, Gal. 6:1  
Children Gal. 3:26, I John 2:1  
Christians Acts 11:26, 26:28, I Pet. 4:16

**CREED**

Jesus Christ Matt. 16:16-18, 10:32-33; Acts 8:37

**RULE OF FAITH  
& PRACTICE**

Word of God Matt. 28:18-20, II Tim. 3:16-17, II Pet. 1:3, Jas. 1:21

**WORSHIP**

Sing Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19, I Cor. 14:15, Heb. 2:12  
Pray I Thes. 5:17  
Teach Acts 5:42  
Communion Acts 20:7, I Cor. 11:23  
Contribution I Cor. 16:1-2

**MISSION**

Save Souls Matt. 5:13-16, John 15:8, 16, I Tim. 4:16, II Tim. 2:2, Heb. 5:12

**WARNING**

Be Faithful Matt. 15:9; Matt. 15:13, Gal. 1:6-8, II John 9: , Rev. 22:18-19

## CONCLUSION

After presenting the lesson, ask the prospect if he understands, if so ask him to become a Christian now. If he does not understand, teach him further, then read the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian noblemen in Acts 8:26-39 and ask him if he knows as much as this man did. If so, ask him to make the decision now that this Ethiopian made.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1). What kind of teaching situations and prospects would a lesson like this be best suited?
- (2). Discuss how opportunities can be made to teach this lesson.
- (3). Should the wrongs of the prospect be discussed, when the truth has not been present in a positive way? What is meant by the statement, "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness?"
- (4). Should we conclude that the prospect is not interested because we cannot convert him with one lesson? Discuss how to continue with several planned lessons, such as filmstrips.
- (5). Should the baptistry be ready for use at all times?

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The "Way of Salvation New Testament" may be ordered from Christian Lighthouse, Inc. Price \$2.00 each. Add 25c postage and tax where applicable.

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# Building A Successful Youth Ministry

by Lytle Thomas

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." (Jeremiah 1:6-7).

## INTRODUCTION

Before we take a look at the mechanics involved in building an evangelistic youth ministry, let us consider three important questions and examine the scriptural answers that will aid us in preparing for the opportunity that lies ahead.

1. Does God expect teenagers to be evangelistic?

Paul said to the Romans, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7:4).

This verse points out the real reason for our marriage to Christ: "that we should bring forth fruit from God," and did not exclude teenagers in this statement. In John 15:2, Jesus said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." In this statement, Jesus does not exclude teenagers. II Samuel begins by saying, "The child Samuel ministered unto the Lord." I believe that it is easy for us to understand that God does expect Christian teenagers to be evangelistic.

## **2. Is there a need for an evangelistic youth program today?**

In Matthew 28:19 our Lord commands us to take the gospel to all the world. We need to understand that having parties and training our youth to hold devotionals is not going to accomplish the very task that our Lord asks of us.

In everyone's life there has to be a time for rest and relaxation. Therefore, I find nothing wrong with teenagers having some wholesome entertainment. Entertainment under Christian supervision is very wise and should be continued. The danger is in mistaking entertainment for serving the Lord. We have missed the point of our marriage to Christ. Just because a church owns a bus and takes a group of young people to a youth rally or seminar does not mean that it has an evangelistic youth program. Tragic as it is, many of our youth have been deceived into thinking that they are serving God. All of these activities are good in their place. However, that place is second to evangelism. If we teach evangelism, then entertainment, devotionals, and youth rallies will all fall into place.

## **3. Can parents hinder their children from being evangelistic?**

Too many times we as parents and teachers have tried to protect our precious children too much. There is certainly no sin in protecting our children. However, when our protection interferes with their spiritual growth, we have sinned against our children. We are many times more concerned with our children's physical growth than with their spiritual growth. If parents put Christ first in their lives, then it will be easier for them to understand a child's desire to put Christ and His church ahead of sports, education, and social standing.

In some cases, teenagers are more spiritually mature than their parents. When Jesus was found in the temple, by his parents, who did not fully understand the need for their son's involvement in religious affairs, he said, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

## **OUR TEENAGERS SEARCH FOR A SOUL**

Many times when we lose a loved one we find ourselves carrying out his last request or will. Sometimes we go to great expense to fulfill our loved one's last request. In Matthew 28:19, our Lord, who loved us so much that He gave His life for us, made His last request while on earth. It was to go and teach all nations. We realize this commandment applies to teenagers as well as to adults. In the New Testament we find there are only two things teens are not required to do. They cannot serve as elders or as deacons, but all other commandments apply to Christian teenagers. With this in mind, the elders, where I serve as director of youth activities, have given their approval to the following "Search for a Soul" program.

## **TEENAGERS WIN SOULS WITH BUSES**

Our bus ministry, which consists of four routes, is run entirely by our teenagers and staff, with teens being bus captains, secretaries, program leaders, and workers; all drivers are adults. When the teenagers took the bus ministry,

the average was about 30 riders on two bus routes. Fourteen months later, the average attendance was 110 riders on four bus routes.

For months, Bus No. 1 seldom had more than ten riders. After staffing this route with teenagers, the average attendance for all four services per week in one month was 36. The teenagers who work in the bus ministry spend about 18 hours per week with their bus work, trying to bring more children to learn about Christ.

The Lord has blessed the youth with many rewards in the bus ministry. They have engaged in home Bible studies in which bus teams are winning the parents of bus riders to Christ. There are Bible studies in progress regularly with teenagers who ride the buses. Two of the workers were at one time bus riders. Some of the bus riders are involved in our preacher training class and have already delivered sermons. Other bus riders are participating in a song leader training class and are directing song services. Some bus riders are conducting cottage Bible studies and some have led their parents to Christ.

### **TEENAGERS GO FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE**

Some of the youth are unable to work in the bus ministry because of conflicting employment schedules. Therefore, they are given the opportunity to take part in a home Bible study program, which is under the direction of an 18-year old worker.

This program requires much preparation. Most of those who participate have had a one-year course on soul winning. Some of this group have finished the Youth Evangelism course at the Great Commission School. When one who has not completed the course of training sets up a home Bible study, he is always accompanied by one who has finished the course.

The Home Bible Study program begins each Saturday morning with survey teams going from house to house setting up Bible studies and enrolling students in a Bible correspondence course. If one expresses an interest in a Bible study when the survey team approaches his door, the team must be qualified to conduct an on-the-spot Bible study. Usually, an interested person will not want to study at that time but he will set a designated time for the survey team to come back for a study. Many people that do not want a home Bible study are interested in enrolling in the Bible correspondence course.

During one year while in the training course, the young Christians baptized 25 precious souls. Seventy-five percent of those are working for Christ. Of the twenty-five that have fallen away, some moved to a community where there was no program in the local congregation to make young Christians soul winners. We are working to restore these erring.

Now that we have finished the training course and organized the home Bible study phase of the "Search for a Soul" program, we are having excellent success. Our young people will average ten home Bible studies per week. Many of the prospects are attending worship services.

As our "Search for a Soul" program continues to grow, we expect to see many souls won for Christ.

### **ORGANIZING A SEARCH FOR A SOUL PROGRAM**

**Selecting a Youth Leader.** Let us look at the mechanics that will help us to build an evangelistic youth program. The first step to consider is the selection of a man to lead this effort. This man must have several important qualities: a very zealous evangelistic attitude and lifestyle, many hours of personal evangelism experience, a love for lost souls, and an ability to identify sin and

take a stand against it. His age is not a major factor. This leader must be able to communicate with and like teenagers. Also important in the consideration of a man for this position is the attitude of his wife. She, like the man, must possess certain qualities such as a love for lost souls, a willingness to open her home (and her refrigerator) to teenagers, an ability to counsel teens, and the strength to identify sin and to stand against it regardless of social pressures.

This couple will give both their days and their nights to young people. It must be an unselfish total commitment to God. One thing that we should keep in mind while selecting a youth director is that teenagers will not follow someone they do not like. We must choose this couple or man very prayerfully. Teenagers are not easily deceived. The success of any program will be determined by this selection.

### **WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITY GROUPS**

Once a leader has been selected, the next step is to change the Wednesday night educational program. The goal to be accomplished in this change is to motivate teenagers to want to attend class. This aim can be achieved by offering a type of activity program during the class period. Let me suggest the following activities:

**Youth and Golden Years.** This class will meet for a devotional and then divide into small groups of six. These groups must be led by responsible persons. Each group will go to the home of a shut-in and conduct a short worship service with songs, prayer, and an inspirational thought. After the service, group members will have the opportunity to help with any household duties that the shut-in is unable to do himself, or to set up an appointment to come back at a later date to cut grass, paint, etc. It may be necessary to do the latter in order to get back to the church building by the time the Bible study hour is over. Not only will this activity give the young people a chance to serve other Christians in need, but it will also reassure the visited shut-in that Christian love and concern do exist.

**Mission Class.** For this activity select a mission-minded person to get a list of missionaries and then assist the teenagers in writing to them. In the letters, the teenagers will ask the missionaries if they can be of service to them. Usually the teens will receive responses asking them to collect clothing, send religious literature, and spend a little of their spare time writing to pen pals.

**Promotions Class.** Use the class time to make posters and decorate bulletin boards. These can be used either in the church building itself or outside the church to promote attendance drives, gospel meetings, and any youth or congregational activity. Let me suggest that all materials made be catalogued so that they can be used again at a later date.

**Scripture Chain Class.** For the teenagers who are already interested in studying the Bible, a class on how to conduct an open Bible study should be started. The scripture chain used in Ivan Stewart's book, "From House to House", is an excellent foundation on which teenagers can build Bible knowledge and confidence in teaching others. This class should be offered continuously so that everyone, including new converts, can eventually have this training. If taught effectively, the people who graduate from this class will automatically begin to teach others. This zeal will capture the interest of teenagers who participate in the other activities, resulting in their desire to change to this class. By all means, let them do it. If they are sincere in their request, this is the beginning of spiritual growth in their lives. There may not be a single person left in the other classes after a while; if not, simply discontinue the classes. They were motivational classes to begin with, and at this point they have accomplished their purpose.



**Tuesday Night for Christ.** Schedule an informal Bible study for Tuesday nights. This class should be a one-hour Bible study. It is not to be used as a period of devotional or as a rap session. It should begin and end on time. The location of the class can be either in the church building or at the youth minister's home.

It is important not to call on individual members of the class to read publicly unless they volunteer. Too often a visitor or shy member who is sincere in his desire to study the Bible will never come back because he was asked to read in front of a group of people.

I suggest that the Tuesday night studies begin in the book of James, followed by a study of Acts. All members of the class should agree to read, believe, and obey what they study, regardless of parents, preachers, and other fellow Christians. Anyone who cannot test and prove his religion has no religion. By the time the class reaches the second chapter of Acts and reads the 46th verse, "And they continued daily . . .", most of the youth should be converted to daily service and evangelism.

At this point in our youth program we should be able to expand into the fields that are white to harvest. Some of the work that can be started now includes a bus ministry, personal evangelism (cottage meetings), and preacher and song leader training classes. Be sure, though, to continue the scripture chain class for the new converts of your "Search for a Soul" youth program.

### **CONCLUSION**

As we start this "Search for a Soul" program to train up our children in the way they should go, let us remember life is short, death is sure, judgement will be final, and eternity will last forever. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (I Cor. 2:9). What better promise do we need to motivate us to forsake all and follow Christ.

### **THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

- (1). Why is it important that young people be trained to carry the gospel to the lost?
- (2). How can parents help their children to put God first and become soul winners?
- (3). Is it difficult to get older church members to become personally involved in seeking the lost? Do you think they would be more interested now if they had learned to be evangelistic when they were young?
- (4). Discuss your congregation's efforts to involve youth in evangelistic work. Is it done on a regular basis? Discuss how you can improve what you are doing.
- (5) Do you feel that we are losing many of our young people because they are not involved?

# Building Through A Bus Evangelism Program



by Carl W. Wade

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind . . . Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." (Luke 14:21, 23).

## INTRODUCTION

One of the great problems facing any church which desires to win many souls to Christ is where to find prospects? Bus Evangelism provides an avenue for the church to be in contact with people who can be taught and won to Christ weekly! Many churches of Christ are successfully using this method to bring people in to be taught in classes and worship. Also, it opens up new doors for us to go and teach the lost in their homes.

## ARE PEOPLE INTERESTED?

The devil has discouraged some churches today with the thought, "No one will come any more to hear the gospel preached." Forgotten, it seems, is the fact that the church is compelled by divine command to "Go ye therefore, and teach . . ." (Matt. 28:19). This urgent request of our Lord should burn in the heart of every born-again believer. Naturally, the world is not interested in spiritual things. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him . . ." (I Cor. 2:14). People may be distracted more today by worldly mindedness and carnal impulse than at any time before. They may not appear to be interested in "attending church" but they are still lost, without peace, searching for a ray of hope and despairing as they pursue worldliness in hope of finding lasting happiness. Considering these thoughts the church must be more aggressive in going out and persuading people to come and hear the "words of life" taught. Bus Evangelism provides a tool which can be used very successfully to accomplish this goal. Churches using Bus Evangelism as a local outreach in their communities are having outstanding results in bringing lost people to hear the gospel and convert multitudes to Jesus Christ. A dramatic change in the attitude of the community toward the church has been noticed by churches using Bus Evangelism. A more favorable response is realized when the lost of a community see the church cares enough to "go" and "compel" people to come and have the gospel of Christ shared with them.

## SCRIPTURAL ASPECTS OF BUS EVANGELISM

Bus Evangelism is one way in which any church desiring to reach multitudes of lost souls can "go" and "compel" them to come to the spiritual feast which our Lord has prepared. It is a great tool which can be used effectively for the glory of God. It will create "fruit" for fruitless Christians. (John 15:5, 8).

In the Parable of the Great Supper (Lk. 14:15-24) Jesus taught a lesson which has an application to our efforts today. He referred to those who had been invited to a great feast (the Jews) but who refused to come. Then he told of the Lord of the feast (God) who offered the invitation to any and all who would come (the Gentiles).

Is this not true of us today concerning the spiritual feast prepared in the Lord's church? We invite those who are dear to us, our friends, neighbors, relatives and others to come and share the blessings of Christ with us. They often refuse to come! They make excuses. Some few come, maybe once or twice, only never to return. Then we say, "People just won't come to hear the gospel anymore!" We need to apply the lesson of the Parable of the Great Supper. We have invited those we know and our dear friends, now we need to "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind." (Lk. 14:21). We must, "Go out into the highways, and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." (Lk. 14:23). Bus Evangelism is the method which can be used by any church to go out quickly and compel the physically poor, the spiritually maimed, the emotionally halt and the doctrinally blind to come in that the Lord's church may be filled!

Mark's record of the Great Commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk. 16:15). Bus Evangelism gives us the means to "go" into our part of the "world" preaching the gospel. The Lord's commands are explicit, "Go", "Compel", "Bring them in", "Go out quickly". Not implied is how we are to go, compel, and bring! We may go in our cars, we may go on foot and walk from "house to house" or we may buy buses and go in them to "bring them in". Bus Evangelism is proving to be the most successful means we have today to keep the Lord's commands in reaching the lost people of our local area.

## **SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF BUS EVANGELISM**

Thousands of churches of Christ have bought buses, painted them attractive colors, put the name of the local church on them and gone out to solicit people to come and ride their buses to the church building to hear the "good news" of Jesus Christ taught and preached. There are successful bus programs among our churches which have been in existence for 10, 20 or more years. The first bussing effort in the churches of Christ was at the North Central church, Flint, Michigan in 1942! The Rockwood, Tennessee congregation has been bussing people to every service since 1955. Many programs have come into being in more recent years because of the growing evangelistic fever sweeping the church. Many churches have seen and realized the great potential which can be realized through the use of Bus Evangelism.

One church increased in four years from 260 in attendance to over 1,100 each Sunday after becoming involved in bussing. This church has been baptizing over 200 a year since being active in Bus Evangelism.

A church in Oklahoma grew from 98 members to over 1,200 in attendance in just five years using as their main thrust Bus Evangelism. They bus in over 500 on their buses for nearly every service. They baptize 150 to 200 each year with most of the conversions coming from the bus routes.

Another church, in Tennessee, which had been in existence for 41 years and experienced only a nominal and very slow growth became involved in Bus Evangelism. In 8 months time they increased from 140 in attendance to 337. Their building was overflowing and they had to buy more land and construct a new building having space for over 1,000 in Sunday School and worship.

A number of small mission points has experienced phenomenal growth through Bus Evangelism.

Many other churches have been using, successfully, Bus Evangelism to the winning of souls. One survey in a religious publication indicated, that among churches of Christ involved in bussing, those churches, almost without exception, increased from 100 percent to 400 percent in size in the first year! Most conversion rates doubled or tripled in the same period. As the number increased, the survey also indicated, the contribution also increased substantially. All of the churches reported a greater involvement by the members.

Bus Evangelism should be considered a "local mission" program. It is an organized, efficient means by which the church in any area, rural or metropolitan, north or south, east or west, can make great progress in reaching the lost in its area. Bus Evangelism has proven it can open doors otherwise closed to the gospel. It also provides a regular method of going back to prospective persons and keeping in contact until such time that a Bible study can be conducted in the home.

### **WHY BUS EVANGELISM SUCCEEDS**

Bus Evangelism succeeds when proper preparation has been made and continuing emphasis is placed on bussing. More time, energy, money, planning and leadership has to be put into bussing than probably any other single work of the church! No other program, excepting the Bible classes, will involve as many workers or as many man-hours as will Bus Evangelism. (This is true for churches which continue to add buses and want a growing bus program.) Also, the rewards and visible results are much more evident in bussing than from nearly any other endeavor in the local church's program of works.

### **HOW TO BEGIN A BUS EVANGELISM PROGRAM**

(1) **Prepare:** Buy books, literature, tapes, etc. on bussing to learn "what it is all about". Be sure the elders, deacons and preachers are involved in the preparation. Invite every member to learn about bussing. Conduct a local workshop on Bus Evangelism and have a guest speaker who is experienced in bussing. Visit other churches in your area who are bussing and see how they do it.

(2) **Train Workers:** Bus workers must be trained. Training will be needed in canvassing for riders, visiting the regular riders, conducting a program on the bus, keeping records, maintaining the bus, working with the children, etc. Set up a training class on Sunday morning or Wednesday evening. In the beginning include all adults and teens possible in the class. (Books on bussing are recommended at the end of this chapter.)

(3) **Buy A Bus:** Once the congregation is committed to bussing then buy at least one bus, maybe two or more. It may take up to a month or more to find the bus you want. A used bus is recommended. Shop around as you would in buying a car. Have a mechanic check the bus over before purchasing it. As soon as possible have the bus painted and lettered.

(4) **Recruit Workers:** Four ways are very effective in recruiting workers: (a) Every worker recruit another worker. The personal influence in getting new workers is the strongest. (b) Pulpit appeal. The preacher is a key factor in the success of a bus program. Without his continuing support the program will have little success. (c) Congregational survey. Survey the entire church with commitment cards indicating what they would like to do in the bussing program.

(d) Attend bus workshops. These are informative and inspirational. Have a workshop at your congregation in advance of kicking-off your bussing effort.

(5). **Select a Route Area:** Basically the most riders will be children, most of these between the ages of 5 to 14. A rule of thumb then is to go where there are the largest numbers of children. One captain had 115 riders by his second week in working mainly housing projects and an area with a high concentration of children. Middle-income and middle-to-lower income neighborhoods usually produce a higher-rider-rate-per-capita than upper income areas.

(6). **Canvass the Area:** Have all necessary advertising materials, enrollment cards, worker I.D. badges, maps of area, etc. Set a target date and motivate as many of the church as possible to participate in the initial canvass. Make it a big day for the local work! This is a "local mission" effort and each member can become a "missionary". Set a goal for the number of riders you want to enroll. Take the bus or buses along for the new riders to see what they will be riding. Expect to have about 50 percent to 75 percent less riders to ride the first week or two than what you actually enroll. Often it takes two or three weeks of call backs by the bus captain to get some to ride the first time. Be sure the bus captain gets all names and addresses of riders enrolled and that the captain goes over the addresses with the driver before making the first run with the bus.

(7). **The First Day:** Set the time for the bus to leave on Sunday morning. Allow a few extra minutes for delays in getting children out and other unforeseen problems. All workers must be neat, hair cut, modest clothing and a happy disposition. Be sure the bus has been properly prepared. Have a few of the member's children to ride as "decoys" and to add to the program for the first few weeks until the route is enlarged. Adult members who want to ride as "spectators" should be discouraged since this intimidates workers and riders.

(8). **Bus Program:** Plan a program for the children. Consider the average age of the children who will ride (usually the most will be 5 years to 12 years old). Have many songs, visual aids, brief Bible stories, Bible drills, etc. The "program leader" should stand to the front of the bus. All children should be seated from the front to the back of the bus. Send a worker to the door (not the driver) at each stop to walk the children to the bus and to see them safely across the street.

(9). **Class and Worship Preparation:** For each bus route that grows to a successful number expect an increase of from 30 to 50 in attendance. Generally the increase will come in the following ranges: 50-60 percent — ages 5 thru fifth grade; 20 percent — preschool; 15-20 percent — junior and high school; 10-15 percent — adult. Extra materials should always be on hand for each class. Explain rules and regulations to all new riders. In the worship the children may be distributed among the members with two or three sitting with each member family. As the number grows some special service for new children may be initiated in order to train them more effectively and reach their age level. A Children's Bible Hour or Youth Worship is conducted by many churches in another part of the building at the same time of the usual worship. Such a service is designed to teach and encourage on the children's level and to help them to reach a better understanding of God's word and proper worship.

(10). **Plan for Promotions:** As mentioned earlier in this lesson the worldly minded person does not comprehend spiritual things. Jesus fed thousands and taught them. Later he said he knew they were just following him for the food and not for the spiritual blessings. (John 6:26). Yet, again, he fed them! He used that which they could relate to in order to gain their attention and lead them on to spiritual things. Promotions are not used to "bribe" children to ride but to "encourage" them and "reward" them. Such treats represent the love and concern of the church toward these little ones. Jesus taught if we give a

"cup of cold water" to "one of these little ones" he said "he shall in no wise lose his reward". (Matt 10:42). Surely, if the giving of water is permitted by our Lord then the giving of colored-sweetened-cold-water called "Kool-aid", or bubble gum, or candy will not be frowned upon! The Bible often mentions the term "reward" as a motivation for Christians. Rewards for children in attending bringing visitors, etc. are good to encourage them to good works.

### **WHY BUS EVANGELISM SUCCEEDS**

Bussing succeeds because of certain factors: (1) It is keeping the commands of God for us to go out and compel and bring in the lost. God blesses those individuals and churches who keep his commands to be evangelistic. (2) When our motive is for the winning of souls then we will succeed. The worldly desires to just have larger numbers, because another church is bussing or to brag about our efforts are the wrong motives for bussing. (3) When people know we care then they will be more responsive to listen to what we know about God's word. (4) Personal contact has always proven to be the most effective means of reaching people. Bus Evangelism succeeds because there is much personal contact. Depending on the size of the bus program there may be from 100 to as many as 1,000 doors knocked on each week by bus workers from one church! (5) Souls will be won to Christ in greater numbers than ever dreamed possible. Each rider represents a family who may not have any other spiritual ties. Therefore, each family is a prospect to be taught the gospel. (6) Members who may have never been involved in other works of the church will become active in bussing. Some will be drivers, secretaries, teen-helpers, captains, co-captains, program leaders or mechanics on the bus. New converts and those recently restored make excellent bus workers. (7) Active involvement of the leadership of the church causes a bussing effort to succeed. Members will follow men who are leading the way rather than trying to push others into what they will not do themselves! (8) Adequate financing for bus purchases, repairs, promotions, literature, etc., will keep the bus program growing and help it to be a successful endeavor to the building up of the local church and the winning of souls to Jesus Christ.

### **"JOY BUSSING"**

The newest concept in Bus Evangelism is the "Joy Bus". J-O-Y stands for J-Jesus first, O-Others second, Y-Yourself last. It is a term that is descriptive of the workers' attitude, the program on the bus and the new life in Christ. Everything is keyed to the thought of "joy"! "Rejoice with joy" (1 Pet. 1:8) and "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22) are just two verses of many that refer to the joyful attitude and spirit we should exhibit to others. Many churches with depressed or sagging bus programs have converted to the "Joy Bus" concept and have made a dramatic increase in enthusiasm and attendance. Children delight in every occasion to ride the "Joy Bus".

### **BOOKS ON BUSSING**

Books available on bussing: "Joy Bus Evangelism", Carl W. Wade; "Bible School on Wheels", Pat Casey; "On the Move with Bus Evangelism", Albert Hill; "Church Bus Handbook", David Powers; "How to Win Souls with Buses", Toby Quinn. (These may be ordered from Christian Lighthouse, Inc., P.O. Box 159, Madison, Tennessee 37115.)

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1). What is the primary motive in bussing? Name some wrong motives for bussing.
- (2). How does the Bible encourage us to righteousness through "reward motivation"? How can this concept be used to encourage the lost to seek righteous things?
- (3). Why did the Lord have the writers of the gospels to mention many times His love and concern for children? What should be our attitude toward children?
- (4). Why is proper preparation and continuing emphasis on bussing vitally important to the success of a bus program?
- (5) Define what your concept of the term "leadership" would be in Bus Evangelism. How important is it for the church leaders to be involved in bussing?

**Note to Teacher:** Read chapter nine of the Leadership in Personal Work Manual in preparation for this lesson.

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# Building Through Bible School Evangelism

by Ray Fulenwider

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly." (Acts 6:7).

## INTRODUCTION

Jesus gives teachers their major purpose in the great commission of Matthew 28:16-20. Their primary purpose is to "make disciples." The King James Version inaccurately translates verse 19 to read "teach" instead of "make disciples." Newer and more accurate translations render it "make disciples" or "teach and get results."

Some will ask what the difference is between teaching and making disciples. There can be a world of difference. Teachers may teach an hour in a Bible class because someone asked them. They may labor hours on handwork, bulletin boards, and media to have a good lesson of which they are proud. The teachers whose goal is to "make disciples" does all of this, but they also do much more. You never have to worry about them visiting absentees or new prospects for their class. They are always praying for their students and their parents when the invitation song is sung. They keep up with their students after they leave their department. It is possible for a teacher to teach a lesson and be satisfied, but this soul-winning teacher teaches students the word of God. They are not satisfied until these students are disciples of Jesus headed for heaven. They



believe in the power of the gospel and expect change to take place in the lives of their students.

These teachers can now motivate and train students of all ages to be soul winners. It may be as simple as inviting non-members to class or visiting every class absentee weekly. It may be as complex as preparing students for home Bible studies and mission trips.

## **PLANNING FOR A GROWING BIBLE SCHOOL**

God had only one Son and they called Him teacher. God can bestow no greater honor upon you than to place His Book in your hands and call you teacher. The Evangelistic Bible school has:

The greatest message — the gospel.

The greatest audience — the world.

The greatest textbook — the Bible.

The greatest opportunity — for saving souls.

The greatest person on earth — the soul winning Bible school teacher.

Before a Bible school can become a volunteer army of soul winners, those who are leaders in the Christian education program must have this desire. The road to an evangelistic, growing Bible school begins with the planning and organizing of the program as soul searching questions are asked. These people must have a real concern for the lost and they need to plan according to the following model.

### **Planning Model:**

1. Constantly pray for wisdom from God.
2. Establish objectives in regard to what should be accomplished.
3. Formulate a program to determine how the objectives should be accomplished.
4. Design a schedule to determine when each activity in the plan should be accomplished.
5. Arrange a budget that reveals how much manpower, money, and other resources will be needed and how they will be supplied.
6. Plan behind what you can do with your own strength.

### **1. Constantly Pray for Wisdom From God.**

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5). I would not dare plan to begin an evangelistic Bible school program without first praying to God about it and asking Him for wisdom. Before the group began that evangelistic crusade we know as the Great Commission, Acts 1:14 tells us "these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Praying individuals are soul winners. I have often stated that one of the greatest ways to produce soul winning Bible teachers and students is to get them on their knees in prayer. Let us not forget prayer in this important planning process of building an evangelistic Bible school. "Ye have not, because ye ask not." (James 4:2) — should never be a problem of the Lord's church.

### **2. Establish Objectives in Regard to What Should Be Accomplished.**

We must establish objectives, purposes and goals in our Bible school program. Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14). The ultimate goal for a Bible school program is Heaven and the purpose is the saving of souls.

There should be at least four important spiritual objectives for the Bible

school program. The first objective is to go teach. Matthew 28:19-20 tells us to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Our job is to (1) go and reach the non-member; (2) teach him the gospel so that he will become a disciple of Jesus; (3) continue to teach him the Bible after he becomes a Christian; and (4) train and encourage him to now reach non-members with the gospel. All four roles of Christian education are very important. Two involve reaching and teaching the non-member. Two involve reaching the member. We strengthen and edify him through Bible study, train him how to teach non-members, and motivate him toward reaching the lost.

Congregations should evaluate their Bible school program in light of these objectives. When they are followed, you will be well on your way toward building an evangelistic Bible school. The Bible school that does not formulate programs to go and reach the non-member cannot produce a growing church. If you check your attendance and find you are teaching few non-members, something is drastically wrong with the program as we look at the objectives of the great commission.

The second objective illustrates a problem which many churches have. They may have in their classes a lot of their own members' children who grow up and never obey the gospel. These churches need to seriously evaluate their programs to find out why they are not producing disciples for Jesus. This can also be a problem when a congregation buses many non-members to their classes and few actually become Christians.

The third objective points to the need for continued Bible study after a person becomes a Christian. This at once does away with the false concept that Bible school is just for children. Faith is increased through a study of God's word, and as we feast upon it we are able to become spiritual giants instead of spiritual dwarfs.

The fourth objective stresses the need for training and encouraging our present members to reach non-members with the gospel. (cf II Tim. 2:2). Because of this fourth objective, all of us can get excited about building an evangelistic Bible school. The majority of churches already have many students attending each week. If we believe in the educational process, we believe that people can be taught, motivated, and trained to reach non-members as well as to become actively involved in the work of the local church. (cf I Cor. 15:58).

There are also three important educational objectives which we need to follow in our Bible school program. I call it the KAA plan. The K stands for Knowledge. We need to make sure that Bible knowledge is being taught to everyone in Bible classes. God has given us His message to share with others. We cannot share what we do not know.

The first A stands for Attitude. Attitude is tremendously important. How something is said may be as important as what is said. If we are producing "walking Bibles" who have poor attitudes we are accomplishing very little. We need to make sure that our Bible school program is developing students with Christlike attitudes. (cf Col. 4:6).

The last A stands for Action. All of the teaching in the world is useless unless it produces action. This is the dilemma of many adult classes. They study the Bible in class year after year, but little action takes place. Souls are not won and the majority of the people do not really get actively involved in the work of the church. (cf Heb. 5:12-14). Other classes for young and old have lessons taught to non-members, but they are not followers of Jesus. We need action to take place in the lives of our students. If action is not taking place, we need to wear callouses on our knees in prayer so that we will have the wisdom and power to motivate action in the lives of our students.

All three parts of the KAA Plan are important. Let us take sharing the "good news" for example. A person may have complete knowledge of the good news of the gospel, but he may never actively share it with anyone. Indeed, this is a chronic problem of the church, and I find that it is in utter contrast with the teachings of the New Testament church. (cf Acts 5:42). One might also have the knowledge of the "good news" and have an attitude that is so repulsive that no one will listen. (cf II Tim. 2:24-26).

Again, a person may have a wonderful, Christlike attitude and not have an accurate knowledge of the good news. He may want to share with everyone, but he may not know what to share. People may love him and his attitude, but they are frustrated at what he tells them when they compare it with the Bible.

The man of action may face the same problem. He may knock on every door, try to teach a dozen classes and extend himself in the work of the local church. However, without proper knowledge and the right attitude, he is doomed to failure. Be sure to take time to evaluate your complete Bible school program in light of the KAA educational objectives.

### **3. Formulate a Program to Determine How the Objective Should Be Accomplished.**

Many folks get excited about dreams and objectives, but they never formulate solid programs that lead to the accomplishment of their goals.

Each local church is autonomous and should know more than anyone else the programs needed to "capture their city" for Jesus Christ through the use of an evangelistic Bible school. To do this, they must make a serious study of the people in their area and design ways to reach them.

The most exciting story ever told about "capturing a city" for Jesus Christ is the story of the Jerusalem church. Jesus had given them their goals and objectives in what is known as the great commission. He left, but it was up to His followers to carry out the plan. Read that grand story from the book of Acts and study ways they overcame opposition, how they were filled with a sense of urgency, how they attracted different people's attention and ways they utilized everyone's talents. Glean from your reading the program they had that led to steady and continuous growth. Notice the vital part unity and love played. Be cognizant of the fact that they were not interested in praise for themselves, but were "all praising God". Study their fantastic soul winning program and notice the role played by outstanding soul winning teachers. (Acts 6:7).

If we truly believe in the educational process, we can use the Bible school program to reach our evangelistic goals. We can use it to train and motivate our people. We can use it to promote visitation and bringing non-members to class. We can use it to start unique classes just for non-members. Bus ministries, Thursday schools, Saturday schools, puppet programs, mission trips, Vacation Bible Schools and special ladies Bible classes can be designed to reach scores of non-members.

### **4. Design A Schedule To Determine When Each Activity In The Plan Should Be Accomplished.**

This step is also very important in the building of an evangelistic Bible school. It is not enough to formulate a plan and program. We need a time table to help us evaluate our progress toward meeting our objectives. We also need a time table to make sure the program functions smoothly. For example, a church that starts a bus ministry before adequately training teachers for the bus students has a timing problem. Scheduling also keeps many different programs from conflicting, and helps the entire church get the "big picture" as we strive to permeate every program with evangelism.

**5. Arrange a Budget That Reveals How Much Manpower, Money and Other Resources Will Be Needed and How They Will Be Supplied.**

Bible school evangelism will never take place unless you have adequate personnel sold on this concept. Leadership has to solidly support and lead out in this direction. They must see that teachers are adequately trained and have a soul winning philosophy. God spare us from the concept that our only soul winners are a small group of people who check filmstrips and charts out of a closet. Most churches already have a large teaching force in service. Why should not every teacher be a soul winner?

The budget needs to include adequate facilities, materials and media for a quality Bible school program. There is no reason why we should have shoddy materials and facilities in evangelistic Bible school programs. Unless we provide a quality educational program, we will have a high casualty rate with non-members as well as our own children!

**6. Plan Beyond What You Can Do With Your Own Strength.**

Mark 3:14-15 states that Jesus "ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." For years I hastened to explain to people that the primary reason Jesus called the apostles was that they might go out and preach and tell others about Him. However, this passage stresses the very first reason He called them was to "be with Him". I think every soul-winning Bible teacher needs to meditate on this. Unless we spend quiet times of prayer, meditation and Bible study with Him — all of our efforts toward building an evangelistic Bible school will fail. With Him, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me". Because of this, we should and can plan far beyond what we can do with our strength!

**THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

- (1). How important is prayer in building an evangelistic Bible school? How many hours a week do you pray? For what do you pray?
- (2). What are the goals and objectives of your class or congregation?
- (3). What programs have you formulated for making your class or congregation evangelistic?
- (4). Do you have a time schedule to determine when each of your evangelistic classes or congregational programs should be implemented? If not, would you design one?
- (5). What could be the difference between "teaching" and "making disciples"?
- (6). What do you do in your personal life in regard "to being with Him"? How important is this in the building of an evangelistic Bible school?
- (7). Apply the six planning principles to the Jerusalem church and discuss their situation. Apply this to your local congregation.

Ray Fulenwider is the author of several booklets and tapes on "How To Grow A Church Through The Bible School." Price \$8.95 for complete kit. This is available from Christian Lighthouse, Inc.

**Note to Teacher:** Read chapter four of the Leadership in Personal Work Manual in preparation for this lesson.

# Building Through Keeping The Converts



by Clayton Pepper

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of the bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42).

## INTRODUCTION

What a joy to see men "turned from darkness unto light and from the power of Satan unto God!" Angels in heaven rejoice every time a soul is saved. (Lk. 15:7). Those who bring them in from the fields of sin rejoice with them. (Lk. 10:17). The new Christians in Jerusalem continued steadfastly in four things, (Acts 2:42):

1. The Apostles teachings. They needed to know how to live faithfully to God. They were being taught to observe all things that Jesus and His apostles had commanded them to do. (Matt. 28:18-20).

2. Fellowship. Men are social creatures. They need and want the fellowship of friends. They need the right kind of friends — God's children. Much strength is drawn from Christian friends. Therefore, we need fellowship one with another.

3. Breaking of bread. The Lord's supper helps to keep us mindful of Christ's sacrifice for our sins. It reminds us of the sad condition that we would be in if He had not died. It also reminds the Christian of the glorious hope that he has in Christ.

4. Prayer. Prayer reflects man's dependence upon God and his gratitude to God for all that He has done for him. No Christians can be strong who does not pray regularly.

If for some reason the new Christian, or the more mature Christian strays from God, brethren have the responsibility to strive to restore the erring brother. (Heb. 13:17).

## NEEDS OF NEW CONVERTS

What are the basic needs of new converts?

1. They need to know that they are loved and that they really "belong" in their new spiritual family.

a. Becoming a Christian means a radical change for many people (I Cor. 6:9-11; I Pet. 4:1-6); hence; they need the constant assurance that they are loved and forgiven by both God and man.

b. Lydia seemed to feel this need when she was baptized. (Acts 16:15).

c. All the saints need love and encouragement. (Heb. 13:1; Jno. 3:13-18).

2. They need to understand that they have been "born again".

a. They need to see the spiritual birth as illustrated by the physical birth (Jno. 3:1-8; I Cor. 4:15; I Pet. 1:22-23).

b. They need to know that they are indeed "new creatures" (Rom. 6:1-4; II Cor. 5:17).

c. They need to understand that they are partakers of a new, "divine nature". (II Pet. 1:1-11).

d. They need to understand God as their Father (Rom. 5:12-16) and that their worship and service to him should be an expression of love and gratitude (cf I Jno. 4:8).

e. They need the assurance of the intercession of the Holy Spirit according to the will of God upon their behalf. (Rom. 8:26-28).

f. They need to know that their bodies are the temple of God and that they are His redeemed possession. (Acts 17:24-25; I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20).

3. They need help in learning how to "handle aright" the word.

a. Basic instruction should be given on the Old and New Testament, the division of the Testaments; how to find scripture references (each one should be introduced to the use of a Bible dictionary and a concordance), basic principles of interpretation and how Bible authority is established.

b. Also, such subjects as worship, daily living, study habits, personal purity, accepting responsibilities, meeting temptation, and continual Christian growth should be thoroughly covered.

c. Faithfulness and dependability in worship and service to God should be emphasized. (Heb. 10:24-31; I Cor. 15:58).

4. They need responsibility.

a. They should be used as soon as possible in whatever capacity they are qualified to serve.

b. This helps them to "identify" with the work of the Lord.

c. They need to be encouraged to win souls. After all, a candle begins to glow as soon as it is lighted. (cf. Matt. 5:13-16). They probably know more prospects than most other Christians.

5. They need watchful guidance by the elders and other more mature Christians.

a. The task of watching for souls belongs to the elders (Heb. 13:17), and normally it should be the young in Christ who need the greatest amount of care.

b. Each Christian is charged with assisting their brethren who need their help. (Gal. 5:1-3; Jas. 5:19-20). Obviously, the concern for new converts should be shared by all.

What elements should go into a new converts program?

1. The elders should visit the new convert immediately. If he is baptized during the assembly, each elder should be waiting to greet him as soon as the service is over. They should let him know that they are always available to assist him with any problems.

2. The elders may want to use the "buddy system" to help watch for these souls.

a. The coordinator should greet new converts as soon as they are baptized and introduce them to a "buddy" who will work with them during the first twelve months of their Christian life. This "buddy" should visit the home of the new converts, check on them when they are absent and help them get acquainted with other Christians. A systematic plan to see that the new converts are invited into some of the homes should be arranged.

b. Fellowship is vital to those converted through home Bible studies. All of their ties are in the world and denominations. Read how the Jerusalem church continued steadfastly in fellowship. (Acts 2:42-47).

c. He should coordinate the home teaching aids program and be sure that each new convert is given proper training (through such films as "Now That

I'm A Christian" and/or provided with self-teaching aids). This should begin the week following his conversion.

d. He should arrange a "door buster". This is a period of fellowship for all new converts or other new members. Three or four couples will visit the home at a prearranged date taking light refreshments for all.

3. The elders should provide a new converts class in the regular Bible study program and see that the very best material and instruction are made available.

a. Ideally, the teacher of this class should be one of the elders.

4. The new converts should be invited to be the guest of one or more of the visitation teams at the earliest possible fellowship meeting. He should be encouraged to work with one of the teams as a partner with someone already experienced.

Attention should be given to integrating the new convert into the work of the local congregation.

1. All the above suggestions should be helpful in getting the new Christian integrated into his new spiritual family, however, a few other thoughts are in order:

a. After the new Christians "graduate" from the new converts class, they should go into an "orientation" study program. In this program they should be given a review of basic Bible doctrines and introduced to the entire program of the congregation.

3. The orientation class should also include questionnaires to determine specific needs, talents, and interests of new Christians. Before the class is completed, each new Christian should have a personal interview with the elders so that they may better know how to watch for his soul and that he may know and appreciate the elders. (Those placing membership should also be interviewed.)

4. After the orientation class is completed, each new convert should be given specific training to further development and spiritual maturity. This training should include classes in such areas as:

- a. Introduction to soul winning.
- b. Cottage classes,
- c. Teacher training,
- d. Leadership training, and
- e. Specific Bible textual studies.

5. The orientation class probably should be taught by an elder or perhaps by all the elders, rotating on a systematic basis.

Byron Laird has this to say about following-up new converts:

"We had been losing a lot of new converts, but significant progress has been achieved through improved follow-up efforts.

"In recent years we have had many to answer the invitation. In fact, the local personal work program yielded forty baptisms within ninety days. An alarming number of them soon became inactive. Follow-up obviously was not keeping pace with personal work. We had tried. Due to the limited number of workers weekly classes were set up especially designed for new members. At first, nearly all of them attended. Capable teachers taught them. Time tested visual aids illustrated the lessons, yet we failed to get the job done.



"Upon conversion one enters a completely new environment. His familiarity with the truth may be only what he learned from a few hours of Bible study. He feels far behind those who were in the church before him. Unless he already has friends within the congregation his sense of loneliness may be acute. Familiar faces remain within his denominational circle, perhaps, while new ones surround him. Church functions and order of worship are different. Adjustment is required before he can feel at ease.

"Perhaps, the greatest challenge to his endurance is ample justification for his change. Persons with whom he has strong emotional ties may seek to embarrass him by penetrating questions for which he has inadequate answers. The church should begin efforts to ground him in the faith immediately. Often he is hazy about the standards to which he is expected to subscribe. He wonders, "Will I be able to hold out?" Early ideals are often high, and falling short paves the way to discouragement. Principles seem to forbid, while circumstances seem to require, some ethical and religious compromises. Torn between loyalty to Christ and hunger for group approval, the young convert often stumbles, a sense of failure grips him, he grows steadily weaker and quits.

"An effective follow-up program provides for fellowship, instruction, supervision and recognizes the urgency of the situation. A membership awakened to the necessity of integrating new members into the church family has gone a long way toward guaranteeing the keeping of converts. Recognizing that the "buddy system" had once failed for us, we are determined to make it work by revision. Several families are assigned to each new member until he is able to contribute to the strengthening of others. No longer is the cementing of friendships left to the premises of classes and worship. The home offers the greatest opportunity.

"From the beginning, it is understood that the prime reason for the meeting each week is to study the Bible. Socializing is important, but secondary. Workbooks are furnished dealing with subjects we deem vital to the growth of the "babe" in Christ. Each of the twelve lessons is complete providing scriptures written out, and questions based upon them. Embarrassment is thus avoided in the event of clumsiness in locating books in the Bible, while anchoring his faith, more securely, in the scriptures. During the sessions each question is discussed. For greater fortification each student is provided a list of scriptures on each vital point discussed, and further study is encouraged.

"Immediately, upon entering the church one is more likely to agree to setting up a twelve week study course than later, when his zeal has lost some of its fervor. I feel free to talk frankly with new converts about the sense of deep satisfaction one feels on being able to wield the "sword of the Spirit" effectively. The course is long enough to provide for grounding in the faith as well as ample opportunity to make new friends.

"Failure to attend Bible classes or worship is noted at once. The first absence may be justifiable, but it may also be a symptom of trouble ahead. To my knowledge none has resented this attention, but many have welcomed it.

"The church has come a long way in converting sinners bringing rapid church growth. But until we become as devoted to keeping them as we are to winning them, the church will fail to sustain its growth, many souls will needlessly be lost, and much of our effort in personal work will go down the drain. Since revising our follow-up program, only two new converts have faltered, and both of them were unable to schedule immediately." (Taken from *Personal Evangelism Magazine*, fourth quarter, 1970, p. 17).

## CONCLUSION

A Florida church made a study of their growth in two years. They baptized forty-four and restored twelve. Thirty-five placed membership, making a total growth of 91. However, during this same period of time about 100 died, moved away or ceased to attend. A loss of nine people in two years. Some of these factors cannot be controlled. However, too many congregations have the attitude of "Little Bo Peep" — "leave them alone and they will come home." It does not usually work that way. They drift farther and farther away. If we would build a great congregation of the Lord's people, we must work to keep the converts.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1). Why does the new Christian who has not been previously attending church services need more teaching and encouragement than a child who has a Christian father and mother?
- (2). Discuss ways in which mature Christians can make the new Christian feel loved and wanted in the congregation.
- (3). Discuss the importance of continuing to teach and strengthen the new Christian in his home.
- (4) How can we strengthen new Christians through fellowship?
- (5). What are signs of drifting from their first love?

**Note to Teacher:** Read chapter 7 and 8 of the Leadership in Personal Work Manual in preparation for teaching this lesson.

**Plan of Action:** Design a program for following up new converts and restoring the erring if you do not have such a program.

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Use the "Basic Bible Study for Christian Growth" Table top charts for teaching new Christians. Price \$11.95. Order for Christian Lighthouse, Inc., P.O. Box 159, Madison, Tennessee 37115.

Use the book, "Basic Bible Study for Christian Growth", in your new converts' class. Price \$1.25.

# 11

# Building Through Restoring The Erring

by Willie Cato

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. 6:1).

## INTRODUCTION

It has been said that if we could restore all the erring members in our city, we would have to build a new building. It has also been reported that after conversion the Lord loses approximately fifty per cent during the first five years. The observation of some of our critics has been that we "dip'em" and "drop'em."

What do you suppose would be the reaction of the United States Federal Government if fifty per cent of all air planes that took off from our airports were to crash on takeoff, — before they got five miles away from the runway. What would be the reaction of any state or municipality, if while going to school, fifty per cent of our children were killed before they got five miles from home.

## DEFINITIONS

Paul admonished the Galatians to restore anyone who was overtaken in a fault. The word restore means to place again. The root part of the word is store, the prefix is re, which means again. Those who were once close to God and enjoyed all of God's blessings and privileges as His children need to be restored so that those blessings can continue. We use the term erring and this is a phrase that has been taken from James 5:19 — "brethren if any of you do err upon the truth . . ." This is referring to one who has already become a Christian, one who has learned and obeyed the truth, but along the way has been overtaken in a fault. This may be the fault of walking in moral unrighteousness, or failing to render honor, devotion, adoration and praise to God at the specific times of assembly. There are many ways that we can prove that we have "left our first love." (Rev. 2:4).

## GOD'S DISPLEASURE AT UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Man has never pleased God when he failed to do what God wanted him to do. God has always expected, demanded and deserved obedience. He required the very first creatures to obey and when they failed to obey, He drove them from the Garden of Eden. God also expected righteous men to be obedient — He required Noah to build an ark according to specific specifications. God rewarded this obedience, but we can well assume that if Noah had not obeyed, the results would have been different. God expected kings to obey — He required King Saul

to utterly destroy all of the Amalekites (I Sam. 15), when King Saul disobeyed, it repented God that He had set up Saul to be king; "then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, it repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he has turned back from following me, and has not performed my commandments." (I Sam. 15:10-11). God not only expected kings to be obedient, but He required obedience of His Son. Jesus Christ came not to do His own will but the will of his father which sent Him. The writer of the Hebrew letter describes God's Son as being obedient; "Tho he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" (Heb. 5:8-9).

As one reads through the entire Bible, there is always one predominant idea — God has always rewarded obedience and punished disobedience.

## **THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIANS**

God is not limited. He is able! However, He has planned for His children to assist in the work that needs to be done.

He expects us as obedient followers to go and try to restore those who have been overtaken in a fault. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

Christians are to bear the infirmities of the weak, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." (Rom. 15:1). We ought to bear one another's burdens, "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2). Christians are commanded to exhort, to comfort, support the weak, and to be patient; "Now we exhort you brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." (I Thes. 5:14. Brethren must realize that they are the keepers of brethren; "And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother? But he said, I know not, am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9). Brethren are to convert erring brothers; "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (Jas. 5:20).

In Biblical days, watchmen were placed on the walls. They continually watched for the approaching enemy. If an enemy were observed, the watchman shouted to the people in the city. If the watchman failed to warn, he paid with his life. (Ezek. 3:18-21). Also, those who guarded prisoners, were required by the law to keep the prisoners and if a prisoner escaped, the guard paid — his life was taken. When God, using an earthquake, released Paul and Silas from prison, the jailer thinking that they were gone, was about to take his own life. Perhaps, he reasoned that since his life would be required by the officials, so he would simply take his own life. (Acts 16:27). These various customs of people have been used by God as an example to you and me, to let us know that God expects us to do something about the lost.

Elders are watchmen. They watch for souls. (Ref. Heb. 13:17). They are overseers, overseeing the flock. Incidentally, they cannot oversee that which they do not see. How obvious! Elders are expected by God to get the flock "back home." What a responsibility! How can any man be guided by custom, tradition and social expectation, even that of his brethren, when God expects so much.

## **CHRISTIANS MUST BE CONCERNED**

God considers His children of great value. So must we. Listen to the Christ; "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul;

but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. 10:28-31).

Surely, we can also see God's concern for the lost when we read the story of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. (Lk. 15). In order to know that the sheep was lost, perhaps, somebody counted the sheep. This should well emphasize to us the fact that we must be interested in one and that we must be concerned enough to leave the ninety-nine who are safely in the fold and go search, find and bring back the missing one. Perhaps, in our day we would say, "We're too busy"; "But, we have such a terrific program going" or, "It takes so much time doing church work." When we react in this manner, we are overlooking the flock instead of overseeing the flock, or we are watching those who are at home more than we are looking for those who are away from home. Remember, there is more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner that needs to repent than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance., Yes, God is concerned! Are we?

### **SOME CAUSES FOR LEAVING CHRIST**

Generally speaking, many Christians grow weak in the faith, begin to die spiritually and become entangled with the world. Why do some go astray?

1. Some leave the Lord as a result of deliberate disobedience. The Hebrew writer said, concerning those to whom he was writing, that "Forsaking the assembly" was willful sin. (Heb. 10:25-29). It seems that many people do not believe that a failure to assemble and worship with the saints is sin. Worship permits us to honor, adore, reveal our affection and render glory to God — is the opposite of this not sin?

2. Some depart through ignorance — just simply not knowing "the way". Inadequate instructions may have been given when they first became Christians, or, we may have stopped short and failed to "teach them all things commanded you." Peter lists seven things that can be added to our faith which will aid us in "standing" for Christ. They are: "Virtue, knowledge, self control, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness, and love . . . for if you do these things ye shall never fail." (II Peter 1:5-10). Paul told the Christians at Ephesus to "put on the whole armor of God in order to be able to stand." (Eph. 6:11).

3. Drifting aimlessly and carelessly has diverted many from the cause of Christ. (Heb. 2:1-3). The current of the every day life stream of the world is downward and leads one into ungodliness and unrighteousness. The motto of our day seems to be, "run with the crowd", or "everybody else is doing it." If man is not strengthened through Bible study, prayer and Christian fellowship, he will weaken and will be unable to stand. He will be, "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine." (Eph. 4:14).

4. Many people sin and walk in darkness because of weakness. (II Peter 2:14). In a moment of weakness Peter denied the Lord. (Matt. 26:69-75). Simon sinned when he wanted to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit with money — perhaps, in a moment of materialistic weakness. (Acts 8:18-22). No doubt David's unforgettable sin occurred in a moment of weakness.

Think of the people who have been lost to Christ and His Church because they have permitted materialism to become the dominant force in their lives. Oftentimes shiftwork, Sunday-work, overtime work and just the sheer challenge of making money, get in the way of serving Christ and walking in faithfulness. America is a country of "things" — we have more "gadgets" to prepare and repair than most of the rest of the world combined. There is always something to polish, or paint, or something at hand with which to "putter". Like the world

around us, we have become more concerned with "things than with souls, including our own soul.

5. When one moves, many adjustments are required. One of the easiest ways to make these adjustments is to seek out someone with similar interests. How can one in Christ find a more similar group than others who are "in Christ"? However, sometimes when people move they will not search out and find God's children. Fortunately, because of the widespread zeal of the Christians, the church is scattered throughout the land — but if there is not a congregation of Christians meeting in any town where one might live, as a Christian, he should begin meeting and teaching and as a result, others will obey and the Church of our Lord can exist in any area where Christians move.

6. Oftentimes problems, death, the coming of a new baby, sickness, discouragement, personality problems, marriage adjustments, evil association, popularity crave, worldliness, etc., etc., etc., crowd Christ out of our lives. We take our eyes off the Lord and put our eyes primarily on ourselves. We become carried away with other cares. The Lord warned against this. He shared with us the parable of the sower; "and they which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection." (Luke 8:14).

### **WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE LOST**

The best thing that can be done is to prevent losing anyone. Everyone is important. Just because the ear does not see, does that mean that the ear is unimportant? Or, because the eye does not smell, does that mean that the eye is not important? We know the answer — every member of our body is important and we do not want to lose a single member. It is the same way with the body of Christ. Every member is vital and there is none to lose.

We should find where people are spiritually and begin at that point. It seems our Lord did this when He talked with the Samaritan woman. It seems that Philip did this when he talked with the Ethiopian. Do not begin with the point of greatest difference. There are too many things on which we agree, so begin there. We must understand that any weakness will probably not grow overnight into a strength. It takes time. Patience is necessary.

Understanding these things, we need to continue to teach. The great commission is not singular, it is more than that, we are to teach, we are to assist those who desire to be obedient and we are to continue to teach those who are obedient. If one has been properly taught and truly converted to Christ then his brethren need to assist him in learning the requirements of God's "family". A series of studies such as, "Now That I'm A Christian" or "The Way Home", or just a very simple open Bible study approach will aid "babes" in Christ.

Not only is teaching needed, but motivation is needed by all. The same thing that motivated one to become a Christian ought to be the same motivation that inspires him to continue faithfully — the love of God, the sacrifice of Christ, the blessings in Christ, the continued grace of Christ that lends hope to eternal salvation, all of these should continue to motivate one to righteousness and faithfulness. One should never forget the wonderful love of God, yet, it is never possible to fully comprehend. This love can motivate us to meet the needs of our own soul, to render good influence in the lives of others, and to continually reveal our love for God because of His continuing grace and mercy.

### **AN EFFECTIVE LOST SHEEP PROGRAM**

The lost must be brought back. Someone has said, "We need to bring 'em back alive." Naturally, we do not want to "kill" with wrong attitudes when we

go after them, but we do want to be keepers of our brethren and to restore anyone who has been overtaken in a fault.

A good place to begin is with old attendance records. It may not be likely that you will find such in writing, they may be only mental records. Too often we have "written them off" or just simply "left them off" when we prepared a new church directory. That is the easy way out! It is not Biblical, but it is the one that is taken so often. The ones who have been "left off" the new church directory need to be restored to Christ.

Accurate records of attendance should be maintained. This can be done by registering all members and visitors who assemble at every worship.

After a list of absentees is available, preferably the following day, a selected group should be trained to call each one who was absent. This will require the best of telephone finesse. Much kindness should be shown and much concern.

If the person is absent a second time, this person should be visited by members of the congregation, perhaps one of the members of the visitation teams. Again, the same kindness and concern will be shown, obtaining the specific reasons for absence.

After the fourth absence — or earlier, maybe we put too much on a practical and technical basis, but at least very soon, the elders should visit the absentee. At this time, the visit should be on a very intimate basis, dealing with specifics. If the workload is too great for the elders, other spiritual men and women could be selected by the elders to assist. Do not send "babes" in Christ — send the "spiritual giant", one who has grown up and become stabilized in the faith. (Gal. 6:1). This selected group of spiritually mature people should be trained.

The entire congregation should be made sensitive toward the lost. They should be well trained concerning their obligation and relationship toward the lost. A good book to use is "I Know Thy Works", by G.F. Johnson. This will prepare the congregation for any further action that might be necessary and their relationship to the departed brother in such an incident.

## CONCLUSION

Christians must never permit unfaithful brethren to believe that they are pleasing God and that they have a satisfactory relationship with Him. Like the prodigal son, they must be convinced that they are "in the hog pen", and that they must climb out and make their way homeward. The lost must be assured that God continues to love them and that He will receive them once they are willing to leave the "hog pen" (sin) and return to Him. God stands ready to receive, reconcile, and restore anyone who has repented. However, this resolution must be supported by actions — climbing out of the "hog pen", heading home and arriving at his "father's house". A ring, robe, shoes and joy are waiting for him.

However, not all will return. The conscience has become seared and cannot be pricked and motivated. In that event, only one thing remains, releasing them to Satan so that the soul can be saved. However, we must keep in mind that the withdrawal of fellowship is only for the adamant, the rebellious and the unrepentant. God expects us to withdraw our fellowship from such an unrepentant child of His, just as much as He expects us to restore a sinful child of His. The only motive for withdrawal of fellowship is love — love of God, in doing His will, and love of souls. Man sees discipline as a hindrance. God gave it for the good of His Kingdom.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

- (1). What does it mean to restore a brother?
  - (2). Discuss God's everlasting displeasure of unrighteousness. What should be the relationship between the "strong" and the "weak"?
  - (3). Discuss God's concern for the lost and how He expects us to have this same concern. Why do Christians sometimes leave undone the task of seeking, finding and restoring the lost?
  - (4). Discuss the reasons for people leaving Christ. (Perhaps the list can be enlarged). Formulate a proposed plan for restoring the ~~evangel~~.
  - (5). What is the ultimate act, approved by God, for dealing with the lost who fail to repent? What is the motive behind such an act?
- 

# Building Through Capturing Your City For Christ



by Clayton Pepper

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." (Acts 18:9-10).

## INTRODUCTION

The cities of America are in trouble! The streets of our cities are being turned into jungles of crime, rape, terror and death. The blight of crime threatens to engulf them. It is dangerous to walk down the streets after dark. The problem? SIN! Men without God! The answer? The gospel of Christ! Is God concerned about wicked cities today? He was in Old Testament times and He is today! Read of God's concern for Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 18:20-33; 19:1-29 and His concern for Nineveh in Johah 1 and 2. Lot failed his city. Jonah had to be dealt with by God before he would carry a message from God to Nineveh. I want to tell you how congregations worked together in an effort to take the gospel to every creature. Perhaps your city can do what Nashville did.

Nashville, Tennessee is a city of some 465,000 people with approximately 45,000 Christians. The city of four Christian schools and over 100 congregations is yet a mission field. In 1975, 76 congregations in Davidson County and some out of the county worked together in the "Let Freedom Ring" Campaign. This may have been one of the greatest evangelistic efforts to reach the entire county in the history of the church in this area, or any such area in modern times. The objective was to reach every reachable person with the gospel of Christ. The theme "Let Freedom Ring" was selected in keeping with the Bicentennial thought. The freedom that is being emphasized is described in John 8:36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."



## BRETHREN'S INTEREST DETERMINED FIRST

Several congregations were considering having their own campaign. Many were thinking along the same lines, but not an area wide effort until they learned of the widespread interest. In an effort to encourage the area-wide campaign, the Great Commission School included in the fall outreach training series a class on "The Possibility of a Davidson County Campaign for Christ." The room was filled each night, except Wednesday night, when brethren went to their home congregations. The conclusion was "Yes, we want to have the campaign." From this group, four fact-finding committees were appointed and assigned one of four geographical areas in which the county had been divided. Their task was to contact all the congregations in order to explain the plan and determine their interest in such an effort. This involved primarily the elders and preachers. Others were invited. Many meetings were held within a two month period of time in the fall. A special dinner meeting was held with emphasis on getting decision making brethren together to go over the campaign countdown plan and make the final decision. The countdown plan recommended by brethren who had led all fact-finding efforts was approved. It involved every congregation; (1) training its own people, (2) taking its own religious survey and (3) having its own gospel meeting.

At a later meeting the elders of the Radnor Church of Christ, who had encouraged the campaign from the beginning were asked to lead the campaign. Already, churches had been asked to select one man to attend all meetings and keep the local congregation informed. These became known as "contact" men. The Radnor elders asked the writer to work as coordinator of the campaign and steering (or advisory) committee chairman. A steering committee was then selected. First, one man from each of the four geographical areas of the county was selected. All of these men were full-time preachers and personal evangelists. All were greatly committed to the campaign. Some of the men had directed campaigns. One had conducted over 1500 cottage classes. Three other men were then added to coordinate work in special areas. The steering committee met every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. along with two of the elders of the Radnor church.

## CAMPAIGN PLANS

The first objective was to prepare the church. It was recommended that the entire membership of each local church study a three-month motivational course on personal evangelism. (The book, "Building An Evangelistic Church Through Total Evangelism" was published later to meet this need.) This began the first Sunday in January. After this three months course, two special courses were offered: One on how to teach the lost in their homes ("Introduction to Soul Winning" has been published to meet this need) and the other on "Follow-up of New Converts and Restoring the Erring", a book by B.C. Carr. It was recommended that those studying the first course would be surveyed to determine who would take which of the two following courses. The book "Following Up New Converts and Restoring the Erring" makes an excellent study for those who did not take the course on soul winning. After these three month courses, the congregation studied how to take a religious survey. (See Chapter 10 of the "Leadership in Personal Work Manual"). This was done in July. (This does not mean that those studying soul winning or how to follow-up on new converts and restoring the erring would necessarily stop these studies. These classes may need to continue).

Beginning the first of August the religious survey was begun with the view of completing it as soon as possible. Home Bible studies were arranged, Bible correspondence courses were offered, children were enrolled in Bible School, bu

riders located and literature left at the home. Up to 29 per cent of homes surveyed in some areas agreed to a home Bible study. Scores of people were baptized and restored. We must recognize here that the capability of persons doing the teaching will have much to do with the results.

Some surveys have shown in some areas of America that 40 per cent of those over nine years of age are not members of any church and 60 per cent of those under nine are not enrolled in any Bible School program.

Following the survey, prospects were worked diligently. The week of October 5, all participating congregations conducted its own meeting. The goal was to have the "old time" evangelistic meeting with members working to bring as many unsaved people as possible. There were over 630 responses in the meetings. The follow-up work of all prospects and home teaching to keep the converts were continued.

## **HELPING THE CONGREGATIONS PREPARE**

Knowing the great need for adequate preparation, additional training was planned in special areas. In a three month course offered each Monday night during March, April, and May, the following classes were offered:

1. Campaign Leadership. All the congregations were asked to select three men for this class. It was recommended that if possible the preacher and at least one of the elders be involved in this in order to accomplish maximum results.

2. Youth Leadership. Each congregation was to select a youth leader to take this training so he could coordinate youth activities in the campaign. They would take the telephone survey in April and May, offering free literature on Bible subjects according to the prospect's interest and Bible Correspondence Courses.

3. Adult class on soul winning.

4. Adult class on how to follow-up new converts and restore the erring.

5. Teenage class on soul winning.

These classes were taught by men on the steering committee. Many times attendance exceeded 1,000 in this series. Each person was asked to set a goal to win or restore four or more during the year. For several years, one congregation had conducted a mission forum on foreign mission work. Brethren who had been planning the mission forum permitted the program to be on "Home Missions." On April 14-17, twelve speakers participated in this effort. All of this was devoted to "Let Freedom Ring" campaign preparation.

Up to this point, the primary emphasis had been on getting the church prepared. This also involved employing a campaign secretary who compiled a list of every preacher, elder, adult Bible teacher, educational, personal work, and bus ministry directors. Some churches included the deacons. This was done in order for them to receive a monthly campaign bulletin.

## **PREPARING THE COMMUNITY**

The second major objective was to prepare the community for what was about to happen. This involved using mass media for total saturation. One of the first efforts, both to inform the brethren and the community, was an existing radio program sponsored by one of the congregations. The format was changed and the program was given the name "Let's Go Fishing for Men." This program focused on the campaign, soul winning, and souls won. The preacher directed the program. The program director for one of the local television stations, being a member of the Lord's church, had a plan prepared for this, using all means of mass media. He arranged for some \$10,000 worth of free

radio and television time. This was carried out over a period of months, with a greater concentration during August and September.

A "Let Freedom Ring" magazine was distributed from house to house during the religious survey. (Some were mailed into areas where the local church did not participate.) Approximately 185,000 copies were distributed.

At the proper time the community was informed by television and radio about the religious census. Workers found that at least 98 per cent of the people were expecting them and gave a warm reception. Workers found cooperation beyond their fondest expectations.

As this is being written, results are not yet complete. We do know the growth of two congregations. One had 44 responses in 1974, by mid-October 1975, they had 144. Another congregation had 94 in 1974 and by mid-October 1975 they had 271 responses. If every congregation had involved every member in soul winning, they would not have had too many workers. One church who did not follow the recommended training program worked one-twelfth of the area assigned to them and arranged 96 home Bible studies and had only 6 people to teach them. They stopped their survey work. This reflected the tragic lack of soul winning emphasis in this congregation. This was one of the larger congregations and could have completed the job on schedule. Many congregations that often have grown large did not do it through their commitment to soul winning. It was more often through mobility (people moving in) and population growth.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is this writer's conclusion that much more can be accomplished when a group of congregations adopt a master plan whereby each congregation trains its people, takes a religious survey, works its prospects and conducts its own meeting on a simultaneous basis than can be accomplished in one big meeting at a central location. Brethren can work together and do great things!

## **THOUGHT QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON**

- (1). Compare the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Nineveh with many American cities today. Are their needs the same?
- (2). Compare Lot and Jonah with God's people today. Discuss Lot's lack of influence in Sodom.
- (3). Do we have a responsibility to the whole city (or our geographical area) or just an area around the church building?
- (4). Discuss how you can take the lead in encouraging your city to have a campaign like Nashville.

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- (1). A filmstrip is being produced on the campaign. It will be available after March 1, 1976.
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# Why We Fail To Build Evangelistic Churches



by David Powers

**SCRIPTURE TEXT:** "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars:

And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." (Rev. 2:1-5).

## INTRODUCTION

The church can work hard, persevere, hate sin, fight false teaching, endure hardship, and still not be pleasing to Christ. The church at Ephesus is an example of such a problem. They did a lot of right, commendable things, and seemingly did them well; however, they were rebuked by the Lord because they

had left their first love and were instructed to repent and do their first work. Of course, the first love of every saved person ought to be love for the Savior. Our Savior declared, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14:21). So long as we love Christ first, His work will be first in our lives. He "came to seek and save the lost." (Luke 19:10). He commanded His disciples to do the same thing (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus said the way to return to our first love is to do our first work. The brethren at Ephesus needed to become evangelistic again; they needed to revive the joy of soul winning. Many churches today are sound in faith but sound asleep as far as soul winning is concerned. Others are well informed doctrinally and fight false doctrine everywhere, but have become keepers of orthodoxy rather than becoming soul winners. Anytime a church is faithful in doctrine and works hard for Christ, about the only conclusion we can come to if they are not growing is that they have left their first love and need to go back to their first work. In this lesson we shall concern ourselves with several reasons why churches leave their first love, fail to do their first work, and become unevangelistic.

### **1. BUSY WITH UNPRODUCTIVE WORK (Rev. 2:2).**

It seems that Jesus is saying to this church, "I know that you are busy; I know your works; but your works are not fruitful. You need to be productive." Most churches spend about eighty per cent of their time doing unproductive work. Many are involved in benevolent programs and building programs. Some devote their time to cleaning and taking care of the facilities; others work in youth activities, plan parties, recreation, etc. The sick need to be visited and working with members through zone programs is good. It takes time and effort to put out a good bulletin; teachers often spend a great deal of time decorating their rooms; others work in training programs and attend training classes, song practice, etc. Not a single one of these things is bad — the problem is that we sometimes become so involved in doing church work that we do not have time to do our first work. It is still the work of the church to save souls.

**APPLICATION:** The solution to the problem is for everyone to take a look at the way they are spending their time. If you do not go soul winning on purpose every week, then repent of it. Just as you put time in your busy schedule in order to eat, dress, go to worship, etc., set aside a time and go soul winning on purpose.

### **2. EMPHASIZING THE NEGATIVE (Matt. 7:21).**

Christianity is both positive and negative, and Jesus commends people for doing, rather than not doing. It is not just enough to know what is wrong and refuse to engage in wrong acts. Every Christian needs to do the positive things that are necessary to reach souls. Many Christians have been led to believe that after they are saved they need to be very careful not to do anything that is wrong. There has been a constant emphasis, "Don't, don't, don't." Many pride themselves in the things they do not do. "I don't smoke, I don't drink, I don't abuse my wife, I don't steal, I don't lie, I don't miss services," etc. After you can truthfully say all of these things, you are about as religious as a department store mannequin — it does not do any of these things either. Preachers and elders need to teach the members exactly what God wants them to do and how to do it. If we spend more time on the positive than the negative, we will find that it is necessary to spend less time teaching people not to do certain things.

**APPLICATION:** God loves you, gave His Son for you, Christ died for you, saved you, made it possible for you to become an adopted son or daughter of God, and someone taught you the gospel of grace so that you could be saved. All of this is positive. Resolve now to begin to do something positive for others. Go today and lead someone to Christ.

### **3. EMPHASIZING WORSHIP RATHER THAN SOUL WINNING (John 15:8).**

Jesus here declares that we glorify God by bearing much fruit. Many people have been in the church for many years and have never glorified God one single time by bearing fruit. In a recent survey, it was discovered that it took the average member of the church an average of seven years to lead one person to Christ. While many denominations are outgrowing us, many of our preachers, elders, and Bible class teachers continue to put the major emphasis on attending worship services, Bible study, and giving. It is very difficult to find a lesson in any of our magazines or workbooks that emphasizes personal soul winning. Everything needs to be geared to winning souls. Members need to understand that we are saved to save others. It will be a terrifying experience to stand before the Lord in judgement and learn that we have not glorified God because we have failed to bear fruit. Many have the idea that Jesus was talking about peace, joy, love, etc., but the fruit of a Christian is another Christian, just as surely as the fruit of an apple is an apple, or the fruit of a dog is a puppy dog. Paul taught that "we are married to Christ for the purpose of bringing forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7:4). He also declared that he wanted to come to Rome and preach to them so "that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles." (Rom. 1:13). Paul was talking about reproducing Christians. No church is evangelistic unless there is a constant emphasis on saving souls.

**APPLICATION:** If you are a preacher, elder, or a teacher, begin now to speak about soul winning at every opportunity. As members, all of us should give top priority to soul winning at all times.

### **4. LACK OF VISION (Prov. 29:18).**

The church will not just stand still when there is a lack of vision by the leadership, but it will go backwards and will perish. Our lack of vision is seen in many areas. For example, how many churches have found themselves in trouble with a building that is relatively new, but far too small, with not enough parking area or not enough classrooms and no way to expand because of lack of vision. Many have become involved in a bus ministry, have gone out and brought in a lot of people, and stopped because they lacked the vision to train their people for a sudden and great ingathering of souls. Where there is a lack of vision, there is a lack of planning. No one ever planned to fail — we just failed to plan. Far too often, when we do begin to plan, we forget the fact that we serve a "big" God who does "big" things. We need to sit down and decide where we should be five years, ten years, and fifty years from now and what we need to do in order to get there.

**APPLICATION:** Dream big dreams. Ask God for big things. Plan big things and do big things for God.

### **5. FEAR (2 Tim. 1-7).**

This Scripture declares that "God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind." Anyone who is afraid loses his power. A congregation that is afraid of dividing is afraid to take the steps necessary to

grow. The truth is that if a congregation is very old, it will not become a super aggressive, soul winning church without there being a purging. Jesus declared that "every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2). What is true with people is also true with congregations. Likely, there will be members who will not be able to catch the thrill and the excitement of growing rapidly, who will become fearful and complain. Often, leaders become afraid that members will leave and the church will suddenly find itself unable to make the payments on the building. This fear causes them to abandon programs that are fruitful. Far too many preachers are afraid to tell it like it is, for fear they will have to move again. Teachers are afraid to discipline and have order in their classes, because someone might be offended. Many members are afraid to talk to people about their soul and tell them about the Savior, for fear they will become angry. Many are afraid they might lose a friend if they try to convert people. They would rather their friend lose his soul. There is better religion than this in Hell. (Ref. Lk. 16).

**APPLICATION:** Always remember that God does not give us the spirit of fear. If we are afraid, then it is because we are yielding to the Tempter. Trust God — face whatever you are afraid of, and do it. The only way to overcome the fear of speaking in public is to speak. The only way to overcome the fear of soul winning is to go soul winning. No one ever overcame the fear of flying while staying on the ground.

#### **6. WEAK PREACHING (Acts 4:29-31).**

The apostles, when they were being persecuted, prayed that they would be able to speak the Word of God with boldness. There is a notable absence of boldness in far too many of our congregations. Just as a congregation where the truth is not taught is weak, so is a congregation weak where the truth is taught without boldness, a sense of urgency, and conviction. Preachers need to be men of God who are "on fire" for Christ. Often, when preachers get excited and try to teach and persuade men to obey Christ, they are accused of being too emotional. It is impossible for a man to understand the love of God and appreciate the sacrifice of Christ and salvation by His grace and not feel any emotion. How can one tell the story of the cross without being emotional? Too many congregations are weak because preachers fail to cry out against wickedness and sin, calling it by name, and far too many today are silent on the evils of denominationalism. The power to save souls is in the Word of God and in far too many cases there is not enough Bible preached to teach a soul how to be saved. Preachers are busy preaching on other things.

**APPLICATION:** Preachers need to be determined to preach so as to please God and not man, no matter what the cost. Members need to learn to uphold the hands of the man who will boldly preach the gospel and try to win souls through pulpit preaching.

#### **7. UNWILLING TO CHANGE (Mark 7:13).**

On this occasion, Jesus accused God's people of making God's Word of none effect through their tradition. God's people today often are guilty of this. We need to realize that if we want things to be different, we must do things differently. So long as we continue to do the same old thing in the same old way, we get the same old results. Any time a congregation is through changing, they are through! By nature, we resist change. We feel comfortable doing what we usually do, therefore, when the order of worship, time of services, or classroom methods are changed, we meet with resistance. Observe the resistance when we ask someone to park some place else, sit somewhere else, or

ask a teacher to use a different method of teaching. Sometimes, churches are evangelistic and experience wonderful growth, then suddenly they find themselves having reached a plateau where everything is nearly at a standstill — nothing that is tried seems to work. Sometimes, these plateaus are easily recognized; other times they are most difficult. If the building is overflowing, we know we need a new building; however, if the preacher's schedule is overflowing, he is unable to do the important things when he spends his time typing letters or running a mimeograph machine. It is sometimes difficult to get a congregation to agree to hire a secretary, an assistant, a preacher, an educational director, youth director or bus director. Often, we devise a program that will work well with 200 people. When we get to 300 people, we find we are having difficulty. The organization needs to be changed, but far too often we continue to do the same old thing in the same old way. Wise leaders will recognize the need for change before the church is in trouble. If we devise a program of work and have a staff to take care of 500 people, when we only have 200, the first thing we know we will have the 500 people. If we are prepared to have 1,000 people when we only have 500, suddenly we will look around and there will be the thousand.

**APPLICATION:** It is so important that we do not get hung up with things as they are. We need to be willing to make whatever changes are necessary and pay the cost, however great, to be an evangelistic church where souls are being saved.

#### **8. LACK OF INVOLVEMENT (Luke 9:23).**

As Christians, we are to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow Christ. In most congregations, a few people carry nearly all of the load. Usually, the same people who teach the classes do most of the giving and most of the other work. Jesus' cross was what He was willing to bear for the good of others. There needs to be daily in our lives an involvement in the lives of others for the sake of others. There is a place of service for everyone in God's kingdom. Each person should seek to find the place where he can function well and serve faithfully. Our involvement should be a daily involvement. Often, when people are asked to become involved in evangelism, or anything connected with it, they refuse, stating that they are too busy. Working at things that contribute to saving souls is not enough.

**APPLICATION:** The solution to the problem is for everyone to take a look at the way they are spending their time. If you do not go soul winning on purpose every week, then repent of it. Just as you put time in your busy schedule to eat and dress, go to worship, etc., set aside a time and go soul winning on purpose. Make it a practice of saying "Yes" every time you are asked to do anything in God's service, if it is at all possible.

#### **9. LACK OF DEDICATION (Acts 5:42).**

Only a people dedicated to Christ and the saving of the lost would meet daily in the temple and in every house. The early church had daily additions (Acts 2:47) because of its dedication, which led it daily to be evangelistic. Certainly, these people had to work to earn their daily bread. They had to be about the business of living life, and yet their dedication kept them busy daily with evangelism. Many churches today have difficulty in getting people to attend every night of a gospel meeting. This is evidence of a lack of dedication. If a church is emphasizing soul winning, and members have been led to realize that the most important thing — truly the only thing in the world that really matters — is saving lost souls, then they will be dedicated to daily evangelism.

**APPLICATION:** We can dedicate ourselves to whatsoever we choose. Why not right now choose some kind of daily activity that can be used by God to save the lost?



## **10. LACK OF MOTIVATION (Acts 20:24).**

Paul was determined to finish the work that the Lord had given him to do, no matter if it cost him his life. He was motivated because of what he believed. How is a church motivated to be evangelistic? By believing that winning souls is the only thing in the world that really matters. Nothing is more important for any born-again child of God, than leading others to Christ. God believed that the salvation of the lost was important enough for Him to give His only Son. His Son believed it enough to give His life. God's people need to believe it enough to give their time, talent, energy, money, and anything else within their power, in order to get it done.

**APPLICATION:** Get off to yourself in some quiet place to meditate and talk to God. Ask Him to help you understand exactly what is the most important thing in the world. When you truly believe that the salvation of a soul is worth more than all the world, this will be your motivation.

## **11. LACK OF SEPARATION (2 Tim. 2:19).**

It is God's will that everyone who has named the name of Christ depart from iniquity. As long as God's people are tangled up in worldliness and not really trying to live above sin, they will never really be impressed with the importance of soul winning and could not be used by God effectively to lead others to Christ. God simply cannot bless sin, and a congregation that is full of sin will not be an evangelistic church.

**APPLICATION:** "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

## **THOUGHT QUESTIONS**

- (1). How could soul winning be emphasized more in your congregation?
- (2). What fears hold back the work of your congregation, and what can be done about them?
- (3). How much of the work being done in your congregation is unproductive as far as winning souls is concerned? Be specific.
- (4). What changes could be made in your congregation to help it become truly evangelistic?
- (5). If one of the changes involves your going soul winning regularly, will you change?

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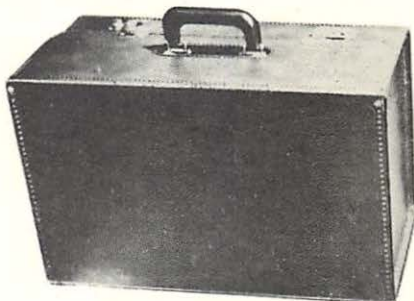
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