

# Now Is The Time For Evangelism

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#7 in Series on "Now Is The Time"

John 4:35-38

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## Introduction

The subject of evangelism is so huge that many books have been written, many sermons have been preached, and many seminars have been held on the subject. To preach one message on this subject, then, is a task in itself when we try to consider the subject in one swoop. However, today we are going to try to consider some the salient points of this great and grand subject.

The word evangelism means "to give the good news." We have the good news to give. That good news is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his death, burial and resurrection. In a world where we have so much bad news, it is time for us to give some good news.

## I. THE PROSPECT OF EVANGELISM

- A. In John 4:35 Jesus asked: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?"
- B. His listeners were expecting to have a harvest of grain, but it would not be for four more months. They had time to spend doing other things besides harvesting the grain.
- C. This is the way we look at evangelism today. We put it off, thinking that we might do it later or that the time may be better later, the opportunities will be more later, we may be better prepared later, or we may be busy about this when we live the majority of our lives and perhaps retire from public work.
- D. Read Luke 18:17-24.
- E. These may seem to be flimsy excuses, but they are many of the same excuses we use today to keep from doing our work for the Lord.
- F. The prospect is always there, but it seems to never come. We may wait for better times or opportunities, but they will never come if we just wait.

## II. THE URGENCY OF EVANGELISM

- A. Jesus said again in John 4:35: "look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."
- B. What is a better opportunity to tell someone the good news of the Gospel than now?
- C. 2Co 6:2 (*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.*)
- D. Now some debate as to whether this verse speak to the lost person or to the saved person.
- E. If it is to the saved, the urgency is very real. If today is the day of salvation, then it means that we as God's children are to give the good news to someone today and not delay our labor in the Lord's vineyard.
  1. There are people out there who have never heard the real Gospel.

2. There are religious people who are held prisoner to their religions. They need a release, and the only thing that can free them is the Gospel.
  3. There are people who are wondering about spiritual things, and they need answers to life's questions. The Gospel will answer the most profound questions that a person may have.
  4. We do not have to prove anything; we simply have to give the message.
  5. Ro 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*
  - 6.
- F. If it is to the lost, then the urgency is an emergency. He must today trust Jesus Christ today,
1. Today must be the day the lost man repents of his sins and turns to the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior of his soul.
  2. Today must be the day when he sees himself as a sinner and becomes guilty and sorry before a holy God.
  3. Today is the day the lost person must make things right with a God before whom he will stand one day.
  4. Today is the day to prepare to meet God. Jesus is coming again, and he will not delay his coming. It may be today. We all must be ready for that glorious day.

### III. THE REWARD OF EVANGELISM

#### A. Fruit Unto Eternal Life

1. Joh 4:36 *And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*
2. Ga 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*
3. Mt 13:8 *But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.* What is the good ground? See next verse.
4. Mt 13:23 *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*
5. But what is the good ground? Lu 8:15 *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep [it], and bring forth fruit with patience.* The good ground is a prepared just as the ground is prepared for the sowing of the seed of grain.

#### B. Joy Altogether

1. Joh 4:37 *And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.*
2. You may sow the gospel every day for the rest of your life, and you may not see any result, though I think that is very improbable because of the promises the Lord has made to us concerning reaping and sowing.
3. But someone somewhere will reap. You may reap your own harvest; another may reap your harvest. On the other hand, you may reap someone else's harvest.
4. Ps 126:6 *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves [with him].* Read John 4:38.
5. There is nothing like reaping the harvest of a soul. This is our wage, our reaping

- of the harvest. This is the reward for working in the Lord's vineyard.
6. We might reap today. Now may be the time. It is God's time.

#### IV. THE MESSAGE OF EVANGELISM

##### A. The Word

1. Joh 4:39 *And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.*
2. Eph 1:13 *In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*
3. 1Pe 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*
4. We must preach the word. No one will be saved without it.
5. 1 Cor 1:21 *For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

##### B. The Work

1. The work that is done in the heart of the sinner through the preaching of the word is done by the Holy Spirit. It is not by persuasion or by debate. It is by the spirit of God.
2. Zec 4:6 *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This [is] the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*
3. Joh 6:63 *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life.*
4. Jon 2:9 *But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay [that] that I have vowed. Salvation [is] of the LORD.*

##### C. The Wonder

1. 2 Cor 5:17 *Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*
2. This is a totally new life. It is a new birth.
3. We need to give the message of Gospel, because it is the power of God unto salvation. It brings new life.
4. Eph 2:1 *And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

#### V. THE COMMISSION FOR EVANGELISM

- A. The Lord gives a command to his churches to be evangelistic. We as church members should take heed to the commandment.
- B. Read Matthew 28:18-20
- C. The message and the command have always been incumbent since Jesus gave this commission. It is imposed upon us as the Lord's churches to do this job, and it has been so in every generation from then until now.
- D. Now is the time for the commission to be active in our churches.

#### VI. THE SORROW OF LOSS

- A. Lu 3:9 *And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which*

*bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

- B. Just as there is a fruit if we sow, there is also loss if we do not.
- C. If a tree does not bring forth fruit, then it is cut down and cast into the fire. This is a warning to everyone. To the lost, it is a warning that God's judgment will come one day; and it will be hard and harsh.
- D. To the professing Christian, it is a warning that, if you do not bring forth good fruit, then you are not his; you have not been born again; you are still in your sins.
- E. What sadness comes to those who have neglected their crops and go out to harvest them. They have no fruit, and the harvest is fit for the fire.
- F. Without a witness of Jesus Christ, men, women, boys and girls will be cast into the fires of Hell. This should shake our bones and rattle our consciences. This should make us desirous to be a witness of our Lord.

## VII. HOW DO I BECOME AN EVANGELIST

- A. First, You must Be Saved.
  - 1. Rom 1:17 *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
  - 2. How can you tell someone about a Jesus you have never met personally? How can you tell of an experience you have never had? How can you tell of a salvation that is not real in your own heart?
  - 3. The righteousness of God is passed from one person of faith to another person, who may trust the Lord and, therefore, have faith. This is God's design for evangelism.
- B. You Must Be Studied
  - 1. 2 Tim 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
  - 2. If you do not study the word of God, then how can you expect to be able to handle (divide) the word of God? It is the word of truth, you know.
  - 3. Take time every day to learn something about the Bible. Memorize a verse, learn a name, read a few verses and write comments on them. Study the word of God that you may be a workman of God not being ashamed that you do not know his book.
- C. You Must Be Secure
  - 1. First, in order to be a good witness for the Lord, you must have assurance of your salvation.
    - a. Joh 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*
    - b. With this assurance you can with confidence give the Gospel to others and believe that the Lord will save them just as he saved you and give to them the same assurance that you have in him.
  - 2. Secondly, you must be secure in the fact that God has a people.
    - a. As Paul went into Corinth, the Lord said to him in Ac 18:10 *For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*
- D. You must Be Pressed in the Spirit
  - 1. (Acts 18:5) to speak to others.
  - 2. The only way to do this that I know is to ask the Lord, who will give you a strong

desire to be a witness for him.

E. You must Go to Those Who Will Hear

1. (Acts 18:6).
2. Some will not hear, so we are not to continually press them and harass them. We are to keep going to new people until one hears, then another, then another.

F. You Must Continue in the Work

1. (Acts 18:11). We are not to quit. Even though Paul had conflict and enemies there, he continue there six months preaching the word. Eventually, a church established there.
2. It is easy to get sidetracked and stop doing our work as evangelists. We are all evangelists to one degree or another, good or bad ones.
3. If you have not called someone, visited someone, written a card or letter or some other form of reaching out, then now is the time to start.
4. If you have never done it before, it will not be easy the first few times, but you will be strengthened by doing it.

G. You Must Become A Church Member

1. The Great Commission, I believe, was given to the Lord's local churches; so, in order to be an effective witness for the Lord and be blessed by him, you must be a member of a New Testament Church.
2. First Baptist Church is a New Testament Church. If you want to become a member, walk to the front during our final hymn and present yourself for scriptural baptism. After baptism you will become a full member of our church.
3. If you are from a church of like faith and order, you may join by letter from that church.
4. If you are from another denomination, then you will need to be baptized to become a member of the church.
5. The Lord said through Paul in Eph 3:21 *Unto him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

## Conclusion

Someone might say, well then, why don't you start a weekly visitation program? That might be a good idea, but for the first 8 or 10 years that I was pastor here, I started visitation programs 8 or 10 times. After a few weeks, I came to the church and met no one. I would go out by myself. One winter I came every week in all kinds of weather and met no one. In hot weather, in cold weather, I would meet no one here. So, I decided that it was not my job to try to make you go on visitation or contact people.

Evangelism is your business. It should be a natural part of your life if you are saved by God's grace. If you need someone to go with you visiting, look among the members of our church and set a time with that person even if it is no more than once a month. Just be sure to be a witness of the Lord.

Some do a really good job of writing letters, sending cards and encouraging people with the Gospel. This may be a good way for you to do your job as an evangelist.

You may be able to pass out tracts or some other way, but now is the time for us to get the message to people.

People are dying and going to hell. We need to be concerned about that. Join me in

making this year the greatest year of contact with the Gospel. Take the children in your Sunday School class. Engage your students in activities encouraging them to contact others inviting them to come to Sunday School. Always give the Gospel in your class, and always allow the students to ask questions or respond with their confession of faith in Christ. Let them know how to become a member of the church if they have believed in them.

This is our goal; this is our job. Evangelism is a job for every believer. It must be done now. Jesus said in Joh 9:4 *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*