



As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Teaching 2 – Responsibilities of an Evangelist

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EVANGELIST

If you will “confess with **your mouth** the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart, that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” **Romans 10:9**. Many have come to that beginning point of salvation, but some who have *believed* have not begun to *follow* him as Lord, or to know the delight and duty of *discipleship*. **Luke 8: 10-15**

A disciple is a believer who has become an ongoing follower of the Lord Jesus and of His methods and means of disciple-making. Notice the progression: believer, follower, disciple. Can you locate yourself in one of these three categories?

When you acknowledge where you are, ask for God’s help in becoming all that He has in mind for you as a devoted disciple.

*There are just two groups of people in this world: those who have heard the gospel and those who have not. If those who have heard (and believed) refuse to tell those who have not heard, God will render to each according “to his deeds.” Sobering! While people often debate about those who have died without hearing the gospel, **Proverbs 24:11 and 12** reveals the soul-stirring importance of seeking those who are alive and have not heard! We cannot go back to the last generation, nor can we reach the next generation, but we can serve this one. The only generation God expects us to be vitally concerned about is our own.*

What did the early disciples do to learn and demonstrate the “Master’s methods” in disciple-making? They chose the **right goals** (to seek disciples and not just decisions), the **right methods** (plow, plant, and harvest), and the **right lifestyles** (Spirit-gifted lives reaching out to edify and evangelize). For us as modern disciples to show responsible ministry toward our generation we must model the goals, methods, and lifestyles of the early disciples.

Right Goals:

After worship, the Bible shows that two other primary goals of the church are to edify other believers and to evangelize. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. **Ephesians 4:11-12**

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Now all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. **2 Corinthians 5:18–20**. As we move further on in this study guide, we will see how edification and evangelization rub off on one another.

In **Luke 13:6-9** Jesus told a parable about a barren fig tree. The immediate application was to the nation of Israel, which had failed to produce spiritual fruit. However, we too can learn a lesson about goals and church programs from this parable.

It seems the fig tree had been planted, nurtured, and expected to produce fruit. Certain church programs, too, may have developed over many years, but close analysis reveals that after much work there is still little or no fruit. In many such cases, Jesus' principle is to "cut it down" (**v. 7**). It is using up time and resources, which could be invested with another program. Yet the hired help urged the owner of the vineyard to wait, in order to "dig around it and fertilize it" for another year. Presumably he had been doing this all along, and his goal was to keep on doing whatever he had been doing. He was "program centered" rather than "goal centered." The owner of the vineyard, however, was concerned with the fruit, the harvest. He had to make the decision whether to continue the program or to "cut it down" and replace it with something which showed more potential.

Right Methods:

Plough; Some evangelistic efforts do not succeed because care has not been given to prepare the soil for the precious "seed" of the Word. Ploughing breaks up the hard surface and helps expose rocks and obstacles, which need to be removed before the seed is planted.

Ploughing is hard work. It frequently has to be done early, before the heat of the sun is out for the day. It is not glamorous and doesn't have much to show for itself.

What aspects of evangelism could be likened to plowing?

Plant; Jesus told of a "sower [who] went out to sow his seed." The means of planting at that time was to dip one's hand in a sack of seed and then "broadcast" it in a spreading motion. The seed fell wherever it landed and some grew and some did not. See the Parable of the Sower in **Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8**.

The Bible does not give us modern techniques for planting the gospel seed. **Psalm 24:1** says, "The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein". We are free to use whatever modern means will glorify God and not detract from the message of the Cross.

List how many means of communication you can think of which might be useful in "planting the gospel seed".

Why are some methods of planting more useful with certain age groups or certain cultures?

Harvest; God alone can guarantee a harvest. He alone can cause the seed we've planted to grow and then to ripen. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" **1 Corinthians 3:6**

But He does not harvest the crop. He requires laborers to discern which fields are now ripe for harvesting, and then to go and "bear much fruit" **John 15:8**

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In Jesus' day there were three "fields": Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans. Early on, only the Jews were the "field" **Matthew 10:5 6** later, both the Gentiles and the Samaritans ripened and bore much fruit for the Kingdom.

Right Lifestyles:

For many, the most responsible action we can take toward our generation is what some have called "friendship evangelism". This form of outreach takes us to people who perhaps would not be reached in any other way. It requires a sacrifice on our part, a giving, but isn't that what the gospel is all about?

In our Lord's ministry we find an example of "friendship evangelism" in **John 4** why would the Pharisees be concerned with Jesus' ministry at this point in time? **John 4:1, 2**

Why would Jesus need to go through Samaria? **V4**

What time of day did this incident take place, by Jewish reckoning? **John 4:6**

How would that help to explain where the disciples were? **V8**

WE MUST CONTACT OTHERS SOCIALLY:

Make no mistake; separation from the things of the world is not optional for the Christian. It is mandatory. "Come out from among them and be separate from them, says the Lord" **2 Corinthians 6:17**

From what are we specifically told to abstain? **1Thessalonians 5:22 and 1 Peter 2:11**

What is the implied answer to Paul's question on fellowship in **2 Corinthians 6:14?**

In thinking about our efforts in evangelism, many will come to the painful realization that we have a limited opportunity to witness because we have few non-Christian friends. Certainly, God's intention is that we be insulated from the attitudes and activities of this world, but not isolated from them. However, for some, our commitment to service within the church has cut off our contact and fellowship with those outside the church. Our pool of non-Christian friends has dried up.

Jesus prayed to the Father in **John 17:15**, "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one." Our lost friends are the ones who need our friendship and God's forgiveness.

Write out Jesus' response to them **VV 31-32?**

Describe the emotional state of this woman?

What did Jesus offer as a solution to her problem?

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WE MUST GO WHERE NON-CHRISTIANS ARE;

The Cross-must be raised in the marketplace as well as on the steeples of the churches. We cannot hope to get our entire communities into our churches to hear evangelistic sermons (**as valid and proven as this method of evangelism is**). But we can hope to get our churches (**born again believers; devoted disciples**) out into every area of our communities.

How did the mob in Thessalonica describe the evangelistic effectiveness of the early disciples?
Acts 17:6

The disciples did not have evangelistic success by only inviting people to church with them. They did it by reaching out to people in non-Christian settings. Read the following scriptures and identify some of the various places Paul presented the gospel. **Acts 16:11-34 and Acts 20-20**

Peter and John said they couldn't restrain their desire to witness for the Lord Jesus: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard!" **Acts 4:20**

In the Bible we find four points of "friendship", or "lifestyle" evangelism.

1. ***The Holy Spirit will prepare the harvest field for you.***
2. ***The Holy Spirit will lead you.*** Psalm 37:23 says, "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord". And Paul taught, "It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" **Philippians 2:13**
3. ***The Holy Spirit will empower and guide you.*** An open door is often a spiritual, emotional, physical, or material need, which you discern in someone.
4. ***The Holy Spirit remains active in lives after your initial contact*** **John 4:39-42**

Jesus went to a public gathering place and proceeded to establish an opportunity for presenting truth, which transformed an entire town!

Communication-build Bridges:

Jesus did not begin by telling the **Samaritan woman she was a sinner** and He alone could save her. Sometimes we let the pressure to witness build and then explode like a time bomb of scripture verses. He began with something she was obviously interested in and built a bridge for further communication. We have to win the right to be heard.

This is where friendship evangelism excels. We are not concerned just with presenting them with doctrine but in ministering to them as people, people with needs, feelings, and doubts. If they don't like us, it isn't very likely they will be interested in our message.

Faith Statement: Romans 10:13 and 14 says, "For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

If you would experience the delight of life-style evangelism:

- ***Be available***
- ***Be aware***
- ***Be attentive***

AROUSE CURIOSITY:

We can arouse curiosity by what we do. ***The Samaritan woman was surprised that a Jew would talk to her.*** She was a woman in a patriarchal culture. He was a holy man, a Rabbi. Furthermore the Jews [had] no dealings with the Samaritans; **John 4:9** yet Jesus befriended her.

As Christians we are to be possessed by a deeper purpose in life. ***Our attitudes*** toward people are to be loving, considerate, kind, and long-suffering. ***Our reactions*** to circumstances are most telling when we demonstrate complete trust in the will of God. ***Our actions*** in the course of our daily duties may be the turning point in our contact with that non-Christian friend. An act of kindness, unselfish love, may be the key to someone's soul. We can draw people to Jesus by living on the outside the changed life that we have on the inside. **1 Peter 3:15-16**

Some have found simple questions to be helpful. Something like:

Do you ever give much thought to spiritual things?"

Have you every thought of becoming a Christian?"

If someone were to ask you; 'What is a real Christian?' what would you tell them?"

Learn to be alert to everyday experiences. Throw out a leading comment, and plan ahead for common remarks in everyday conversation. For example, someone may ask, "Why are you so happy?" Then you can share your spiritual experiences. Or you might respond to their frustrations by saying, "You know, I used to feel that way." Or, "You know, I would feel that way if it were not for." Another way to arouse curiosity and draw people into a conversation of spiritual issues is to be alert to current events. Crime, economics, sickness, medical cures, and many other topics all have the potential of attracting spiritual interest.

DON'T CONDEMN:

Our Lord allowed this woman's sin to condemn her by itself. We are to witness His love and grace. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and to convince of righteousness. How many have been turned off by self-righteous condemning people?

WISDOM: A drunken and profane man sat beside an evangelist on a train and offered him a drink. The wise evangelist responded, "No thank you, but I can see that you are a gracious man."

How would you have handled the situation? "No thank you, I don't drink, I'm a Christian."

If this were your response, you have condemned the person. You have implied that you are more holy than he is, when all of us are "sinners saved by grace". You have also confused the gospel. The essence of Christianity is not whether you drink or don't drink. Temperance is a fruit of the spirit, not the root of it.

Win friends and influence them for Christ. Look for opportunities to live graciously in a non-Christian society. Don't let your good be spoken of as evil **Romans 14:16**. Look for opportunities to compliment rather than condemn.

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BRING PEOPLE TO A CONFRONTATION WITH CHRIST:

It is not enough to talk *about* Jesus or spiritual things. A listener must make a *personal decision* about Christ. Salvation is a gift. One either accepts it (on His conditions) or rejects it.

Sometimes we are hesitant to be so direct. We may be afraid because we fear it may bring our friendship to an end. Yet we see signs that say, "Friends don't let their friends drive drunk." In a similar sense, "Real friends don't want their friends to miss heaven and end up in hell."

Perhaps these three points summarize responsible witnessing:

1. We shouldn't pressure a person to receive Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can bring a person to this commitment.
2. Let a person know in advance that your friendship does not depend upon his or her response to Christ.
3. But *do* invite the person to receive Him personally. "Does this make sense to you, Charlie? Would you like to receive Christ now?"

SUMMARY:

These principles of evangelism worked for Jesus **John 4:39–42**. They will work for you too. But like all rules for success, they will not work unless you do. If you will cultivate the ground and plant the seed, you can expect to reap the resulting harvest for Christ. Evangelism is not optional. We are commanded to serve the Lord by reconciling sinful man with a holy and loving God. What are we doing about it?

Getting our own lives into alignment with our Lord, His character and purpose, is vital. Enthroning Jesus, as Lord in our own lives is what finally determines which activities will get the energy bursts needed for us to reap evangelistic results.

In helping us to prioritize our lives and our lives' activities, how do you see Jesus' statement, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me?"

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